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PIYUSH GOYAL BACKS SWADESHI PUSH FOR \$2 TRILLION EXPORTS

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal on Monday said that India has set a target of achieving \$2 trillion in exports in the next five years as part of its journey towards an 'Atmanirbhar Bharat', or self-reliant India. Goyal was speaking at a two-day national conclave of trade leaders being held at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi, organised by the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT), where he launched a website for the Bharat Vyapar Mahotsav. He expressed confidence that the Bharat Vyapar Mahotsav, set to begin in 86 days at Bharat Mandapam, would act as a platform to scale up indigenous goods, strengthen import substitution and expand India's presence in global markets. Goyal added



that with 140 crore Indians united in the effort, «no force in the world can stop us» from reaching the goal of a developed India. Bharat Vyapar Mahotsav is a Swadeshi fair programmed to showcase India-made goods and

services. The event is being organised by the India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO) in partnership with the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT), with support from transport bodies, logistics firms, Swadeshi

Jagran Manch and Laghu Udyog Bharati. Goyal said the fair would bring together a thousand businesses and focus on quality, packaging, branding and marketing to help Indian products compete internationally.

Piyush Goyal said India is targeting \$2 trillion exports in five years through the Swadeshi-focused Bharat Vyapar Mahotsav and Atmanirbhar Bharat vision.

Goyal said India's exports had already risen to \$863 billion this year, about 5% higher than last year, and the government had now raised the target to \$1 trillion for the current year. He said the Commerce Ministry was working on free trade agreements with 38 countries, mostly developed economies, to give Indian exporters preferential access through lower import duties.

SEBI Chief: 22 urban bodies raise Rs 4,500 crore via bonds

TBG NETWORK
BHUBANESWAR

Highlighting the increasing importance of municipal bonds as a key source of financing for urban infrastructure and development projects across the country, SEBI Chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey noted that across India 22 Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) have collectively raised more than Rs 4,500 crore through municipal bonds till FY26. Speaking at the Association of Mutual Funds Program in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, Pandey said the securities market serves as an efficient tool for directing savings into investments alongside banks, government support and internal accruals. He highlighted that the capital market has diversified financing avenues through instruments such as equity, debt, REITs, InvITs and municipal bonds. Referring to states such as Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, which have successfully leveraged municipal bonds for



city-level infrastructure and urban development, Pandey said Odisha could also position municipal bonds as a key pillar of its development financing strategy. «With wider participation, municipal bonds can evolve into a key pillar of funding for urban infrastructure in Odisha as well. So as an investor, when you invest, you are not just earning returns. You are participating in the growth of your city when you are investing in municipal bonds, state and

the country," Pandey said. He further noted that mutual funds also indirectly contribute to infrastructure financing through investments in debt instruments, including corporate and municipal bonds. The SEBI Chairman said that while the domestic municipal bond market remains nascent, 22 urban local bodies across the country had collectively raised more than Rs 4,500 crore through 31 issuances by the end of FY26.

GE Aerospace invests Rs 100 crore in Pune facility expansion

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

GE Aerospace, on Monday, announced an investment of Rs 100 crore in its Pune manufacturing facility, aimed to strengthen the company's manufacturing footprint in India and solidify its long-term commitment to the region. According to GE Aerospace, the financial allocation targeted new welding technologies, advanced inspection equipment, precision tools, gauges, and fixtures. The company also directed resources toward infrastructure enhancements to increase production capacity, improve process precision, and support the delivery of high-quality components for global customers. This new investment was built on the Rs 410 crore announced over



the past two years, which brought the total investment in the Pune facility to more than Rs 510 crore over a three-year period. Previous investments focused on advancing manufacturing processes, automation, and capability enhancements for next-generation engine components. The latest upgrades expanded the facility's capabilities and supported component production across the GE90, GENx, GE9X, and

CFM International's LEAP engine programs. CFM International operated as a 50-50 joint company between GE Aerospace and Safran Aircraft Engines. CFM International is a 50-50 joint company between GE Aerospace and Safran Aircraft Engines. «This continued investment reflects GE Aerospace's long-term commitment to India and our confidence in the Pune facility's role within our global manufacturing

network," said Vishwajit Singh, Managing Director of the Pune manufacturing facility at GE Aerospace. The Pune plant served as a critical component of the global supply chain for the company, producing key parts for commercial aircraft engines. The facility operated alongside more than 300 local suppliers out of a broader network of over 2,200 GE Aerospace suppliers in India, which enhanced the role of the country in global aerospace programs through advanced manufacturing expertise and precision engineering capabilities. «Our continued growth is a win for our customers and the broader community, driving more apprenticeship and job opportunities at GE Aerospace and for our supplier partners.

India Banks' asset quality stable; west Asia risks loom: Report

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Asset quality across India's banking sector remained broadly stable during the fourth quarter of FY26, although lenders have cautioned that geopolitical tensions in West Asia could pose risks to credit quality in the coming quarters, according to a report by Systematix Research. The report noted that most banks under its coverage universe continued to maintain healthy asset quality metrics, with net slippage ratios remaining under control despite macroeconomic uncertainties and pressure on margins following the repo rate cut cycle. «The slippages in the quarter were broadly in control with most coverage banks reporting sub



80bps of net slippage ratio (except IIB),» the report said. According to the report, the banking sector's overall credit cost trend also remained largely stable sequentially, though some lenders created additional prudential buffers using one-off recoveries and tax-related gains. Public and private sector lenders alike continued to strengthen their balance sheets amid global uncertainties. However, banks

flagged emerging external risks stemming from the ongoing conflict in West Asia. The report said lenders do not yet see any immediate stress build-up in loan books, but they expect the actual impact of geopolitical tensions to become visible over the next few quarters. «There is no incipient rise in asset quality yet but the banks expect the true impact of the west Asia war to be visible in Q2FY27 or in H2FY27,» the

report stated. Among the banks reviewed, private lenders such as ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank and Kotak Mahindra Bank reported relatively resilient asset quality trends, while PSU banks also maintained stable slippage ratios. Indian Bank, however, saw a rise in slippages due to year-end adjustments linked to memorandum of changes (MOC), according to management commentary cited in the report.

