



Pahalgam effect: India suspends postal links with Pakistan, bans imports, prohibits Pak-flagged ships



New Delhi, May 3 (UNI) In a slew of rapid punitive measures against Islamabad, India has suspended all postal linkages with Pakistan, banned the direct or indirect import of goods from that country, and banned Pakistani-flagged ships from entering Indian ports and vice versa. The measures come as part of India's retaliatory steps against Pakistan, in the aftermath of the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam of Jammu and Kashmir in which Islamist gunmen brutally shot dead 26 people, mostly tourists. The Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts, in a notification issued today, said the Government of India has "decided to suspend exchange of all categories of inbound mail and parcels from Pakistan through air and surface routes". Earlier, the Directorate General of Shipping, Mumbai, issued a directive under the Merchant Shipping Act, banning Pakistani-flagged ships from entering Indian ports and prohibited Indian-flagged vessels from visiting ports in Pakistan. The restrictions are effective immediately. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry, in a notification issued on Friday, "prohibited the import or transit of all goods originating in or exported from Pakistan", with immediate effect. India has already shut the Attari land crossing, which is the sole trade route between the two countries, in the aftermath of the Pahalgam attack. The measures are the latest by New Delhi to crack down on Islamabad following the Pahalgam terrorist attack, which has led to embittering of relations between the two sides. India has taken several measures to hit back at Pakistan, including suspending the Indus Waters Treaty, closing the Attari border, telling all Pakistani nationals to leave, thinning the staff at the Pakistan HC and its own in Islamabad, and vowed to pursue the perpetrators and planners of the attack to the ends of the earth.

26/11 Mumbai terror attack: NIA collects Tahawwur Rana's voice, handwriting samples

New Delhi, May 3 (UNI) National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Saturday collected the voice and handwriting samples of 26/11 Mumbai terror attack mastermind Tahawwur Rana, who was extradited from the United States. Piyush Sachdev Counsel for Rana stated that as per earlier order of the Special Court, NIA obtained the voice sample of Rana in its headquarters and collected his handwriting sample before the Judicial Magistrate First Class (JMFC). On Monday, the court extended the NIA's custody of Rana, a Pakistani born Canadian for 12 more days, till May 9 and on Wednesday the court allowed the application of NIA for obtaining the voice and handwriting samples. Tahawwur Rana is one of the accused who was charged in the 2008 terror attacks and cleared the way for his transfer to Indian custody.



Claims about removal of Director General of Defence Intelligence Agency false: govt

New Delhi, May 3 (UNI) The government on Saturday dismissed as false the claims circulating on Pakistan-backed social media accounts that Lieutenant General DS Rana, Director General of Defence Intelligence Agency, has been removed from his post and deputed to the Andaman and Nicobar. The false claims about Lt Gen DS Rana being "removed" are being circulated by Pakistan-based news channel @ARYNEWSOFFICIAL and several social media accounts. The Press Information Bureau (PIB) of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in a post on social media platform X said, "Lt Gen DS Rana has been promoted to the prestigious rank of Commander-in-Chief, Andaman & Nicobar Command. He is the first Chief of Defence Intelligence who has been elevated to the rank of Commander-in-Chief." The PIB said, "Andaman & Nicobar Command is the first Tri-Services Command, which is of immense strategic significance for Indian Armed Forces in the Indian Ocean Region". Earlier too, Pakistan-based media had made false claim about Lieutenant General Suchindra Kumar alleging that he was removed after the Pahalgam terror attack. Notably, the Ministry of Home Affairs had banned several Pakistani YouTube channels for disseminating provocative, false and misleading contents against India.



Unprovoked firing by Pak continues for 9th straight night

Srinagar, May 3 (UNI) There was no let-up in exchange of firing between Indian and Pakistan armies along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir for the ninth consecutive night on Friday. The Indian Army said the latest ceasefire violation happened across the LoC opposite the Kupwara, Uri and Akhnoor areas of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.



These were responded promptly and proportionately by the Indian Army. The ceasefire violations along the LoC

PM Modi vows firm and decisive action against Pahalgam terrorists, their backers

New Delhi, May 3 (UNI) Prime Minister Narendra Modi today again vowed firm and decisive action to bring the perpetrators and backers of the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack to book.

Addressing a media event post his talks with visiting Angolan President João Lourenço, Prime Minister Modi said: "We are committed to take firm and decisive action against the



terrorists and those who support them.

"He thanked Angola for its support in India's fight against cross-border terrorism. PM

Modi also said that the two countries are united in their opposition to terrorism which the biggest danger to humanity. He thanked the Angolan leader for the condolences of his country for the victims of the Pahalgam

attack. Notably, PM Modi has vowed to bring the perpetrators and backers of the Pahalgam terror attack in which 26 people, mostly tourists, were brutally gunned down, to book and go to the ends of the earth to hunt them down. He has also given the Indian armed forces operational freedom to deal with their reprisal action in the matter.

CBI busts child sexual abuse networks as part of Op Hawk

Kolkata, May 3 (UNI) The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has busted cybercrime networks in parts of India allegedly involving online child sexual exploitation with international linkages after the federal agency received inputs from the USA, official sources said. On the basis of inputs received from the USA, the CBI launched Operation Hawk and successfully dismantled the cybercrime networks involving online child sexual exploitation with international linkages, the CBI said. The International Operations Division of CBI registered a case against one Sheikh Muizz Ahmed under section 506 of Indian Penal Code as well as section 68D of Information Technology Act, 2000 and section 12 read with

section 11 of POCOA Act, 2012 and launched investigation to detect the cybercrime network involving online sexual exploitation. During March, 2024, accused Sheikh Muizz Ahmed, a resident of Mangalore, operated through social media platform "Discord" under the username "heisenberg7343" and engaged in online chats with "a minor girl from the US." During chats, the accused induced the minor girl to engage in sexualized chats with him and he further enticed her to share her obscene images/videos with him over the said platform, the CBI said.



Dr Poonam Gupta takes over as Dy Governor of RBI

Mumbai, May 3 (UNI) Poonam Gupta has taken over as the Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

The government appointed her as Deputy Governor on April 2, 2025 for a period of three years from the date of assumption of charge or until further orders, whichever is earlier. As Deputy Governor, Dr Gupta will take charge of the monetary policy department, financial markets operations department, economic and policy research department, department of financial stability, international department, department of statistics and information management, corporate strategy and Budget department and department of communications.

Prior to this appointment,



Dr Gupta was the Director General of the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), dealing with issues related to economic development, international financial architecture, central banking, macro economic stability, public debt and state finance. She also served as a member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister and Convener of the Advisory Council of the 16th Finance Commission.

Prior to joining NCAER, Dr. Gupta held senior positions at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the

World Bank for nearly two decades. Dr. Gupta also taught at the Delhi School of Economics, University of Maryland (USA) and also served as a visiting faculty at the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI), Delhi. She has been an RBI Chair Professor at the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP) and a Professor at the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER). Dr. Gupta has published several research papers and authored an edited book 'Emerging Giants: China and India in the World Economy'. She holds a Master's degree and PhD in Economics from the University of Maryland, USA, and a Master's degree in Economics from the Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi.

6 killed, over 30 injured in Shirgao Jatra stampede

Panaji, May 3 (UNI) Six people were killed and more than 30 others injured in a stampede during the famous Sri Lalrai Jatra pilgrimage in Goa's Shirgao district on Saturday, police said. Police and rescue teams reached the spot as soon as the incident was reported.

The injured have been admitted to Goa Medical College and North Goa District Hospital in Mapusa. Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed grief over the loss of lives in the accident. "Saddened by the loss of lives due to stampede in Goa's Shirgao. Condolences to those who lost their loved ones, wishing the injured a speedy recovery." The local administration is assisting the affected people. Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant has reached the hospital. He has asked for free treatment of the injured. Goa Congress has also expressed grief over the incident. The incident took place when there was a



sudden panic in the huge crowd, due to which people started running to save their lives. Witnesses said people kept falling on each other, resulting in deaths. Police and emergency services rushed to the spot and relief and rescue operations were immediately started. The injured have been admitted to nearby hospitals. Authorities are yet to officially confirm the reason behind the stampede, but according to initial reports, overcrowding and the lack of proper arrangements led to the chaos.

Bodies of 4 members of family found in Thane

Thane, May 3 (UNI) The bodies of four members of a family, including a woman and her three daughters, were found hanging in their house in Fene village of Bhiwandi taluka of the district on Saturday. The incident came to light this morning when the woman's husband returned home from work. He found the bodies of his wife and three daughters hanging from the iron angle of the roof of the house. He informed about this to the Bhiwandi city police, whose team rushed to the spot and opened the door of the house, police said. The Bhiwandi city police conducted a 'panchanama' at the scene and after that, sent the bodies to the Late Indira Gandhi Smriti Sub-district Hospital for autopsy. Police



have found a suicide note purportedly handwritten by the woman at the scene. Although the woman's suicide note said that she had committed suicide, the reason behind incident has yet to be ascertained. It was written that she was doing it of her own free will and that no one should be held responsible for the suicide. However, the reason behind the suicide of this woman

India bans Pakistani-flagged ships from entering Indian ports

Mumbai/New Delhi, May 3 (UNI) In another punitive measure against Islamabad, India today banned Pakistani-flagged ships from entering Indian ports and prohibited Indian-flagged vessels from visiting ports in Pakistan. The restrictions, effective immediately, were issued by the Directorate General of Shipping, Mumbai, under the Merchant Shipping Act. It said: "A ship bearing the flag of Pakistan will not be allowed to visit any Indian port, an Indian flagged ship will not visit any ports of Pakistan." This order is issued to ensure safety of Indian assets, cargo and connected infrastructure, in public interest and for safety of Indian shipping. Any exceptions to the order will be examined and decided on case to case basis, it said. The order comes into force with immediate effect, and will remain in force till further orders.

The measure comes as India has also banned the



direct or indirect import of goods from Pakistan. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry, in a notification issued on Friday, "prohibited the import or transit of all goods originating in or exported from Pakistan". These measures are the latest by New Delhi to crack down on Islamabad following the Pahalgam terrorist attack in which 26 tourists were gunned down, leading to embittering of relations between the two sides. India has taken several measures to hit back at Pakistan, including suspending the Indus Waters Treaty, closing the Attari border, telling all Pakistani nationals to leave, thinning the staff at the Pakistan HC and its own in Islamabad, among others.

BJP Natl Prez Nadda reviews 2026 TN Assembly poll preparatory works

Chennai, May 3 (UNI) In his first visit weeks after the revival of alliance with the main opposition AIADMK, BJP National President and Union Minister J P Nadda on Saturday held a meeting with the core committee members of the Party's Tamil Nadu unit, discussed and reviewed the 2026 Assembly poll strategy and the preparatory works.

Newly-elected BJP State Unit President and Legislature Party Leader Nainar Nagendran, who is a former AIADMK strongman commanding enough influence in the southern districts, senior Leaders including BJP TN-in-charge P Sudhakar Reddy, Convenor H Raja, National Mahila Morcha President Vanathi Srinivasan, also an MLA, former State Presidents Ms Tamiliasai Soundararajan, Pon Radhakrishnan and



others. In the meeting the party leaders, promised to strive hard to increase the BJP's numbers in the State Assembly by working in close-coordination with the AIADMK, which is heading the NDA in the State, and other allies which were likely to join the alliance an unseat the ruling DMK from power. Mr Nadda also urged the party functionaries to go the extra mile to strengthen the grassroots level workers and immediately start the

preparatory works for the polls, which is less than an year away.

It may be recalled that the BJP revived the ties with the AIADMK-- two years after it had walked out of the NDA-- for the crucial 2026 polls and it was announced by BJP master poll strategist and Union Minister Amit Shah after AIADMK General Secretary and Leader of the Opposition Edappadi K Palaniswami met him at New Delhi.

Mohammed Shami's form a concern for India as England tour nears

Mumbai, May 3 (UNI) With the high-profile tour of England on the horizon, India will be boosted with veteran quick Mohammed Shami back in the mix. Shami, who had been out of action for over a year's time following the 2023 Men's Cricket World Cup owing to a knee injury, had returned back in Indian colours at the ICC Men's Champions Trophy. As India wrapped up an unbeaten campaign to seal the title, Shami finished with nine wickets under his belt. However, the 34-year-old's recent form in the ongoing IPL 2025 season will give India a cause to worry for the tour of England, believes former India opener Aakash Chopra.

Melodious footsteps celebrate spirit of classical dance in Hyderabad

Hyderabad, May 3 (UNI) The stage came alive with rhythm and grace as over 150 classical dancers from 20 academies gathered for a spectacular day-long celebration of Indian dance forms at the CESS Auditorium in Greenlands, Begumpet. The event, titled Muvvala Savvadi (Melodious Footsteps), was organised by Amrutha Cultural Trust and featured performances across four major classical styles—Kuchipudi, Kathak, Bharatanatyam, and Andhra Natyam—from 1000 to 1700 hours on Saturday. Audiences were treated to a visual and spiritual feast as dancers of all ages presented their art with devotion, technical finesse, and vibrant expression. Esteemed guests at the event included Andhra Natyam exponent and Sangeet Natak Akademi awardee Kala Krishna and retired IAS officer Vinod Agarwal. Both lauded the organisers for their efforts in reviving classical dance and praised the event for "resurrecting the soul of the art". The performances were evaluated by a panel of jury members including Shirusha Amar, Padma Denduluri, Vanashree Proddatur, Veena Ganesh, Sunila Gollapudi, Sushma Uday Mahanti, and Chaitanya Kusumapriya, who commended the unique expressions, synchronisation, and artistry



displayed by each academy. Awards were presented in categories such as abhinaya, group coordination, audience engagement, mudras, costume design, and digital spotlight. Participating academies included Nrityanjali Kuchipudi Natyalayam, Lahari Shree Nritya Niketan, Natya Sandhya Kuchipudi Dance Academy, SKM Fine Arts Academy, Tarangini Kathak Kendra, Sri Radhika Sangeet & Nritya Academy, and several others—each contributing to the day's cultural vibrance with captivating performances. Representing Amrutha Cultural Trust, organisers Vishal Arya, Revathi Puppala, Seetha Anand Vaidyam, and Anupama emphasised their commitment to nurturing classical arts. "Indian classical dancers are the torchbearers of our culture,



Patna, May 3 (UNI) JD(U) on Saturday accused RJD leader Tejashwi Prasad Yadav of taking false credit of caste census as he had no issue to raise before the people in next Bihar assembly election, slated for October-November this year. JD(U) president Umesh Kushwaha told media persons here that Tejashwi had nothing to say in public about achievements of RJD when the party was in power for 15 years in Bihar from 1990 to 2005. His parents Lalu Prasad and Rabri Devi remained engaged in looting money while law and order had also totally collapsed during their tenures as Chief Minister of Bihar, he alleged.

CBSE Results 2025: Board Updates Re-evaluation Process for Class 10 & 12 – Key Changes Here

Nagpur 3 May : The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has revised its post-result re-evaluation process for Classes 10 and 12 ahead of the CBSE Results 2025. In a bid to enhance transparency and help students make informed choices, the board has changed the sequence of steps involved in applying for re-evaluation.

CBSE Revised Re-evaluation Process

Earlier, the re-evaluation process followed this order:

- Verification of marks
- Obtaining a photocopy of the evaluated answer book
- Re-evaluation

However, starting with the



2025 board exam results, CBSE has reversed the sequence. The new order is: Verification of marks or re-evaluation (or both) This change allows

students to first review their evaluated answer sheets, including the marks awarded, the evaluator's comments, and any potential errors. Based on this, they can decide whether to proceed with verification (which includes re-checking for totalling errors and overlooked responses) or apply for a re-evaluation of specific questions.

According to CBSE, this shift aims to provide greater clarity and fairness in the result review process. Students will have the opportunity to make well-informed decisions by understanding how their answers were assessed

before opting for any redressal.

Those choosing to wear religious or cultural attire during the verification process should still adhere to the security and reporting guidelines, as applicable.

Application Details

Application Soon

The CBSE will soon declare the results for classes 10th and 12th on the official website – cbse.gov.in and results.cbse.nic.in. Once the results are declared, the board will release detailed guidelines for applying for photocopies of evaluated answer books and for submitting verification or re-evaluation requests.

IMD Issues Yellow Alert for Nagpur, Thunderstorms and Hailstorm Bring Relief from Heat

Nagpur 3 May : The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a Yellow Alert for Nagpur and adjoining districts, warning of thunderstorms with gusty winds in the coming days. On Saturday, May 3, strong winds, rain, and hailstorms struck various parts of Nagpur, providing much-needed respite from the intense summer heat. According to the Regional Meteorological Centre (RMC), a sudden change in weather patterns led to moderate rainfall and hail activity across several areas. Similar conditions were observed earlier in Bhandara district on Thursday, where a hailstorm brought down temperatures



to 36°C. Light showers also cooled parts of Gadchiroli, Gondia, and Wardha, where temperatures ranged between 36°C and 39°C. In Nagpur, the maximum temperature dipped below 40°C, offering temporary relief. Over the past 24 hours, maximum temperatures across Vidarbha varied between 37.9°C and 44.5°C, while minimum temperatures ranged from 19.8°C to 28.2°C—both within the normal range for the season. Akola recorded the highest temperature at 44.5°C, followed by Amravati (42.8°C) and Washim (42.6°C).

