



# Aryan Age

The Age of Truth

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## Terrorists attacked soul of India, guilty to face punishment beyond their imagination: PM



**Madhubani:** In his first public expression against the Pahalgam terror attack two days ago, Prime Minister

Narendra Modi on Thursday issued a stern warning that terrorists and conspirators involved in the ghastly

incident will face punishment "beyond their imagination".

"The Pahalgam terror attack is an attack on the soul of India and every peace-loving person is in favour of strong action against the culprits," Modi said, adding that those involved in the act, would be identified, tracked and punished. "No one would be spared", he warned.

"Those involved in the attack would be chased till end of the earth," he said.

At least 27 tourists from across the country and a local died in a dastardly attack by

terrorists in the picturesque tourist destination of J&K's Pahalgam on April 22, drawing worldwide condemnation and anger in the country.

While addressing a public meeting in Bihar's Madhubani, the Prime Minister said the entire country was united and was deeply disturbed by the gruesome act of terrorists.

The PM said people from different parts of India were in Pahalgam when they were attacked by terrorists. Those who lost their lives were from

various states and spoke different languages, he said, adding the dead also included one person from Bihar.

The PM thanked all world leaders and people of their countries who stood with India in condemning the Pahalgam terror attack. Those injured in terror attack were being given the best medical treatment to ensure their early recovery, he added.

The public meeting addressed by the Prime Minister was his first after the Pahalgam terror attack.

## Stopping Indus Water Treaty will be considered an act of war

### Pakistan responds to India

**Islamabad:** Pakistan today warned that any move by India to divert the flow of the Indus river waters will be considered as "an act of war".

This was decided at the National Security Committee (NSC) -- the top civil-military decision-making body - meeting chaired by Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday.

As part of its immediate response to India's downgrading of ties, the Pakistani government announced the restriction of the Indian High Commission's diplomatic staff in Islamabad to a maximum of 30 personnel, effective April 30.

Pakistan has also closed its airspace to all Indian-owned or operated flights with immediate effect.

The committee also decided to suspend all forms of trade with India, including those routed through third countries.

Furthermore, it announced the immediate closure of the

Wagah Border crossing.

The NSC vowed that Pakistan would respond to India's hostile actions with full national strength, declaring that the nation and its armed forces are fully prepared to counter any form of aggression, Geo News reported.

Islamabad's response comes after India's Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) laid out five measures which New Delhi has termed as "decisive response to cross-border terrorism".

India yesterday announced suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty, a water-sharing agreement between India and Pakistan, facilitated by the World Bank.

It gives India control over the three eastern rivers (Ravi, Beas and Sutlej) of the Indus basin while it gives Pakistan authority over the three western rivers (Indus, Jhelum and Chenab).

The other measures announced by India include



the immediate closure of the Integrated Check Post Attari as well as the issuance of a deadline for Pakistanis to leave the country before May 1, 2025.

Also, Pakistani nationals will not be permitted to travel to India under the SAARC Visa Exemption Scheme (SVES) and any SVES visas issued in the past to Pakistani nationals are now deemed cancelled.

Any Pakistani national currently in India under an SVES visa has 48 hours to leave India.

India announced the moves following the Pahalgam terror attack in which 26 tourists were gunned down by Pakistan-linked terrorists.

### Pahalgam attack: India suspends visa service to Pakistani nationals with immediate effect



**New Delhi:** Continuing its strong action against Pakistan in the aftermath of the Pahalgam terror attack, India today decided to suspend visa services to Pakistani nationals with immediate effect.

It also said that all existing valid visas issued by India to Pakistani nationals stand revoked with effect from April 27, 2025. Medical visas issued to Pakistani nationals will be valid only till April 29, 2025.

All Pakistani nationals currently in India must leave India before the expiry of visas, as now amended.

Indian nationals are strongly advised to avoid

travelling to Pakistan. Those Indian nationals currently in Pakistan are also advised to return to India at the earliest, it said.

India on Wednesday downgraded its diplomatic ties with Pakistan, and announced it was suspending the Indus Waters Treaty, shutting down the Attari land border check post, and banning the entry of Pakistani nationals under the Saarc Visa programme. India also asked the defence advisors in the Pakistan High Commission to leave immediately, after terming them Persona Non Grata, and slashed the number of mission staff to 30 from 55.

## Pahalgam: Police release sketches of 2 Pakistanis, one local; 1,500 detained

Srinagar, Apr 24 (UNI) Even as J&K police have released sketches of three terrorists, including two Pakistani nationals, allegedly involved in the Pahalgam terror attack, over 1,500 suspects have been detained for questioning as part of the ongoing investigation, top security officials said on Thursday.

In one of the deadliest terror attacks in J&K, 25 tourists and a local resident were shot dead on Tuesday at Baisaran meadow in Pahalgam. The attack plunged the nation into mourning. Police on Thursday released sketches of three attackers and identified them as Adil Hussain Thokar from Anantnag and two Pakistanis Ali Bahi alias Talha Bahi and Hashim Musa alias Suleman.

Meanwhile, in a major crackdown around 1,500 suspects have been detained from several districts of the



Police announced a reward Rs 20 Lakh each for anyone sharing information or leads about the Pahalgam attack. "The three are involved in the terrorist attack on civilians in Baisaran Pahalgam," police said. The Resistance Front (TRF), a proxy of the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba, has claimed responsibility for the attack on tourists.

Meanwhile, in a major crackdown around 1,500 suspects have been detained from several districts of the

valley for questioning during the probe of the Pahalgam attack. A top police officer said that those detained include suspected overground workers (OGWs) and those with prior records linked to militant activities. The case is currently being handled by the J&K Police and it has already registered a case at police station Pahalgam. The National Investigation Agency is likely to take over the investigation of the case in the coming days.

## CWC condemns Pahalgam terror attack, adopts resolution demanding probe into security lapses

**New Delhi:** The Congress Working Committee (CWC) on Thursday held an emergency meeting during which it strongly condemned the terror attack on tourists in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, and also expressed grave concern over the security lapses that allowed such an attack to occur.

The CWC, attended by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, ex-Congress president Sonia Gandhi, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and members of the Working Committee, paid tribute to the 26 people killed in the terror attack.

The CWC also adopted a resolution holding Pakistan responsible for

masterminding the terror attack, describing it as a direct assault on the values of the Indian Republic.

It also expressed grave concern over the security lapses in a region known for its heavy security and three-tier protection system.

Before the meeting began, the CWC observed a two-minute silence as tribute to the victims of the Pahalgam attack.

Later addressing the media, party leaders KC Venugopal, Jairam Ramesh and Pawan Khara, said that the CWC adopted a resolution expressing its deepest shock and condemnation of the heinous terrorist attack in Pahalgam.

The resolution adopted by the CWC said, "This cowardly and calculated act of terror,

mastermind by Pakistan, is a direct assault on the values of our Republic. The deliberate targeting of Hindus was done to inflame passions across the country," the resolution read,



while appealing the people to "remain calm in the face of this grave provocation and reaffirming the collective strength in the face of adversity".

The resolution demanded a comprehensive inquiry into the intelligence failures and

security breaches, especially since the area falls under the direct jurisdiction of the Union Home Ministry.

With the Amarnath Yatra set to begin soon, the CWC

safety of pilgrims, as well as the livelihoods of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, many of whom depend on tourism, must be protected with full sincerity and seriousness," the CWC resolution said.

The resolution also slammed the BJP, accusing the party of politicising the tragedy. "The BJP is exploiting this grave tragedy through official and proxy social media platforms to sow further discord, mistrust, polarisation, and division at a time when unity and solidarity are most needed," the resolution said.

Meanwhile, the party will hold a candlelight march across the nation on Friday, at state and district levels, against the Pahalgam terror attack and against terrorism.

### Army jawan martyred in gunfight with terrorists in Udhampur



**Jammu:** A soldier was martyred in a gunfight between security forces and terrorists on Thursday in Udhampur district of Jammu and Kashmir, security sources said.

Official sources said that a brief contact was established between security forces and terrorists when a search operation was launched on specific inputs about the movement of terrorists in the forest belt of Latti in Dudu-Basantgarh area of Udhampur.

The terrorists fired upon the search team and it was

retaliated. The White Knight Corps of Indian Army in a post on X said that based on specific intelligence, a joint operation with police was launched on Thursday in Basantgarh, Udhampur.

"Contact was established and a fierce firefight ensued. One of our bravehearts sustained grievous injuries in the initial exchange and later succumbed despite best medical efforts," said an Army source.

The operation however, is in progress.

## SC to hold final hearing on Godhra train carnage appeals on May 6-7

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court on Thursday scheduled the final hearing of the 2018 criminal appeals in the 2002 Godhra train burning case for May 6 and 7, declaring that no other matters will be listed on those days.

A bench comprising justices J. Maheshwari and Aravind Kumar issued the order while hearing a series of appeals both by the convicts challenging their conviction, and by the State of Gujarat, which is seeking the death penalty for those whose sentences were commuted by the High Court.

Notably, the case has seen repeated adjournments, with the court previously expressing its displeasure over continuous deferrals sought by the parties.

On this occasion, the matter was not taken up as the bench was scheduled to sit only until 1 p.m. The court instead engaged with senior advocate Sanjay Hegde, representing one of the convicts, to discuss a viable date for an uninterrupted hearing.

The bench then issued a formal directive.

"The case was opened by senior counsel Sanjay Hegde, and a compilation has been filed. Along with the said, heading-wise material is not attested. However, he undertakes to revise this compilation and supply all on or before May 3,"

The court said the counsel for accused persons may take guidance from the said compilation and may prepare their own

compilations.

As stated by the counsel, the hearing of this matter is required at least for two weeks.



The court said, "First, we will take up this matter on May 6 and 7 continuously. We request the Registry to list the matter for final hearing both on May 6 and 7 and, on said dates, no other

cases would be listed."

The court also clarified that it would convene a three-judge bench on May 6. This aligns with arguments raised



earlier by Hegde, who cited Mohd. Arif vs The Reg. Supreme Court Of India & Ors (2014), asserting that a death penalty appeal mandates a larger bench.

While some questions

regarding remission were raised during the proceedings, the court reiterated its earlier stance that the power to grant remission lies with the state and is not part of the current judicial review.

The Godhra incident on February 27, 2002, led to the deaths of 58 people in a fire that engulfed the S-6 coach of the Sabarmati Express, which was carrying kar sevaks returning from Ayodhya. The tragedy sparked one of the most severe episodes of communal violence in Gujarat.

In March 2011, a trial court convicted 31 individuals, sentencing 11 to death and 20 to life imprisonment, while acquitting 63 others.

The Gujarat High Court in 2017 commuted the 11

death sentences to life terms and upheld the life sentences for the remaining 20.

The Supreme Court has since handled multiple bail applications.

In 2022, it granted interim bail to Abdul Raheman Dhantiya due to his wife's terminal illness and his daughters' mental health conditions, later extending his bail.

Similarly, in December 2022, it granted bail to convict Farook, who had already served 17 years and was found to be involved only in stone-pelting.

In April 2023, eight other life convicts were granted bail, while four were denied the same. In August 2023, the court rejected bail for three convicts due to the specific roles they played in the incident.





**Madhubani:** Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Thursday reiterated in presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi that he would not make another “U” turn, a reference of his assurance for not deserting NDA again.

# Will not make another “U” turn Nitish says before PM

in August 22 and also on one more occasion earlier, he added.

Chief Minister said that on advice of some leaders of his party JD(U), he had committed the mistake in deserting

NDA and joining hands with RJD. One of the leaders who had given such advice, was present on the dais itself, he asserted in his own style

next Bihar assembly elections. Few months back, RJD chief Lalu Prasad had also offered Chief Minister Kumar to come together for working in the interest of Bihar. Door for Nitish was always open, Lalu had remarked.

Kumar had first deserted NDA to join hands with RJD in 2013 and formed Grand Alliance government after

## Siddaramaiah urges Centre to crush terrorism after Pahalgam attack

**Bengaluru:** Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Thursday visited the Bengaluru residence of one of the Pahalgam terror attack victims to offer condolences, and called upon the Central Government to take decisive action to eliminate terrorism.

Siddaramaiah said that it is the Centre's responsibility to ensure national security, and assured that the state government would extend full support in suppressing terrorist activities across the country.