The report further highlighted that government-backed schemes such as Credit Guarantee Scheme for Microfinance Institutions 2.0 (CGSMFI 2.0) and Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme 5.0 (ECLGS 5.0) could help cushion potential stress in vulnerable loan segments if external conditions worsen.

Urban areas to drive 70% of India's GDP growth by 2036: Report

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Urban areas are expected to contribute nearly 70 per cent of India's GDP growth by 2036, driven by rising investments in urban infrastructure and reforms in municipal financing, according to a report by Brickwork Ratings. The report titled «From grants to markets: How Urban Challenge Fund will reshape urban finance in India» highlighted that India would require around Rs 80 trillion in urban infrastructure investments by 2037, even as Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) currently rely minimally on debt markets. According to the

report, «Urban areas' contribution to India's GDP by 2036» is projected at 70 per cent, underlining the growing importance of cities in India's economic expansion. The report noted that the newly introduced Urban Challenge Fund (UCF) marks a major policy shift from traditional grant-based urban financing to market-linked financing mechanisms. «UCF design logic: 'Reform-linked' and 'leverage-based'—cities only receive central money when they can attract private capital. Market borrowing is mandatory, not optional,» the report stated. It added that ULBs currently utilise only around 5 per cent of their funding



requirements through debt markets, reflecting the low penetration of commercial

ULBs must raise at least half of project costs through bonds, loans, or PPPs before accessing UCF grants—making credit ratings non-negotiable,» the report said. The report observed that while institutional lenders such as HUDCO and IIFCL continue to dominate urban financing, municipal bonds are emerging as an important financing route due to greater transparency.

financing in the urban sector. The report further said the UCF would create a strong push for municipal bond issuances and structured urban borrowing, particularly among Tier II and Tier III cities. «ULBs

must raise at least half of project costs through bonds, loans, or PPPs before accessing UCF grants—making credit ratings non-negotiable,» the report said. The report observed that while institutional lenders

continue to dominate urban financing, municipal bonds are emerging as an important financing route due to greater transparency, investor participation, and market discipline. It also pointed out that around 4,223 smaller ULBs and cities are being targeted under the UCF framework, with nearly 80 per cent of them yet to access market debt. The report said reforms linked to governance, digital systems, audited financials, and property tax improvements would strengthen the creditworthiness of ULBs and improve their access to long-term financing markets.

NARENDRA MODI HOLDS TALKS WITH NORWAY PM STØRE

Narendra Modi held bilateral talks with Norway Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre during his historic two-day visit to Oslo, the first by an Indian PM in 43 years.

TBG NETWORK
OSLO

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday held a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre of Norway as part of the latter's two-day official visit to the Nordic country. PM Modi was welcomed by his Norwegian counterpart at the Government Guest House in Oslo, where the bilateral engagement took place. The meeting comes as part of the fourth leg of Prime Minister Modi's five-nation tour after he visited the UAE, the Netherlands and Sweden. In a historic milestone for bilateral diplomacy, PM Modi touched down in Oslo earlier in the day, marking the first time an Indian Prime Minister has visited the Scandinavian nation in 43 years. Arriving for a two-day official tour following his engagements in Sweden, PM Modi's visit constitutes the crucial fourth leg of his ongoing tour, aimed at comprehensively revitalising India-Norway strategic and economic relations. Demon-



strating a unique diplomatic gesture that underscored the significance of the visit, the Prime Minister of Norway, Jonas Gahr Støre, was personally present on the tarmac to receive the Indian leader. The high-profile welcoming delegation at the air-

port also featured Norway's Ambassador to India, May-Elin Stener, and India's Ambassador to Norway, Gloria Gangte, alongside several other high-ranking dignitaries. Reflecting the mutual excitement surrounding the visit, PM Jonas Gahr

Støre took to social media to personally welcome the Indian PM. "Welcome to Norway, Prime Minister @narendramodi. It marks a historic moment: the first visit by India's Prime Minister in over 40 years. I look forward to how Norway,

the Nordics, and India can strengthen cooperation on trade, green transition, and our common global challenges," the Prime Minister of Norway stated in a post on X. Expressing immense pride regarding the high-profile visit and noting the long-standing gap since an Indian leader last set foot in the country, Ambassador May-Elin Stener also shared her enthusiasm on X. «Honoured to welcome Indian Prime Minister @narendramodi to Norway.» "Truly special occasion - the first visit by an Indian PM to Norway in 43 years. A reflection of our strong ties and shared ambitions", she wrote. The itinerary for PM Modi's time in Oslo is packed with high-level engagements, including participating in the third India-Nordic Summit and holding critical bilateral discussions. While in the country, PM Modi is scheduled to call on King Harald V and Queen Sonja. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to next visit Italy as part of the last leg of his tour.

Amit Shah to launch Jan Jan Suvidha Kendras in Bastar today

TBG NETWORK
JAGDALPUR

The forests of Bastar, once known for gunfire and security operations, are set to witness a historic transformation as Union Home Minister Amit Shah will inaugurate the "Jan Jan Suvidha Kendra" model from Netanar in Bastar on Monday. It is an initiative that symbolises the changing face of the region, where security camps are now being transformed into centres of development and public service. The initiative, prepared by the Chhattisgarh government, aims to bring governance and essential services directly to remote tribal communities that have remained disconnected from basic administrative and welfare facilities for decades. Amit Shah will launch the «Jan Jan Suvidha Kendra» initiative during his two-day visit to Chhattisgarh from May 18 to May 19. The visit assumes significance as it comes after the Centre's announcement earlier this year regarding its goal of achieving a "Naxal-free India" by March 31. The initiative is especially significant for villages where people still travel long dis-



tances for even the basic government-related work. Under this model, officials in the Chhattisgarh government said, selected security camp premises will be converted into integrated public service centres, offering multiple government services under one roof. Priority will be given to villages where access to administrative offices, banking facilities, health-care and digital services remains limited. «These centres will provide Common Service Centre (CSC)-based services such as Aadhaar updates, banking facilities, applications for income, caste and domicile certificates, ration card services, Ayushman Bharat cards, e-Shram registration, electricity bill payment, online applications, and railway and bus ticket booking. Printing, scanning and other digital services will also be available.» Officials

said the initiative, developed under the leadership of Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai, represents a significant shift from a "security-centric" approach to a "development-oriented" model. Over the past two decades, several Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) and state police camps were established across Naxal-affected regions to restore security, improve road connectivity and strengthen administrative outreach. With the security situation improving significantly in many areas, the government is now preparing to repurpose these very premises into «Jan Jan Suvidha Kendras.» «One of the biggest advantages of this initiative will be for tribal communities living in remote villages, who often have to travel to district or block headquarters for basic services.