Nagpur Police Crack Down on Illegal Child Shelters; Public Urged to Report Abuse or Unregistered Institutions

Nagpur 3 May : Following disturbing reports of child sexual abuse in unauthorized shelter homes in Alandi and Thane, the Nagpur City Police have intensified efforts to identify and take legal action against unregistered child care institutions operating in the city. Reports suggest that several illegal orphanages and hostels across Maharashtra are confining children without authorization and exposing them to physical, mental, and sexual abuse.

These actions are a direct violation of the Juvenile



Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 (amended in 2021) and the Maharashtra State Juvenile Justice Rules, 2018. Under the direction of Commissioner of Police Dr. Ravinder Kumar Singal, Nagpur Police are actively tracing individuals and

organizations running such illegal facilities.

Authorities have stated that anyone found operating unregistered child shelters will face strict legal consequences.

In a public appeal, Nagpur Police have urged citizens to report any suspicious or illegal institutions.

Individuals aware of any abuse or unregistered shelter homes are encouraged to report directly to Nayana Munde, Commissioner of the Women and Child Development Department, Pune, or call the Child Helpline at 1098.

RSS Third Year Training Camp from May 11 in Nagpur

Nagpur 3 May : The Third Year training of RSS workers will begin at Nagpur on May 11 in the presence of Sarkaryawah Dattatray Hosabale.

Following Bharat Mata Pujan at 9 am, the training programme would begin. Sarsanghchalak Dr Mohan Bhagwat will address the volunteers during the concluding function on June 6. RSS was conducting the training programmes – Purva Prathamik, Prathamik, Dwitiya, Trutiya varg (Pre-primary, primary, second and third year). The duration for the training programmes was changed during the All India Representatives' Meeting in



2024. Accordingly, the Primary training is of seven days and was conducted at Reshimbag, Nagpur, from April 25 to May 2. For young entrepreneurs from the Vidarbha region, the training will be held at Khapri, Nagpur, from May 18 to 25.

Sangh Shiksha Varg will be held in Akola from May 16 to June 1. Volunteers' Development Class-I (General) will be held at Nashik from May 11 to June 1. Sangh Shiksha Varg Class-I (Special) will be held at Rajkot in Gujarat from May 7 to 27. Volunteers' Development Class-2 will be held at Reshimbag, Nagpur, from May 11 to June 6.

Fresh Murder in Bhandewadi Marks Violent Start to May After 14 Killings in April

Nagpur 3 May : The city's spate of violent crimes continues as May begins with its first reported murder, just days after April ended with a staggering 14 homicides. Panic gripped the Bhandewadi area under Pardi police station limits after the body of a 31-year-old man was discovered near an under-construction railway platform on the evening of Friday, May 2. The deceased has been identified as Satish Kalidas Meshram, a resident of Ekta Nagar in Pardi, who



worked as a centering labourer. According to police sources, Satish left home for work on Thursday morning but did not return, prompting his family to begin a search and subsequently lodge a missing person report. Around 7 pm on Friday, a local resident spotted

Satish's body near the construction site at Bhandewadi railway station and immediately alerted authorities. Pardi police personnel arrived at the scene and found multiple stab wounds on the victim's body, indicating he had been attacked with a sharp weapon. A case of murder has been registered, and further investigations are underway. Police are scanning CCTV footage in the vicinity and questioning locals in an effort to trace the assailant(s).

Heritage Committee Reviews Construction Near Historic Sites in Nagpur

Nagpur 3 May : A crucial meeting of the Nagpur Heritage Conservation Committee was held under the chairmanship of Anup Kumar to discuss developments near heritage structures across the city. Key officials present included Chief Engineer Leena Upadhye, Assistant Director of Town Planning Ruturaj Jadhav, Superintendent Engineer Prakash Pangarkar, Deputy Engineer Rajeev Gautam, INTACH Nagpur coordinator Madhura Rathod, former Head of History Department



at RTMNU Dr. Shubha Johri, Archaeological Department

Superintendent Arun Malik, Deputy Engineer Vivek Telrandhe, and architect Ved Purendu Prakash.

During the meeting, Maharashtra State Infrastructure Development Corporation (MSIDC) proposed an exemption from the No Objection Certificate (NOC) requirement for upcoming unified construction of administrative buildings such as the Divisional Commissioner's office and District Collectorate in Nagpur.

Officials clarified that the new District Collector's office building is planned at a distance of 108 meters from the old Treasury Building—recognized as a heritage structure.

The committee found this satisfactory and expressed no objection.

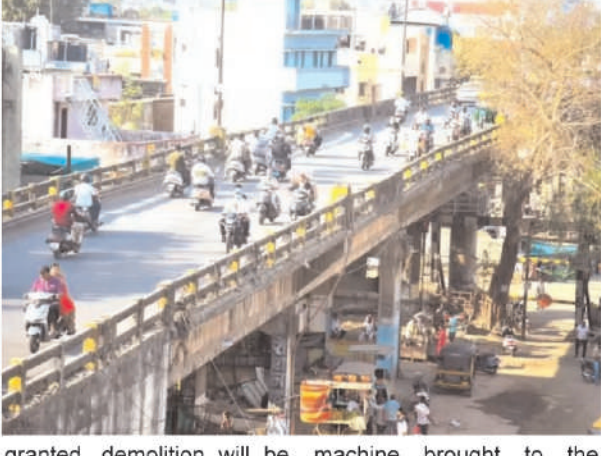
Additionally, the committee also discussed a proposal related to the Jagritheshwar Devasthan at Jagnath Budhwari.

The meeting highlighted a sensitive balance between urban development and heritage preservation, with emphasis on careful planning around protected sites.

Panchpaoli Bridge Demolished from Kamal Chowk to LC 570; Work Gains Momentum

Nagpur 3 May : The iconic Panchpaoli Bridge, one of Nagpur's oldest, has been completely demolished from Kamal Chowk to the Mehdi Bagh side up to Railway Level Crossing (LC) 570. As of now, a 250-meter stretch of the old bridge no longer exists. The demolition work will now proceed from the Golibar Chowk side. The dismantling began on the night of April 16, and within two weeks, 250 meters of the structure has been razed. Around 750 meters of the bridge is yet to be demolished.

Railway approval (block) is awaited to demolish the portion above the railway tracks. Once



granted, demolition will be expedited with the help of an additional jaw crusher machine brought to the site. To address air quality concerns in this densely

populated area, especially in the summer heat, sprinklers have been installed to reduce dust spread caused by high winds.

Officials estimate that once the railway block is secured, the entire demolition process could be completed in just 25 days. Meanwhile, local commuters are facing severe difficulties navigating the area between Kamal Chowk and Golibar Chowk. With frequent railway gate closures causing long traffic jams, most drivers now prefer taking longer alternate routes. As a result, vehicle movement on this stretch has visibly reduced.

Are Rooftop Restaurants Legal in Nagpur?

Nagpur 3 May : nagpur As the nation reels from the tragic Kolkata hotel fire that claimed 14 lives, attention is once again turning to the legality and safety of rooftop restaurants especially in cities like Nagpur where such establishments continue to operate, often illegally. The Municipal Corporation (KMC) acted swiftly after the April 29 fire at Rituraj Hotel, issuing an immediate order to shut down all rooftop restaurants in the city citing fire safety violations and unregulated commercial use of common terrace areas. This tragedy echoes the infamous Mojo Bistro fire in Mumbai (December 29, 2017), which led to the deaths



of 14 people due to a fire that started at the restaurant and quickly engulfed the adjoining 1 Above rooftop pub in Kamala Mills compound. A subsequent probe found gross violations of fire safety norms, including the absence of proper exits and use of flammable decor materials. nagpur.

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Nagpur's Ashish Agrawal Becomes First from City to Run the Boston Marathon

Nagpur 3 May : Boston/Nagpur: Ashish Agrawal, a prominent lawyer and the city's ace runner, has etched his name in history by becoming the first from Nagpur to complete the prestigious Boston Marathon, clocking an impressive time of 3:42:53 at the 129th edition of the iconic race held on April 21. The Boston Marathon, the world's oldest annual marathon, is considered one of the most challenging and revered races globally.

Running through the undulating terrain of Massachusetts, it attracts elite athletes and passionate amateurs from around the world. Agrawal's feat adds a proud chapter to Nagpur's sports legacy.

With Boston now under his belt, Agrawal has successfully completed five of the six World Marathon Majors – Berlin (2022), London (2023), Chicago and New York (2024), and now Boston (2025). He now sets



his sights on Tokyo in 2026 to join the elite club of Six Star Finishers, a rare achievement in the global running community.

Expressing gratitude, Agrawal thanked his support system including his training group Nagpur Runners and Riders, Coach Deepa Nayak, sports physiotherapist Kevin

Over 250 NEET UG Candidates Face Action Amid Ongoing Paper Leak Probe



Nagpur 3 May Amid the ongoing CBI investigation into last year's NEET UG paper leak, the government has acted against more than 250 MBBS students and aspirants accused of unfair practices, including using leaked question papers and impersonating other candidates during the exam. The National Medical Commission (NMC), the top regulatory body for medical education in India, has cancelled the admissions of at least 14 students who

enrolled for the 2024-25 academics session. According to Union Health Ministry sources, the candidature of another 215 students who appeared for the NEET UG exam has been put on hold. Additionally, 26 MBBS students already enrolled in medical colleges have been suspended for allegedly assisting aspirants through unfair means. The NMC has directed the respective medical colleges to implement the suspensions without delay.

Maha Police Report Card: Nagpur rural shines, city disappoints

Nagpur 3 May : Maharashtra Chief Minister and Home Minister Devendra Fadnavis had set a 100-day target for each government department to achieve specific goals after he assumed charge of the Mahayuti government in December 2024. Following the deadline, CM Fadnavis announced the results on May 1. While the office of the Nagpur rural Superintendent of Police (SP) secured the second rank with 80 out of 100 points, the Nagpur Commissioner's office failed to make it to the list under the Home Minister's objective to expedite administrative efficiency. In the Police Commissioner category, Mira-Bhayandar, Thane, and Mumbai Railways bagged the first, second, and third ranks respectively. In the SP category, Palghar emerged on top with 90.29 points, followed by Nagpur and Gadchiroli, which shared the second position with 80 points



each. Jalgaon (65.71) and Solapur (64) followed.

Addressing a press conference on Friday, May 2, Dr. Dilip Bhujbal, Inspector General of Police (IGP) for Nagpur Zone, credited the hard work and dedication of Nagpur rural officials and personnel for this administrative success. "The assessment, carried out by the Quality Council of India, evaluated parameters such as website maintenance, cleanliness, grievance redressal, administrative facilities, workplace improvements, use of Artificial Intelligence, and others. The thorough efforts by SP Harsh Poddar and the entire Nagpur rural police department were

crucial in achieving this success," he said. Discussing how Nagpur rural police are leveraging AI to improve efficiency, IG Bhujbal added, "Police personnel are equipped with MARVEL and Crime OS AI systems and are using them effectively to crack crimes in the district. Every police station has one sub-inspector and one head constable undergoing training. MARVEL includes tools like ChatBot, CDR, IPDR, TDR, and video analysis. Additionally, Crime OS assists in scrutinizing FIRs, data analysis, and providing concise briefs." Dr. Bhujbal also highlighted Nagpur rural police's initiative to reduce road accidents in collaboration with the SaveLIFE Foundation. "Following the success achieved by Nagpur rural police in reducing road accidents, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways selected them for a pilot project.

Medals Awarded in RANGOTSAV Challenge Cycling Competition: 211 Cyclists Sonawane



Amravati 3 May: A medal distribution ceremony was recently held to honor the successful participants of the Rangotsav Challenge Cycling Competition, organized by the Amravati Cycling Association. The event was conducted under the guidance of Dr. Chandrashekhar Kulkarni and was sponsored by Dr. Anjali Kavimandal Memorial Hospital and Ganpati Diagnostic Center.

The competition received an enthusiastic response from cyclists across the country.

The challenge spanned a duration of 31 days, during which participants were required to cycle a minimum of 20 kilometers daily. To qualify for medals, specific milestones had to be achieved: 500 kilometers over 15 days for a bronze medal, 750 kilometers over 20 days for a silver medal, and 900 kilometers within 25 days for a gold medal. Additionally, consistent performers who cycled for 26 out of 31 days—minimum 40 kilometers daily

for women and 50 kilometers for men—were awarded the Consistent Trophy.

The event was coordinated by Association Vice President Sanjay Mendse. Out of 280 registered cyclists from various parts of India, 211 successfully met the targets and were awarded medals. Notable participation came from Amravati, Gondia, Nagpur, and Wardha.

The medal distribution event was graced by Amravati Cycling Association President Dr. Chandrashekhar Kulkarni, Maharashtra Archery Association Secretary Pramod Chandurkar, Tivsa Tehsildar Kalse, Vice President Sanjay Mendse, and Secretary Atul Kalmkar. The guests were introduced by Laxmikant Khandagale, and the welcome speech was delivered by Atul Kalmkar.

Key contributors to the success of the event included Sachin Parekh, Ramesh Dr. C.N. Kulkarni, Dr. Surita Daphale, Dr. Sagar Dhanorkar, Vishwaja

Wankhede, Mahesh Gattani, Nitin Borgavkar, and Vaishnavi Sonawane. Riders who completed long-distance categories of 200, 300, 400, and 600 kilometers during the year were honored with the Super Randonneur (SR) title. Among them were Atul Kalmkar, Rajendra Mahajan, Nitin Ambare, Virendra Tarte, Raju Thote, Mohan Kaware, Gajanan Hinge, Vijay Mahalle, and Sachin Chaudhary.

This year also featured two special cycling expeditions—Ayodhya Yatra and Mahakumbh Mela Ride. Participants covered a distance of 1,068 kilometers over eight days. Cyclists honored for this achievement included Rajendra Mahajan, Dinesh Narsu, Vinod Wankhade, Abhay Sarjale, Raju Deshmukh, Jayama Deshmukh, Nitin Ambare, Vicky Kherde, and Ashish Borkar.

The event was smoothly hosted by Sushma Joshi and Neeta Kakkad, with a vote of thanks delivered by Vaishali Sarage.

Demand for Statues of Annabhau Sathe and Lahujji Salve in Washim

Lahujji Vastaad Salve Akhada Vyayam Krida Mandal Submits Memorandum to Guardian Minister



Washim 3 May: A delegation from the Lahujji Vastaad Salve Akhada Vyayam Krida Mandal has submitted a memorandum to Guardian Minister Dattatraya Bharane, demanding the installation of statues of revolutionary literary figure Lokshahir Annabhau Sathe and freedom fighter Lahujji Salve at Akola Naka in Washim city. The delegation met the minister at the local guesthouse on Wednesday, April 30.

The memorandum highlighted the significant presence of the Matang community in the Washim district and their deep connection with the thoughts and legacy of these two iconic figures. Lahujji Salve was a pioneering freedom fighter who dedicated his life to liberating India from British rule, even sacrificing his life

for the cause. Similarly, Annabhau Sathe, a renowned folk poet and writer, glorified the valor of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj through his powerful powadas (folk ballads), and his revolutionary writings continue to inspire generations.

The delegation expressed disappointment that even 27 years after the formation of Washim district—carved out from Akola in 1998—statues of these revered figures have not yet been erected in the Akola Naka area.

They also raised concerns about the deteriorating condition of the historic Mahurvesh Gate, the last surviving city entrance gate, urging its restoration and beautification.

Additionally, they called for urgent repairs to the Annabhau Sathe Samaj

Mandir near Mahurvesh. This community center serves as a venue for various social, cultural, educational, and ceremonial events of the Matang community. The building is currently in a dilapidated state, and the community emphasized the need for its renovation to preserve its utility and cultural importance.

The memorandum urged the government to honor the sentiments of the Matang community by fulfilling these long-pending demands.

Present during the submission of the memorandum were Bablu Raju Gaikwad, Shrawan Khadse, Shaligram Khadse, Akash Kuchekar, Deepak Satpute, Sub-Divisional Agriculture Officer Ujwal Agarkar, Group Development Officer Narayan Amzare, and Panchayat Samiti Agriculture Extension Officer Gajendra

MLA Pravin Tayde Urges Vigilance Against Spurious Seeds, Fertilizers, and Pesticides in Farmers' Interest



Chandur Bazar 3 May: "There have been numerous complaints from farmers in Chandur Bazar and Achalpur talukas regarding the sale of spurious seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides. With the upcoming Kharif season approaching, the Agriculture Department must take proactive measures to ensure that such fake agricultural inputs do not reach farmers," said MLA Pravin Tayde during a Kharif season agriculture review meeting held at the Tehsil Office auditorium.