“It is the responsibility of the Central Government to completely eliminate terrorists. Our Government will fully support the Centre in completely suppressing terrorist activities in the country and defeating terrorists,” Siddaramaiah said, in the wake of three Kannadigas falling victim in the Pahalgam terror attack. The Chief Minister visited the residence of one of the victims, Bharat Bhushan, a well-educated youth from Mattikere, to pay his last respects and offer condolences to the bereaved family. “The terrorist attack is an inhuman act. Killing innocent people in broad daylight, in front of their families, is a heinous act,” he said. Drawing parallels with previous incidents, Siddaramaiah added, “Pulwama and Balakot incidents have happened in Kashmir in the past, and such attacks recurring again indicate possible lapses in Central Intelligence.” The



other victims from Karnataka were Manjunath Rao and Madhusudan. Home Minister Ramalinga Reddy met the families of Bhushan and Rao in Bengaluru and Shivamogga respectively. Minister Madhu Bangarappa instructed officials to extend full cooperation to the bereaved families. The government has announced an ex gratia of Rs 10 lakh each to the families of the deceased. Labour Minister Santosh Lad, along with a team of officials, was despatched to Kashmir to assist Kannadigas stranded in the valley and facilitate the return of the victims' mortal remains. “A total of 175 Kannadigas are being brought back to the state safely. It is the duty of the government to protect Kannadigas in distress,” Siddaramaiah said.

He also noted that while the Central Government had initiated some steps following the incident, the State Government would offer complete cooperation for any further counter-terror operations.

“The entire country stands with the family of Bhushan in this hour of grief. I pray to God that the departed soul may rest in peace,” he added.

## Grief, anger all around, says Shanta Kumar



**Palampur :** Former Chief Minister and former Union minister Shanta Kumar said on Thursday that the entire country is shocked by the Pahalgam massacre. He said there was not only grief but also anger all around.

He said it is a harsh truth that local help facilitated foreign infiltration. He said the government has now arrested 1,500 suspects and they were being questioned.

Kumar said that a few months ago, four foreign terrorists were caught from Reasi and Bandipur and the names of terrorists were disclosed by them during interrogation and a large amount of arms and ammunition were also recovered from them.

Kumar said it was surprising that despite security agencies having received information about terrorist activities, such an inhuman incident took place. “It raises some questions about the present government.”

The veteran BJP leader said that according to information, security agencies were told that about 60 terrorists were active in Kashmir valley. Whenever such terrorist incidents have happened, the biggest reason cited was the help of local sources, he added.

He attributed the Pahalgam incident to the failure of intelligence agencies.

# Hamirpur boils over terrorist attack in Pahalgam

**Hamirpur:** Being one with the sentiments of the people of the whole country against the terrorist attack in Pahalgam, the society on Thursday demonstrated its angry feelings in various areas of Hamirpur district.

In the protest rally organized at Gandhi Chowk in Hamirpur, where the effigy of terrorism was burnt, anti-Pakistan and anti-terrorism slogans were also raised.

Panjab Bhartiya, State Co-Minister of Vishwa Hindu Parishad Himachal Pradesh, strongly condemned this incident. He said that this heinous massacre is unforgivable and the Indian Army should retaliate immediately. He said that the way this massacre has been done on the basis of religion, it

reflects the mentality of a particular group.

He reiterated the resolution of Vishwa Hindu Parishad to make Himachal free from conversion and appealed to the public to cooperate in this.

He alleged, “People of a particular community are waiting to capture our businesses, our homes, and they should be completely opposed.” He urged the local residents not to give their business, houses and shops to these people with Jihadi mentality.

Saint Gaur Chandra Das of ISKCON also taught everyone to follow the path of religion. He said that Ahimsa Paramo Dharma is one line, Dharma Hinsna Taithaav Cha Vichar Hain. He clarified that the basis of

religion is the nation, if the nation is safe, then religion will also be safe and temples will also be safe.

He appealed to everyone



to take initiative to create a harmonious society by getting free from the bonds of caste. Department coordinator of Vidyarthi Parishad Neha Kumari awakened everyone to the various dangers looming in

the society.

She said that Sanatan society works by considering each other's pain as its own pain and this feeling makes it

their shops to anyone without registration and police verification so that such incidents do not take place in Devbhoomi Himachal Pradesh.

Rajya Sabha MP Sikandar, MLA Ashish Sharma, Indra Dutt Lakhnarpal, former MLA Rajendra Rana, Kamlesh Kumari, Vijay Agnihotri, BJP District President Rakesh Thakur, District Minister of Vishwa Hindu Parishad Sher Singh Thakur, District Organization Minister of Vidyarthi Parishad Abhilash, Kuldeep Sharma from Hindu Raksha Manch, Sumit Singh Thakur from Rajput Sabha along with hundreds of workers from various sections and communities of the society participated.

## UP: Policeman commits suicide inside station premises in Rampur



**Rampur:** A 40-year-old police personnel, posted at Ganj police station, shot himself with his service revolver and committed suicide inside the premises in Rampur district here in Uttar Pradesh, police sources said here.

Police sources said that Mohammad Umar, who was posted as head clerk in Ganj police station, shot himself and committed suicide in Maal Khana inside the

station. “Umar, a resident of Joya, lived in a rented house in PWD Colony. He was posted in different police stations in Rampur for the last six years and became the head clerk one and a half years ago,” they said. Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Atul Srivastava said that head clerk Mohammad Umar committed suicide by shooting himself in the Ganj police station premises.

“Further legal action will be taken after finding out the reasons of the incident,” he said. SP Vidya Sagar Mishra said that during the inspection of the incident spot, a hand written suicide note was recovered from the pocket of the deceased. He said that the letter left by Umar stated, “I Mohammad Umaram committing suicide without blaming anyone. The police chief of Rampur is a very nice person. My elder brother and younger brother, please forgive me and raise my children like your own children. I am under a lot of mental stress, my brain has become dull. I do not remember anything. Police Chief Vidya Sagar Mishra please help my family.”

## Border tourism to be promoted in Kinnaur with ITBP support: CM Sukhu

Shimla, Apr 24 (UNI) To allay fears among tourists in the wake of Pahalgam massacre, the ITBP may play a role of tourist-friendly force in forward posts along India-Tibet border, Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu said here on Thursday.

“We are planning to promote forward tourist destinations in Kinnaur district with the active support of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP),” Sukhu told media after a meeting with ITBP's Frontier Commander Sanjay Gunjyal at the state secretariat.

The meeting focused on transforming forward regions such as Chitkul, Sangla Valley, Kaurik, and Nako into adventure and cultural tourism hotspots, while also ensuring visitor safety through ITBP infrastructure and personnel.

Speaking to media after the meeting, the Chief Minister said, “We are working to open up forward areas to tourism by



leveraging ITBP's presence and infrastructure. This includes utilizing ITBP helpads, medical facilities, and routes for tourism and emergency services.” He emphasized that coordination with ITBP's regional response centers will enhance disaster preparedness and security in high-altitude regions. “Tourists

will soon be able to explore destinations previously out of reach, under a safe and structured model supported by our brave border forces,” he added. The discussions also touched upon strengthening the rural economy in border villages by enabling ITBP to procure local produce such as fruits, vegetables, and dairy directly from farmers and orchardists. This initiative is expected to create local employment and support agri-based tourism ventures. Commander Gunjyal informed the Chief Minister about progress on three new roads under the Virbent Village Development Programme, including proposed connectivity to forward posts in Sangla and Kaurik. He also shared details about 15 additional road projects intended to improve access to

remote and strategically important areas.

Chief Minister Sukhu instructed state officials to expedite the installation of communication towers and complete all formalities for upcoming construction work, giving priority to local contractors and workers. Revenue Minister Jagat Singh Negi, Deputy Chief Minister Mukesh Agnihotri (virtually), Himfed Chairman Buddhi Singh Thakur, ITBP DIG Pawan Kumar Negi, and other senior officers were present at the meeting.

In view of increasing tourist inflow and recent security concerns, the Chief Minister also discussed the possibility of deploying Central paramilitary forces at key tourist sites like Shimla, Manali, Dalhousie, and McLeodganj.

## ‘One Nation, One Election’ need of the hour: Pankaj Chaudhary

**Maharajganj :** Union Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary on Thursday said that ‘One



Nation, One Election’ is the need of the hour and it will not only save resources in the country but will also increase the pace of development.

Addressing a traders conference organised on the topic of ‘One Nation, One Election’ at his residential camp office, the minister said that frequent elections lead to wastage of energy and resources of the administration. “If simultaneous elections are

held in the country, it will accelerate policy-making along with political stability,” he said.

He appealed to the business class to support this initiative. He highlighted various aspects of ‘One Nation, One Election’ and called it a necessary step in the interest of the country. A large number of businessmen, social workers and dignitaries were present on this occasion.

Through this conference, the business community was made aware of the concept of ‘One Nation, One Election’, and its wide benefits were discussed. The programme was chaired by businessman Suresh Rungta, Pashupatinath Gupta, Phoolchand Agarwal, Anil Kasaudhan and Rampreet Gupta were present on the stage as special guests.

## Govt failed to ensure security of tourists: Akhilesh

**Lucknow:** Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav on Thursday while condemning the terrorist incident in J&K's Pahalgam, said the Central government, which has failed to protect tourists, should take strict action against the terrorists.

In a press conference held at the party's state office, Akhilesh said that terrorists have no religion. “The government has called an all-party meeting on Pahalgam. The party's national chief general secretary Prof Ram Gopal Yadav will represent the SP,” he said.

He said that no party should take political advantage from such a gruesome incident because it is a matter of national interest. “It is also the responsibility of the government to immediately stop any kind of fake news that hurts our internal and

external security and keep a close watch on social media,” he said.

The SP chief said the government took decisions



in the Kashmir valley as per its discretion and now it was the responsibility of the government to take care of the safety of the tourists going to Kashmir.

“The place in Pahalgam where terrorists fired on innocent tourists was not a deserted place, but no arrangements were made there for the safety of the tourists. The government

will have to take this responsibility,” he said.

He said that his party welcomes the decisions taken by the government after the terrorist incident. Akhilesh reiterated that the youth of the country was not in favour of the Agniveer scheme for the armed forces. “They want permanent jobs and permanent uniforms. No matter how much budget is spent for the security of the country, we should spend it. The government should have taken even harsher decisions against terrorism and they should be implemented strictly,” he said.

Speaking in favour of Kashmiris doing business in other parts of the country, he said, “Business unites us, it has no caste or religion. This thinking flourishing on social media that Kashmiris should not be allowed to do business in other states will have to be removed.”

## ICG conducts SAR exercise off Karaikal coast

**Chennai:** The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) Regional Headquarters (East) conducted a regional-level Search and Rescue Exercise (SAREX-25) off the Karaikal coaston Thursday.

Conducted by ICGS Karraikal, the exercise simulated a major maritime distress scenario involving the ferry vessel HSC Shivgangai, which was transiting from Nagapattinam to Sri Lanka.

The primary objective was to validate the efficiency of the regional Search and Rescue (SAR) mechanism and enhance inter-agency coordination among maritime stakeholders, showcasing a united and efficient response to maritime emergencies, defence sources said.

The simulated scenario involved a fire breaking out onboard Shivgangai, resulting in multiple casualties and necessitating immediate mass rescue

operations.

The Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) was promptly activated, and ICG assets were rapidly deployed. These included ICGS Shaurya, ICGS Ameya, ICGS Annie Besant, ICGS Rani Avantibai, interceptor boats, a Dornier aircraft, and a Chetak helicopter, along with support from local authorities.

Key agencies including the Indian Navy, District Administrations of Mayiladuthurai, Nagapattinam and Karaikal, Fire and Rescue Services, Customs, Port Authorities, and medical teams from local hospitals actively participated in the exercise.

The joint efforts demonstrated a seamless and professional multi-agency response.

Live demonstrations of firefighting, medical evacuation, and triage simulations were executed with high precision during the exercise.

Deputy Inspector General S.S. Dasila, Commander of Coast Guard District Headquarters No.13, emphasized the critical importance of inter-agency coordination and the ICG's pivotal role in saving lives at sea.

He said such exercises are essential for maintaining readiness and enhancing capabilities to safeguard life and property in maritime zones.

The exercise concluded with a comprehensive debrief, highlighting lessons learned and best practices, thereby reaffirming ICG's unwavering commitment to maritime safety and swift response to distress situations at sea.

The event was graced by Soma Shekhar Appa Rao, District Collector of Karaikal, and T Aakash, District Collector of Nagapattinam, along with other dignitaries from the civil administration and stakeholder agencies.

# UP govt launches plan to train 30K youth in solar energy sector

**Lucknow:** The Uttar Pradesh government has launched a new plan to train and employ 30,000 youth in the solar energy sector in order to help them become self-reliant in the future by 2027, official sources said here on Thursday.

Sources said the initiative is being carried out by the UP New and Renewable Energy Development Agency (UPNEDA), in collaboration with the National Institute

for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (NIMSME) and the Union Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.

“The initiative is equipping youth across the state with solar technology skills to help them become self-reliant in the future,” they said.

Sources said that recognising the rising demand in the solar energy sector, the state government

envisions a wave of new job opportunities for youth in roles such as installation technicians, maintenance engineers and site supervisors.