SBI Report sees no fiscal impact from oil price rise

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The retail fuel price hike of Rs 3 per litre has been implemented to reduce the losses incurred by oil marketing companies (OMCs) due to unchanged fuel prices amidst rising Brent Crude prices. While immediate consumer price inflation shows an upward movement, according to SBI Research Ecovrap, "there is no direct impact of this hike on the fiscal situation." The report noted that fuel consumption levels typically recover quickly after an initial price change. "Historical data shows that hike in petrol and diesel price has been followed by a decline in consumption immediately after the hike, only



to recover thereafter with no decline visible in the annual consumption levels. Further, immediate impact on CPI inflation is likely around 15-20 bps in May-June 2026. So we revise our FY27 forecast to 4.7%. There is no direct

impact of this hike on the fiscal situation," the report stated. The under-recoveries of OMCs on the sales of petrol and diesel are rising because retail prices remain unchanged for a long period. "According to the Union Min-

ister, OMCs are incurring losses to the tune of Rs 1,000 crore per day, which amounts to around Rs 3.6 lakh crore a year," the report mentioned.

The current increase in oil price by Rs 3 provides a relief of Rs 52,700 crore in under-recoveries, which is 15 per cent of the expected total loss of the OMCs in financial year 2027. The SBI report, outlining the fiscal implications if the government alters the current tax structure on fuel, said, "If we assume that the Government reduced the excise duty on petrol and diesel to zero from its current level of 11.9% and 7.8% respectively, it will lead to reduction in government revenue/gain of OMCs to the tune of Rs 1.9 lakh crore.

Rupee under pressure, may hit 100/USD: Experts

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Currency experts have warned that the Indian rupee may continue to remain under pressure in the coming months due to rising crude oil prices, persistent foreign investor outflows, global uncertainty and geopolitical tensions. Rupee has depreciated by around 6 to 7 per cent against the US dollar this year. The currency started the year near the 89 mark and has now fallen to a historic low beyond 96 per US dollar. Experts said the pace of depreciation in recent weeks has raised concerns in financial markets. K N Dey, Currency expert told that the sharp fall in the rupee since May 11 has surprised



market participants. «The speed of the rupee's descent since May 11 has caught the market off guard, yet both the regulator and North Block have remained notably silent,» he said. According to Dey, aggressive selling by foreign institutional investors (FIIs) has been one of the major reasons behind the rupee weakness.

He said institutional investors have already pulled out Rs 2.65 lakh crore from Indian markets in 2026, close to last year's total outflow of Rs 3.04 lakh crore. «This downward pressure is fuelled by aggressive FII capitulation,» he stated. Dey added that there is currently no clear indication of where

the rupee may stabilise. «With no bottom in sight, trying to forecast a stabilisation point is pure guesswork, and even a psychological slide to 100 is now on the table,» he said. Ajay Suresh Kedia, Director at Kedia Advisory told that the rupee continues to face sustained pressure because of strong dollar demand and rising crude oil prices.

«The Indian Rupee remains under sustained pressure as the dollar index stays firm near 99 while rising crude oil prices continue inflating India's import bill,» Kedia told. He said higher energy prices have increased demand for dollars in domestic markets, while elevated US bond yields are strengthening the US dollar globally.

ASREC (India) Limited Unveils New Corporate Identity and Logo

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

ASREC (India) Limited, one of India's leading Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARCs), formally unveiled its new corporate identity and logo at a prestigious ceremony held at Le Méridien New Delhi today. The landmark event was graced by Shri M. Nagaraju, IAS, Secretary, Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance, Government of India, as the Chief Guest, alongside eminent dignitaries, se-



nior banking leaders, policymakers, shareholders, former board members, and key stakeholders from India's financial ecosystem. The unveiling of the new identity signifies a defining milestone in ASREC's journey — reflecting its evolving vision, institutional maturity, and strengthened commit-

ment towards enabling responsible asset resolution and supporting the resilience of India's banking and financial system. The ceremony commenced with the National Anthem followed by ceremonial lamp lighting led by distinguished dignitaries including Shri M. Nagaraju, IAS; Dr. K.P. Krishnan, IAS (Retd.), Chairman, ASREC; Padma Bhushan Shri V.K. Shunglu, IAS (Retd.), Former Chairman of ASREC and Former Comptroller & Auditor General of India; senior representatives from

leading shareholder institutions including Union Bank of India, Bank of India, Life Insurance Corporation of India, and Indian Bank. Addressing the gathering, Mr. Girish Sharan Sinha, MD & CEO, ASREC (India) Limited, said: "The unveiling of ASREC's new identity represents more than a visual transformation. It reflects our renewed vision, stronger purpose, and commitment to building a future-ready institution aligned with the evolving needs of India's financial sector.

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

SIIA Data Analysis Research Council has appointed Mr. D.T. Thimmegowda as the Executive Director for Karnataka State with immediate effect, recognising his long-standing experience in grassroots public engagement, organisational coordination, and social service activities. The appointment was approved during the council's board meeting. A Mysuru-based public figure with over two decades of active involve-



ment in organisational and community initiatives, D.T. Thimmegowda has worked extensively at the grassroots level across Karnataka. He is known for his sustained participation in public outreach programmes, election campaign coordination, and commu-

nity welfare initiatives. According to the council, his appointment reflects the organisation's focus on strengthening regional leadership and expanding its strategic data analysis and research initiatives in Karnataka.