MLA Tayde emphasized that the Agriculture Department must not limit itself to merely appointing vigilance committees, but should also conduct direct inspections to verify the quality of agricultural inputs. He further called for cooperation from agri-input dealers to prevent the exploitation of farmers.

The meeting was attended by Tehsildar Ramdas Shelke, District Agriculture Superintendent Rahul Satpute, Sub-Divisional Agriculture Officer Ujwal Agarkar, Group Development Officer Narayan Amzare, and Panchayat Samiti Agriculture Extension Officer Gajendra

Deshmukh, among others.

Highlighting his own experience, Tayde pointed out that he himself had received only partial benefits from a micro-irrigation scheme and urged the Agriculture Department to ensure that farmers receive 100% of the benefits of all government schemes. "We must be particularly cautious so that such lapses do not happen to any farmer," he stated. The MLA also directed the Taluka Agriculture Department to undertake detailed planning for the Kharif season by visiting farmers' fields, aiming to make both Kharif and Rabi seasons more productive and beneficial for farmers. During the event, Agriculture Assistants Satish Nikmar and Madhav Deshmukh were felicitated by the MLA for their exemplary work under the Fruit Orchard Plantation and Vanrai Bandhara schemes, respectively.

The program began with an introduction by Agriculture Officer Falguni Nanir, who presented detailed information on the department's plans and schemes for 2025-26 through a digital display.

District-Level Lokshahi Din to Be Held on May 5

Washim, May 3 (NP): The district-level Lokshahi Din (Democracy Day), observed on the first Monday of every month, will be held on May 5, 2025. The event is scheduled for 1 PM at the Rajeevak Auditorium in the District Collector's Office. Residents who wish to submit grievances for the district-level Lokshahi Din must ensure that their applications have already been submitted during the taluka or district-level Lokshahi Din. These applications should be submitted in the prescribed format along with all necessary documents, in two copies, at least 15 days in advance.

Innovative Step by Washim District Administration for Groundwater Recharge: Collector Bhuvaneshwari S Appeals for Active Participation by Officers and Staff

Washim, May 3 (NP): In response to the declining groundwater levels in the district, the Washim District Administration has taken a remarkable and exemplary step. District Collector Bhuvaneshwari S has urged all officers and employees from private establishments in the district to implement groundwater recharge measures on their farmland.

These measures include the construction of soak pits and mass recharge pits, which are highly effective for

water conservation and will provide long-term benefits to farmers.

Interestingly, many officers and employees are also farmers themselves, and the administration believes that by implementing these initiatives on their own land, they can set an example for others to follow.

This campaign is being carried out under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), aiming to enhance water retention and

conservation. It is also intended to raise awareness among farmers about the importance of water conservation on their own fields.

Sub-Divisional Officer (EGS) Kailas Devre has also appealed to all district officers and staff to immediately join and actively participate in this campaign.

This thoughtful initiative by the administration is being viewed as a positive step toward addressing the looming water crisis in the future.

Bacchu Kadu Meets Education Minister Bhuse to Discuss Teachers' Issues

Amravati 3 may: Former State Minister Bacchu Kadu met Maharashtra Education Minister Dada Bhuse at his official residence in Mumbai on April 29 to discuss key issues concerning the education sector. The meeting, though informal, focused on addressing the problems faced by both teachers and students across the state.

During the discussion, Minister Bhuse assured Kadu that a meeting would soon be held at the Mantralaya level with members of the Prahar Teachers' Association to

resolve teachers' grievances.

Earlier, on April 2, a problem-resolution camp was organized at Kurlapurna under the leadership of State President Mahesh Thakare of the Prahar Teachers' Association. The camp aimed to address pending issues faced by teachers in the Amravati division. A large number of teachers from Zilla Parishad, Nagar Parishad, Municipal Corporations, and private primary and secondary schools actively participated and voiced their concerns directly to Bacchu Kadu.

Following the commitments made during the camp, Kadu has initiated steps to resolve the raised issues. His meeting with Education Minister Bhuse is seen as a part of this ongoing effort. Jeetu Dudhane, State Spokesperson of the Prahar Janashakti Party, was also prominently present during the meeting.

The development signals a proactive approach by the Prahar Teachers' Association and its leadership toward ensuring timely resolution of long-pending educational issues in the region.

Central govt should announce Caste Census schedule: Prithviraj Chavan

Satara (Maharashtra), May 3: Former Maharashtra Chief Minister Prithviraj Chavan on Friday said the Central government should announce the schedule of the Caste Census in the country. Chavan, while talking to reporters at Karad city of Satara district, said Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi first raised the demand in parliament strongly but the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) MPs and leaders ridiculed the former Congress president for his stand at that time.

Bag Containing Rs 1.79 Lakh Snatched, Case Registered Against Unknown Accused

Chandur Bazar, Amravati 3 May: A finance company employee was robbed of a bag containing Rs 1,79,100 while he was travelling on a two-wheeler after collecting savings from self-help groups.

The incident took place near Kajali village under the jurisdiction of the Chandur Bazar police station on April 29. Following the complaint, a case has been registered against an unidentified accused.

The victim, Saurabh Suresh Rao Hutke (28), a resident of Kokarda in Anjangaon Surji taluka, works with a finance company involved in self-help group

operations. On April 28, he was returning after collecting funds from SHGs in Shirjgaon Kasba and Brahmanwadi Thadi areas. While travelling on his two-wheeler, an unknown individual on another bike snatched a black bag from him near Kajali.

The stolen bag contained Rs 1,51,500 in cash, a tablet, and a biometric machine, with the total value of stolen items amounting to Rs 1,79,100. Saurabh Hutke rushed to the Chandur Bazar police station and lodged a complaint.

Police have registered a case against the unidentified thief and have launched a thorough investigation to trace the culprit.

Three Arrested for Failing to Pay After Purchasing Grains Khollapuri Gate Police Take Action

NP Amravati 3 May: On May 1, the Khollapuri Gate police arrested three individuals for allegedly purchasing grains without paying. The accused have been identified as Rajesh Govindrao Mandve (34, resident of Kumbharwada, Amravati), Manish Sudhakarrao Rautkar (43, resident of Kharkadipura, Amravati), and Golu alias Gopinath Prakash Chavan (27, resident of Mahajanpura). According to the police, the trio purchased 10 sacks of wheat, 2 sacks of rice, and 2 sacks of tur dal—total goods worth Rs. 18,630—which have now been seized.

The incident took place on April 15 when Mahadanal Khandelwal (62), who owns a shop in the Sakarsath area of the city, received a phone call from an unknown number. The caller claimed there was a religious feast (Mahaprasad) at the Gadgeshwar Hanuman Temple and requested the grains for the event. They assured payment would be made after delivery. Following this, Khandelwal sent the goods in a vehicle and handed the bill to the auto driver Sheikh Rizwan, instructing him to collect the payment. After the delivery was completed, the accused claimed they would pay online. However, even after

15 days, no payment was received. Khandelwal then lodged a complaint at the Khollapuri Gate Police Station. Acting swiftly, the police launched an investigation and arrested the three accused. The operation was carried out under the guidance of Police Commissioner Naveenchandra Reddy, Deputy Commissioner Ganesh Shinde, and Assistant Police Commissioner Jaydutt Bhavar. Senior Police Inspector Gautam Patre, along with officers Rajendra Holkar, Pravin Khairkar, Ram Lokhande, Devendra Kothekar, Mangesh Bhelave, Vishal Bhosale, and Amol Nakashe, were involved in the successful operation.

Fake 'Raja Chhap' Tobacco Seized Worth Rs 93,000; Case Registered at Nagpuri Gate Police Station

Amravati, 3 may: In a significant crackdown, the Nagpuri Gate Police have busted a racket involving the sale of counterfeit tobacco packets under the name of the well-known 'Raja Chhap' brand. A raid was conducted on May 1 at MJ Traders, located near Tangapadav Chowk on Walgaon Road, resulting in the seizure of counterfeit tobacco worth Rs 93,720.

A case has been registered against Chetan

Jitendra Patel (40), a resident of Swastik Nagar near Navathe Plot, at the Nagpuri Gate Police Station.

According to police sources, Nikhil Jayant Virkar (36) has been operating a registered tobacco manufacturing unit named V Products on Akoli Road since 1992. His factory legally produces and sells tobacco under the registered brand name 'Raja Chhap'.

Virkar received information that duplicate

versions of his product were being sold in fake packaging at MJ Traders. Acting promptly, he informed the Nagpuri Gate Police, who then raided the location. During the raid, they found a large stock of counterfeit 'Raja Chhap' tobacco packets, leading to the seizure.

Based on Virkar's complaint, the police have registered a case against Chetan Patel, and further investigation is underway.

Kirit Somaiya Alleges Role of Tehsildar, Naib Tehsildar, and District Collector in Fake Birth Certificate Scam



Achalpur 3 May: Senior BJP leader Kirit Somaiya has made serious allegations regarding the issuance of fake birth certificates used by illegal Bangladeshi and Rohingya immigrants to obtain Indian citizenship in the Achalpur-Paratwada region. On Friday, Somaiya flew directly from Delhi to Achalpur, where he filed a detailed 324-page complaint at the Achalpur Police Station, accusing local government officials of playing a suspicious role in the matter.

Somaiya claimed that a total of 24 individuals, including Naib Tehsildars, have not only acquired government positions

using forged documents but also endangered national security by illegally becoming Indian citizens. He pointed out that all the fake birth certificates were issued by the Achalpur Tehsil office and curiously listed January 1st as the birth date in every case—a detail he believes indicates a well-planned scam. Demanding strict criminal action against those involved, Somaiya urged law enforcement to register a case and take swift action. During a meeting with the Tehsildar at the tehsil office, Somaiya also expressed his dissatisfaction with the handling of the issue.

Speaking to the media, Somaiya warned that if an FIR is not registered within seven days, he would initiate legal proceedings against all responsible officials, including the District Collector, Tehsildar, and Naib Tehsildars. "This is a matter of national interest," he asserted.

Somaiya was accompanied by several local BJP leaders and party workers, including Vishal Kakad, Rupesh Dhepe, Shankar Malkhede, Prakash Sherekar, Praveen Mehare, Prafull Kukde, Gaurav Raghuvanshi, Suraj Yadav, Dipil Raut, Ritesh Kane, and Vilas Shirbhate.

Attendant Honored with Flag Hoisting on Maharashtra Day in Chandur Railway Panchayat Samiti

Chandur Railway 3 May: The Maharashtra Day celebration at the Chandur Railway Panchayat Samiti turned into a truly inspiring event this year. In a break from tradition, instead of a senior official, long-serving staff member Mr. Dinkar "Dinu Bhau" Chaudhary, who worked as an attendant, was given the honor of hoisting the national flag. This unique decision was taken by Tejashri Awale, the Group Development Officer and Administrator of the Panchayat Samiti. The move has sparked positive discussion within administrative circles. Originally, the flag hoisting ceremony was to be conducted by GDO Tejashri Awale herself. However, choosing to honor dedication over hierarchy, she invited Mr. Chaudhary—who is set to retire next month after many years of sincere service—to hoist the flag. Known affectionately as "Dinu Kaka," Mr. Chaudhary has earned



deep respect from his colleagues over the years. The moment was emotional and heartwarming, moving many officers and staff to tears. The gesture was widely appreciated, with people from various sectors lauding Ms. Awale for her thoughtful and progressive approach. Her decision highlighted the values of loyalty, hard work, and integrity—serving as a living example of recognizing silent contributors to public service.

Chandigarh, 3 may: The BJP on Saturday said the Congress was repeatedly supplying "oxygen" to Pakistan, and slammed the opposition party for its leader Charanjit Singh Channi's remarks questioning the veracity of Balakot air strikes that followed the 2019 Pulwama terror attack.

"Inside it is the Congress Working Committee but outside it acts like Pakistan Working Committee," BJP national spokesperson Sambit Patra alleged in a press conference. Patra said it has become a pattern with the Congress that its resolutions and leadership speak in one voice, while its several other leaders speak in another. The Congress Working Committee, the key organisation body of the party, passed a resolution on Friday asking the Centre to act with firmness and clarity to teach Pakistan a lesson for its continued export of terror to India. Patra told reporters that immediately after the CWC passed the resolution Channi held a "parallel" press conference in which he questioned the genuineness of India's air strike in Balakot after the 2019 Pulwama terror attack and also taunted Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

He told reporters, "The



Congress spares no occasion to supply oxygen to the Pakistani



Army and terrorists and to boost their morale.

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Akola City (Preferred locations: Gorakshan Road, Tilak Road, Jatharpeth) Dist. Akola, Maharashtra	Upto 1200 Sq.ft

Last date to submit bids in two separate envelopes is **26TH May 2025**. For more details visit our website www.punjabandsindbank.co.in

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Courts show the way

The country's judiciary and human rights institutions have rung an urgent alarm on the growing threat of heatwaves — marking a rare and significant convergence of concern. In Beat The Heatwave And Climatic Change vs Union of India, the Supreme Court, on April 17, recognised that extreme temperatures are no longer seasonal inconveniences, but life-threatening events. Calling for immediate action, it directed states to establish cooling spaces, issue health advisories and implement relief mechanisms for the most vulnerable populations. This intervention is both timely and necessary. Already, parts of the country are reeling under unrelenting heat, with daily wage workers, children, the elderly and the homeless most at risk.

The SC call, rooted in Article 21 of the Constitution — the right to life — brings much-needed legal weight to climate resilience and public health.

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) on Thursday reinforced this call to action, writing to 11 states, urging pre-emptive measures to prevent avoidable deaths. By framing

heatwaves as a human rights issue, the NHRC has expanded the climate conversation beyond weather forecasts and infrastructure into the realm of dignity and justice.

It rightly asserts that ignoring the suffering of the poor during such disasters amounts to systemic neglect. Adding to this chorus is the Rajasthan High Court, which took suo motu cognisance of the crisis. It rebuked the state government, stating that "citizens cannot be treated as cattle." Its sharp words highlight the callousness with which heat-related deaths are often brushed aside and reinforce the need for accountability.

These directives together form a



moral and constitutional indictment of administrative indifference. They also create a framework for long-term planning — where climate adaptation must be tied to governance reform, health equity and basic infrastructure.

Courts have done their part. The question now is: Will governments finally act?

Voice of sanity

It's heartening to hear a voice of sanity when anger and hatred are sweeping the country after the Pahalgam massacre. Himanshi Narwal, whose husband, naval officer Lt Vinay Narwal, was gunned down by terrorists in the Baisaran meadow, wants nobody except the perpetrators punished. "We don't want people going after Muslims and Kashmiris," she said at a blood donation camp organised on May 1 to commemorate Vinay's birth anniversary. She chose the occasion to make a fervent appeal for peace and communal harmony, in stark contrast to the rabble-rousers who are baying for the blood of Muslims, particularly Kashmiris.



Himanshi has sent out a clear message to the bigots who are exploiting a national tragedy to target a minority community.

A disturbing case has been reported from Agra, where a self-proclaimed cow vigilante allegedly shot dead a Muslim biryani vendor and later declared on social media

that the murder was 'retribution' for the Pahalgam attack. The reluctance of political and religious leaders to condemn such vengeful crimes and hate speech is inexcusable — it threatens our secular fabric, which is already fraying at the edges. The communal killings in Pahalgam were aimed at

escalating Hindu-Muslim tensions and disturbing peace not only in J&K but across the country. Such nefarious designs can only be scuttled with a collective resolve.

Gurmehar Kaur, whose father died fighting terrorists in J&K in 1999, has wisely said that the true defeat of terrorism comes when we refuse to let violence divide us. In the best interests of the nation, citizens should firmly shun those who are adding fuel to the fire.

Central and state governments must crack down on the elements who are bent on making innocents pay for the heinous acts of terrorists. Only a united India can deal terrorism a crushing blow.

Caste count

In a bid to wrest the pro-OBC initiative from the Opposition, the BJP-led Centre has announced that the caste count will be part of the next Census. The surprise decision comes in the midst of a volatile situation — the nation is expecting the government to up the ante against Pakistan following the Pahalgam terror attack. The BJP, however, has shown that even the interests of national security won't make it lose sight of its electoral priorities. The short-term goal is to win the Bihar Assembly elections later this year; the larger objective is to upstage the Congress and other rival parties on the caste turf across the country.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had tried to simplify things when he said in December 2023 that there were only four 'biggest' castes — women, youth, farmers and the poor. The saffron party, supremely confident about the power of



polarisation, let the Opposition play the caste card. However, the underwhelming show in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections was an eye-opener for the BJP, which managed to form the government only with the support of allies such as Nitish Kumar's Janata Dal (United) and Chandrababu Naidu's

Telugu Desam Party. No wonder coalition compulsions have heavily influenced its decision on caste enumeration. Pressure from the Congress and other Opposition parties has also played a big role.

Another key factor is the tussle over BR Ambedkar's legacy. No party can afford to adopt a half-hearted approach to fulfilling his grand dream of social justice, least of all the BJP. The importance of a nationwide caste count cannot be overemphasised. It will help policymakers tailor welfare schemes according to the needs of communities rather than persisting with a one-size-fits-all strategy. Transparent collection and meaningful use of data can go a long way in addressing social inequalities. As of now, it is vital to fix a timeline for the exercise as the Census has already got inordinately delayed.