“To meet this emerging need, special training programmes are being rolled out to equip young people with the necessary skills,” they said.

Sources said that UPNEDA, along with the NIMSME and the Ministry of Skill Development, is



training vendors under the ‘Surya Ghar’ scheme. “So far, nearly 1,800

people have been trained. In addition, programmes like Surya Mitra Training, Solar

Shops and the Surya Sakhi Yojana are also being implemented. These schemes aim to provide training and jobs not only to youth, but also to women in rural areas. The government's goal is to make UP self-reliant in solar energy while also empowering women and youth economically,” they said.

Sources said that UP has set a target to produce 22,000 megawatts of solar energy

by 2027. “To meet this goal, specific production targets have been allocated across different sectors. The government aims to generate 4,500 MW from residential rooftop solar systems, 1,500 MW from non-residential rooftops, 2,000 MW through the PM-KUSUM scheme for farmers, and the largest share of 14,000 MW from utility-scale solar projects,” they said.

Sources said that under the PM-KUSUM scheme,

farmers are being provided with solar-powered pumps, which not only reduce irrigation costs but also offer them the opportunity to earn additional income by selling surplus energy.

“Similarly, under the rooftop solar scheme, both residential and commercial buildings are being encouraged to install solar panels, helping users meet their own electricity needs while cutting power bills,” they said.





Briefs :

Two men stabbed to death in NW Delhi

**New Delhi :** Two men were fatally stabbed, and a third was injured near a traffic signal at Azadpur Sabzi Mandi in north west Delhi's Adarsh Nagar on Monday. Police said they received information at Adarsh Nagar police station from BJRM Hospital at 12.45 am about two individuals who were brought in with stab wounds. "Our team immediately reached the hospital and found that two men, Kamal (40), a driver from Mahendra Park, and Amzad (42), a resident of Shakurpur, sustained single stab wounds and were declared dead on arrival," said a police, adding, "A third victim, Abid (26), sustained a stab injury to his right hand while attempting to protect himself and is currently undergoing treatment." A case was registered under sections 103 (murder) and 109 (attempt to murder) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.

Delhi Police bust drug syndicate, seize heroin worth over Rs 50 lakh

**New Delhi :** In a significant blow to drug trafficking operations in the capital, the Delhi Police Crime Branch dismantled a narcotics network, arresting a prime suspect and confiscating heroin worth over ₹50 lakh in the illicit market. The crackdown began on April 4 with the arrest of a suspected drug courier, identified as Imran, in Kabir Nagar. He was caught transporting 315 grams of heroin in a vehicle. Authorities subsequently registered a case under the provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. Based on leads obtained during Imran's questioning, investigators uncovered links to a man known as Suraj, who also goes by Raja or Thakur. The 40-year-old, a resident of New Usman Pur, was apprehended by Crime Branch personnel on April 21 near the Shastri Park flyover on Pusta Road. He was allegedly attempting to deliver 97 grams of heroin while riding a motorcycle. Further probe into Suraj's background revealed a criminal track record, with at least five previous cases involving robbery and snatching.

Delhi to convert old buses into retail shops at bus terminals to boost local business

**New Delhi :** Delhi govt will repurpose old buses beyond their operational life as retail shops at the inter-state bus terminals at Kashmere Gate, Anand Vihar and Sarai Kale Khan. The public-private partnership (PPP) model aims to boost local business opportunities and make creative use of defunct vehicles, with the refurbished stationary buses being used by vendors. The move aims to provide better snack facilities at the transport hubs at Kashmere Gate, Anand Vihar and Sarai Kale Khan, keeping in mind the lack of eating and drinking areas there, especially at Anand Vihar and Sarai Kale Khan. The transport department initiated the process with a notice inviting tenders: "Establishment of shops in old DTC buses at ISBT Kashmere Gate, Anand Vihar, and Sarai Kale Khan." As per the document, the contractor will be required to notify the municipality, police and other authorities, obtain requisite licences and pay all applicable fees and taxes. They will also have to repair any damage caused to adjoining public or private properties and maintain adequate lighting at night for safety. Sources said that the contractor would have to ensure that water and sanitary installations complied with local municipal by-laws.

# Delhi on high alert, key sites under tight vigil, extra forces deployed

**New Delhi :** Following the attack in Pahalgam, security has been significantly heightened in Delhi. On Wednesday, law enforcement agencies intensified surveillance, increased deployment of personnel, and activated precautionary measures across sensitive locations to deter any potential disturbances.

The Rapid Action Force, paramilitary units, and local police were stationed near the Pakistan High Commission, where a protest was planned. Authorities ramped up patrolling and imposed limitations on public assemblies to ensure public safety. Officers were equipped with crowd-control gear, including batons and teargas launchers, to respond swiftly to any disorder.

According to a senior police official, similar preventive arrangements were made at prominent protest



sites like India Gate and Jantar Mantar, with additional forces stationed there. In South Delhi, enhanced vigilance was observed near popular tourist attractions such as the Qutub Minar.

Security was also stepped up at other notable landmarks including the Red Fort, Humayun's

Tomb, Bangla Sahib Gurdwara, Lotus Temple, Akshardham Temple, Lodhi Garden, and Jama Masjid, where SWAT teams conducted regular patrols. At the city's borders, police officers conducted thorough inspections of suspicious vehicles, while drones were deployed for aerial monitoring of vul-

nerable zones.

In North Delhi, areas with heavy footfall such as the Kashmere Gate ISBT and Chandni Chowk were subject to intensified security measures. Law enforcement also carried out strict verification of tenants and guests in these regions. Additional precautions were taken in Sarojini

## SC slams advocate for misusing legal process

**New Delhi :** The Supreme Court delivered a strong rebuke to an advocate for repeatedly misusing the judicial system by filing baseless petitions. As a consequence, the Court imposed a penalty of ₹5 lakh for misusing the legal provision under Article 32 of the Constitution.

A bench consisting of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta voiced serious concern over the petitioner's actions. The individual, a practicing lawyer who appeared without representation, was criticized for consistently filing unfounded petitions in multiple courts, including the Supreme Court, despite having three years of legal experience.

Expressing dismay, the Bench remarked, "The



petitioner, who is an advocate and well-versed in the law, has shown audacity by filing this petition under Article 32 of the Constitution."

The Court emphasized that such misuse of the legal process wastes valuable judicial time and disrupts the functioning of the Court, while also placing undue pressure on the Registry.

It further observed that the reliefs sought in the pe-

tition were so irrational that no competent lawyer would normally present such claims under a constitutional writ.

The Bench found the petition's content and demands not only baseless but also malicious. While the Court chose not to disclose the specific reliefs requested, it condemned the petitioner's actions as irresponsible and an abuse of judicial procedure.

An attempt by the peti-

tioner to withdraw the plea was rejected. The Court cautioned that allowing such withdrawals without repercussions would encourage similar misuse by others.

"We cannot permit unconditional withdrawals of such frivolous petitions. Doing so would send a harmful message that one can file anything and escape consequences through simple withdrawal," the Court stated.

As a result, the petition was dismissed, and the advocate was ordered to pay ₹5 lakh to the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) within four weeks. Proof of payment must be submitted to the Registry within six weeks, failing which the case will be brought back before the Court.

# Woman stabbed to death, body set on fire in east Delhi flat

**New Delhi :** A 27-year-old woman was stabbed to death in east Delhi's Patparganj on Wednesday evening, following which an attempt was made to burn her body. According to police, initial investigations suggest the possible involvement of a relative in the crime.

The police control room received a call around 6pm regarding thick smoke coming out of a rented flat in the neighbourhood, and a team from the local police

station rushed to the spot.

"The caller informed us that he saw heavy smoke coming from the apartment, and upon looking inside, noticed a woman lying motionless in a burnt condition," a senior officer stated.

On entering the premises, police found the charred body of a woman lying on the floor of a room. She was immediately rushed to the nearest hospital, where doctors declared her brought dead.

The deceased lived with her family in the rented accommodation. Her body was taken to Lal Bahadur Shastri Hospital for further examination. During the postmortem inspection, doctors noted four stab wounds on her body, indicating a violent struggle before the attempt to burn her. "Preliminary findings suggest that the incident occurred while the woman was alone in the house. It appears that a man known to her entered the

flat, and following a heated argument, she was attacked and stabbed multiple times," an officer said.

In an apparent attempt to destroy evidence, the attacker tried to set the body on fire, police said. Investigators recovered an empty kerosene bottle from the site.

Police are scanning CCTV footage from the surrounding areas to determine his escape route. Multiple raids are being conducted to arrest him.

## ‘One terror act has killed our season’: Kashmir’s hospitality sector finds itself in a sudden freeze after Pahalgam horror

**New Delhi :** Until just days ago, the serene valleys of Kashmir echoed with celebratory laughter, clinking of kahwa glasses and the snapping of camera shutters. After years of unrest, the tourism industry in the region was experiencing an unprecedented revival. Families chose the mountain locale to celebrate milestone birthdays, couples honeymooned there and groups of friends headed there to spend time together. Visa delays and international travel fatigue had only accelerated a surge of tourists travelling to Kashmir. Sadly, the senseless terrorist attack at Pahalgam on Tuesday that took a huge toll of lives has brought this thriving season to a brutal and abrupt halt. What was expected to be one of the best seasons for the business now is ransom to fear and uncertainty. Manzoor Sidiq Shah, who runs Vintage Srinagar on Dal Lake, sorrowfully reflected, "Things were never this good. Our hotel was sold out since March. The peak tourist season is May-June, but the last few months have felt like peak season too. Now, this one



terrorist act will derail it all." Shah lamented that there were mass checkouts, reservation cancellations and requests for money refunds. "We were earning more than Rs 20,000 a night because of the high demand. Five star properties were charging much more. The state was thriving and we were seeing development. This dastardly act is the handiwork of the real enemies of our state who want to deprive us of livelihood," said Shah. It's not just hotels bearing the brunt of this atrocity. A local tour operator related how he booked taxis and employed young boys and girls to serve as guides and volunteers. "The cabs are reaching hotels to take guests out on prebooked activities but the guests are now reluctant to go out. They are scared,"

the operator said. "They are waiting for the next available flight to head home. All activities have come to a halt." The economy is likely to receive a big hit. Saddam Zaroof of Golden Tulip in Srinagar, a premier hotel, lamented the deeper impact on local livelihoods and morale. "This time, tourists, our livelihoods, indeed the very identity of Kashmir, were targets of terrorism. Our hotel was running three shifts, employing more people than earlier and the locals had made big investments in the hospitality sector. With this one mindless act, all of us are in deep trouble," he said. "This is an inhuman attack on the bread and butter of the state. We are unable to comprehend what has killed our optimism of a great season." Even businesses

from other parts of India had begun investing in Kashmir's renewed vibrance. Vikrant Batra of Cafe Delhi Heights, which recently opened an outlet in Srinagar, said, "More than tourists, 80% of our diners surprisingly were locals who came for a relaxed café experience. But now, people are cancelling trips they had booked. The locals and tourists are very angry. We'll assess the drop in business income in the coming days, but it's already apparent." Online travel companies are reporting such a fall in business. A MakeMyTrip spokesperson said, "We are deeply saddened by the tragic incident in Pahalgam and our teams are working round the clock with airline and hotel partners to provide flexibility and assistance." The road to recovery, locals say, will be long and uncertain. While travel operators are already suggesting alternative domestic hill destinations in the Uttarakhand, the North-east India and south India, the fragile sense of normalcy shattered after painstakingly built over the years has left people jittery.

## Delhi HC issues notice to Swiggy, Zepto over lack of accessibility to visually-impaired users

**New Delhi :** The Delhi High Court on Wednesday issued a notice to the Central government, along with app-based service providers Swiggy and Zepto, in response to a petition alleging that their platforms are not accessible to individuals with visual impairments.

Justice Sachin Datta sought responses from the parties within four weeks after hearing the petition filed by the NGO Mission Accessibility, and scheduled the next hearing for May 28.

The NGO's petition argued that Swiggy and Zepto's apps do not support screen-reader software, making it challenging for visually impaired users to search for products or place orders—despite legal requirements mandating accessibility.

It further highlighted that under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act and accompanying rules, digital platforms are obligated to meet

accessibility standards. The petition criticized the authorities for failing to enforce these provisions, claiming this negligence has compounded the problem.

The plea also asserted that denying accessible digital services infringes on the constitutional rights of individuals with disabilities and undermines their dignity by excluding them from essential services.

For instance, the petition stated that Swiggy's app uses unlabelled images and icons, which screen readers cannot interpret—making it hard for users to add items to their cart. Similarly, Zepto's search function was described as completely non-functional for screen-reading software, thereby preventing effective navigation.