In his new role, he will oversee state-level coordination, research-oriented activities, and organisational development initiatives aligned with the council's broader objectives. Welcoming the appointment, Dr. Bhargav Mal-

lappa, Director of SIIA Data Analysis Research Council, said, "I am pleased on the appointment of D.T. Thimmegowda. His dedication to public service, grassroots leadership, and organisational experience make him a big asset for the Council and its future initiatives in the state." Speaking on his appointment, D.T. Thimmegowda said, "I am grateful for this responsibility and will work with dedication to strengthen the Council's mission in Karnataka."

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Piyush Goyal backs...

He noted that Oman's FTA was expected to come into effect on June 1. The minister stressed that the objective was not just to promote exports but also to reduce dependence on imports through import substitution. He pointed to sectors like capital goods, medical devices and value-added fisheries and agriculture, where Indian MSMEs in Rajkot, Ludhiana, Pune and Visakhapatnam were already building capability. Goyal said the government had expanded the MSME definition to include businesses with turnover up to 500 crore, while excluding export turnover so that firms could continue receiving benefits even as they scaled abroad. Goyal urged the inclusion of women entrepreneurs and the next generation of traders in the fair, suggesting that 25 women entrepreneurs from each state be invited. He also proposed setting up 50-60 kiosks at the venue to promote RuPay cards and UPI

payments, calling it a step towards a cashless Swadeshi economy. «If we do this, I believe it will engender a new way of thinking,» he said. He described Bharat Mandapam and Yashobhoomi in Dwarka as examples of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to create world-class infrastructure that reflected India's capability. Goyal said every element of Bharat Mandapam, from the chairs made by Rajasthan artisans to the carpets from Kashmir, embodied the confluence of India's craftsmanship. Goyal concluded that the government would act as a «kick-start» through schemes like PLI, but the long-term success of the program depended on industry and trade taking ownership. He said the 80th Independence Day in 2027 should serve as an opportunity to present a successful model of a self-sustaining India to the nation.

SEBI Chief: 22...

The SEBI Chairman said that while the domestic municipal bond market remains nascent, 22 urban local bodies across the country had collectively raised more

than Rs 4,500 crore through 31 issuances by the end of FY26. Highlighting the broader growth of the domestic securities market, Pandey said total market capitalization surged from Rs 95 lakh crore in FY16 to around Rs 463 lakh crore in April 2026. He added that the number of unique retail investors increased to 145 million from 38 million in FY19. According to Pandey, the primary market recorded 366 initial public offerings during the last financial year, raising Rs 1.9 lakh crore and ranking first globally in terms of number of IPOs. Total equity and debt market mobilization stood at Rs 13.6 lakh crore despite geopolitical tensions and global conflicts. He also said mutual fund assets under management grew from Rs 12 lakh crore in FY16 to nearly Rs 82 lakh crore by the end of April 2026, while monthly SIP inflows crossed Rs 31,000 crore in April 2026 compared to nearly Rs 3,000 crore earlier. However, citing the SEBI Investor Survey 2025, Pandey said that although 63 per cent of households were aware of market-linked products, only 9.5 per cent invested in them, with urban participation at 15 per cent and rural participation at 6 per cent. "A se-

curities market is nothing but a bridge between savings and investments. On one side we have individuals like all of us who save money. On the other side we have businesses who need capital to grow. The market connects the two," Pandey said.

GE Aerospace...

Over the past decade, this facility has grown into a high-capability aerospace manufacturing hub, strengthening India's supplier ecosystem and contributing to GE Aerospace's global supply chain," Singh added. Workforce development remained a core function of the facility, which managed a structured two-year apprenticeship program. This initiative enrolled more than 500 apprentices annually in classroom instruction and specialized TIG welding training at the site's dedicated Weld School. As per the company, since 2015, the facility has trained more than 5,000 production associates to build an aerospace manufacturing talent pipeline in India.

INDIA FASTEST-GROWING STEEL PRODUCER: GOLDMAN SACHS

A Goldman Sachs report said India's crude steel output rose 11 per cent in March 2026, making it the world's fastest-growing major steel producer.

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

India has continued to strengthen its position as the world's fastest-growing major steel producer, with crude steel output growth accelerating sharply in March 2026, according to the latest Global Steel: The Steel Market Barometer - May Update report released by Goldman Sachs. The report highlighted that India's steel sector continues to outperform most major global markets despite mixed trends across the international steel industry. In March, India's crude steel production growth accelerated to 11% y/y (vs +10% y/y YTD and +7% y/y in Feb), the report said. The strong growth trajectory reinforces India's emergence as a critical demand and production hub in the global steel ecosystem at a time when several major economies are witnessing slowing industrial output and weaker steel demand. The Goldman Sachs report contrasted India's performance with other regions,



noting that in Japan and the Black Sea, crude steel production declined by 4% y/y and 3% y/y, respectively. The report further showed that China, the world's largest steel producer, is continuing to face production pressures. According to the report, «China's steel production continued to decline y/y in the first two weeks of May (-3.2% y/y vs the same week in 2025).» Goldman Sachs also observed that

while China's long-term steel capacity reduction strategy remains in place, implementation has slowed this year. The report stated, «The anti-involution effort and long-term capacity cut plan for the Chinese steel sector remain intact; we see delayed execution in 2026E in terms of both capacity and production discipline.» Industry experts believe India's strong infrastructure pipeline, expanding manufacturing

activity, and robust domestic consumption are helping sustain steel demand momentum. The report also pointed to broader global trends in steel pricing and production. While several regions registered price increases in flat and long steel products during April, India remained among the few major economies showing sustained production expansion alongside resilient demand fundamentals. The

findings come as India continues to focus on large-scale infrastructure investments, urbanisation, automobile manufacturing, and renewable energy projects, all of which are expected to support long-term steel consumption growth. India's consistent growth in crude steel production is increasingly positioning the country as one of the most important drivers of future global steel demand.