Vaibhav Suryavanshi: Poster boy of a brave, new world of cricket

Even as young men of Vaibhav Suryavanshi's age are content scoring hundreds in their neighbourhood gullies, the 14-year-old smashed a 35-ball century on the grand stage of the Indian Premier League. Only a teenager, mind uncluttered by the pressure of expectations and unshackled by the game's conventions, could have imagined and then composed this shuddering stroke-play. It may be that Suryavanshi himself would fail to reproduce this effort. What is certain is that his life and career will never be the same again.

The feats — the youngest to score a hundred in the format, the second fastest centurion ever in the League — seem trivial in comparison to the spectacle of the carnage he inflicted on a brigade of high-class, highly-experienced bowlers. Ishant Sharma was five years past his Test debut when Suryavanshi was born; Mohammed Siraj had already caught the eye of veteran scouts in local leagues; Rashid Khan is the most successful bowler in this format. The pedigree of the



bowlers didn't scare him, the grandness of the stage didn't subdue him, and the task of hunting down a steep target of 210 didn't make him flinch. How he reached this stage is also a fascinating story. Born in the cricketing backwater of Tajpur in Samastipur district in Bihar, which has multiple cricketing associations feuding for power, his father sold his farmland to nurture his son's ambitions. He made such rapid progress that his first-class debut came at 12. In a matter of 38 balls, he has become the symbol of a generation, a metaphor of the game getting younger, the poster boy of a brave new world of cricketers. The crew of Priyansh Arya, Digvesh

Rathi and Suryavanshi are waiting to conquer the world with free minds and limitless ambitions. This is not the time to wonder where destiny will eventually lead him — to the summit of glory or the valley of unfulfilled renown. It is the time to marvel at his wondrous gifts, of both mind and bat

'Mummy 3 ghante so rahi hai... Papa ne kaam chhod diya' — Vaibhav Suryavanshi reveals his parent's sacrifices

It was not just history that 14-year-old Vaibhav Suryavanshi scripted at the Saiwam Singh Stadium on Monday night — it was a story of dreams, sacrifices, and undying belief. Fresh from becoming the

youngest centurion in IPL history, Vaibhav opened up about the struggles behind his extraordinary rise. Fighting back emotions, he credited everything to his parents, whose relentless sacrifices laid the foundation for his journey.

"Main jo bhi hoon, yahan tak apne parents ki wajah se hoon," Vaibhav said, his voice reflecting pride and gratitude. He revealed how his mother, despite the hardships, wakes up at 2AM to prepare his meals after barely catching three hours of sleep.

His father, once the sole breadwinner, gave up his job to focus entirely on Vaibhav's cricketing journey, with his elder brother stepping up to support the family.

"Ghar bahut mushkil se chal raha hai... par papa hamesha bolte hai karegati, karegati." This isn't just about a record-breaking knock; it's about years of unseen struggles stitched together by unwavering belief. Despite the extraordinary success at such a young age, Vaibhav's vision is set far ahead. "Abhi aur aage kama hai... apne desh keliye kuch karna hai. Jab tak uss level tak nahi pahuchta, tab tak mehnat jaari rahegi."

International Firefighters' Day

Most of us would risk our lives for those we love — family members, friends, pets. But could you imagine risking severe injury or even death for someone whom you don't know at all? Could you imagine going into a burning building to rescue a stranger, knowing you may not come out? Could you imagine climbing a tree in a burning forest just to save a defenseless animal too frightened to come down on its own? These are things firefighters do every day, and though we likely see them as acts of pure heroism, for firefighters, they're just part of the job.

Few people deserve to be celebrated as much as these heroic men and women do, so let's all make sure to celebrate Firefighters Day in their honor!

How to Celebrate International Firefighters' Day

There are many great ways to celebrate firefighters on this day. Get started with a few of these ideas:

Show Appreciation to Firefighters

Most of all, this day is about showing our appreciation for their service, risks, and sacrifice, so find a way to make sure your local firefighters know how much you value them!

As always, it's the thought that counts and small gestures go a long way, so even bringing a cake down to the fire hall would be a nice thing to do.

Raise Funds for Charity

You could also consider donating money to one of the many firefighter charities out there, some of which help

firefighters injured in the line of duty get the medical treatment they need and return to health.

Other firefighter charities help retired firefighters live comfortable lives after years of risks they took for others. You can also raise awareness about the dangers firefighters bravely face every day by wearing a red and blue ribbon — the colors of water and fire, respectively.

There are also a lot of different craft projects that you can enjoy on Firefighters Day that are based on the symbol of the day. Wearing a ribbon, baking a cake or donating a few dollars to a charity may not seem like particularly impressive gestures to you, but they will likely mean the world to those who work tirelessly for their communities.

You could also use this time to educate yourself about some of the heroic acts of firefighters, whether in your area or around the world. All you need to do is a quick search on the Internet and you will be able to read about some amazing heroic firefighter stories.

This includes heroes who have risked their lives to save newborn babies from burning buildings, as well as the firefighters who have been involved in high-profile incidents that have happened around the world, with the tragic Grenfell Tower fire and the Australian bush fires being two of the most recent tragedies. Pay tribute to the amazing firefighters as well as those who have tragically lost their lives.

Show the firefighters of the world a little gratitude and

celebrate Firefighters Day with us!

History of International Firefighters' Day

The first organized professionals whose job it was to combat structural fires lived in Ancient Egypt — however, at the time, firefighters worked for private companies that provided their services only to those who could afford them.

Later, in Ancient Rome, Ceasar Augustus revolutionized firefighting by calling for the creation of a fire guard, called the Vigiles, that was trained, paid, and equipped by the state.

Firefighters Day was started by JJ Edmondson in 1999 after 5 firefighters died tragically during a wildfire in Australia when the direction of the wind changed suddenly and engulfed them in flames. It is celebrated on May 4th because that is Saint Florian's day, and Saint Florian, who was said to be one of the first commanding firefighters of an actual Roman battalion and saved many lives, is the patron saint of firefighters.

The incident that led to the creation of this date happened on the 2nd of December, 1998, in Linton Community, Australia. The event was so tragic that it shook the entire world. Linton is a populated area in Victoria, Australia, and firefighters at the time were tackling a massive bush fire. They called for mutual aid. This resulted in the Geelong West Fire Brigade coming to the scene. They did not know the tragedy and despair that was awaiting them. Matthew Armstrong, Jason Thomas, Stuart Davidson, Chris Evans, and

Garry Vredeveltdt all loaded into a truck. They were sent to help extinguish the flames as part of a strike team. However, as they made their way into the hot zone, the wind switched direction suddenly, which resulted in the truck being engulfed in flames, with all five members losing their lives. It was an extremely tragic event, and it resulted in the birth of a day to celebrate firefighters and everything they do for us. After all many other firefighters have lost their lives in the field.

Symbol of International Firefighters' Day.

The International Firefighters' Day has a significant symbol associated with it, and this is the blue and red ribbon. The ribbon is cut precisely to one cm in width and five cm in length, with the two different colors join at the top. Blue and red were selected by JJ Edmondson because of the symbolism associated with the colors. Blue is designed to represent water whereas the red represents fire. Not only this, but the two colors are also recognized around the world as a symbol for the emergency services. Therefore, it was decided that there was no better color choice!

The ribbon is typically worn on the fold of the fabric on a shirt, i.e. the lapel. However, it is not restricted to a certain spot. You can wear it wherever you feel appropriate, be it a different part of your shirt or your cap, for example.

A lot of people also place them from their car mirrors or windows, as well as the trees in their garden.

Water row



The Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB)'s order on Wednesday to release 8,500 cusecs of water to Haryana has reignited the long-standing Punjab-Haryana water dispute, with fresh political rancour overshadowing pragmatic dialogue. The timing, in the wake of the tragic Pahalgam massacre, is especially unfortunate, as it risks inflaming tensions further when unity and cooperation are needed. The AAP government of Punjab has vociferously opposed the BBMB's order, citing both technical and environmental grounds. With two of its major dams — Pong and Ranjit Sagar — at alarmingly low levels due to deficient rainfall and snowmelt, Punjab claims it cannot spare additional water without jeopardising its own paddy cultivation. At the same time, Haryana insists it faces an acute domestic water crisis and accuses Punjab of breaching agreed allocations.

Amid this clash, the hasty transfers of key BBMB officials — notably the replacement of a Punjab cadre officer with one from Haryana — as well as support to Haryana from BJP-ruled Rajasthan only deepen perceptions of bias and political interference. The issue has spiralled into state-wide protests and mutual recriminations between Chief Ministers. This has diverted attention from the real concern — equitable water sharing in a changing climate.

Both states must recognise that the underlying issue is not just political, but also environmental. Groundwater depletion, canal misuse and erratic rainfall patterns are eroding the foundations of existing water-sharing frameworks. Instead of point-scoring and administrative wrangling, the moment calls for dialogue, data-sharing and possibly third-party mediation by a neutral expert panel along with legal advice. Even as the Punjab government has summoned a special Vidhan Sabha session over the aggravating water-sharing issue, the BBMB's mandate must be upheld impartially. If Punjab and Haryana fail to find common ground, it will only lead to chaos and mistrust — neither of which India can afford amid internal and external challenges.

Drink Champagne, chuck the justification

In 1996, the rarefied world of academia was shaken by a hoax. Alan Sokal, a physics professor at New York University, submitted an article to a cultural studies journal that was replete with jargon but in effect, gibberish. The article was meant to demonstrate that "post-modernism" and its attitude to science lack intellectual rigour. Nearly 30 years later, debates rage on about the Sokal affair and its validity. The idea behind it, not to put too fine a point on it, was for non-scientists to stay in their lane and not pontificate on the nature of science and objectivity. In 2025, though, it might be as important to establish that not everything requires a scientific justification, especially the small joys that make life just a little bit better and merrier — even if they are "bad" for you.

A recent study published in the Canadian Journal of Cardiology finds that drinking the odd glass of champagne — presumably, any sparkling wine — is among the "non-clinical factors" that can help prevent sudden cardiac arrest. This is not, of course, a licence to drink to excess — reducing alcohol intake is undoubtedly beneficial for heart health, as the researchers themselves admit. The reason the study has made global headlines may well be because of the confusion — and hope — around the health benefits of alcohol. For years, quasi-scientific folk wisdom claimed "two glasses of red wine" are good for you. That myth was busted.

Star Wars Day

The way you celebrate Star Wars day will depend on how well you know this cultural phenomenon. Check out a few of these ideas to get started:

Attend Star Wars Themed Gathering

If you are a longtime fan of the franchise, you might want to get a group of friends together and attend one of the many Star Wars events organized in different parts of the world. Such events range from costume contests to museum exhibits to tours of space centers. And if you're not feeling up to going out, there's no reason why a Star Wars Day party organized by you at home should be any less fun.

Host a Movie Marathon

Movie marathons with friends, Star Wars trivia games, and even Star Wars themed snacks (Death Star piñata, anyone?) will guarantee this day is full of fun as well as being very educational. Because Star Wars itself is such an enormous topic, the ways of celebrating the day dedicated to it are virtually endless. So choose one, have fun, and May the 4th be with you!

When we think of Star Wars day now, it's not only a day, it's something fun, and it's also an in-joke that pretty much everybody on earth is a part of. While it may sound silly, something as incredibly simple as Star Wars Day has played a huge part in bringing people together no matter what background they are from.

History of Star Wars Day

Star Wars, an epic space opera written and directed by George Lucas, premiered in 1977 and became an almost instant cult classic. Even today, almost 40 years later, Star Wars remains one of the most financially successful films of all time. The franchise it began remains the most successful one of all time, earning over 2.5 billion dollars since the release of the first film. However, the money it's earned over the years is hardly the most impressive aspect of Star Wars.

As famous film critic Roger Ebert put it: "Like The Birth of a Nation and Citizen Kane, Star Wars was a technical watershed that influenced many of the movies that came after."

Star Wars was a real game-changer, beginning a new era of special effect-packed motion pictures bursting with excitement, adventure, and imagination that appealed enormously to younger audiences as well as older ones.

Star Wars has also had an enormous cultural impact on other areas besides filmmaking, including politics — the Reagan Administration's Strategic Defense Program was mockingly nicknamed "Star Wars." As recently as 2013, President Barack Obama used the phrase "Jedi mind meld" to describe what some people were expecting him to do in his opposition to make them accept his ideas. "May the Fourth be with you" was first used by Margaret Thatcher's political party to congratulate her on her election on May 4th, 1979, and the saying quickly caught on. However, the first celebration of May 4th took place much later, at the Toronto Underground Cinema in 2001. This first official Star Wars Day's festivities included a costume contest and a movie marathon. Fans' favorite parodies of the franchise were also enjoyed, as were some of the most popular mash-ups and remixes. While for some people, there may have been a fleeting thought that Star Wars Day was nothing but a fad that would die out, regardless of the fact the films never did, in snoop Disney, and they restarted the whole thing over and took it to a whole new level. In 2015, Star Wars saw a new saga come and with all the charm, class and lens flares that Disney could throw at it, and wow did it reignite a fire in Star Wars fans, and we know that lighting that fire again was tough after what Jar Jar Binks did to it.

Of course, the fire restarted with the Force Awakens, and the new saga promised to deliver fans everything they wanted from a 21st century Star Wars saga. With Disney behind it and a few familiar faces returning, Star Wars Day was soon to become something even more special to a whole new demographic. Now, a whole new set of parents have to explain why even though it's set a long, long time ago, things are way more advanced than they are now. It seems that over the last five years, Star Wars has reached millions of new soon to be Jedi warriors, and if we know anything about Disney, we know they are going to make sure that this franchise is never left to rest again. Since its revamp, National Star Wars Day has gained so much more popularity and is celebrated by Star Wars fans worldwide, and before long, we expect Disney to declare May 4th to be a national holiday.

ASUS and Vidya Integrated Development for Youth & Adults (VIDYA) Join Hands

Mumbai, 3 May: ASUS, a Taiwanese technology brand, in collaboration with VIDYA has announced the commencement of its Digital Literacy Program for children and youth in the marginalized regions of Western India. Designed to focus on digital literacy and skilling initiatives, the program will equip over 6000 students from Grade 1 to 10 as well as youth with essential skills and digital expertise through interactive and project-based learning via an age-appropriate curriculum which is mapped to UN's Digital Literacy Framework. The first leg of the partnership will commence in Mumbai, followed by Goa and Gujarat.

Since foraying into India, ASUS has committed to bringing innovative technology to the country. Furthering its commitment, the partnership with VIDYA

marks a critical step from ASUS India towards bridging India's digital divide. Addressing the kick-off, Eric Ou, Country Head, ASUS India said, "At ASUS, our commitment to creating meaningful impact goes beyond technology, it lies in ensuring that innovation reaches those who need it the most. With this program, we are taking a step towards bridging the digital divide by empowering students and youth from underserved communities with limited access to digital education with skills that are critical in today's world. By equipping digital labs and enabling VIDYA's proven curriculum through our devices, we aim to strengthen the Foundation of a future-ready generation."

"Every child deserves the chance to dream, to learn, and to thrive in a digital world.

Through our partnership with ASUS, we are opening doors for thousands of young minds—many of whom are first-generation learners from underserved communities. This initiative is not just about digital literacy; it's about hope, opportunity, and empowerment. We are proud to stand with ASUS in shaping the future and nurturing the potential that lies within every student." Said, Rashmi Misra, Founder President, VIDYA India

ASUS is investing in digital access as well as unlocking life-changing opportunities for students and youth in need, laying down pathways for higher education, job readiness, and dignity in tomorrow's workforce. The program underscores ASUS India's growing commitment to social equity and sustainable impact in the communities.

India suspends shipping links, postal services with Pakistan

New Delhi, 03 May: India on Saturday suspended shipping links with Pakistan saying a ship bearing the flag of Pakistan will not be allowed to visit any Indian port and an Indian flagship will not visit any ports of Pakistan.

In an order issued by the Directorate General of Shipping, Mumbai, it was stated that the government was exercising powers under Section 411 of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1958 to ensure the safety of life at sea, the safety of ships and to ensure efficient maintenance of Indian mercantile marine in a manner best suited to serve the national interest.



The order said that section 411 empowered the director general of shipping to issue directions to ships for meeting the objectives of national interest or the interest of Indian shipping. "Now, therefore, in exercise of power conferred by section 411 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1958, with objectives as enshrined under preamble of the SAD act, keeping in view the present situation, the following directions are hereby issued", said the orders. The directions issued are, "A ship

bearing the flag of Pakistan shall not be allowed to visit any Indian port. An Indian flagship shall not visit any ports of Pakistan. This order is issued to ensure safety of Indian assets, cargo, and connected infrastructure, in public interest and for the interest of Indian shipping. Any exemption or dispensation from this order shall be examined and decided on a case to case basis." The order was sent to Chairperson of all ports in India. The development comes in the wake of several others after the April 22, Pahalgam terror attack in which 26 Indian tourists were killed by Pakistan train terrorists. India's retaliatory measures after the Pahalgam attack began with the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty.