"The app fails to engage with screen-reading technology, making it inaccessible for users with visual disabilities," the plea stated.

## VC JMI inaugurates Mental Health Promotion Unit to foster psychological wellness among students

**New Delhi :** Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) took a major step toward supporting student well-being with the inauguration of a newly established Mental Health Promotion Unit within the Department of Psychology. The initiative was formally launched by Vice Chancellor Prof Mazhar Asif, who was joined by Registrar Prof Mahtab Alam Rizvi and Prof Mohd Muslim Khan, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences. The event saw participation from numerous faculty members, department heads, and students.

This new unit has been set up in alignment with the recommendations from the First National Wellbeing Conclave, held in Hyderabad in November 2024, and organized by the Department of Higher Educa-

tion under the Ministry of Education.

The Mental Health Promotion Unit is designed to increase awareness around mental health issues and provide preliminary psychological assistance to students. The facility will be staffed on a rotational basis by faculty members and research scholars. It will also house an array of psychological assessment tools and a referral guide for students requiring further professional care. During the inauguration, Prof Asif expressed his satisfaction with the initiative, dedicating the unit to the student community at JMI. He commended the Department of Psychology for their dedication and emphasized the significance of mental well-being in the academic sphere.





## They must be crushed!

In a horrific attack by Islamic terrorists on the tourist spot of Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir, 26 tourists were killed. All of them were killed simply because they were Hindus. It is clear that this attack was carried out to achieve many nefarious objectives. Peace has been prevailing in the Kashmir Valley for a long time. Especially after the central government revoked Article 370 of the Constitution, which gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir, the dark shadow of terrorism over this region gradually started to fade. Tourism business started to flourish in Kashmir. Due to this, the locals there were more convinced of the importance of peace and the process of moving away from the path of terrorism started to accelerate. In the recently held assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir, the largest number of votes was cast in the last 40 years. The voting percentage was especially impressive in the Muslim-majority Kashmir Valley. For the first time in many decades, a truly democratically elected government has been established in this region. All these developments were showing that the Kashmir train is coming back on track after many decades. This, of course, was not going to be seen by the terrorists. The terrorist organizations want the people of the Kashmir Valley to remain under the influence of terrorists continuously. This desire was being interrupted by the positive developments taking place in the area. Therefore, it is obvious that this attack has been carried out to turn back the clock. The second objective of this attack is to create fear in the minds of tourists and make them stop coming to Kashmir. If that happens, the employment of the local youth of the Kashmir Valley will be stopped, and they will have no other option but to become terrorists again, this is the goal of the terrorists and this attack has been carried out to fulfill it. In this terrorist attack, the terrorists not only escaped by firing indiscriminately, but they also cold-bloodedly asked the tourists about their religion, asked them to recite the kalma and shot dead the Hindu male tourists who could not recite the kalma, as the actual victim tourists have explained. This means that this is an attempt to start a religious war. This is a conspiracy to create unrest not only in Kashmir but in the whole of India. It is not right for the Indian government to believe that the situation in Kashmir has completely improved. It is especially important to keep troops in places where there is a large number of tourists and to maintain stricter security arrangements on the borders. Terrorism is an enemy that can suddenly rear its head anywhere. Therefore, it is necessary to keep an eye on it with oil in its eyes. Sometimes, such attacks happen even though the security arrangements are sound. In such cases, the entire country should condemn such incidents together, in one voice. Everyone concerned should avoid the temptation to politicize such incidents. Because, terrorism is not a crisis related to just one political party. All political parties have had to deal with this crisis during their respective tenures. This attack was carried out openly asking for religion. Based on this, the Salsud propaganda that terrorism has no religion has been proven false. However, one thing should be noted and appreciated. After this attack, the locals of Pahalgam took out a candlelight march to protest the attack. Also, a spontaneous bandh was observed in the entire Kashmir Valley to protest the attack. This is the first time in the last 40 years. This means that it is clear that the local Muslim people of the Kashmir Valley no longer feel sympathy for terrorism. Everyone should make efforts to increase this feeling more and more. The government and security forces will now decide how to respond to this attack. But a positive aspect has also come to light, namely that a different atmosphere is being created in the Kashmir Valley.

However, it has been repeatedly made clear that Pakistan is involved in terrorist activities in India. Pakistan is always trying to create unrest in Kashmir. Sophisticated weapons have been found with the terrorists who tried to infiltrate. But Pakistan has always tried to show that it has nothing to do with these incidents. Even though the terrorists in the 26/11 attack on Mumbai were in its country, Pakistan denied it. A video of Kasab, who was hanged in India in this case, also went viral. Even now, it is said that foreign-made weapons were used in Pahalgam. Evidence of Pakistan's involvement in this attack has started to emerge in the initial investigation by the NIA. During the search operation in Baisaran, the security agencies found 50 to 70 young men. It is said that the American-made M-4 carbine assault rifle and AK-47 are also made in China. The AK-47 bullets are also made in China. Currently, Pakistan's economic condition is very miserable. In such a situation, it has been revealed that it gets help from its close friend China for such activities. China is also uneasy due to India's growing international stature and its rapid progress. Therefore, while its aggression on the LAC is going on, work is also going on to give vent to Pakistan's terrorist activities. Be it Kargil, Uri, Pulwama or the current Pahalgam, the failure of the Indian intelligence department has also come to light in all these incidents. 19 soldiers were martyred in the attack carried out by terrorists in Uri on September 18, 2016. India miscalculated by carrying out surgical strikes exactly 10 days later. It entered Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and eliminated 38 terrorists and destroyed their bases. On February 14, 2019, a terrorist attack on a CRPF convoy in Pulwama killed 40 soldiers. Immediately after that, on February 26, 2019, the Indian Army carried out an air strike in Balakot and destroyed the terrorist camps. During the tenure of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, surgical strikes and air strikes were carried out to give a befitting reply to Pakistan. Even now, the common people expect the same from the Modi government, so that the scum of Pakistan is crushed there and then.

# Mission Amrit Sarovar

India's water challenges have long demanded both structural and participatory interventions. Against this backdrop, the Government of India launched the Mission Amrit Sarovar in 2022 as a flagship initiative under the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. The mission aims to construct and rejuvenate 75 water bodies in each district across the country, thereby fostering water conservation, ensuring sustainability, and reviving traditional community water bodies through public participation.

Launched with the vision of building 50,000 Amrit Sarovars by August 15, 2023, the initiative has now been extended and has become a nationwide movement converging rural development, environmental stewardship, and community empowerment. It is not merely a reservoir creation initiative—it represents the fusion of national pride, ecological restoration, and grassroots governance. In the backdrop of growing concerns regarding ground-water depletion and rural water scarcity, Mission Amrit Sarovar has emerged as a strategic response—blending tradition with modernity and institutional alignment with public mobilization.

As on March 2025, over 68,000 Sarovars have been completed, enhancing surface and groundwater availability across various regions. Under Mahatma Gandhi NREGS, over 46,000 Sarovars were constructed/rejuvenated. These Sarovars have not only addressed immediate water needs but also established sustainable water sources, symbolizing Government's commitment to long-term environmental sustainability and community well-being.

The Mission Amrit Sarovar was announced on 24th April 2022 by the Prime Minister during the celebration of National Panchayati Raj Day at Palli Gram Panchayat, Samba District, Jammu. Anchored by the Ministry of Rural Development, the initiative involves seven ministries: Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. This mission is also supported by the Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics (BISAG-N). This multi-stakeholder approach was intended to ensure convergence, efficiency, and participatory ownership of the initiative. The National Informatics Centre (NIC) has provided a centralized digital platform—amritsarovar.gov.

in—which tracks real-time progress at the granular level, ensuring transparency and enabling coordination between departments and states.

The objective of this mission is “construction/re-



juvenation of at least 75 Amrit Sarovar (ponds) in every district of the country”. Each Amrit Sarovar is designed to have a pondage area of minimum of 1 acre (0.4 hectare) with water holding capacity of about 10,000 cubic meter. Importantly, the reservoirs also serve as socio-cultural hubs—many are associated with national heroes and freedom fighters, nurturing a sense of ownership and respect.

Mission Amrit Sarovar works are being taken up by the states and districts with convergence from various ongoing schemes such as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (Mahatma Gandhi NREGS), 15th Finance Commission Grants, Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sishayojna sub-schemes such as the Watershed Development Component, Har Khet ko Pani, besides States' own schemes. For the monitoring of the progress of Amrit Sarovars, following arrangements are in place at the Panchayat level:

Two dedicated Prabharis for each Amrit Sarovar will be positioned i.e. Panchayat Pratinidhi and Panchayat level officer.

Gram Panchayat will nominate Panchayat Pratinidhi, who will act as citizen supervisor, and will be responsible for faithful and fair execution of the Amrit Sarovar in the Panchayat while protecting the community interest.

Panchayat level officer will monitor the progress and ensure faithful implementation of the mission in the panchayat while reporting the progress in the form of document, with appropriate photos and videos.

As per the guidelines of Mission Amrit Sarovar, effective maintenance and sustainability of Amrit Sarovars requires a formation

and clear mapping of users' groups associated with each Sarovar largely drawn from members of SHGs. A User Group is a voluntary group that operates collectively to conserve and manage the Sarovar for promoting water

and any other native trees. About 23,51,331 trees were planted through the Mission out of which 5,32,124 were Neem, 3,65,791 were Peepal, 3,24,945 were Bargadh and 11,28,471 were other native trees.

Phase II of Mission Amrit Sarovar is envisaged to continue with a renewed focus on ensuring water availability, with community participation (Jan Bhagidari) at its core, and aims to strengthen climate resilience, foster ecological balance, and deliver lasting benefits for future generations. A total of 3,182 sites have been identified under Phase II of the Mission, as of April 17, 2025.

Jan Bhagidari has been the core of this Mission and involves people's participation at all levels. So far 65,285 user groups have been formed for each Amrit Sarovar. These user groups are fully involved during the entire process of development of an Amrit Sarovar viz feasibility assessment, execution and its utilization. To encourage mobilization of citizens and non-Government resources for supple-

use efficiently. It is a representative body of user members of the Sarovar with adequate representation of women and weaker sections. Proper identification and coordination of these user groups are essential for the optimal use and upkeep of the Sarovars. The user group will also be responsible for the ongoing use and maintenance of the Amrit Sarovar including the plantation activities. The removal of silt from the catchment area should be done by the users' groups voluntarily after every monsoon season.

In order to optimize the benefit of the Amrit Sarovars and to ensure that the implementation is done in the most credible manner, latest and most relevant technologies like remote sensing and geospatial are being used extensively from site selection till its completion. Overall, the target to build 50,000 Amrit Sarovar by August 15, 2023, was achieved ahead of schedule. As of May 2023, 59,492 Amrit Sarovar were successfully completed.

Additional to the accomplishment of the Mission target, linking Amrit Sarovar with Panchayat Pratinidhis, Panchayat level officers, user groups were the imperative aspects. About 79,080 Panchayat Pratinidhi and 92,359 Panchayat Level Officers were engaged in the Mission. About 2,203 freedom fighters, 22,993 eldest members of the panchayat, 385 family members of freedom fighters, 742 family members of martyrs and 69 Padma Awardees participated in the Mission.

Each completed Amrit Sarovar has a common signage board stating all the details of the site including the scheme under which it was constructed and mandatory plantation of trees such as Neem, Bargadh, Peepal

Amrit Sarovars sites, national events are to be celebrated.

Possible users of such water structure, including for irrigation, fishery or water chestnut cultivation, should be identified and creation of their group are encouraged.

The Mission promotes the formation of user groups, particularly among farmers, fisherfolk, and local communities, to ensure optimal use of water resources for irrigation, aquaculture, and allied activities.

Mission Amrit Sarovar is boosting the rural livelihood as the completed Sarovars have been identified for the purpose of different activities such as irrigation, fisheries, duckery, cultivation of water chestnut and animal husbandry, etc. These activities are being carried out by different user groups which are linked to each Amrit Sarovar.

The Ground Water Resources Assessment by Central Ground Water Board (CGWB), in collaboration with State Governments, shows a significant rise in groundwater recharge due to



menting the Government's efforts to achieve the target, explicit provisions have been made in the guidelines of the Mission Amrit Sarovars as follows:

Laying the foundation stone for the Amrit Sarovar to be led by freedom fighter or her/his family member or by the family of martyr (post-independence) or a local Padma awardee, and in case no such citizen is available, by the eldest member of the local Gram Panchayat. Provision for people to participate by donating construction material, benches and by Shramdaan.