Paranjape schemes gets Rs 90 crore boost From Nisus Finance

TBG NETWORK
PUNE

Paranjape Schemes (Construction) Ltd., a legacy developer known for pioneering new-age residential formats has announced a strategic investment partnership with Nisus Finance. Through its Real Estate Special Opportunities Fund-I (RESO-I), Nisus Finance will invest INR 90 crore in Realnet Ventures Private Limited towards the development of a premium residential tower at Paranjape Schemes' landmark Blue Ridge township in Hinjawadi Phase 1, Pune. The investment will

support the development of a premium residential tower within "Blue Ridge", Paranjape Schemes' landmark 150-acre integrated township located in Hinjawadi Phase 1, Pune. Over the years, Blue Ridge has evolved into one of Pune's most established mixed-use townships, with 33 residential towers delivered to more than 6,000 families, three operational SEZs employing over 35,000 IT professionals, commercial establishments, educational infrastructure, and modern lifestyle amenities including a 9-hole golf course, basketball and tennis courts. The upcoming

residential development will be constructed on 1.09 acres of conveyed land and comprise 188 premium residences across 3 BHK and 4 BHK configurations, with a total saleable area of approximately 4.02 lakh sq. ft. The project has an estimated Gross Development Value (GDV) of around INR 370 crore. Located in Pune's thriving IT corridor, Hinjawadi continues to witness sustained demand from homebuyers driven by strong employment hubs, improving infrastructure, and increasing preference for integrated township living. The demand for larger

homes and lifestyle-led residential communities has further strengthened the appeal of developments such as Blue Ridge. Commenting on the Development, Mr. Avadhoot Sarwate, CIO, Nisus Finance Services Co Limited said, "Association with Paranjape Group having legacy of 35+ years and delivery track record of 2+ MN sq. ft. in different micro markets of India. Investment by Nisus Finance in their flagship township where all infrastructure is already in place schools, commercial spaces, modern amenities, a golf course, tennis courts.

Glen Launches "Apnapan, Made Better in Glen." Its First Major Brand Campaign

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Glen Appliances Pvt Ltd has launched its first major brand campaign, "Apnapan. Made Better in Glen.", marking the beginning of a long-term platform that reflects the brand's connection with Indian families and kitchens. Built around the emotion of apnapan — the warmth



and understanding shared among loved ones — the campaign highlights how Glen products are designed around the everyday needs of Indian homes and cooking habits. Speaking about

the campaign, Amarpreet Singh Modi said, "Glen has always understood the Indian kitchen as a way of life." That instinctive understanding and warmth is what 'Apnapan' stands for. The campaign features four films set in real Indian homes, showcasing everyday moments of care and connection through Glen products including a chimney, air fryer and built-in

hob. Commenting on the launch, Rintu Dasgupta said, "Glen has never compromised on product quality. This campaign gives a voice to what consumers have always felt about the brand. The campaign marks Glen's first major investment in building an emotional brand narrative around Indian family values and modern kitchens.

Hemraj: The Visionary Force of International Contemporary Art

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

In the expanding landscape of contemporary art, where artistic practices often become trapped within technique, theory, or spectacle, Hemraj emerges as a rare and compelling presence. His paintings and sculptures exist beyond conventional narratives of emotion, symbolism, and visual storytelling. They inhabit an extraordinary psychological territory — a silent space suspended between emotion and no emotion, between consciousness and emptiness, between the visible and the unknowable. Hemraj's art cannot be confined within the ordi-

nary definitions of abstract painting. His works are not illustrations of ideas, nor are they dependent on decorative abstraction. Instead, they function as living visual experiences. Every line, surface, gesture, and spatial interruption in his paintings carries an internal vibration that resists direct explanation. This resistance is precisely what gives his work international significance in contemporary art discourse. Having spent more than three decades in the field of visual art, Hemraj has established himself as one of the important independent voices in Indian contemporary abstraction. His artistic journey includes solo exhibitions in India and abroad,



participation in international auctions including Bonhams in New York, and exhibitions in the United States, Germany, and other international platforms. Yet, unlike many contemporary artists who rely heavily on conceptual-driven presentation, Hemraj's strength lies in the purity of visual language itself. What distinguishes Hemraj

from many contemporary practitioners is that his work rises above method and technique. Technique exists in his paintings, but it never becomes the destination. His process is instinctive yet disciplined, intellectual yet deeply organic. The viewer does not encounter a painted surface alone; one encounters a psychological field. The forms appear fragmented yet complete, chaotic yet meditative, accidental yet inevitable. In Hemraj's paintings, emotion is neither fully expressed nor entirely absent. His work exists in the threshold between emotional intensity and emotional silence. This "in-between state" becomes the central

philosophical quality of his visual language. The paintings do not tell stories in a literal sense, but they evoke states of existence — isolation, movement, memory, tension, stillness, expansion, and disappearance. The viewer becomes part of the work by attempting to emotionally locate themselves within these shifting visual structures. His sculptures carry the same philosophical tension. Whether imagined in monumental stainless steel forms or developed through abstract structural compositions, the sculptures reject imitation of reality. Instead, they transform space itself into an emotional and intellectual experience. Their

reflective surfaces, fragmented geometries, and organic movements create a dialogue between the human body, architecture, and psychological space. In many ways, Hemraj's sculptural thinking aligns with the global evolution of contemporary public art, while maintaining a deeply personal visual identity. Another remarkable aspect of Hemraj's work is its freedom from fixed interpretation. Contemporary art today depends excessively on written statements and theoretical frameworks. Hemraj's work resists this dependency. His paintings do not require explanation to create impact.

SC order on illegal commercial use triggers MCD survey across Delhi

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A recent Supreme Court order raising concerns over rampant illegal constructions and commercial misuse of residential areas across the country has prompted the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) to begin a citywide survey to identify land-use violations in the capital. The directions came in the case of Loganathan v. State of Tamil Nadu Supreme Court Proceedings, in which the apex court observed that there appeared to be "widespread and blatant" vio-

lations of building by-laws and land-use norms in urban areas. The court directed municipal bodies in all state capitals to identify residential areas allegedly being used for non-residential purposes and submit affidavits before it. Following the order, MCD commissioner Sanjeev Khirwar issued directions to all 12 zonal deputy commissioners to conduct a survey of residential premises allegedly being used for commercial activities, according to reports published by PTI and several media organisations.