Union Home Secy has no legal right to order release of water to Haryana: BKU's Rajewal

Chandigarh, 03 May: Balbir Singh Rajewal, President Bharti Kisan Union (BKU), said here today that the Union Home Secretary has no legal right to order the Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB) to release 8,500 cusecs extra water to Haryana. He lashed out against what he called the "anti-Punjab mindset" of the BJP-led central government.

Rajewal said that as per the Punjab Reorganisation Act, 1966, the Union Government can constitute a tribunal to solve such water disputes. The whole process adopted by the BJP government to release water proves the anti-Punjab mindset of this Government, he alleged.

The way senior officers were transferred at midnight without their consent also "proves this unconstitutional attitude" of the Union



Government. Credit goes to those officers who refused to obey the illegal orders of the Union government for watching the interests of Punjab. Rajewal further said that Bhagwant Mann, Chief Minister of Punjab, is responsible for creating this problem by accepting the Dam Safety Act and transferring the control of Bhakra, Pong and Ranjit Sagar Dams to the Union Government. As per the Constitution, water is a state subject as also dams and

their reservoirs. Hence Punjab is owner of the water of these dams. He asked as to who gave the right to vote to non-paritarian Rajasthan and Delhi states to release water in the BBMB meeting. He said that Bhagwant Mann and his party colleagues have been canvassing for votes in Haryana and Rajasthan in lieu of extra water supply.

"The total political leadership of Punjab is responsible for this situation. All parties are responsible for signing the unconstitutional water accord to remain in power. All are fooling Punjab by politicising the whole issue. Punjab is the sufferer and can't spare a drop of water to anybody," he stated. Rajewal said that Punjab has lost its valuable natural resource as water to produce foodgrains. More than 95 percent blocks in Punjab have been declared dark

zone due to depletion of the water table. Apart from that the whole underground water in Punjab is polluted and cancerous.

"We need water not only for fields but for drinking also. The flow of water in rivers of Punjab has drastically come down," he said.

He demanded assessment of the river waters flow before water allotment to any state. Rajewal strongly condemned the attack on Rakesh Tikait "by hooligans of BJP" at Muzaffarnagar, UP, yesterday. His sirapao (turban) was tossed by the goondas.

Sirapao is taken as a blessing of Akal purakh in Gurdwaras by Sikhs. Thus they have hurt the sentiments of the Sikh community, he said, and demanded strict action against the culprits.

Delhi rain: Only small puddles visible at Rajinder Nagar, spot of IAS centre

New Delhi 03 May: As Delhi was put under yellow alert on Saturday following heavy rainfall, one of the keenly watched areas for waterlogging was Old Rajinder Nagar in Central Delhi, where three civil service aspirants drowned in a flooding incident at an IAS coaching centre in July last year.

The July 2024 incident had sparked outrage after several videos surfaced online highlighting the vulnerability of the stretch at Rajinder Nagar, which is lined with several coaching institutes, in the event of heavy rainfall.



When The Indian Express visited the location—a key hub for UPSC and other government exam aspirants—on Friday noon, barring some small puddles, waterlogging was not visible on the roads. Several students in the area noted that the intensity of rainfall was not high enough to cause

flooding, though strong winds did cause some issues. "There are small puddles here and there, but I didn't see any flooding," said Manish Rajput, 21, a student from Lucknow. Work on new drainage infrastructure is also underway throughout the area. "They have constructed drains. One side is

done, the other side is still ongoing, so I don't see water entering the basements," said another UPSC aspirant, Rahul Bind, 24, from Prayagraj, who has been in the area for a year.

"The Municipal Corporation of Delhi has been very strict about not

Kharge demands strong action against Pakistan over Pahalgam terror attack

Bengaluru, 03 May: Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge on Friday expressed shock over the recent Pahalgam terror attack and demanded strong action against Pakistan. He welcomed the Centre's move to conduct a caste census, terming it a vindication of the Congress party's long-standing demand. Speaking to reporters after a meeting of the Congress Working Committee (CWC) in Kalaburagi, Kharge said, "The Pahalgam incident has shocked us all. The bereaved families should get compensation from the government. We want the government to give a befitting reply to Pakistan." Commenting on the caste census issue, the Congress President said, "When we were demanding a caste census, the Cabinet Ministers accused us of trying to divide society and incite communal riots. Now, they have done it. I don't know their intention, but I am happy that our demand has been fulfilled." Meanwhile, in Davanagere, Karnataka Minister Eshwar Khandre



welcomed the caste census move, stating that it had been discussed in detail during the Mahasabha. "There are 90 to 100 sub-castes, some of which had previously moved away. All of them have now been codified and brought to the government's attention. We welcome this decision," Khandre said.

'Suicide bomb' remark of Ktk Minister stirs row post-Pahalgam attack

Bengaluru, 03 May: In the aftermath of the brutal Pahalgam terror attack that claimed over 26 innocent lives nearly ten days ago, Karnataka Minister B.Z. Zameer Ahmed Khan on Saturday triggered a political storm with his inflammatory remarks, declaring that he was prepared to "go to Pakistan with suicide bomb strapped to him" to launch a retaliatory strike. The Minister's remarks, made during a press interaction, drew swift backlash from political opponents and reignited a debate over India's response to cross-border terrorism.



"Let Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah give me suicide bomb, I am ready to go to Pakistan to launch an attack," Zameer said, branding the Pahalgam massacre a "barbaric and inhuman act" against the civilians. His statement quickly went viral on social media, triggering polarised reactions, with some hailing his passion while others criticised the rhetoric as dangerous and

irresponsible. Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah sought to distance himself from his cabinet colleague's outburst, advocating restraint and diplomacy over emotional retaliation. "War is not the solution. It will only lead to more loss of lives on both sides. We must act with wisdom and focus on national interest, not emotional outbursts," he said in a statement. Meanwhile, the Centre has taken decisive steps in response to the attack. The central government imposed a complete ban on all imports from Pakistan, both direct and indirect. The Ministry of Commerce notified the suspension of cross-border

trade, amid reports of heightened tensions along the Line of Control (LoC) and an escalating cyber standoff. The Pahalgam attack, perpetrated by a group of four heavily armed terrorists, saw indiscriminate firing on a group of 'majority community' in the Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir. According to officials, victims were reportedly targeted based on their religion, deepening communal fears and straining Indo-Pak relations further. Essential infrastructure remains under stress, with ongoing airspace restrictions and concerns over potential cyber incursions.

Two HNLC militants arrested in Meghalaya

Shillong, 03 May 3: Meghalaya Police have arrested two suspected Hynniewtrep National Liberation Council (HNLC) militants for their alleged involvement in an extortion racket targeting local businessmen and government officials, police said on Saturday. Acting on credible intelligence, security forces on Friday apprehended Pyndapbok Makri (29) at Lad Quinine in Ri-Bhoi district while he was reportedly collecting extortion money for the banned HNLC. Based on Makri's revelation, police arrested Lari Pynkmen Nongshli (25) from Umtyra village in East Jaintia Hills district. District police chief of Ri-Bhoi, Vivekanand Singh Rathore, said the counter insurgency operation was launched in response to threats issued by HNLC operatives who have been sending demand notes via WhatsApp to Khasi businessmen and

government functionaries. He said the extortion messages were allegedly sent by Bangladesh-based HNLC, included threats of physical harm to coerce victims into paying large sums of money.

CMF Phone 2 Pro sale starts 5 May; Available for as low as ₹16,999

National, May 3, 2025: CMF, the sub-brand of London-based technology company Nothing, has today announced the opensales for CMF Phone 2 Pro across Flipkart, Flipkart Minutes, Vijay Sales, Croma, and all leading retail stores in India, starting 5 May, 12 noon onwards. As a special introductory offer on day 1, Phone 2 Pro will be available for as low as ₹16,999 (including all offers).

CMF by Nothing launched the Phone 2 Pro globally on April 28, 2025, with a best-in-segment three-camera system, a wonderfully bright display, and a premium design. CMF Phone 2 Pro is the ultimate daily smartphone.

The slimmest and lightest smartphone Nothing has ever designed. At 7.8 mm, weighing just 185 g, CMF Phone 2 Pro is nearly weightless - 5% thinner than CMF Phone 1. It comes in an elegant body with an aluminum camera surround - evolved from the first-generation design - and features stainless steel screws for an authentic Nothing feel that unveils the craft behind it. Plus, increased water durability with IP54 - CMF Phone 1 was IP52.

CMF Phone 2 Pro features an advanced three-camera system, complete with a 50 MP main camera with the largest sensor in its segment and capturing 64% more light than CMF Phone 1. For faraway scenes, the first-

Arunachal : World Press Freedom Day celebrated at press club in Itanagar

Itanagar, 03 May: The Arunachal Pradesh Union of Working Journalists (APUWJ), in collaboration with the Arunachal Press Club (APC), celebrated World Press Freedom Day (WPDF) at the Press Club premises here on Saturday, echoing the global call to uphold a free, independent, and pluralistic press as a cornerstone of democracy and development. As part of the celebration, the APUWJ organised a special screening of a journalistic focused film, followed by an interactive discussion led by APUWJ Gender Council convener Appu Gapak, allowing journalists to reflect on the movie's themes and its relevance to their profession. Addressing the gathering, APUWJ president Amar Sangno emphasized the significance of the Day, urging fellow journalists to uphold ethical and truthful reporting. He also spoke about the implications of emerging technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) on journalism, highlighting both their potential benefits and concerns. Sangno also raised alarm over the declining

standards of journalism in the country and India's falling position in global press freedom rankings, attributing the decline to the period following the rise of the Modi-led BJP government. The WPDF observance extended beyond Itanagar, with the affiliated district press clubs, including Seppa Press Club, Ziro Press Club, Pasighat Press Club, Aalo Press Club and Raga Press Club organizing their own events to mark the occasion. Various activities were held across the district press clubs as part of the celebration. Journalists across the state carried banners and distributed pamphlets advocating for press freedom, the protection of journalists, and in remembrance of those who lost their lives in the line of duty. At Raga, the Raga Press Club marked the day with a brief yet meaningful programme at K&K Futsal. Raga RPC president Biku Aka underscored the importance of press freedom and encouraged members to report fearlessly and responsibly, especially amid the evolving influence of AI in media.

Bike thief arrested in Kaithal, nine stolen bikes recovered

Kaithal, 03 May: In a major success, the anti-vehicle theft cell of Kaithal police have arrested a vehicle thief and recovered nine stolen motorcycles from him. Police spokesperson Praveen Shyokand said that according to the complaint of Rakesh, a resident of village Kaulekhan, his bike was stolen near Kalayati Balaji Marble. A case was registered in the police station Kalayati. The spokesperson said that the anti-vehicle theft staff was directed by SP Aastha Modi to clamp down on bike thieves. Following the orders, SI Shubhakaran, SI Jaybhagwan, ASI Ashok Kumar and Home Guard team led by Anti-Vehicle Theft Staff In-charge SI



Pradeep Kumar nabbed accused Joginder Singh, a resident of Sinsar village of Jind, from Dhundwa Road Kalayati. The said stolen bike was recovered from the possession of the accused. The spokesman said that during a comprehensive interrogation, eight other stolen bikes were recovered from the possession of the accused. Four bikes were stolen from the police station Kalayati area, one bike from Civil Lines Kaithal area, and one bike from Rajound area. The investigation about the remaining three bikes under way.



in-segment 50MP telephoto lens offers 2x optical zoom and up to 20x Ultra Zoom. To wrap it up, the 8MP ultra-wide camera provides an expansive field of view, perfect for everything from landscapes to skylines, while the 16 MP front camera is ready to snap your sharpest selfies. Now in its 6th generation, the newly upgraded MediaTek Dimensity 7300 Pro 5G processor packs in 8-core CPU that clocks in speeds of up to 2.5 GHz - ready to live up to the demands of heavy multi-taskers. For cutting-edge performance, with 10% quicker processing and a 5% improvement in graphics when compared to CMF Phone 1.

Availability, Pricing and Offers:

- CMF Phone 2 Pro will be available in White, Black, Orange and Light Green colour
- 8+128 GB - INR 17,999 (Including bank or exchange offers)
- 8+256 GB - INR 19,999

(Including bank or exchange offers)

- As a special introductory offer on 5th May, CMF Phone 2 Pro will be available for as low as INR 16,999 for the 8+128 GB variant and INR 18,999 for the 8+256 GB Variant (including all offers)
- Day 1 exchange offer: INR 1,000 exchange bonus and INR 1,000 bank offer (applicable on all leading banks) will be available together on CMF Phone 2 Pro.
- Availability:**
 - The CMF Phone 2 Pro will go on sale via Flipkart, Flipkart Minutes, Vijay Sales, Croma, and all leading retail stores starting from May 5, 2025. The CMF Phone 2 Pro accessories to be launched in India soon.
- To stay updated on all the latest information, please follow Nothing on Instagram, and X. The full press release, images, videos and the reviewer's guide can be found in the Media Kit.

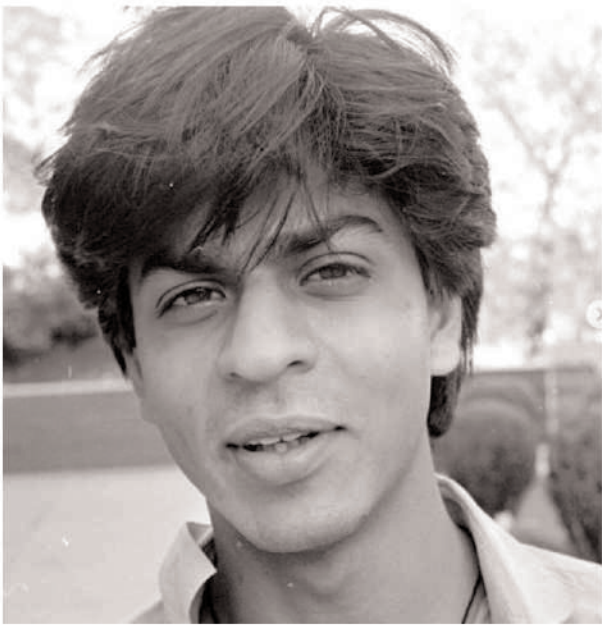
Shah Rukh Khan's 'raw charm' in unseen photos from pre-Bollywood days

Chandigarh 3 may: Actor Amar Talwar, well known for his role in the 1994 TV series "Shanti", has delighted fans by sharing unseen photographs of Shah Rukh Khan—well before the superstar he is today.

Posting the images on Instagram, Talwar revealed that the pictures date back to around 1990, just before Shah Rukh's move to Mumbai to pursue a career in Bollywood.

One of the photos features a young SRK with Talwar's son, Tally, while another captures Khan holding a camera.

"Going through my old pictures, came across these I had clicked of Shah Rukh Khan with my son, Tally, around 1990, before his departure for Bollywood," Talwar wrote in his caption. He added, "Shah Rukh and I had acted in a couple of TAG (Barry John's Theatre Action Group) plays together — "Rough Crossing", "Who's Life Is It Anyway" and "Lend



Me A Terror". Barry cast me in the role he wanted Shah Rukh to play but by then Shah Rukh had left for Mumbai, Bollywood...and the rest is history—I guess!"

The post quickly garnered love from fans, who were

thrilled to see the throwback images of a young SRK. Dressed casually and brimming with youthful energy, Shah Rukh looked every bit the charismatic performer even before his screen debut.

'Speed' reunion: Keanu Reeves and Sandra Bullock set to feature in romantic thriller



Los Angeles 3 May: Hollywood stars Keanu Reeves and Sandra Bullock will feature in an upcoming romantic thriller. According to an entertainment news outlet, the untitled film is being developed at the Amazon MGM Studios. The project will also reunite Reeves and Bullock, who have previously worked together in films like

"Speed" (1994) and "The Lake House" (2006). The details of the plot are being kept under wraps. But the studio has described it as "propulsive".

Bullock is producing the film through the banner Fortis Films alongside Reeves, Mark Gordon and Bibby Dunn from The Mark Gordon Company.

BJP accuses Congress of 'supplying oxygen' to Pakistan over Channi's surgical strikes remark

Chandigarh, 3 may: The BJP on Saturday said the Congress was repeatedly supplying "oxygen" to Pakistan, and slammed the opposition party for its leader Charanjit Singh Channi's remarks questioning the veracity of Balakot air strikes that followed the 2019 Pulwama terror attack.

"Inside it is the Congress Working Committee but outside it acts like Pakistan Working Committee," BJP national spokesperson Sambit Patra alleged in a press conference. Patra said it has become a pattern with the Congress that its resolutions and leadership speak in one voice, while its several other leaders speak in another.

The Congress Working Committee, the key organisation body of the party, passed a resolution on Friday asking the Centre to act with firmness and clarity to teach Pakistan a lesson for its continued export of terror to India. Patra told reporters that immediately after the CWC passed the resolution Channi held a "parallel" press conference in which he questioned the genuineness of India's air strike in Balakot after the 2019 Pulwama terror attack and also taunted Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

He told reporters, "The Congress spares no occasion to supply oxygen to the Pakistani Army and terrorists and to boost their morale." Referring to the Pulwama attack, Channi said 40 Indian soldiers were killed and when elections were held, the government boasted of action.