If village community so desires, beautification works on the Sarovar site may mobilize necessary donations through crowd sourcing and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) contributions. Provision has been made that on the occasion of Independence Day/ Republic Day, the National Flag is to be hoisted at each Amrit Sarovar site, by the freedom fighter or his/her family member or by the family member of martyr or a local Padma Awardee. On

sustained conservation efforts. Recharge from tanks, ponds and water conservation structures increased from 13.98 Billion Cubic Meters (BCM) in 2017 to 25.34 BCM in 2024, reflecting the success of water conservation such as Mission Amrit Sarovar and the role of tanks, ponds & water conservation structures in sustaining groundwater levels. These Sarovars have not only addressed immediate water needs but also established sustainable water sources that can be utilised for irrigation and other purposes thereby improving agricultural productivity.

The pond has been rejuvenated under Amrit Sarovar and is located at Satellite Basti near Graveyard under Gram Panchayat Govind Nagar, Campbell Bay, Great Nicobar. It is a community use base sarovar which directly benefits the 200 villagers. The work has provided employment to 24 households. Neem and other trees have been planted with tree guards around the sarovar. Along with this, the sarovar is also helpful for the

local farmers as moisture remains in the surrounding fields and they use the sarovar water for irrigation and cattle-rearing.

In Jamui district in Bihar is situated Indpe Panchayat, where there was a pond in neglected condition. Indpe Gram Panchayat took decision to rejuvenate this pond. Rejuvenation works were taken up by Mahatma Gandhi NREGA. Thanks to the rejuvenation, this pond has got a new life with attractive look. Spread across 1.04 acres area, this sarovar has become centre of utmost attraction. It has been beautifully decorated with paver block pathway with proper sitting bench facilities. Plantation has also been done around the area of the pond. Boating facilities have also been started in this pond, which is making it unique and generating livelihood. Installation of solar tree and solar lights are giving tremendous look to this beautifully decorated Amrit Sarovar. An electronic display board has also been established here. Large number of morning walkers are getting health benefits. The Sarovar and the area across it is now most preferred choice for the children to play and enjoy. Naari Shakti Jeevika Group is using this Amrit Sarovar for carrying out the fishery activity.

Construction of Fish Pond at Dine Dite Rijo which is a controlled pond, small artificial lake or retention basin that is stocked with fish and is used in aquaculture for fish farming, for recreational fishing, or for ornamental purposes which has been taken up under Mission Amrit Sarovar. The pond is being used to raise fish for sale at a very profitable price. With proper nurturing of fish and management, harvestable food fish production has increased drastically in such a way that it has been utilised for food production. This pond has also been indispensable for livestock rearing, breeding and nurturing of various species of fishes.

Mission Amrit Sarovar stands as a monumental example of cooperative federalism, environmental action, and local democracy. Its blend of cultural reverence, citizen engagement, scientific design, and institutional convergence has allowed it to evolve into a Jan Andolan—a people's movement for water security. As the nation continues into Amrit Kaal, this mission not only addresses India's immediate water needs but also lays the foundation for a resilient, water-abundant rural future. The success of Mission Amrit Sarovar will be likely to inspire more such community-centered development models, placing people at the heart of national transformation.

# Rules to come into force from 1st July 2025

Centre notifies rules for 'Radar equipment for the measurement of the speed of vehicles' under the Legal Metrology (General) Rules, 2011.

To strengthen road safety and ensure fairness in traffic enforcement, the Department of Consumer Affairs has notified rules for 'Radar equipment for the measurement of the speed of vehicles' under the Legal Metrology (General) Rules, 2011. These rules will come into force from 1st July 2025, providing sufficient time for industries and enforcement agencies to comply with the provisions.

These rules make it mandatory for all radar-based speed measurement equipment to be verified and stamped by Legal Metrology authorities. This will ensure that such devices are accurate, calibrated.

And legally compliant, thereby enhancing transparency, public trust and enforcement integrity. Verified radar systems are vital for applications such as traffic speed monitoring, accident prevention and minimizing wear and tear on road infrastructure.

The drafting of these rules was undertaken by a committee with technical inputs based on international standard OIML R 91. Stakeholders, including State Legal Metrology Departments, Regional Reference Standard Laboratories (RRSLs), manufacturers and consumer organizations were consulted through presentations.

And public feedback before finalizing the rules.



The implementation of these rules provides significant benefits to all stakeholders across the board.

For the common citizen, the mandatory verification and stamping of radar-based speed measurement equipment will ensure the accurate enforcement of speed limits, thereby preventing unfair penalties and significantly enhancing road safety.

Citizens can drive with greater confidence knowing that enforcement is based on scientifically validated and legally certified instruments.

For industries, particularly those in-



involved in manufacturing radar-based speed measuring devices, the new rules establish a clear technical and regulatory framework aligned with international standards such as OIML R 91.

This not only encourages domestic innovation and compliance but also enhances the export competitiveness of Indian manufacturers in global markets by ensuring consistency in quality and performance.

For law enforcement agencies, the introduction of verified and stamped devices ensures a higher degree of operational effectiveness and credibility.

These devices allow for reliable, evidence-based enforcement, which is critical for maintaining public trust and improving compliance with speed regulations.

The availability of certified and calibrated instruments enables officers to act with confidence and precision.

At the national level, this initiative is a key step towards data-driven governance in traffic management.

It helps reduce road fatalities, enhances discipline on highways and supports sustainable economic development by minimizing.

the social and economic costs associated with road accidents, vehicle wear and tear and damage to infrastructure.

Overall, the rules contribute to building a safer and more technologically advanced transport ecosystem in the country.

Radar devices operate using technologies like Doppler radar, measuring vehicle speed with high precision. These rules specify detailed technical and safety requirements, ensuring proper calibration, stable operation under various environmental conditions and protection against tampering.

Such measures will foster a culture of technological reliability and legal accountability.

This move marks a significant step forward in India's ongoing reforms to modernize legal metrology infrastructure, ensuring that measuring instruments in public enforcement are scientifically robust and legally verifiable.



Briefs :

20 hurt as bus collides with mini-truck in Gurugram

Gurugram: More than 20 passengers, including women and children, were injured after a tourist bus headed to Mathura-Vrindavan collided with a mini-truck parked on the road near the Maujpur toll on Kundli-Ghaziabad-Palwal (KGP) Expressway on Wednesday. The injured have been admitted to hospital. An FIR was registered at the Chhansa police station against the mini-truck driver. According to the police, the bus door got locked due to the massive collision. The passengers were rescued after an hour once the glass windows were broken. The injured were admitted to the government hospital and private hospitals in Ballabhgarh. Ten passengers were seriously injured while the rest suffered minor injuries. The bus driver suffered a fracture and a head injury. According to the police, there were more than 35 passengers in the bus that had left for Mathura and Vrindavan from Punjab's Phillaur city. "An FIR has been registered and we are trying to nab the accused," said Inspector Suresh Kumar, SHO of the Chhansa police station.

HC slams Haryana's 'absurd' stand, grants promotion to retired officer 17 years later

Chandigarh : Admonishing the state of Haryana for adopting a stand "entirely absurd and lacking a valid foundation in law", the Punjab and Haryana High Court has set aside the denial of promotion to a retired officer, 17 years after his juniors were elevated to the post of District Development and Panchayat Officer. Justice Vinod S Bhardwaj held that the initiation of disciplinary proceedings was a prerequisite for withholding promotion or retirement benefits. Once the state itself admitted that a chargesheet concerning acts/omissions occurring more than four years prior to the date of superannuation could not have been issued, "it could not then deprive the benefit of statutory protection by relying on an assumed interpretation of the statutory rules". The case had its genesis in 2008, when the employee's juniors were promoted. The only actual chargesheet ever served upon him was in connection with a separate matter dated May 29, 2008. That charge was dropped seven years later—on September 16, 2015—after the enquiry officer held that the charges could not be proved. Justice Bhardwaj observed the state counsel was not in a position to dispute that actual chargesheet under the provisions of the Haryana Civil Services Rules for misappropriation of government money amounting to Rs 43,330 was ever served upon the petitioner. Elaborating, he contended that Mahendragarh Deputy Commissioner was asked to send a draft chargesheet. But a chargesheet could not have been served upon the petitioner post his retirement on April 30, 2011, "particularly in relation to an event that occurred more than four years prior to the date of his superannuation". He, at the same time, added that the petitioner's act of depositing Rs 43,330 .

# Potholes finally filled as Sirsa gears up for Cyclothon 2.0

**Sirsa :** With Cyclothon 2.0 set to pass through Sirsa on April 26 and 27, preparations have picked up pace, especially with Chief Minister Naib Saini scheduled to flag off the event. One major issue that finally saw action was the long ignored potholes along the main cycling route. Though the residents had raised the issue months ago during a local "Samadhan Shivir," the repair work only began recently using a tarcoal mixture to fill the deep pits.

Along with the pothole repairs, road resurfacing is also being done on the damaged stretch between Lal Batti Chowk and the railway level crossing. Locals say they had made repeated



complaints, but no action was taken until the cyclothon event and the Chief Minister's visit forced officials to respond. Several residents believe that timely repairs could have prevented many two-wheeler

accidents that occurred on the stretch. Cyclothon 2.0 is a state-led initiative to promote a drug-free lifestyle and healthy living. Over 48,000 cyclists are expected to participate in the event. Parti-

pants will be welcomed at the Ding border on April 26 and the official flag-off ceremony by Saini will be held on April 27. To ensure smooth execution, City Magistrate Yash Malik chaired a meeting on

Wednesday with officials from various departments to review and coordinate all arrangements. He emphasised timely completion of preparations and directed departments to ensure proper traffic management, medical facilities, including ambulances, rest areas, drinking water, and other essential services along the route.

Yash Malik instructed all departments to work in close coordination so that the participants did not face any difficulties during the event. With the countdown to Cyclothon 2.0 underway, Sirsa's administration is now racing against the clock to ensure everything runs smoothly.

## Unrecognised schools in Rohtak face closure amid police crackdown



**Rohtak :** Despite repeated closure notices, several unrecognised private schools in Rohtak district continue to operate, forcing education authorities to seek police assistance to enforce shutdown orders.

On Wednesday, four such schools in Kilo village were sealed by education officials with the support of local police. These institutions had previously been served two notices and locked in the presence of officials, but resumed operations soon after. The crackdown coincided with the visit of Education Minister Mahipal Dhanda to Rohtak for a social function, adding urgency to the enforcement drive. "Initially, 70 unrecognised private schools were identified in the district. However, after a detailed physical inspection by education officials, the number has risen to over 85," sources said.

Authorities not only issued closure notices but also carried out public announcements, urging parents not to enrol their children in these

schools. Despite these measures, some institutions defied orders and continued to function.

"Four private unrecognised schools were identified in Kilo village and served notices on April 1 due to their lack of official recognition," said Mahadev Shastri, principal of Government Senior Secondary School, Kilo. "On April 17, we sealed these schools, but they reopened shortly after. We had no choice but to involve the police to ensure compliance."

He said, "Officials will continue to monitor the situation, and strict action will be taken if these schools are found operating again." Manjeet Malik, District Education Officer (DEO), Rohtak, said closure notices had been issued to all 70 initially identified unrecognised schools, with the majority complying.

"Our officials are working to ensure that the remaining non-compliant schools are also shut down," Malik said.

## CM Saini orders prompt redress of civic issues in Gurugram



**Gurugram :** With civic issues accounting for majority of the complaints in grievance committee meetings, Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini said it was high time the authorities started acting proactively to resolve residents' issues.

During the meeting held here on Wednesday, Saini ordered penal action against the Executive Engineer of the Municipal Corporation, Gurugram (MCG), for failing to resolve the problem of sewage overflow in Begumpur Khatola village. "We cannot have this. We cannot make people run around for basic civic amenities. The officials need to change their working style and address the issues or be ready for similar action. Don't wait for people to complain and plead. Take proactive action if you get to know of the problem; this will expedite the resolution," said Saini.

Talking about Begumpur Khatola, the CM instructed the officials to resolve the problem within three weeks and submit updated photographs of the affected area to his office. The Tribune has repeatedly highlighted the sewage overflow crisis in the village and how it is an obstruction even for children going to school.

"It's been two years that we have been going from one office to another. The village streets are full of dirty water and despite inspections having been carried out, the MCG has failed to do provide a solution to us. Now, they want to set up a construction demolition waste unit, which will further hamper the possibility of setting up of a new sewerage treatment plant," the complainant submitted. A total of 19 such complaints were presented in the meeting, and according to the authorities, 18 had been resolved. Addressing the construction and demolition (C&D) crisis in the city, Saini directed the Municipal Commissioner to recruit additional manpower through Haryana Kausal Rozgar Nigam Limited (HKRNL) for the lifting of C&D waste material at Laser Valley Ground in Sector 29 as well as for door-to-door garbage collection. Responding to complaints regarding waterlogging and poor maintenance of rainwater harvesting systems in Gurugram, the CM directed the department concerned to ensure that all 404 rainwater harvesting units in the district were thoroughly cleaned before the onset of the monsoon season.