Korean court limits Samsung union strike action

TBG NETWORK
SEOUL

Samsung Electronics won a partial court injunction Monday restricting its labor union's planned strike. The court ordered the union to maintain usual staffing levels for key safety and facility protection work during the industrial action. According to a news report by The Korea Herald, the decision places significant limits on the union's full-scale strike scheduled to begin Thursday, though it does not ban the strike itself. The Suwon District Court partially accepted the April 16 injunction request filed by Samsung Electronics against the union. The ruling ordered the labor organization not to interfere with the operation of safety protection facilities or work needed to prevent facility damage and product deterioration. This legal intervention came as the company sought to shield its manufacturing infrastructure from potential disruptions caused

by the mass walkout. "The union must not suspend, abolish or obstruct the maintenance and operation of safety protection facilities at the same level as usual -- including staffing, operating hours, operating scale and duty of care on weekdays, weekends and holidays -- nor instruct its members to do so during the period of industrial action," the report quoted the court in its ruling.

As per the report, the court further barred the union from obstructing essential work required to prevent facility damage and wafer deterioration. It mandated that such operations be maintained at pre-strike levels to ensure the stability of the production environment. Beyond staffing requirements, the court prohibited the Samsung Electronics Company Union and its chief, Choi Seung-ho, from occupying all or part of Samsung's facilities, installing locks, or blocking other workers from entering the premises. This ruling arrived just three days before the

planned industrial action. The union previously announced its intention to launch an 18-day full-scale strike starting Thursday. Labor leaders predicted that approximately 50,000 Samsung employees would participate in the walkout, which would mark a significant escalation in the ongoing dispute. Meanwhile, Samsung Electronics management and the union entered what is expected to be their final round of negotiations before the scheduled strike. The talks took place on Monday at the National Labor Relations Commission at the Government Complex Sejong, with the government acting as a mediator between the two parties. The union demanded the removal of the current cap on performance-based bonuses, which is currently set at 50 per cent of an employee's annual salary. It also sought the codification of a bonus plan that would allocate 15 per cent of Samsung Electronics' operating profit as the specific funding source for such payments.

TVS VENU plans to acquire up to 9.9% in Jana Small Finance Bank

TBG NETWORK
BENGALURU

TVS Motor Company Chairman Sudarshan Venu-led TVS VENU will acquire up to 9.9 per cent stake in Jana Small Finance Bank through a mix of primary issuance of warrants and secondary share purchase, according to a company statement issued to exchanges. As part of the transaction, TVS Motor Company will directly acquire 51,60,903 equity shares, representing 4.9 per

cent of the paid-up share capital of Jana Small Finance Bank, for a cash consideration of Rs 193.31 crore. The company informed stock exchanges that its Investment Committee approved the execution of a share purchase agreement with Jana Holdings Limited for the acquisition. The transaction is expected to be completed within three months, subject to customary closing conditions. In the press release, TVS VENU said the invest-

ment is aimed at strengthening its presence in India's financial services ecosystem and enabling collaboration with Jana Small Finance Bank in the long term. "TVS VENU has agreed to acquire a minority stake in Jana Small Finance Bank Limited through a combination of primary issuance of warrants and a secondary purchase for an equity ownership of up to 9.9% on a fully diluted basis, which includes 4.9 per cent to be owned by

TVS Motor Company, subject to all applicable approvals," the release stated. The company said Jana Small Finance Bank has a significant presence in retail and MSME banking with over 12 million customers, 822 outlets across 23 states and two Union Territories. According to the regulatory filing, Jana Small Finance Bank reported total income of Rs 6,374.76 crore and profit after tax of Rs 326.43 crore in FY26.

Actors from the film "Krishnavataram..." visited ISKCON Dwarka on May 16

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The makers and cast of the recently released film "Krishnavataram: Part 1 - The Heart," which has made a strong impact at the box office, visited ISKCON Dwarka Shri Shri Rukmini Dwarkadhish Temple on Saturday morning, May 16, for darshan. Film producer Sajan Raj Kurup was accompanied by actor Siddharth Gupta and actress Sanskriti Jaina. Speaking about the choice of this mythological subject, producer Sajan Raj Kurup said that Lord Krishna is the supreme divine per-



sonality who is deeply connected with people's emotions. Whether in Gujarat, Odisha, Manipur, or Kerala, temples dedicated to Lord Krishna can be found across every corner of the country, binding people together in a thread of love. Through this film, the team also wishes to

spread a global message of love and harmony, encouraging people to stay connected with one another. According to him, goodwill and love are the greatest keys to peace. He further shared that during the two-and-a-half-year journey of making the film, every effort—from acting

and artwork to jewellery, costumes, and set design—was made with devotion to present a divine vision of Lord Krishna on screen. It often felt as though every decision was being made with the blessings and guidance of Lord Krishna himself. He added that every task done with faith, purity, and sincerity eventually succeeds. The team is praying for the film's continued success and has received immense love from audiences over the past week. Actor Siddharth Gupta said that portraying the role of Lord Krishna in the film was a great blessing and privilege for him.

MONUMENTS SEE HUGE TOURIST TURNOUT ON WORLD MUSEUM DAY WITH FREE ENTRY

Deputy CM Diya Kumari reviews Albert Hall upgrade plans, AI-based facilities proposed

TDG NETWORK
JAIPUR

On World Museum Day, museums and monuments across Rajasthan witnessed heavy tourist footfall, with free entry and traditional Rajasthani welcome including tilak and garlands at sites such as Albert Hall Museum, Amer Fort, Hawa Mahal, Jantar Mantar and Nahargarh Fort. A special exhibition titled "Somnath Swabhiman Parv" was organised at Albert Hall highlighting historical events and cultural revival.

Deputy Chief Minister Diya Kumari visited the exhibition and reviewed proposed development plans for Albert Hall. She said the museum will be upgraded with modern facilities including AI-based information systems, LED screens, and new thematic galleries such as Egyptian mummies, coin collection displays, musical instruments and pottery experiences.