"But we have never seen where in Pakistan the strikes were done and where people were killed. If someone threw a bomb in our country, will people not know? They claim



to have conducted surgical strikes against Pakistan but nothing had happened. Surgical strikes were not seen anywhere and no one knew about them," the former Punjab chief minister said.

Asked if he had sought proof of those strikes, he said, "I have always been demanding that." He, later, backtracked following the BJP's counterattack and said no proof was needed.

Patra, however, hit back saying the oxygen supplied to Pakistan cannot be taken back.

The BJP leader said opposition leaders such as Akhilesh Yadav and parties like AAP were cited by a Pakistani senator for their questioning of the Modi government's stand, and added that Congress's Rahul Gandhi is now trying to join them in getting praise in the neighbouring country.

Patra referred to other controversial comments of several Congress leaders related to the Pahalgam terror attack to slam the party over a gap in its official pronouncements and its members' public comments.

He named Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah, Maharashtra MLA Vijay Wadetiwar, Himachal Pradesh minister Inder Singh, and Rahul Gandhi's brother-in-law

Robert Vadra for allegedly raising issues on the terror attack, which left at least 26 civilians, mostly tourists dead.

Patra alleged that they have questioned the need for war and asked whether terrorists had indeed religiously profiled their victims, and said this raises questions about the sincerity of the Congress' official stand.

It is more than a coincidence and is in fact a pattern, he said.

The BJP leader asked if a string of such controversial remarks by Congress leaders has not lowered the morale of armed forces and Indians in general.

The Congress, he noted, has asked the government to spell out its strategy following the terror attack.

Patra said the moment Congress leaders are informed of the government's plans, they will seek to best each other in conveying the message to Pakistan.

In this context, he also took up Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's repeated attack on Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi over the latter's alleged visit to Pakistan.

Patra noted that Sarma has also said that Gogoi's children are not Indian citizens.

At Rs 1 lakh, is gold worth the splurge?



Mumbai 3 May: In a momentous milestone, gold prices in India have surged past the Rs 1 lakh per 10 gram mark, triggering awe, debate and fresh questions for investors. For a country where gold is far more than just an investment — deeply intertwined with festivals, weddings, and financial security — this psychological price barrier has rekindled the timeless debate: is gold still worth buying at these levels? At the same time, silver, often in gold's shadow, is experiencing its own rally, driven by both industrial demand and traditional allure. So, with precious metals hitting new highs, what should investors make of the glitter?

Glorious run

Gold has long held its ground as a resilient wealth preserver. In 2000, the price of 10 gram stood at around Rs 4,400. Fast forward to 2025, and that number has skyrocketed to Rs 1 lakh — a remarkable 22-fold rise, yielding a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 11-12 per cent. This compares favourably with India's equity indices such as the Sensex and Nifty, which, though offering slightly better long-term returns, have also weathered more volatility — from the 2008 financial crisis to the Covid-19 pandemic crash and the recent inflationary tremors. Historical data from the RBI shows an even more compelling story. In 1970, gold was just Rs 184.96 per 10 gram in Mumbai. Over the past five decades, its price has jumped nearly 550 times, reinforcing gold's ability to retain value across eras of change and uncertainty.

Still a golden investment?

Despite its lofty valuation, experts continue to view gold as a sound investment — but with caveats. "Gold will always remain a core asset for Indian investors, especially considering its liquidity and ability to safeguard wealth over generations," says Saksham Diwan, Assistant Vice-President, Wealth Management, Anand Rathni Wealth Ltd. However, he cautions against emotional buying in a bull market. "Investors should avoid rushing into gold purely due to the price surge, such as the recent one. It's always better to allocate funds gradually."

How to invest wisely now

With gold at record levels, here are some prudent approaches:

Asset allocation: Experts recommend allocating 10-15 per cent of your investment portfolio to gold.

gold reached their highest level in more than 50 years.

Weakening US dollar: As interest rates taper and US fiscal deficits mount, the dollar has softened — giving gold, which moves inversely to the greenback, another boost.

India's unshakeable obsession

India remains the world's second-largest gold consumer, importing 700-900 tonnes annually. According to the World Gold Council, Indian households are estimated to hold over 25,000 tonnes of gold — a staggering figure, reflective of gold's deep-rooted cultural, religious, and financial significance.

Even jewellers are optimistic. "The sudden rise in gold price will definitely have an impact on demand. However, once the shock gets absorbed, demand will stabilise," says Rajesh Rokde, chairman of the All-India Gem and Jewellery Domestic Council. "Overall, there is a positive sentiment in the market, and we expect good consumer demand in the coming weeks."

Retailers across India are observing an evolution in buyer preferences rather than a complete shift. "We are seeing a pull in buying behaviour — more lightweight, modular designs and higher interest in digital gold and gold bonds," explains a Chandigarh-based jeweller, requesting anonymity.

Global economic uncertainty:

Geopolitical tensions — from the Russia-Ukraine conflict to unrest in the West Asia — along with fears of a looming global recession, are driving investors toward the safety of gold.

Inflation hedge: With inflation proving to be sticky, gold has reasserted itself as a reliable store of value, protecting purchasing power over time.

Central bank buying: Nations like China, Russia and Turkey have been aggressively building gold reserves. In 2023, global central bank purchases of

IAF conducts night drill with fighter jets on Ganga Expressway airstrip in Shahjahanpur

The Indian Air Force (IAF) successfully conducted night-time combat drills involving fighter jets on the country's first expressway airstrip on the Ganga Expressway in Shahjahanpur district, officials said on Saturday.

The drill, which took place between 7 pm and 10 pm on Friday, saw fighter jets Rafale, Sukhoi, Jaguar, and Mirage-2000 simulate touch-and-go landings and combat operations on the 3.5-kilometre airstrip near Piru village under the Jalalabad police station limits.

Superintendent of Police Rajesh Dwivedi told PTI, "Multiple fighter jets carried out successful sorties as part of a night operational exercise. The drill involved precision landings, coordinated take-offs, and tactical operations by jets. More than 250 CCTV cameras were mounted on and around the airstrip for

surveillance and security. "This ensures safe operations and quick response in case of any untoward incident," he said.

Traffic was halted for nearly three hours on the Bareilly-Etawah route that intersects the expressway while the sorties took place. Dwivedi said that some fighter pilots landed on the airstrip through ropes from their jets and then boarded cars parked nearby, as part of an exercise. "Despite strong winds and unfavourable weather during the day, the drill was completed successfully, with the night operations proving to be smoother and more efficient," he added.

The drill was originally scheduled for two days, but IAF officials completed the entire exercise in one night. "The programme scheduled for the next day was cancelled as the objective was already achieved," the SP said.



Additional District Magistrate (Finance and Revenue) Arvind Kumar said, "Fighter jets made contact with the airstrip near the VIP camp and then took off again. Over 1,000 sanitation workers and other personnel from the Panchayat Raj Department were deployed along a 40km stretch to ensure no animals or obstructions entered the airstrip." Locals watched the exercises with enthusiasm from fields nearby, he said.

"It was a historic moment for the district," Kumar said.

The airstrip on the Ganga Expressway, recently inspected by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, is now capable of supporting fighter jet landings and operations both day and night, officials confirmed.

"Abhinandan Bank Inaugurates Its 10th Branch with a Promise of Everlasting Prosperity"

Amravati 3 May: Celebrating a legacy of disciplined service for the past 27 years, Abhinandan Urban Co-operative Bank marked a significant milestone with the grand inauguration of its 10th branch at Camp, Amravati, coinciding with the auspicious occasion of Akshaya Tritiya. Known not just for its name, the bank has also been honored with several prestigious government awards for excellence.

Rajya Sabha Member Dr. Anil Bonde, speaking at the event, expressed strong confidence in the bank's continued success and prosperity. He praised the Central Government's initiatives to strengthen the cooperative sector and asserted that Abhinandan Bank would rise further through a corruption-free cooperative movement. He also highlighted Amravati's development potential, noting that the operationalization of the local airport could greatly enhance the region's ecosystem. The inauguration ceremony was chaired by the Bank's President Adv. Vijay Bothra and witnessed the presence of several distinguished dignitaries, including Lok Sabha MP Balwant Wankhade, former MP Navneet Rana, former MLA Dr. Sunil Deshmukh, Founding President Hukamchand Daga, Board Chairman Sudarshan Gang, Vice President Dr. Surendra Bardia, CEO Shivaji Detha, and Deputy CEO Anil Ugale. MP Balwant Wankhade, who formally inaugurated the branch, considered himself fortunate to be part of the event and expressed his desire to attend the opening of the bank's 25th branch in the future. Former MP Navneet Rana pledged her support to ensure that future inaugurations, especially of the bank's flagship buildings, are presided over by a Chief Minister with integrity. She also lauded the contributions of Founding President Hukamchand Daga and Chairman Sudarshan Gang. Dr. Sunil Deshmukh mentioned with pride that he had inaugurated three of the bank's branches previously.

In his welcome address, President Adv. Vijay Bothra shared that the bank now serves multiple regions including Badnera, Shegaon, Dhamangaon, Paratwada, Chandur Bazar, Varud, and now Camp, all with modern amenities. He noted the bank's Gross NPA stands at an impressively low 0.14%, with a goal to bring it down to zero. "With recognition comes responsibility," he said, emphasizing that the bank consistently meets RBI's stringent standards. Expressing gratitude, Board Chairman Sudarshan Gang revealed that due to the bank's performance, RBI had granted its directors the opportunity for an international tour. He also acknowledged the efforts of the bank's dedicated staff and officers.

The event was compered by CA Rajesh Chandak.

Several esteemed guests graced the occasion, including R.B. Atal, CA R.R. Khandelwal, CA D.D. Khandelwal, CA Nileshbhai Lathia, CA Jitendra Khandelwal, CA Sanjay Lakhotia, Architect Akash Mohta, Interior Designer Naval Zanwar from Nagpur, Vasantbabu Malpani, Pawan Gattani, Harishbhai Lathia, Amritbhai Mutha, Pravin Jain, Suresh Munot, Prakash Bokaria, Vivek Marathe, Sanjay Munot, Naresh Kanthaliya, Rajendra Bucha, Tejprakash Chopda, Anil Kothari, Ramesh Sabadra, Nareshchandra Kathole, Shubham Bokaria, Dr. Ravindra Chordia, Sheetal Lunawat, Adv. Gaurav Lunawat, Vijay Khajanchi, Vijay Bucha, Rameshwar Gaggad, Sugan Chand Bothra, Anil Sarode, Mankalal Ostwal, Dr. Santosh Maharaj of Shivdhara Ashram, Rajendra Bhansali, Om Khemchandani, Prof. Ajay Bonde, Dr. Govind Kasat, Omprakash Navandar, Sushil Padole, Nitin Gabhane, Anita Chordia, Jyoti Rathod, District Sub-Registrar Shankar Kumbhar, Usha Karwa, Kiran Jain, Manju Bothra, Ram Joshi, CA Shrenik Bothra, Dr. Chandu Sojatiya, Shankar Shinde, Lokhande, Jijau Bank Chairman Kothale, Congress President Bablu Shekhawat, Mohan Jajodia, Vinod Kalantri, Suresh Jain, and Abhinandan Pendhari among others.



Grand Opening of 4th All India Federation Cup Kabaddi Tournament at Amravati

"Indian players have established their identity in the world of Kabaddi" – MLA Sulbha Khodke

Amravati 3 may: Kabaddi, a traditional sport deeply rooted in Indian culture, continues to thrive even in the era of commercialized sports. Despite the rise of many modern games, Kabaddi has not only preserved its significance but has also achieved a dominant presence in national and international tournaments. Indian players have gained global recognition in Kabaddi, elevating the status of the country's sports culture, stated Amravati MLA Sulbha Khodke during her inaugural address at the 4th All India Federation Cup Kabaddi Tournament.

Organized by Vidharba Amateur Kabaddi Association, Amravati District Kabaddi Association, and Shodh Pratishthan, the tournament is being held from May 2 to 4, 2025. The grand inauguration ceremony was held on Friday with an impressive gathering of dignitaries and athletes. Present on the dais were Amravati Municipal Commissioner Sachin Kalantre, International Kabaddi Federation Director Tejaswini Gehlot, Amateur Kabaddi Federation of India President Vibhor Vineet Jain, Indian Kabaddi Federation President Jitendra Singh Thakur, Haryana Kabaddi State Chairman Kuldeep Dalal, Bihar Kabaddi State Chairman Kumar Vijay Singh, Uttarakhnad Kabaddi Association President Chetan Joshi, Maharashtra State Amateur Kabaddi Association Secretary Baburao Chandere, Amravati Divisional Sports Deputy Director Shekhar Patil, Amravati Police Deputy Commissioner Sagar Patil, Shivaji Shikshan Sanstha President Harshvardhan Deshmukh, Preeti Sanjay Band, Dronacharya Awardee Balwan Singh, and selection committee members Anup Kumar, Rakesh Kumar, Deepak Hooda, Mamatha Pujari, Tejaswini B.V., and Pooja Sharma.

The ceremony began with the floral tribute and lamp lighting in honor of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj, and Kabaddi pioneer Late Janardhan Singh Gehlot. This was followed by the hoisting of the sports flag and lighting of the sports torch. Addressing the gathering, MLA Sulbha Khodke emphasized the importance of sports infrastructure along with education, health, and basic facilities in the overall development of a region. She expressed her commitment to reviving sports associations and promoting Kabaddi to regain its former glory in Amravati. She also assured support for providing platforms for talented players to shine at national and international levels. Municipal Commissioner Sachin Kalantre mentioned that Amravati has a strong legacy in sports and that



"Aiming to Make Amravati No. 1 in Sports" – Yash Khodke
Speaking at the event, Yash Khodke, President of Shodh Pratishthan, expressed his vision to make Amravati a top name in Indian sports. He highlighted that Kabaddi has been played in Amravati since 1936 and many local players have represented India. He stressed the importance of organizing such tournaments to give new-generation players opportunities at the national level.

"Indoor Kabaddi Stadium Planned for Amravati" – Jitendra Singh Thakur

In his welcome address, Indian Kabaddi Federation President Jitendra Singh Thakur expressed gratitude toward the game of Kabaddi and announced plans to build an indoor Kabaddi stadium in Amravati. He acknowledged the unwavering support of MLA Sulbha Khodke and Yash Khodke in hosting the largest Kabaddi tournament in the country and called for collective efforts to realize the stadium project.

the municipal corporation will provide all necessary facilities for sports events. International Kabaddi Federation Director Tejaswini Gehlot highlighted that Kabaddi, even before the advent of Pro-Kabaddi League, had already made its mark globally, and expressed her joy over Amravati hosting one of the biggest Kabaddi tournaments in the country.

The inaugural day witnessed a massive turnout of Kabaddi enthusiasts filling the spectator gallery. The matches commenced immediately after the inauguration with a visually captivating setup that included spectacular lighting, fireworks, giant LED screens, and a grand stage.

MLA Khodke performed the ceremonial ground worship and interacted with the players, wishing them success.

Day 1 Matches:
Men's Category:
Vidharbha vs Punjab
Maharashtra vs Rajasthan
Services vs Haryana
UP vs Goa
Indian Railways vs Rajasthan
Punjab vs Maharashtra
Rajasthan vs Vidharbha
Indian Railways vs Punjab
Women's Category:
Chhattisgarh vs Vidharbha
Himachal Pradesh vs Tamil Nadu
Indian Railways vs Karnataka
Rajasthan vs Chhattisgarh
Haryana vs Chandigarh
Vidharbha vs Himachal Pradesh
Rajasthan vs Tamil Nadu
Haryana vs Karnataka
Spectators thoroughly enjoyed the competitive spirit and energy of the games.

BUSINESS

SExperience the Future of TV with Samsung's Premium AI-Integrated QLED TV Series and Crystal Clear 4K UHD TV Now Live on Amazon and Flipkart



GURUGRAM, India -03 May : Samsung, India's largest consumer electronics brand, announced the launch of its new range of AI-powered QLED TV and Crystal Clear 4K UHD TV, available on Amazon, Flipkart, and Samsung.com starting May 1, 2025. Designed to deliver the ultimate home entertainment experience, the new lineup includes the QLED series - QEF1, equipped with cutting-edge AI technology, and the Clear 4K UHD series - UE81, UE84, UE86, engineered to provide exceptional clarity, color, and detail for an immersive viewing experience. At the center of the launch is the QLED TV, featuring Real and Safe Quantum Dot Technology to deliver stunning color accuracy and durability. Featuring True Quantum Dots for unparalleled color precision, these TVs are also free from Cadmium, a harmful substance known to be a cancer-causing agent, ensuring both safety and superior performance.