During the meeting, the

CM also set a deadline before the next review meeting for the completion of development works related to Sector 4. Additionally, addressing a complaint from the Sarpanch of Mubarakpur village regarding the lack of electricity connection to the village for over a year, the Deputy Commissioner was instructed to personally investigate the issue and take strict action against the negligent officials. During the meeting, a senior citizen from Kadarapur village had reported that his brother had sold his share of their ancestral land, but his own portion was illegally encroached upon in collusion with the buyer. Despite repeated appeals, no action had been taken by the authorities concerned. Taking serious note of the complaint, the CM directed the police officials to register an FIR against both the buyer and seller. He also instructed the Tehsildar concerned to expedite revenue-related proceedings.

In response to a Sohna-based farmer, who reported illegal encroachment involving the demolition of a room constructed in his field, the CM ordered the SDM to ensure the restoration of possession within 10 days and take strict action against any officials found negligent in the investigation. The CM inspected Haryana's first "Complete Streets" initiative, walking through the site in Udyog Vihar in Sector 18, Gurugram. He remarked that the "Complete Streets" concept reflects the state government's commitment to providing everyone with the right to walk safely and with dignity. The project demonstrates the transformative potential of collaboration among the government, private sector and civil society.

The project has been implemented along the Sanath road and Gali No. 7 in Udyog Vihar, covering a stretch of 2.4 km with a width of 30 m. This road connects Old Delhi Road to the Airtel office on NH 48. The project's total cost is estimated to be approximately Rs 23 crore, jointly funded by the GMDA, MCG, DHBVN and the Raahgiri Foundation. Private partners such as Nagarro, Maruti Suzuki and SafeExpress also contributed, setting a remarkable precedent for public-private partnership. Key features of the project include wide and shaded footpaths for pedestrians, safe track for cyclists, bioswales for rainwater harvesting, and the preservation of 700 mature trees.

## Kurukshetra man cracks UPSC test in fifth attempt

**Karnal :** Kurukshetra resident Rishabh Mittal (28) has successfully cracked the UPSC civil services examination in his fifth attempt, securing an All-India rank of 363.

Currently posted as an Auditor in the Defence Accounts Department at Ambala Cantonment, Mittal's journey is a testament to

firmness and steady dedication.

A Delhi Technological University (DTU) BTech graduate, Mittal began his civil services preparation at the end of 2019. He accredited his success to constant support and motivation by his family, close friends and office colleagues. "Continuous efforts pay in achieving

goals. Youngsters must focus on their target and work accordingly," Rishabh said, underlining the importance of discipline and determination.

Mittal added that he stayed away from social media platforms like Facebook during his preparation. However, he used WhatsApp for official purposes.

# Jhajjar gears up for monsoon, DC orders stormwater drains cleanup

**Jhajjar :** With the rainy season approaching, the district administration has ramped up efforts to prevent waterlogging in the city during the monsoon. Deputy Commissioner Pradeep Dahiya has instructed officials concerned to complete the cleaning and maintenance work of all drainage systems and stormwater drains before the onset of monsoon.

He warned that no negligence would be tolerated in these preparations, as they were critical to preventing waterlogging and flood-like situations. Dahiya also directed the officials concerned to ensure that village ponds were filled with clean water and issue advisories for protecting livestock from heat.

The directions came during a key review meeting chaired by the DC, which was attended by officials from the Irrigation and Public Health Engineering Departments, here on Wednesday. The meeting focused on readiness for potential water-related challenges during the summer and monsoon



seasons. Satish Janawa, Superintending Engineer (Irrigation), presented a comprehensive report detailing flood control strategies, canal management and current water availability across the district.

Addressing concerns about drinking water supply, Dahiya noted a significant rise in water consumption

during summer in both urban and rural areas. He asked the officials concerned to formulate proactive and well-coordinated water management plans to avoid shortages. Officials assured him that the district had adequate water reserves and supply was expected to remain stable throughout the season. The DC stressed the need for

## Old Railway Road in Gurugram to remain closed for 30 days for sewer repair work

**Gurugram :** The Old Railway Road from Sohna Chowk to Kabir Bhawan Chowk will remain closed for the next 30 days due to the sewer repair work. The Gurugram traffic police has issued an advisory with route diversion.

According to the advisory, sewer work is to be carried out before Shiv Murti on the said road while going from Sadar Bazar Chowk towards New Colony route. This route will be closed for security reasons. Apart from this, the route going from New Colony Mode towards Rajiv Chowk will remain open for vehicles smoothly. "Drivers

wanting to go from Rajiv Chowk towards New Colony Mode, Sector 4/7 and the railway station can use the route via Jail Chowk, Bhuteshwar Mandir, Pataudi Chowk, New Colony Mode and then further towards Sector 4/7 and railway station. For smooth flow of traffic, the above route diversion will continue for about 30 days," read the advisory. Councillor Dalip Sahni said due to the breakage in two chambers and sewer line before Old Railway Road, Kabir Bhawan Chowk, the Nai Basti area got inundated, causing inconvenience to locals.

## Gurugram to get 400 new electric buses soon, says CM Saini

**Gurugram :** In what is bound to give a major boost to green public transport in Gurugram, the GMDA will soon have 400 new electric buses. The declaration was made by Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, who approved an infrastructure Budget of Rs 3,034 crore for the civic body. Saini, who was in Gurugram on Wednesday, chaired a review meeting and instructed all stakeholders to ensure no waterlogging this year.

"There is no dearth of funds, so there is no reason that the city drowns in rain.

We have zero tolerance to negligence, inefficiency and corruption, and any officer found lacking in his duty will be penalised," said Saini as he issued instructions for a special anti-waterlogging plan.

The authorities concerned have been asked to make special drains in the low-lying areas. The CM also issued orders to increase the drinking water capacity by 100 MLD May 31. Earlier, the city would get 570 MLD of water, which will now be raised to 670 MLD. The Rs 300-crore Budget ap-

proved by the CM spans a wide range of urban infrastructure, including the construction of underpasses and flyovers, a new connecting road to Naurangpur village, revamping stormwater drainage and water supply upgrades. It also has the approval for the construction of six underpasses, including one at Bakhtawar Chowk, along the upcoming metro alignment at an estimated cost of Rs 350 crore. These will be constructed by Gurugram Metro Rail Limited (GMRL) and funded by the GMDA.

# HC dismisses plea challenging IIM Rohtak director's appointment, sets aside show-cause notice

**Chandigarh :** The Punjab and Haryana High Court has dismissed a petition challenging Dr Dheeraj Sharma's appointment as the director of the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Rohtak. The court held that Dr Sharma's appointment was valid, as he was selected and recommended by Search-cum-Selection Committee (SCSC) under

the "nomination from eminent person" category. Justice Kuldeep Tiwari also set aside a show-cause notice for initiation of disciplinary inquiry against him "on account of its being issued by an authority lacking able jurisdiction". The notice was issued by the Ministry of Education, Department of Higher Education, Management Bureau, whereby Dr

Sharma was been asked to show-cause why necessary administrative and legal action should not be taken against him for "deliberate non-submissions of Bachelor's degree certificates and misrepresentation of education qualifications for securing appointment to the office in question". The bench asserted it was of the opinion that the appointing and disci-

plinary authority to the director's post was Board of Governors and not MHRD. It was not competent to serve show-cause notice to Dr Sharma "Board of Governors was not only the appointing authority to the post of director, but was also – as evident from the terms and conditions attached with the appointment letter – conferred the powers of disci-

plinary authority... This court has no hesitation to hold that MHRD did not have any jurisdiction to serve the impugned show-cause notice, and that it suffers from the vice of lack of able jurisdiction." Justice Tewari ruled. Dr Sharma was represented by senior advocate Puneet Bali with counsel Gagandeep Singh and Anmol Chandan.





## Time for decisive action against terrorism: Hooda



**Chandigarh** : Bhupinder Singh Hooda, a former CM, today condemned the terrorist attack in Pahalgam and said the guilty should not be spared.

Calling for a decisive strike against terrorism, he said there was anger in the whole country, and all were united against terrorism.

The culprits should not be spared and a strong message should be given to the enemies of the country, Hooda said. He said the cowardice and barbarity shown by the beasts who targeted innocent tourists in Pahalgam was intolerable. "Until those cowards and their masters are brought to

justice, the victims' families will not get justice," he stated.

He paid emotional tribute to Karnal resident Lt Vinay Narwal and said he had got married just six days ago, but the terrorists shot him. Hooda said the country stood with the family in this hour of grief.

## HC junks plea challenging IIM-Rohtak Director's appointment

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the MHRD. It was not competent to serve a show-cause notice to Dr Sharma. "The Board of Governor was not only the appointing authority to the post of Director, but was also — as evident from the terms and conditions attached with the appointment letter — conferred the powers of disciplinary authority...

This court has no hesitation to hold that the MHRD did not have any jurisdiction to serve the impugned show-cause notice, and that it suffers from the vice of lack of able jurisdiction," Justice Tewari ruled. Dr Sharma was represented by senior

advocate Puneet Bali with counsel Gagandeep Singh and Anmol Chandan. Referring to the notice, Justice Tewari asserted its examination reflected the premeditated mind of the authority, which drew it. The contents showed that calling for a reply from Dr Sharma was merely a formality. "The authority had already concluded that he does not possess the requisite educational qualification, i.e. First Class degree at Bachelor's level, hence apt action is required to be taken against him," the court observed. Justice Tewari added there was no wrangle that Dr Sharma did

not possess First Class Bachelor's degree. But the court was of the opinion that the SCSC recommended Dr Sharma's name for appointment to the Director's post under the category "nomination from eminent person", and it was well empowered to do so. The Bench added that the credentials of the petitioners, who challenged the appointment by filing the writ of quo warranto were "also under question". It appeared that the petitioners were only the front faces of two disgruntled erstwhile employees of IIM-Rohtak, whose services were terminated by Dr Sharma.

## Congress to launch 'Save Constitution' drive today

**Chandigarh** : Haryana Congress incharge BK Hariprasad held a meeting of party leaders in Delhi on Tuesday to chalk out a programme to launch the 'Save Constitution' campaign from April 25.

MLAs, MPs, candidates who contested the Assembly and Lok Sabha polls, and former state party presidents attended the meeting. Over six months have passed, but the party has failed to name the Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leader. No discussion took place on the issue today, the leaders said. "During the Ahmedabad session, it was decided to expose the BJP on how it has been undermining the Constitution and constitutional



institutions. The ruling party has been running a

vendetta against opposition leaders through agencies. The 'Save Constitution' campaign will be 40 days long," said Nuh MLA Aftab Ahmed.

Rohtak MLA BB Batra said the campaign would cover each district and all Assembly constituencies, and would also be launched in villages. Bhupinder Singh Hooda, a former CM, state party president Udai Bhan, and former Union minister Birender Singh were also present.

Ahmed said NGOs would be involved in the campaign. Veteran Congressmen and constitutional experts would be urged to join the programme.

## Lt Vinay Narwal cremated with full military honours

**Karnal** : Tears flowed freely, and silence spoke louder than words as the mortal remains of Navy officer Lt Vinay Narwal (26), who was killed in a terror attack at Pahalgam in Kashmir on Tuesday, were consigned to the flames with full military honours at the Model Town cremation ground in Karnal on late Wednesday evening.

Lieutenant Narwal was on his honeymoon when bullets shattered the peace of Baisaran in the Valley.

The air was thick with sorrow as Lieutenant Narwal's Tricolour-draped coffin arrived to the farewell tune of the Naval band. A sea of humanity from the region descended on Karnal to pay their tributes to the young officer. Lieutenant Narwal's wife Himanshi, married just a week ago, clung to her husband's body, reluctantly letting go with a final kiss and a tight embrace. Standing as a symbol of strength with her family, the emotions ran raw and deep. Choking with



grief, she broke into a powerful lament: "Lt Vinay Narwal amar rahe". Echoing the intensity of the sentiment, the crowds chanted 'Bharat Mata ki jai', 'Vinay Narwal Amar Rahe', 'Pakistan murdabad'.

Equally shattered was Vinay's younger sister Srishiti, but she could be seen consoling her father Rajesh Narwal, and Himanshi. Srishiti, along with her father, lit the pyre. Among those present were Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, Assembly Speaker Harvinder

Kalyan, former Deputy CM Dushyant Chautala, Karnal MLA Jagmohan Anand, and Mayor Renu Bala Gupta, besides prominent people of the region, Navy officials, family members, friends, neighbours, and dignitaries. Born in Bhusali village of Karnal district, and residing in Sector 7 of the city, Lieutenant Narwal had completed his schooling from Karnal before pursuing engineering in Sonapat. Driven by a deep sense of duty and patriotism, he joined the Navy

three years ago as Second Lieutenant, and was later promoted as Lieutenant. Earlier, CM Saini and Union Minister Manohar Lal Khattar spoke to Lieutenant Narwal's grandfather Hawa Singh Narwal over video calls, assuring him of the unwavering support of the state and Union governments and promising "strict action" against those involved in the terror act.