The state government has prepared a Rs 26 crore



By CM Diya Kumari visited exhibition and reviewed proposed development plans for Albert Hall Jaipur

Deputy Chief Minister Diya Kumari visited the exhibition and reviewed proposed development plans for Albert Hall. She said the museum will be upgraded with modern facilities including AI-based information systems, LED screens, and new thematic galleries such as Egyptian mummies, coin collection displays, musical instruments and pottery experiences.

development plan to transform Albert Hall into a world-class heritage museum with 18 advanced galleries, light shows, souvenir shops and cafeterias. Officials said the aim is to blend heritage preservation with modern technology to enhance visitor experience.

RIICO revises industrial plot rules, sets fee for logistics conversion activity

TDG NETWORK
JAIPUR

The Rajasthan State Industrial Development and Investment Corporation (RIICO) has introduced new regulations for permitting logistics and warehousing activities on industrial plots. The decision, taken in the RIICO board meeting on April 24, 2026, was formalized through an order issued on May 13.

Under the new system, applicants seeking to convert industrial use into logistics or warehousing will have to pay a permission fee equivalent to 0.50 times the prevailing land rate of the respective industrial area. The fee will be calculated based on current land valuation in each zone.

A special relief has been announced for applicants applying on or before July 31, 2026, during which no additional charges will be levied. However, applications submitted after this date will attract the revised fee structure, increasing



Under the new system, applicants seeking to convert industrial use into logistics or warehousing will have to pay a permission fee equivalent to 0.50 times the prevailing land rate of the respective industrial area. The fee will be calculated based on current land valuation in each zone.

overall costs.

RIICO clarified that cases already granted final approval will not be reopened.

The remaining provisions will continue as per existing guidelines across industrial zones.

Kota Collector reviews wheat procurement, directs supply management



TDG NETWORK
KOTA

District Collector Piyush Samaria reviewed wheat procurement at Minimum Support Price and ration distribution during a weekly meeting at the Collectorate auditorium. He directed officials to ensure adequate availability of gunny bags at mandis and procurement centres for smooth procurement operations. He instructed that wheat

distribution for April to June be completed on time and fresh stock for July be procured from FCI without delay to maintain uninterrupted supply.

Reviewing budget announcements, he asked departments to ensure timely implementation of approved proposals and update progress regularly on a Google Sheet. He also reviewed dilapidated buildings and directed municipal officials to take safety measures before

the monsoon season, along with proper drain cleaning and drainage arrangements.

He stressed preparations for the "Vande Ganga Jal Sanrakshan Jan Abhiyan" starting May 25, urging public participation in water conservation efforts. The campaign will run from May 25 to June 5, including awareness drives, Kalash Yatra and restoration of water structures. Senior district officials were present at the meeting.

Baran Police launches operation Vajra Prahar

TDG NETWORK
JAIPUR

The Baran Police carried out "Operation Vajra Prahar", freezing assets worth Rs 5.82 crore belonging to an accused drug network. Acting under Section 68-F of the NDPS Act, the action targets properties earned through illegal narcotics trade.

According to SP Abhishek Andasu, the operation has resulted in the freezing of a two-storey luxury bungalow, vehicles including Scorpio, Maruti car, tractor, motorcycle and scooter, along with bank accounts linked to accused Kishore Meena, his brother Ghanishyam Meena, and wife Anita Meena.

Investigations revealed that over Rs 33 lakh was deposited in their accounts without any legitimate source of income, while earlier NDPS cases had led

The total illegal wealth and transactions were found to be around Rs 5.82 crore.

to seizure of 263 kg dodachura. The total illegal wealth and transactions were found to be around Rs 5.82 crore.

The case has been approved by the competent authority in Delhi for asset freezing. Income Tax, GST and other agencies have also initiated parallel investigations into disproportionate assets and financial irregularities. Officials said similar economic actions will continue to dismantle the financial base of drug mafias.

Secretary reviews Jodhpur hospitals, directs heat relief for patients and elderly

TDG NETWORK
JAIPUR

Principal Secretary of Medical Education Department Gayatri Rathore chaired review meeting at Dr Sampurnanand Medical College auditorium, Jodhpur, on Monday, assessing facilities, infrastructure, human resources, ongoing construction and medical equipment across affiliated hospitals.

Principal and Controller B S Jodha presented details of sanctioned posts, staffing levels, OPD/IPD load, bed capacity, operation theatres, budget works, equipment and medicines availability.

She directed hospitals to ensure adequate arrangements for patients and attendants amid intense heat, including shade, drinking water, seating and cooling facilities, with special priority to senior citizens to reduce waiting time and



improve comfort.

Rathore emphasized efficient use of manpower through rotation and redeployment across units to ensure uninterrupted services, and ordered timely disposal of expired medicines and unused equipment as per prescribed procedures.

She also stressed strict adherence to SOPs in operation theatres, improved quality of services, and

strengthening of hospital information and display systems so patients can access clear guidance easily.

Senior doctors and officials from the Medical College and affiliated hospitals were present at the meeting. Principal Secretary of Medical Education Department Gayatri Rathore chaired review meeting at Dr Sampurnanand Medical College auditorium, Jodhpur.

DDCC meeting reviews development works, stresses water, health, roads



TDG NETWORK
JAIPUR

The District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee meeting was held at the Jaipur Collectorate auditorium, attended by Jaipur MP Manju Sharma, Jaipur Rural MP Rao Rajendra Singh, Dausa MP Murari Lal Meena and Sikar MP Amararam along with MLAs and officials.

The meeting discussed major public issues including drinking water supply,

electricity, roads, health services and sanitation. Special emphasis was laid on improving water supply during the summer, timely completion of development works, drainage cleaning before monsoon, and expansion of public welfare schemes such as PM SVANidhi and PM Awas Yojana.

Directions were issued for development of the Dravyavati River, improvement of cremation ground facilities, expansion of CHC ser-

vices, and plantation along highways. Awareness on HPV vaccination and other health schemes was also stressed.

District Collector Sandesh Nayak and senior officials briefed progress on multiple central and state schemes, while DMFT fund utilization was also reviewed.