Powered by Samsung's latest Q4 AI Processor, the TV analyzes and optimizes content in real-time with sharper visuals, clearer sound, and a more personalized viewing experience. Leveraging Samsung Vision AI, it intelligently enhances picture quality by recognizing scenes, objects, and faces for lifelike details, while also ensuring precise color volume with Pantone Validated Colors for true-to-life hues. To ensure peace of mind, the TV is secured with Samsung Knox Security, protecting users' data and connected devices. Additionally, the new lineup offers access to Endless Free Content, delivering a world of entertainment with no additional cost.

Samsung's new UHD models deliver crystal-clear 4K resolution, powered by the advanced Crystal 4K Processor, ensuring sharp and vibrant visuals. With 4K Upscaling, the models also enhance lower-resolution content to near 4K quality. Featuring PurColour, they offer lifelike colors for a truly immersive viewing experience. The integrated OTS Lite technology delivers dynamic sound with virtual top channel audio, creating an enriched audio experience. With access to endless free content, these models make premium entertainment accessible to a broader audience.

Viplesh Dang, Senior Director, Visual Display Business, Samsung India, said, "At Samsung, we continuously push the boundaries of innovation to deliver products that redefine home entertainment. With launch of our AI-enhanced QLED and Crystal Clear 4K UHD TVs, we are elevating the viewing experience for consumers, offering advanced entertainment. These models, powered by Samsung Vision AI, deliver intelligent scene recognition for enhanced picture quality, making every frame more immersive. This launch reflects our dedication to delivering intelligent viewing experiences to more homes, meeting the evolving needs of our consumers with innovation, convenience, and reliability."

Customers can look forward to benefits like discounts of up to 35%. The new Samsung Online TV lineup is available with 12 month No Cost EMI starting at just INR 3,333/month for QLED models and INR 2,500/month for UHD models. Customers can also avail an instant bank cashback of up to INR 3,000. With innovative features and exclusive launch offers, this new range is set to transform living spaces into cinematic hubs.

Key Features of QLED TV
Real and Safe QLED.
Q4 AI Processor,
Pantone Validation,
Samsung Vision AI,
Samsung Knox Security.SmartThings

By using SmartThings, you can control appliances, lights, and security cameras directly from the TV. To set it up, simply navigate to the SmartThings option in the TV's menu and follow the prompts to connect your devices.

Key Features of Crystal Clear 4K UHD TVs
Crystal Processor 4K
PurColor
Multi Voice Assistant
OTS Lite
OTS Lite (Object Tracking Sound Lite)
Samsung inspires the world and shapes the future with transformative ideas and technologies. The company is redefining the world of TVs, smartphones, wearable devices, tablets, digital appliances, network systems and memory, system LSI, foundry and LED solutions. For latest news on Samsung India, please visit Samsung India Newsroom at <http://news.samsung.com/in>. For Hindi, log on to Samsung Newsroom Bharat at <https://news.samsung.com/bharat>. You can also follow us on Twitter @SamsungNewsIN.

Hrithik & Rakesh Roshan on-screen together for the first time, taking drivers on an 'Unforgettable Journey' with the Mobil 1 brand

New Delhi, India, May 3, 2025 - ExxonMobil Lubricants Pvt Ltd, an ExxonMobil affiliate in India that markets Mobil™ branded lubricants, today announced the launch of its new commercial as part of its ongoing 'Unforgettable Journeys' campaign, with the latest installment spotlighting Mobil 1™, the world's leading synthetic engine oil brand. Featuring Bollywood icon Hrithik Roshan, the commercial draws a powerful synergy between Hrithik's drive, India as a nation of dreamers and doers and the performance of Mobil 1™, all united by shared passion and the relentless pursuit of excellence.

The latest commercial brings together Bollywood icon Hrithik Roshan and his father, Indian film producer and director, Rakesh Roshan, on-screen for the very first time. As Hrithik marks 25 years in the film industry since his successful debut in Kaho Na Pyaar Hai, the campaign celebrates his unwavering passion and pursuit of excellence to deliver unforgettable performances. His journey also mirrors India as a nation- where dreamers defy odds and doers turn ambition into achievement. It reflects the spirit of a country that is constantly evolving, where every generation dares to imagine a better future and works tirelessly to achieve it. Sharing this same spirit is Mobil 1™- a brand that continues to redefine the possibilities of engine oil. Powered by cutting-edge technology, it evolves with the times to deliver the most innovative and highest performance engine oils that keep your engine running like new. Hrithik & Rakesh Roshan, who joined Mobil™? as a brand ambassador in 2023, expressed his excitement about continuing the 'Unforgettable Journeys' campaign.

SPORTS

"Clarity and backing make the difference": Pragyan Ojha lauds Prasidh Krishna's impact for GT



New Delhi, 03 May: Former India spinner and JioStar expert Pragyan Ojha has heaped praise on Gujarat Titans (GT) seamer Prasidh Krishna for his sharp spells and consistent impact this Indian Premier League (IPL) season, especially highlighting the support system behind the fast bowler's rise.

Krishna delivered a match-winning spell of 2/19 in four overs as Gujarat Titans defeated Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) by 38 runs in Ahmedabad. The victory propelled GT to the second spot on the IPL 2025 points table. Speaking on JioHotstar, Ojha applauded Krishna's execution and composure, attributing much of his success to the clarity in his bowling and the environment created by the team leadership. "I think he's been brilliant so far. What I love about him is the clarity he has in his bowling," said Ojha. "He's also got strong backing from his captain and coach Ashish Nehra. If you've heard Nehra speak, he always emphasizes bowling hard lengths—and Prasidh thrives on that," he added. Ojha further underlined the confidence that comes with having a well-defined role and the right encouragement.

"When you're backed for your strengths, everything becomes easier. Once he gets those early wickets, the momentum carries forward. And that's exactly what he's done consistently," he added. With Krishna finding rhythm at a crucial juncture of the tournament, Gujarat Titans will be hoping their strike pacer continues to fire as the playoff race heats up.

Coming to the fixture, GT maintained its flawless record of defending a 200-plus target in their home den. Guided by its 38-run triumph against the misfiring Sunrisers was lauded by an early blitzkrieg from Sudharsan (48) and Gill (76), topped up by Buttler's rollicking 64 (37). SRH's pursuit of 225 turned into a massacre as Gujarat hunted in packs to leave Hyderabad dwindling. While Sunrisers went for runs with gallantry, wickets came at regular intervals, sending Hyderabad on the brink of exit after they surrendered to a 38-run defeat.

Shubman Gill in trouble? Gujarat Titans skipper risks 1 match ban after 'heated umpire arguments'

Ahmedabad, 03 May: Gujarat Titans skipper Shubman Gill could be staring at disciplinary action after engaging in two heated exchanges with umpires during the Indian Premier League 2025 match against Sunrisers Hyderabad at Ahmedabad's Narendra Modi Stadium on Friday.

While GT clinched a crucial 38-run victory, Gill's confrontational conduct may cost him ahead of the team's upcoming IPL game against Mumbai Indians on May 6.

The first flashpoint came after Gill was 'controversially' run out for a blistering 76 (38), sparking an animated argument with the fourth umpire over the decision. The tension flared again in the second innings when Gill furiously protested an on-field LBW call that went in Sunrisers' batter Abhishek Sharma's favour. The GT



captain had to be calmed down by the opposition batter himself.

Gill's actions appear to breach Article 2.8 of the IPL Code of Conduct, which relates to dissent at an umpire's decision. With two incidents in one match, he could face a Level 1 offence—leading to a fine and demerit points—or, if deemed more serious, a Level 2 offence, which could result in a match

suspension. However, Gill later opened up about the heated exchange with the umpire during the run chase. Speaking at the post match presentation, the Gujarat Titans skipper downplayed the incident, stating that emotions were running high in a crucial game. "There are so many emotions, you give 110% on the field, sometimes you're bound to show emotions," Gill said.

Bollywood actress Avneet Kaur trends, Virat Kohli breaks silence after Instagram 'like' controversy

Bengaluru, 03 May: Virat Kohli has responded to a social media controversy that erupted after social media users noticed his verified Instagram account had liked a post on a fan page dedicated to actress Avneet Kaur. The seemingly minor interaction quickly gained traction online, sparking a flurry of reactions and unwarranted speculation—some of which even dragged Kohli's wife, actress Anushka Sharma, into the discussion.

Amid the growing buzz, Kohli took to Instagram Stories to issue a brief but direct statement, clarifying the situation and urging fans not to jump to conclusions. Without naming the actress



or the post, he wrote, "I'd like to clarify that while clearing my feed, it appears the algorithm may have mistakenly registered an interaction. There was absolutely no intent behind it. I request that no unnecessary assumptions be made. Thank you for

"WAVES is great platform to boost traditional sports": Union Minister Raksha Khadse

Mumbai, 03 May: Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports, Raksha Nikhil Khadse, believes WAVES 2025 is a "great platform" to boost traditional sports, which have yet to reach the heights they should have.

WAVES 2025 is India's first-of-its-kind international summit dedicated to the audio-visual and entertainment sectors. It brings together over 10,000 delegates, 1,000 creators, 300 companies, and 350 startups, creating a robust cross-sectoral network. "WAVES is a great platform to boost traditional sports like Kho Kho, Kabaddi and others."

"The event encompasses the entire spectrum of media and emerging technologies, from film and OTT to AVGC-XR, comics, AI, and broadcasting. The four-day event began on May 1 and will continue until May 4.

ENTERTAINMENT

Actor Anil Kapoor's mother Nirmal dies at 90, cremated in Mumbai



Mumbai, 03 May : Nirmal Kapoor, mother of Bollywood actors Anil Kapoor, Sanjay Kapoor and producer Boney Kapoor died at a private hospital in Mumbai due to old age-related ailments, a source said.

She was 90.
She was cremated here on Saturday in the presence of family and close friends. Nirmal Kapoor died Friday evening at a private hospital here due to old age-related ailments.

Her last rites were held at the Pawan Hans Crematorium.

Many prominent personalities from the film fraternity, including Anupam Kher, Arbaaz Khan, Rani Mukerji and Orhan Awatramani attended the funeral. Nirmal Kapoor was married to film producer Surinder Kapoor, with whom she had four children—Anil, Reena, Boney and Sanjay.

Her grandchildren include Sonam Kapoor, Rhea, Harshvardhan, Arjun, Janhvi, Khushi and Anshula, Shashani, Jahaan, and Mohit Marwah. In a joint statement on Friday, the Kapoor family said Nirmal Kapoor passed away peacefully, surrounded by family members. "She lived a full and joyful life, leaving behind four devoted children, loving daughters-in-law, a caring son-in-law, eleven grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, and a lifetime of treasured memories," the statement read.

Soon after her demise, Anil Kapoor was seen arriving at her residence in an ambulance with her body. He was accompanied by brother Sanjay Kapoor, sister Reena Kapoor and nephew Arjun Kapoor. Several celebrities, including Ananya Panday, Javed Akhtar, Jackie Shroff and Veer Pahariya, visited the family to pay their respects.

Arjun Bijlani's new music video Ho Jaa released

Mumbai, 03 May : Actor Arjun Bijlani has a treat for his fans! The actor's latest music video Ho Jaa is out and here's why we love it! Be it his dapper look, the interesting storyline of love and longing, or the soulful melody, this one is surely a winner. The actor took to Instagram to share a glimpse of the number with his fans. He captioned the video as, "The pain of heartbreak never fades, it only makes you stronger. Ho Jaa is out now"



In the music video, Arjun shares the screen with the actress Heli Daruwala. The song has been composed by Nirmaan and directed by Arvind S Khaira.

Will Jugal marry Kadambari to save Bapodara chawl from demolition in Sony SAB's 'Pushpa Impossible'?

Mumbai, 03 May : Sony SAB's Pushpa Impossible continues to strike a chord with audiences, weaving a heartfelt and inspiring narrative centered around the unwavering spirit of Pushpa (Karuna Pandey). The show beautifully captures her journey as she confronts life's challenges with incredible strength, resilience, and grace. In the recent episodes, Arjun (Tanmay Nagar) stealthily enters his father's office and stumbles upon a crucial file that unveils a game-changing truth - the so-called masala factory is, in fact, a full-fledged manufacturing unit. This crucial evidence could turn the tide of the court case in their favor and potentially save the chawl from demolition. Just as hope begins to flicker, Kadambari (Brinda Trivedi) makes a dramatic comeback with a devious twist. She



cunningly swaps the file and drops a jaw-dropping ultimatum threatening to upend everything.

In the upcoming episodes, Kadambari drops a shocking ultimatum to Jugal (Anshul Trivedi) to marry her, and in return she will save the chawl from demolition. With the future of countless families hanging in the balance, Jugali is caught in a dilemma, but Pushpa is not one to stand by quietly. As Kadambari dares her to stop

the wedding, Pushpa finds herself compelled to protect her friend from making a life-altering sacrifice. Meanwhile, Sambhu Shekhawat (Sukesh Anand) seethes with rage as his meticulously crafted plan to transform the chawl into a spice factory faces unexpected roadblocks.

Will Pushpa be able to stop Kadambari and Jugal's marriage and save the chawl?

Karuna Pandey, who plays the role of Pushpa in

the show, says, "I've seen in my mother while growing up. I remember how she would go to lengths to protect her loved ones with sheer willpower and determination. That moment shaped me, and it's that very spirit I try to bring to Pushpa's character - the unwavering resolve to fight for what's right, no matter how impossible it may seem. Pushpa is torn between saving the chawl and protecting her best friend."

The thought of Jugal sacrificing his entire life for the chawl breaks her from within. She's fighting a battle where no choice feels right. But Pushpa won't give up - not on the chawl, and not on her friend. She'll do whatever it takes to protect both."

Tune in to watch Pushpa Impossible from Monday to Saturday at 9 PM only on Sony SAB.

Harleen Kaur Rekhi is in love with theatre



Mumbai, 03 May: Harleen Kaur Rekhi, known for her character Mandodari in Shrimad Ramayana, is now winning hearts playing Mata Sita in the stage production Humare Ram, starring Ashutosh Rana as Ravana. A passionate theatre artiste, Harleen has performed in over 60-70 plays since 2011, after graduating from Shri Ram Centre, Mandi House, a place she fondly calls her first school of acting.

Sharing the stage with veteran actor Ashutosh Rana, Harleen describes the experience as 'incredible and mesmerising'. She recalls, "Seeing him since childhood, he has always been an idol. Everyday, everytime I step on stage with him, it's a new

experience altogether." She praises Rana for his powerful command over Hindi and the magnetic aura he brings to the stage. Despite the rise of screen-based entertainment, Harleen remains a fierce advocate of theatre.

"Theatre is, and will always be, my first school. It stays with you till your last breath," she asserts. "It's a beautiful art form — there are no retakes, and the joy of receiving instant reactions from a live audience is incomparable," she adds.

Recalling emotional moments from Humare Ram performances, Harleen shares, "An elderly couple once came on stage with tears in their eyes, touching my feet and offering me prasad.

Meet Sachin Pilgaonkar, the 'sutradhar'

Mumbai, 03 May : Sony Entertainment Television's latest offering Shirdi Wale Sai Baba promises to take audiences on a profound journey of faith and transformation. Rooted in the timeless teachings of Sai Baba, the show is set to be enriched further with the presence of veteran actor and revered performer Sachin Pilgaonkar, who steps in as the sutradhar (the narrator) and guiding voice of the show. As the narrator, Sachin will guide viewers through each episode, helping them understand how Sai Baba's simple yet powerful messages are meaningful and relevant even in today's world. His voice will emphasise the stories and highlight the values of kindness and hope.

Known for his versatility and unmatched legacy in Indian cinema and television, Sachin brings both gravitas and emotional depth to the show through his narration. His spiritual connection to Sai Baba further adds a heartfelt layer to his role as the sutradhar. Sharing his thoughts on being part of Shirdi Wale Sai Baba, Sachin says, "This isn't just another professional milestone for me, it's something deeply devotional. I've always been a devoted follower of Sai Baba and his teachings have been a constant source of strength and guidance in my life. Hence when I was asked to become the sutradhar of this show, I saw it as more than just a professional service, it felt like a heartfelt tribute towards my faith through my narration. I hope to convey the simplicity, depth and timeless relevance of Baba's wisdom, and gently remind people that his values of love, compassion, and humility are needed now more than ever before."



Visa-Free Vacations: 10 Stunning Countries Indians Can Visit Without A Visa

Let's be real — nobody enjoys visa applications. The endless paperwork, the nerve-wracking approvals, and the uncertainty? Total buzzkill. But what if you could just book your flight, pack your bags, and jet off without worrying about a visa? Well, you can! Indian passport holders have access to some incredible destinations across Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, and beyond, without a single visa form in sight. From tropical beaches to buzzing cities, here are the best visa-free countries for Indian passport holders where you can land, flash your passport, and head straight to adventure.

1. Thailand
Who doesn't love Thailand? It's got postcard-perfect beaches, buzzing markets, insane nightlife, and the best street food in the world. Indians can now enjoy visa-free entry until May 2024, making this the perfect time for that long-overdue Bangkok-Pattaya-Phuket trip. Pro tip: Skip the tourist traps and check out places like Koh Lipe and Chiang Rai for a more laid-back vibe.