"The country has lost a brave son. This barbaric attack on innocent citizens is not just a crime against the nation, but an assault on humanity itself," said Khattar.

A broken Hawa Singh demanded strict action against those involved in the barbaric act.

"Lt Narwal was a brave son of the soil. His sacrifice will never be forgotten," said the Speaker. Paying his condolences, MLA Anand said, "The entire nation stands with the family."

Meanwhile, residents of Karnal have demanded the status of a 'martyr' for Lt Narwal.

## Minister warns Omaxe City to clear dues or face FIR

**Rohtak** : Haryana Development and Panchayats Minister Krishan Lal Panwar has directed officials of Omaxe City in Rohtak to clear all outstanding dues, including electricity bills, within two months — warning that failure to do so would lead to an FIR being filed against the township management.

During a district grievances committee meeting on Sunday, Panwar responded to a complaint filed by Yashveer and others regarding unpaid dues. "Omaxe City must pay Rs 72 lakh in pending electricity bills and Rs 5 crore as bank guarantee related to the construction of the 33 kV power substation," the minister said. He said, "If any excess amount has been charged, it will be refunded."

In another matter, the minister ordered action against a complainant for misleading the committee. The issue involved Pradeep Kumar of Kamla Nagar, who had reported an illegal factory operating in a residential area

but was absent from the meeting. "The Regional Officer of the Pollution Control Board should investigate. If it is found that the complainant reached a mutual settlement, then action under Section 182 should be initiated for misleading the committee," Panwar said.

Taking up the issue of alleged encroachment in Rithal Narwal village, raised by the village sarpanch, the minister directed the CEO of the Zila Parishad to visit the site and submit a report.

The committee addressed 13 complaints in total — seven were resolved on the spot, while reports were sought for the remaining six. Deputy Commissioner Dharendra Khadgata assured that all residents' grievances would be resolved on a priority basis.

The meeting was attended by Rohtak MLA Bharat Bhushan Batra, Kalanaur MLA Shakuntala Khatak, Rohtak Mayor Ram Avatar Valmiki, and other senior district officials.

## 777 new doctors to join health services, says Minister Arti Rao

**Yamunanagar** : Haryana Health and Family Welfare Minister Arti Singh Rao on Wednesday announced that 777 new doctors will soon be recruited across the state to strengthen the public healthcare system.

Speaking after a surprise inspection at Mukand Lal District Civil Hospital in Yamunanagar, the minister said, "In the recent past, 561 doctors have already been recruited, out of which 12 have been posted in Yamunanagar district." Rao said the purpose of conducting surprise inspections was to identify deficiencies and infrastructural gaps in government hospitals and to ensure timely improvements. "The main purpose of such inspections is to assess the real-time needs of hospitals, so appropriate steps can be taken to upgrade the infrastructure and services," she said. During her visit, the Health Minister interacted with Civil Surgeon Dr Poonam Chaudhary and gathered information about the medical services being offered to patients.

She visited several departments, including the trauma centre, gynaecology, paediatrics, ICU, private wards, delivery room, women's surgical ward, blood bank, and special newborn care unit. She also reviewed medicine availability and checked attendance registers of various departments to verify the presence of doctors and staff. At the maternity ward, Rao met mothers of newborns, enquired about their health, and congratulated them.

Addressing hygiene concerns, Rao said, "Lack of cleanliness has been noticed in the hospital toilets. Attention needs to be paid to this, and a report has been sought." When mediapersons questioned her about falling tiles in the hospital building, the minister called the Superintending Engineer of the Public Works Department and instructed him to carry out repairs without delay. "I have directed the engineer to fix the building issues immediately and ensure the trauma centre construction is completed at the earliest," she said.

## Wheat crop on over 800 acres destroyed in fire across 15 dists



**Chandigarh** : Wheat crop standing across 814 acres in 15 districts of Haryana has been destroyed in a series of fire incidents, impacting 312 farmers and resulting in crores worth of losses, according to the state Agriculture Department. Short circuits caused by overhead power lines running through fields have emerged as the primary reason for these fires, said officials. However, such incidents do not fall under the purview of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), which covers crop damage due to lightning but not electrical short circuits, clarified a senior Agriculture Department official.

The government is yet to declare a formal compensation package for the affected farmers. Still, insiders suggest the average loss per acre is about Rs 50,000, making the estimated total damage significant. Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, acknowledging the crisis, said,

"The recent fire incidents in the state have caused damage to crops, livestock, and property, resulting in

hardship for farmers." He has directed all Deputy Commissioners to submit detailed reports on the damage.

Worst-hit districts Sirsa is the most severely affected district, where 266.28 acres of wheat have been lost, affecting 57 farmers. On April 18, Ruli Chand from Rupana Urf Darba Khurd village lost standing wheat over 40 acres, with an estimated loss of Rs 23.28 lakh, based on an average yield of 24 quintals per acre. Fellow villagers Satpal, Krishan, and Baljeet each suffered losses on nine acres, losing Rs 5.24 lakh each. A day later, in Rori village, farmer Karnail Singh lost both his wheat crop over four acres and his tractor, which caught fire as he tried to douse the flames. The total loss in Sirsa is pegged at Rs 1.55 crore. In Kaithal, the second most-affected district, 146.3 acres were damaged, impacting 61 farmers. In Kaul village (Pundri), Joginder suffered 100% loss over 5.5 acres, along with nine other farmers. In Pabnawa village, Sumit and 11 others lost their crops over multiple acres.

## Close illegal openings on highways in Panipat, Sonapat: Admn to officials

**Panipat** : Taking serious note of accidental deaths on the highways in Panipat and Sonapat district, the district administration has directed officials of the departments concerned to close all illegal openings on national highways crossing from the districts under the Road Safety and Safe School Vahan Policy.

Sonapat DC directed the officials to identify such people, who reportedly made illegal openings on the national highways and lodge FIRs against them. Dr Manoj Kumar Yadav, Deputy Commissioner, Sonapat, while chairing the meeting of the Road Safety

and the Safe School Vahan Policy, directed the officials to take strict measures to stop accidents on the highways in the district.

The Deputy Commissioner also warned the officials that if any death was reported in the district, then action would be initiated against the official concerned under Section 304 of the BNS after fixing his responsibility. That's why all agencies should identify all black spots on the highway to stop accidents. Yadav directed the HSIIDC and National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to ensure that the pedestrian should use the foot overbridge



(FOB) to cross the NH-44 near the Barhi industrial zone to avert accidents and also directed the officials to work with mutual coordination with the industries there.

The Deputy Commissioner also directed the

Railways officials to complete the flyovers' on NH-352 A and on Rohtak road. Taking a note of the accidents on NH-44, the Deputy Commissioner directed the NHAI officials to repair the bumps on the highway on priority to avert accidents.

## 126 dera followers acquitted in Panchkula riot case, 124 were women

**Chandigarh** : In a major setback for Panchkula Police, a local court on Tuesday acquitted 126 persons, including 124 women, in a 2017 case linked to the violence that erupted following the conviction of Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh in a rape case. The acquittals come nearly seven years after the incident, which was part of a series of riots that left over 40 people dead and led to the registration of 152 cases across Panchkula.

According to the prosecution, on August 26, 2017, SHO of Sector 5 police station, Inspector Karambir Singh, along with his team, received a tip-off that women dera followers involved in

stone pelting and arson a day earlier were regrouping at Yavnika Park. Police claimed they arrested 103 women on the spot, and recovered stones lying nearby, which were seized as evidence. More arrests followed during the investigation. Charges were framed on September 4, 2018, for rioting with deadly weapons, unlawful assembly, and cheating by personation. However, during the trial, Inspector Karambir Singh admitted during cross-examination that he could not identify the accused due to the passage of time. All 16 prosecution witnesses were police officials, but none could establish the presence or involvement of the ac-

cused in the violence that took place on August 25, 2017, after the CBI court pronounced its verdict against the dera chief. Delivering the judgment, Chief Judicial Magistrate Ajay Kumar said, "None of the witnesses deposed anything about the involvement of present accused persons in the incident which took place on August 25, 2017... None of the witnesses identified the accused persons as those who pelted stones or committed arson." The court further held that the confessional statements recorded in police custody and demarcation memos were inadmissible due to the bar under Sections 25 and 26 of the Indian Evidence Act.

## Day after HC set aside suspension, Superintending Engineer suspended again

**Rohtak** : A day after the Punjab and Haryana High Court set aside the suspension of (DHBVNL) Superintending Engineer (SE) Hari Dutt, he has been placed under suspension again. "Er Hari Dutt, SE/OP Circle, DHBVNL, Jind, is hereby placed under suspension with immediate effect in view of contemplated disciplinary proceedings against him under Regulation-7 of DHBVNL Employees (Punishment and Appeal) Regulations-2019 for imposition of major penalty on account of his non-performance and lack of supervision as SE/OP Circle, DHBVNL, Jind", states the order issued by the Managing Director (MD) of DHBVNL on Wednesday. The MD has maintained that the above order is issued in terms of the liberty granted by the court in its decision dated April 22, 2025. Dutt, who was suspended last week, had challenged his suspension before the court. His counsel told the court that as per news reports, the petitioner was suspended because he did not attend to the phone call of the Power Minister on April 16. The court had set aside the

suspension order, terming it "non-speaking, non-reasoned and mechanical". It, however, stated that the respondent (state of Haryana) was at liberty to pass fresh order in accordance with law. Haryana Education Minister



Mahipal Dhanda, on whose complaint the SE was said to have been suspended, said, "The courts should also understand a bit. It is not that we are giving them 'gyaan', but there has to be complete information of facts," he said during his visit to Rohtak on Wednesday.









# MARKET

BSE Sensex	
Close	79,801.43
Percent change	-0.39%
Previous close	80,116.49
Open	80,058.43
High	80,173.92
Low	79,724.55

Nifty 50	
Close	24,246.70
Percent change	-0.34%
Previous close	24,328.95
Open	24,277.90
High	24,347.85
Low	24,216.15

Nifty 500	
Close	22,180.65
Percent change	-0.26%
Previous close	22,237.60
Open	22,217.65
High	22,270.15
Low	22,155.40

Nifty Next 50	
Close	65,900.80
Percent change	-0.15%
Previous close	65,999.65
Open	66,092.65
High	66,291.60
Low	65,698.15

Nifty 100	
Close	24,860.90
Percent change	-0.31%
Previous close	24,937.00
Open	24,899.90
High	24,968.15
Low	24,824.10

Nifty Bank	
Close	55,201.40
Percent change	-0.30%
Previous close	55,370.05
Open	55,103.90
High	55,550.45
Low	55,088.40

Nifty Midcap 100	
Close	54,969.85
Percent change	0.13%
Previous close	54,912.90
Open	55,094.05
High	55,223.35
Low	54,912.90

## Top Gainers

Company	Current	% Gain
IndusInd Bank	819.75	3.22
UltraTechCement	12,159.00	1.76
Grasim	2,729.20	1.62
Tata Motors	668.35	1.28
Dr Reddys Labs	1,200.50	1.22

## Top Losers

Company	Current	%Loss
HUL	2,325.30	-4.06
Bharti Airtel	1,845.60	-1.91
Eicher Motors	5,650.50	-1.56
ICICI Bank	1,402.70	-1.52
Eternal	236.38	-1.20

## Commodities

Commodity	Price	Change (%)
Gold Jun 05	95,850.00	1,128.00 1.19
Silver May 05	97,467.00	-332.00 -0.34
Crudeoil May 19	5,396.00	87.00 1.64
Naturalgas Apr 25	250.40	-9.10 -3.51

## Social Beat crafts Manish Malhotra x Samsonite launch cCampaign

**Chennai** : When a legacy travel brand famous for innovations meets a visionary designer renowned for reshaping Indian couture—something iconic is bound to happen.

Manish Malhotra x Samsonite is more than a collaboration—it's a landmark moment that reimagines what luxury luggage can look and feel like. And Social Beat brought this collaboration to life with a campaign that felt just as elevated, stylish, and statement-making as the collection itself.

The idea was simple: don't just launch a bag—launch something rare, desirable, and bound in legacy.

The pre-buzz kicked off with subtle sightings of Manish Malhotra himself carrying the bag. No big reveal, no overt branding—just intrigue.

This was followed by a curated wave of influencers who seamlessly seeded the collection into their worlds, helping

the bag quietly (but powerfully) claim its place as the accessory of the season, a release from Social Beat here and aid.