2. Mauritius
If you're after powdery white beaches, turquoise waters, and Insta-worthy sunsets, Mauritius is calling. This dreamy island lets Indian travellers stay visa-free for up to 90 days. Swim with dolphins, feast on Creole cuisine, or just laze around in a luxury resort. It's basically like the Maldives, but easier on the wallet.

3. Indonesia/Bali
Isn't just a destination — it's a mood.



Think lush rice terraces, infinity pools, and beachside brunches.

4. Seychelles
Want to feel like you're on the set of a Hollywood beach movie? Seychelles is your spot. This tropical paradise gives Indian passport holders visa-free access for up to 90 days. Hike through lush jungles, snorkel with sea turtles, or just sip on a cocktail while watching the waves roll in. It's luxury, but without the visa stress.

5. Fiji
Fiji is that dreamy, faraway escape you never knew you needed. Think overwater bungalows, coral reefs, and island-hopping adventures. Indians can visit visa-free for up to 120 days — yes, FOUR whole months!

That's plenty of time to switch off, slow down, and soak in the island life.

6. Serbia
Europe always seems out of reach because of visa hassles, right? Not Serbia! This underrated Balkan gem welcomes Indian passport holders without a visa for up to 30 days. Explore the charming streets of Belgrade, soak in the nightlife, or take a road trip to Novi Sad. It's Europe, minus the Schengen stress.

7. Barbados
Looking for a sun-kissed getaway with soft sands and rum punches? Barbados offers Indians visa-free entry for 90 days.

Spend your days shopping between picture-perfect beaches, swimming with turtles, and indulging in fresh seafood. Bonus: The locals are some of the friendliest you'll ever meet!

8. Jamaica
Bob Marley's homeland welcomes Indian travellers without a visa for up to 30 days, and trust us, it's a vibe.

Whether you're chilling on Seven Mile Beach, hiking up Dunn's River Falls, or getting lost in the beats of reggae music, Jamaica is pure magic. Just don't leave without trying their famous jerk chicken!

9. Bhutan
The happiest country in the world is just next door! Bhutan allows Indians to visit without a visa — just bring your passport or voter ID. Wander through ancient monasteries, hike to Tiger's Nest, and soak in the peaceful mountain scenery. Just keep in mind the Sustainable Development Fee (SDF) you'll need to pay per day.

10. El Salvador
Not many people think of El Salvador when planning a holiday, but this underrated destination is perfect for adventure lovers. Indians can enter visa-free for up to 90 days, giving you plenty of time to surf world-class waves, explore Mayan ruins, and trek through volcanoes. It's raw, unfiltered, and refreshingly different.

Explained: The Nanda Devi Nuclear Device Mystery

In a village located in the Indian Himalayas generations of people believe that a nuclear device is buried under the snow and rocks up in Nanda Devi mountain peak. It all happened after an accident that took place back in 1965. It is believed, that nuclear device is still active and can cause a catastrophe situation in India. Locals believe that the recent Chamoli floods were triggered by the lost nuclear device.

INTRODUCTION
In 1964 China conducted its first nuclear test which alarmed the USA. During a cocktail party in Washington D.C, a photographer associated with national geographic whose name was Barry Bishop met the US air force chief Curtis LeMay. In American defense history, Curtis LeMay holds an important position he led the bombings of Japan during World War II. They both had a discussion over nuclear tests conducted by China later the US realized how important it was to top keep an eye on China's nuclear capabilities. Reportedly the area where China was conducting tests Americans lacked satellite technology in that area which means they could not spy over that area using satellites. The peaks of our Himalayan mountains were strategically very important as China was visible from there. The USA approached India to monitor activities that were being undertaken by the Chinese side. India was also interested in the offer as India recently lost a war in 1962 against China and India's immediate neighbor was arming itself with nuclear arms which led to cop-operation between India and the USA as it was in interests of both the nations. To keep an eye on Chinese nuclear activities the plan was to install a nuclear spying device on the peaks of Nanda Devi mountain peak. Nanda Devi is the second highest peak in India it is over 25,643 ft above sea level.

PLANNING AND EXECUTION OF MISSION
Manmohan Singh Kholi in the mountaineering history of India has made a great contribution. He led India's first successful mountain climbing team to Mount Everest in 1965. He didn't know what kind of mission was waiting for him. American CIA and Indian Intelligence



Bureau came on board. The mountaineers of India and America who were supposed to undertake this mission were assembled in Alaska, the USA at mount Mckinley where those mountaineers were trained under vigorous circumstances. Mount Mckinley is the highest peak in North America. The nuclear spying device was supposed to be installed on the peak of Nanda Devi mountain the device was around 56 kilograms heavy along with it an 8-10 feet antenna, transceivers, and snap generator were also to be carried to the peak. Reportedly the snap generator was half the size of the bomb dropped in Hiroshima and 7 plutonium devices were also carried to the peak. In an interview, Manmohan Singh Kholi revealed that along with mountaineers, porters, sherpas, nuclear experts, intelligence officers, signal experts, and communicators also accompanied them. In October 1965 when the team was about to reach the end of the summit a misfortune struck, when the team reached camp IV at 24,000 feet the team met with a snow blizzard. As captain of the group Manmohan Singh Kholi had to take a quick decision he told the team to secure the device by making caves and putting the device inside that cave and tying it with ropes and securing it with batons both the Indian and American intelligence officers were happy with the arrangement and the team came back as it was not possible to continue with the mission due to bad weather conditions.

ACCIDENT THAT TOOK PLACE

In 1966 the team returned back and they found that the device was missing the ropes were broken and things have fallen due to an avalanche triggered by a snow blizzard causing panic among intelligence agencies of India and the USA. The question still remains where the device vanished this mystery could not be solved to date.

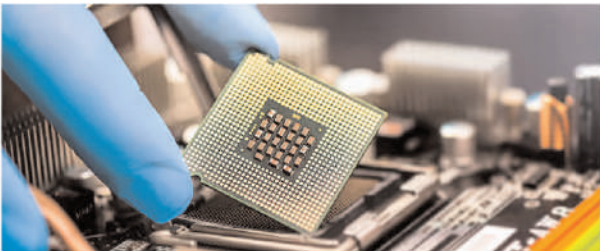
In 1967, near Nanda Devi peak another device was installed on Nanda Kot. But the whereabouts of the 1965 nuclear device could not be found. A nuclear device along with a plutonium device was lost in the mountains. Plutonium is a dangerous element. Till 1974 Nanda Devi peak and surrounding Nanda Devi sanctuary were closed for expeditions. Remember this was a secret operation but it remained a secret till the late 1970's only as later international media started reporting about it. After which then Indian Prime Minister Morarji Desai acknowledged this operation in the Indian Parliament. From 1965 till now a few search operations took place but nothing was found. The water samples were tested for radioactivity. Some reports suggest that in 1993 a team found a round steel case in which the Plutonium devices were being carried.

It is assumed that plutonium devices got separated from the steel protection. In this mission, Plutonium Pu238 was used whose half-life or radioactive isotope to decay is around 88 years which means around 30-35 years are still left.

Has India found it's footing in the semiconductor industry?

Three years ago on December 15, India embarked on a bold journey to carve a place for itself in the global semiconductor industry — an endeavour it had struggled to realize over the past seven decades. The COVID-19 pandemic-induced semiconductor supply chain disruptions were a wake-up call for nations worldwide, highlighting the need for self-reliance in this critical industry. Semiconductors, integral to everything from consumer products to defence and space, emerged as a strategic commodity that could shape the geopolitics of the future. Countries with robust semiconductor ecosystems would inevitably command a stronger voice on the global stage. But how did India tackle this Herculean task?

Laying the Groundwork
Former Minister of State for Electronics and IT, Rajeev Chandrasekhar, who played a key role in shaping the Semicon India Programme, shared insights with Fortune India on how the government laid the foundation for this transformative mission. "The very important starting point was the political leadership of our country recognizing the opportunity



semiconductor value chain represented for India, and the fact that the Prime Minister immediately sanctioned those \$10 billion and approved the policy in the cabinet," recalls Chandrasekhar. Beginning in 2014, the government focused on electronics assembly and gradually expanded its efforts through various production-linked incentive (PLI) schemes including mobile phones, electronics and IT. These initiatives aimed to attract global players and bolster India's electronics manufacturing capabilities, creating a fertile ground for semiconductor investments.

The Semicon India programme approved by the union government on December 15, 2021, offered competitive incentives at 50% for setting up fabs, testing and packing plants, compound fabs, display fabs among others to lure semiconductor manufacturers. Individual

states provided additional support of about 20-25% over the centre's subsidy, making it a combined subsidy of about 70-75%.

Even after being called as one of the best and competitive subsidies in the semiconductor ecosystem by experts, India's lack of semiconductor expertise and its history of failed attempts loomed as significant challenges. "The semiconductor CEOs are the most cynical, because in 2021, 2021 and 2023, every country was wooing every semiconductor company. So, they had heard every pitch, they had met every country," Chandrasekhar admitted. "They remembered India as a country with poor roads, unreliable power, and inadequate infrastructure."

Changing Perceptions
To overcome these doubts, Chandrasekhar personally led presentations to global semiconductor leaders.

Dilwara Jain Temple - Marble Stone Craft At Its Best



Dilwara Jain Temples is one of the finest Jain temple known world over for its extraordinary architecture and marvelous marble stone carvings, some experts also consider it architecturally superior to the Taj Mahal. It seems fairly basic temple from outside but every cloud has a silver lining, the temple interior showcases the extraordinary work of human craftsmanship at its best. These temples were built between 11th to 13th century AD. The beautiful lush green hills surrounding the temple gives a very pleasant feeling. The ornamental details of marble stone carvings is phenomenal and unmatched. The minutely carved ceilings and the pillars are just amazing. All this was done at a time when no transport or roads were available at a height of 1200+ Mtrs in Mount Abu. Huge blocks of marble stones were transported on

elephant backs from the Arasoori Hills at Ambaji to this remote hill region of Mount Abu. Dilwara temples is also a popular Jain pilgrimage attraction. Dilwara Temple complex consist of five major sections or temples devoted to five Jain trithankaras (saints): Shri Mahaveer Swami Temple - This temple was constructed in 1582 and is devoted to Lord Mahaveer the 24th Tirthankara of Jain's, this temple is relatively small the temple's upper walls have pictures of the porch painted by craftsmen of sirohi in year 1764. Shri Adinath Temple or Vimal Vasahi Temple - This temple is build by Vimal Shah, Minister of Solanki ruler of Gujarat in 1031 A.D., this temple is the oldest of all and dedicated to Shri Adinath Ji - The first Jain trithankar, the temple has an open courtyard surrounded by corridors all beautifully decorated with marble carved stones.

India's Harmonious Relations Worldwide

The Ministry of External Affairs (India) (MEA), also known as the Foreign Ministry, is the government agency responsible for the conduct of foreign relations of India. With the world's third largest military expenditure, fourth largest armed force, fifth largest economy by GDP nominal rates and third largest economy in terms of purchasing power parity, India is a prominent regional power, a nuclear power, an emerging global power and a potential superpower. India assumes a growing international influence and a prominent voice in global affairs.

As a former British colony, India is a member of the Commonwealth of Nations and continues to maintain relationships with other Commonwealth countries. Since gaining independence from Britain in 1947, however, India is now classified as a newly industrialized country and has cultivated an extensive network of foreign relations with other states. As a member state of BRICS - a repertoire of emerging major economies that also encompasses Brazil, Russia, China and South Africa, India also exerts a salient influence as the founding member of the Non-Aligned Movement. In recent decades, India has pursued a more expansive foreign policy that



encompasses the neighborhood first policy embodied by SAARC as well as the Look East policy to forge more extensive economic and strategic relationships with other East Asian countries. Moreover, India was one of the founding members of several international organizations — the United Nations, the Asian Development Bank, New Development Bank, BRICS, and G-20, widely considered the main economic locus of emerging and developed nations. India has also played an important and influential role in other international organizations like East Asia Summit, World Trade Organization, International Monetary Fund (IMF), G8+5 and IBSA Dialogue Forum. India is also a member of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

Regionally, India is a part of SAARC and BIMSTEC.

India has taken part in several UN peacekeeping missions, and as of June 2020, is the fifth-largest troop contributor. India is currently seeking a permanent seat in the UN Security Council, along with the other G4 nations.

HISTORY OF INDIAN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

India's international influence varied over the years after independence. Indian prestige and moral authority were high in the 1950s and facilitated the acquisition of developmental assistance from both East and West. Although the prestige stemmed from India's nonaligned stance, the nation was unable to prevent Cold War politics from becoming intertwined with interstate relations in South Asia. On the intensely debated Kashmir issue with Pakistan, India lost credibility by rejecting United Nations calls for a plebiscite in the disputed area.

Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve

"Tadoba" is taken from the name of the god "Tadoba" or "Taru", worshipped by the tribal people who live in the dense forests of the Tadoba and Andhari region; "Andhari" refers to the Andhari river that meanders through the forest. Legend holds that Taru was a village chief who was killed in a mythological encounter with a tiger. Taru was deified and a shrine dedicated to Taru now exists beneath a large tree on the banks of Tadoba Lake. The temple is frequented by adivasis, especially during a fair held annually in the Hindu month of Pausa (December-January). The Gond kings once ruled these forests in the vicinity of the Chimur hills. Hunting was banned in 1935. Two decades later, in 1955, 116.54 square kilometres (45.00 sq mi) of

this forest area was declared a national park. Andhari Wildlife Sanctuary was created in the adjacent forests in 1986. In 1995, the park and the sanctuary were merged to establish the present tiger reserve. Tadoba Andhari Reserve is the largest national park in Maharashtra. The total area of the reserve is 625.4 square kilometres (241.5 sq mi). This includes Tadoba National Park, with an area of 116.55 square kilometres (45.00 sq mi) and Andhari Wildlife Sanctuary with an area of 508.85 square kilometres (196.47 sq mi). The reserve also includes 32.51 square kilometres (12.55 sq mi) of protected forest and 14.93 square kilometres (5.76 sq mi) of uncategorised land. To the southwest is the 120 hectares (300 acres) Tadoba Lake



which acts as a buffer between the park's forest and the extensive farmland which extends up to Irai water reservoir.

This lake is a perennial water source which offers a good habitat for Muggar crocodiles to thrive. Other wetland areas within the reserve include Kolsa Lake and the Andhari river.

Tadoba Reserve covers the Chimur Hill, and the Andhari sanctuary covers the Moharli and Kolsa ranges.

Nearest village from this place is Durgapur.

It is bounded on the northern and western sides by densely forested hills. Thick forests are relieved by smooth meadows and deep valleys as the terrain slopes from north to south. Cliffs, talus, and caves provide refuge for several animals. The two forested rectangles are formed of the Tadoba and Andhari ranges.

The south part of the park is less hilly than the remainder. Winters stretch from November to February; during this season, daytime temperatures are in the 25°–30° C range and the park is lush green. While summers are extremely hot in Tadoba, with the temperature rising to 47° C, it is the ideal time to sight mammals near lakes as vegetation is minimal.

Gulzarilal Nanda: A true Gandhian who preferred life away from spotlight

By Sanjay Mishra
A simple man to the core who consigned himself to a spot away from public glare and preferred a life away from the spotlight and took up living in a nondescript locality, was thrown out of the one-room abode by the landlord for his failure to pay rent over a few months. He pleaded with the landlord that he would clear the rent dues shortly, but the latter remained unmoved. Neighbors who knew the man as just another denizen of their ilk also requested the landlord who ultimately yielded to the request and let the 94-year old tenant stay but on 'or else' terms. His worldly possessions comprised a cot, a plastic bucket and some necessary aluminum utensils plus Rs 500 per month as pension. A journalist passing by the scene of the pandemonium gauged the situation and his heart tugged him. The scribe decided to write a feature in the newspaper with the headline he coined on the spot, 'Cruel landlord kicks old man



editor asked the journalist if he knew the old man and the scribe expressed ignorance. The next day, the news appeared on the front page of the newspaper, headlined, 'Former Prime Minister of India Gulzarilal Nanda living pathetic life.' The news mentioned how the former Prime Minister unable to pay house rent was thrown out of the house and added that Gulzarilal Nanda had initially reject a monthly allowance of Rs 500 insisting that he would not touch the money that was allocated for freedom

fighters. However, after contentions of friends, he accepted the pension and that became his only source of income with which he paid house rent and led his life on the measly left over of the Rs 500.

After the news was flashed in print, the then Prime Minister sent ministers and high officials along with a carcade to the colony where Nanda lived and it was then that people knew who the man actually was. The landllord bowed at the former Prime Minister's feet and prayed for pardon. The ministers and officials' urgings resulted in the former two-time Prime Minister and central cabinet minister through several terms, with, "What is the use of such facilities for an old man?"

Gulzarilal Nanda, till his last breath, led a life of common citizens in true Gandhian manner. He was awarded the nation's highest civilian award, the Bharat Ratna in 1997. A true tribute to a human being who believed in 'Simple Living and High Thinking'.