At the centre of the launch is a hero film that brings to life the idea of elegance meeting exclusivity. It showcases how everyone walks their own path in their own unique style, projecting the bag as an extension of their distinct self. Clean silhouettes and sharp frames mirrored the bag's sleek elegance, while grunge-laced interiors brought in a raw edge. Esoteric by intent, the film carried Manish Malhotra's refined aesthetic without ever spelling it out. A quiet, confident storytelling that lets the product do all the talking. Anushree Tainwala, Executive Director at Samsonite South Asia, shared: "This collaboration was a milestone for Samsonite—a fusion of our legacy of innovation with Manish Malhotra's timeless design sensibility. The cam-

paign was crafted to reflect the sophistication of the collection while introducing a bold, fashion-forward chapter in the Samsonite journey."

Ashish Tambe, National Creative Director at Social Beat, said: "The campaign had to evoke the emotion of owning a statement. The creative had to tick all the boxes that a launch must—from a brand and product lens—but at the same time, move beyond the tactical and create an aura of a fashion-first international traveller."

Vikas Chawla, Co-founder of Social Beat, said: "Collaborating on this unique launch combines our capabilities across creative, films, media and technology. The goal was to build a campaign that did justice to the grandeur of the Manish Malhotra x Samsonite collaboration, and our team brought that vision to life across platforms with creativity, passion, and precision."

## Sensex falls 315.06 pts



**Mumbai** : Breaking winning streak of last seven sessions, the BSE Sensex on Thursday slipped 315.06 pts to settle at 79,801.43 on weak global cues.

The National Stock Exchange (NSE) declined 82.25 pts at 24,246.70.

The Sensex opened negative at 80,058.48, easing 58 pts. During the day it was dropped 392 pts at 79,724.55, days low, before closing at 79,801.43, sliding 315.06 pts from its previous close.

The Nifty registered days high at 24,347.85 and low at 24,216.15 pts.

Stocks that kept the market low were Realty, Technology and FMCG stocks. Realty was slipped by 1.39 pc, FMCG by 0.82 pc and Technology by 0.59 pc.

The Mid cap fell 0.16 pc and Small cap by 0.01 pc.

The losers were Hind Unilever by 4.01 pc to Rs 2325, Bharti Airtel by 1.85 pc to Rs 1846.95, ICICI

Bank by 1.57 pc to Rs 1401.60 and Eternal by 0.98 pc to Rs 236.85.

The gainers were IndusInd Bank by 3.29 pc to Rs 820, Ultracemco by 1.77 pc to Rs 12160, Tata Motors by 1.18 pc to Rs 667.70 and Titan by 0.97 pc to Rs 3389.05.

European and US market were seen weak today.

In Asian Market, Strait Times fell by 0.01 pc, Hang Seng by 0.74 pc and Taiwan Weighted by 0.82 pc.

## Black Box logs record Rs 1,550 cr order wins in Q4 FY25

**Mumbai** : Black Box Limited, a global provider of digital infrastructure solutions, on Thursday reported its highest-ever quarterly performance, clocking in order wins worth Rs 1,550 crore in the fourth quarter of the financial year 2024–25.

The company attributed the strong performance to its ongoing transformation and strategic pivot towards high-value, large-scale global projects. "This quarter's exceptional performance validates our strategic priorities and reinforces our commitment to disciplined execution," said Sanjeev Verma, Whole Time Director, Black Box Ltd.

Among the major deals in Q4, Black Box secured a landmark ₹240 crore contract for infrastructure modernisation with one of the largest hospital networks in the United States. The company also bagged data centre service contracts exceeding Rs 225 crore from global hyperscalers.

Further, Black Box expanded its reach in the transportation and education sectors, winning orders worth over Rs 130 crore for airport modernisation and a Rs 90 crore contract from a leading US university respectively.



Outside of the United States, the company reported key wins in the Asia-Pacific and Indian markets. This included a Rs 90 crore order from a major consumer electronics firm in APAC and two significant domestic deals, a 5G rollout project with Indian telcos and a digital infrastructure contract with a large municipal corporation, together valued at Rs 180 crore.

The company highlighted the strategic appointment of a Chief Revenue Officer for the US market and the expansion of sector-focused sales leadership as drivers of growth across geographies and industries.

"We are seeing strong, sustained client demand for the modernisation of IT and networking infrastructure to stay competitive in an increasingly digital-first world," Verma noted. He added that digital infrastructure is now central to AI adoption and business resilience.

Headquartered in India, Black Box employs over 3,600 professionals globally and serves sectors ranging from healthcare and education to financial services, manufacturing, and public infrastructure.

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## Odisha approves seven Renewable Energy projects worth Rs.1191.47 crore

**Bhubaneswar** : Seven renewable energy (RE) projects with a cumulative capacity of 149.97 MW at an investment of Rs.1191.47 crores, will be established in Odisha to strengthen the state's sustainable energy infrastructure. The Single Window Committee (SWC) meeting under the Odisha Renewable Energy Policy-2022, chaired by Principal Secretary of Energy Department, Vishal Kumar Dev, on Wednesday, granted in-principle approval of these projects. The approved projects include 2 Wind Power Projects of 95.7 MW, 4 Ground based Solar Projects of 53.97 MW and first Battery Storage Project of 0.6 MWh. These projects will leverage Odisha's natural potential for renewable energy generation, emphasizing the State's commitment to achieving its renewable energy goals under the Odisha Renewable Energy Policy-2022.

## GreenLine rolls out LNG trucks for Bekaert to power greener logistics

**Mumbai** : GreenLine Mobility Solutions Ltd, an Essar Group venture and India's only green logistics operator using LNG and electric-powered heavy commercial trucks, on Thursday flagged off a fleet of LNG trucks for Bekaert, a global leader in tyre reinforcement technologies, at the latter's Ranjangaon Plant near Pune. The deployment marks the beginning of a pilot initiative aimed at decarbonising Bekaert's logistics operations and aligns with the government's vision of promoting a gas-based economy. Each GreenLine LNG truck is expected to cut up to 24 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions annually, significantly contributing to Bekaert's goal of becoming carbon net-zero by 2050 and deriving 65 per cent of its sales from sustainable solutions.

Speaking on the occasion, Anand Miman, CEO, GreenLine Mobility Solutions Ltd, said, "Our partnership with Bekaert demonstrates the growing commitment of forward-thinking corporates to drive sustainability at scale. At GreenLine, we are proud to

offer not just green trucks, but an integrated ecosystem—from LNG refuelling to real-time telematics—that empowers our partners to make meaningful progress on their net-zero goals."

Echoing the sentiment, Dinesh Mukhedkar, Procurement Operations Lead - South Asia and Procurement Global Shared Service Centre Lead, Bekaert, said, "As part of our purpose 'Establishing the new possible,' and our ambition to lead in safe, smart, and sustainable solutions, decarbonising logistics is an essential step. This directly supports our commitment to ESG principles and long-term sustainability goals." GreenLine's LNG-powered truck fleet has already covered over 40 million km and helped avert more than 10,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The company now plans to scale operations further with over 10,000 LNG and EV trucks and a nationwide infrastructure comprising 100 LNG refuelling stations, EV charging hubs and battery swapping facilities—aiming to reduce 1 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> annually, it said.

## FDSA showcases industry growth, Women's role

**Chennai** : The Federation of Direct Selling Association (FDSA), in collaboration with Shoolini University, organized a day-long Education and Awareness Program here on Thursday.

The event witnessed a vibrant gathering of over 300 Direct Sellers from across Tamil Nadu, representing various FDSA member companies.

FDSA, India's largest self-regulatory body for the Direct Selling industry, established in 2011 and comprising 29 active member companies, led the initiative.

Mr Mohan, Director and Commissioner, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Department, Tamil Nadu Government commended FDSA for its consistent efforts in organizing such awareness drives.

The event served as an educational platform to raise awareness on Direct Selling rules, ethical practices, regulatory frameworks, and the importance of compliance with The Consumer Protection (Direct Selling) Rules, 2021. The 13-year long journey of FDSA was showcased through a video presentation highlighting its impact on shaping-up the legal and policy frameworks, since its inception.

The Direct Selling industry in India has come a long way from the days of uncertainty and lack of regulation. When the FDSA was founded in 2011, our mission was clear—to bring legal sanctity and structure to an industry that had immense potential but was often misunderstood.

Over more than a decade, through persistent advocacy and close collaboration with both state and central governments, we are proud to have played a pivotal role in the development and implementation of the Consumer Protection (Direct Selling) Rules, 2021, FDSA members said.

South India, and Tamil Nadu in particular, has always been at the forefront of this movement. In fact, every district in Tamil Nadu is home to at least one successful Direct Selling company.

Today, the industry has expanded to an impressive Rs 26,000 crore in annual sales, with FDSA member

companies contributing approximately 31%. It is also noteworthy that 45% of direct sellers are women, many of whom focus on healthcare-related OTC products designed to meet specific wellness needs at the individual level.

With a comprehensive regulatory framework now in-place, the Direct Selling sector is well-positioned for accelerated growth, projected at around 20% year on year. "As India progresses towards its vision of becoming a USD 5 trillion economy by 2047, I am confident that our industry will play a vital role in contributing to that national aspiration. It was during the challenging year of 2020, amid the COVID-19 pandemic, that Direct Selling truly proved its value—emerging as the first choice for many who had lost their jobs and were seeking an alternative, reliable source of income," FDSA President AP Reddy said, in his address.

This momentum was further reinforced by the introduction of the Direct Selling Rules in 2021, resulting in consistent year-on-year industry growth ranging from 12% to 20%. In today's fast-paced and demanding world, health has become a central concern. Stress, lifestyle imbalances, and poor dietary habits are contributing to a surge in long-term health conditions such as diabetes, thyroid disorders, obesity, and high blood pressure. These issues often stem from irregular or inadequate nutrition.

Recognizing this growing need, many Direct Selling companies are now focused on offering health and wellness products that help individuals maintain a balanced diet and lead healthier lives. Mr Reddy said, "Rajiv Gupta, Vice President—FDSA, provided a comprehensive overview of the Direct Selling industry's journey in India, highlighting the transformation from a credibility-challenged sector to one now backed by legal recognition. He encouraged the youth to embrace Direct Selling as a legitimate livelihood opportunity."

## Adani Energy Solutions sees 79 pc profit surge in Q4 FY25

**New Delhi** : Adani Energy Solutions (AESL) reported a 79% year-on-year increase in its net profit for Q4 FY25, reaching Rs 647.15 crore, driving its shares up by over 3%.

The company had earned a net profit of Rs 361.44 crore in the same quarter last year. The surge this year reflects the company's strong financial performance and operational growth, it claimed. Following the announcement, AESL's shares were trading at Rs 967.80 apiece.

The company's revenue from operations also saw a rise of over 35% YoY, totaling Rs 6,374.58 crore for the quarter. Its total expenses



amounted to Rs 5,411.60 crore, while the debt-to-assets ratio improved to 0.54. The net profit margin for the quarter rose significantly to 10.82%.

AESL also reported a record 23%

increase in its full-year EBITDA, reaching Rs 7,746 crore, driven by growth in its transmission segment, expansion in the Mumbai utility's EBITDA, and a 13% YoY increase in the regulated asset base.

CEO Kandarp Patel attributed the strong performance to the company's ability to execute complex projects, outperform peers in project bids, and maintain financial prudence. He emphasised that AESL is focused on incremental project commissioning, expanding meter installation, and improving operational efficiency in the upcoming fiscal year.

## ACC profit drops 20 pc in March quarter on higher input costs

**Mumbai**: Adani Group-owned ACC Ltd on Thursday reported a 20 per cent decline in its consolidated net profit to Rs 751 crore for the quarter ended March 2025 as against Rs 943 crore in the corresponding period last year, as rising expenses offset robust sales volumes during the seasonally strong quarter.

The cement major's consolidated

revenue grew 13 per cent year-on-year to Rs 5,992 crore in Q4 FY25, compared to Rs 5,317 crore in Q4 FY24. Sales volumes rose 14 per cent on an annual basis.

Despite the increase in top-line and volumes, higher input costs weighed on profitability. Total expenses for the quarter rose 12.7 per cent, primarily due to an up-

tick in raw material costs.

The company's board declared a dividend of Rs 7.5 per equity share for the financial year 2024-25. June 13 has been fixed as the record date, and the dividend will be paid on or before July 1.

Commenting on the performance, Vinod Bahety, Whole Time Director and CEO of ACC Ltd, said, "As we conclude this FY, ACC

stands stronger, more agile and future ready. This year has been marked by strategic milestones that reinforce our position as a leader in the Indian cement industry. Our capacity expansion initiatives including the commissioning of new grinding units supported by debottlenecking and modernisation, are aligned with growing infrastructure.