The District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee meeting held at the Jaipur Collectorate auditorium

Police foil IPL betting operation in Jaipur, nine accused nabbed

TDG NETWORK
JAIPUR

In a strong action against illegal IPL betting, police arrested nine bookies after raids at two locations in Sanganer Sadar and Murlipura areas. The accused were allegedly betting on the Rajasthan Royals vs Delhi Capitals match through an online network.

Special Commissioner (Operations) Om Prakash said the raids were conduct-

ed by the Commissionerate Special Team following inputs of illegal betting activity. Police seized 20 mobile phones, LED screens, betting registers, cash, and two luxury vehicles. Accounts worth crores were reportedly found in recovered registers. Investigations revealed that the accused were operating an organised betting network using mobile apps and taking "lines" from established bookmakers.

Some suspects were running operations from rooms above shops and even from residential houses to avoid detection.

Police said multiple accused from Jaipur and Tonk have been arrested under relevant legal provisions including BNS and IT Act. Further interrogation is underway to uncover the wider betting syndicate and financial links involved in the IPL betting network.



Post-Antibiotic Era: Are Common Infections Becoming Untreatable?

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

For years, antibiotics have been one of the modern medicines biggest protections against the infections. A simple course of medicine could treat pneumonia, urinary tract infections, and post-surgical complications as well. But today, the world is moving closer to a dangerous reality where some of these infections are becoming very difficult and in certain cases, almost impossible - to treat. This growing threat is also known as antimicrobial resistance.

AMR occurs when bacteria, or parasites stops responding to medicine that were earlier effective against them. As a result of which, infections lasts longer, medical treatment becomes more complicated, hospital stays increase and risk of severe illness or death rises. As per World Health

Organisation bacterial AMR was directly responsible for around 1.27 million deaths in 2019 and was associated with nearly 4.95 million deaths globally. WHO identifies AMR as one of the top global public health and development threats.

The warning signs are visible already. Most recently, WHO global antibiotic resistance surveillance report indicated rising resistance trends across bloodstream infections, urinary tract infections, on the basis of data from around 100 countries.

In India, the concern around antimicrobial resistance is especially alarming, as antibiotics are frequently used without proper medical guidance. Self-medication, easy over-the-counter availability, inadequate infection control practices, and delayed diagnostic interventions continue to fuel the problem.

MOST SHAMEFUL CONDUCT IN NEET EXAM!

A dangerous assault on the minds of lakhs of students; if we can conduct free and fair elections, why not examinations?

OPINION

DR VIJAY DARDA



The leakage of the NEET examination papers is not merely a shameful incident, it is in effect a psychological violation of millions of students. The shockwaves of this scandal have not only shaken the students themselves, but also deeply disturbed their parents and families. I am compelled to write this article in severe and uncompromising language because I myself am profoundly shaken. A troubling question continues to haunt me: If we are technologically capable of conducting free, fair and transparent elections across the length and breadth of this vast na-

tion without interference, why are we incapable of conducting examinations with honesty and integrity? How can we permit such a vile, humiliating and insensitive betrayal of the very students who are our future? How can a society move forward while trampling upon the dreams and aspirations of its youths?

The incident of the question paper leak has inflicted severe mental anguish not only upon the more than 22.05 lakh students who appeared for the examination but also upon countless others preparing for future competitive examinations. Their faith has been deeply shaken. A disturbing fear has now taken root in their minds: That while they toil with sincerity and discipline, success may ultimately belong to those who gain access to the question papers beforehand. Students devote themselves wholeheartedly to their studies. They sacrifice comfort, peace and personal joys while nurturing

the dream that clearing NEET will secure them admission into medical colleges, enabling them to become competent doctors and serve the nation. Yet, the criminals within the system have shattered those dreams. True, the examination may be conducted again, but the enthusiasm, determination and emotional investment associated with one's first attempt are irreplaceable. Once that momentum is broken, how can it truly be restored? And what of the emotional devastation suffered by their parents, siblings and families, who invested their hopes and aspirations alongside them?

Since this latest incident of question paper leak sparked nationwide outrage and intense public debate, the examination was cancelled. But is malpractice in competitive examinations a new phenomenon? Certainly not. A glance through history reveals dozens of such cases. Yet, if one attempts to discover how many of the real masterminds behind these scandals were ever punished, one may scarcely find even a single convincing example. You surely remember the infamous Vyapam scam of Madhya Pradesh. Hundreds of arrests were made and a few persons were indeed convicted. However, dur-



The betrayal of students' trust is a very serious matter. What about the hard work they put in throughout the year, sacrificing everything in pursuit of success? Who will compensate for the mental trauma they have suffered?

ing the investigation, at least 48 people connected to the case one way or another died under mysterious circumstances. The names of several influential individuals also surfaced, yet the identity of the true architect of the conspiracy was never conclusively established. Can it really be believed that if a government genuinely wished to uncover the entire truth, the facts could remain hidden?

That seems highly improbable. Inevitably, one is left with the suspicion that certain aspects were deliberately overlooked so that the real 'crocodiles' of the system would never be trapped.

In truth, the crocodiles are almost never caught. Investigating agencies manage to net only a few small fish. The larger fish continue to swim freely, while the crocodiles remain entirely untouched

and secure. This is hardly a new revelation. Stories of the firm grip of such powerful vested interests over the education system are so widespread that wherever one looks, another example readily emerges.

The task of conducting a thorough investigation into the latest NEET question paper leak has now been entrusted to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). Yet, even from a commonsense perspective, certain aspects of the case appear strikingly evident. In connection with the leak, the name of one Rakesh Kumar Mandawariya from Samarthpura village in Khadela tehsil of Rajasthan's Sikar district has surfaced prominently. After completing his education up to

standard X, he reportedly left his village and moved to Sikar, where he has been residing for the past 15 years. What exactly does he do? The answer to this question introduces a curious twist to the story. For the past several years, he has allegedly been operating a 'consultancy office' directly opposite a coaching institute on Piprali road in Sikar. One must pay close attention to this detail: He is not employed by the coaching institute. Rather, he runs an independent consultancy office, situated in front of the institute. Consultancy for what purpose? No clear answer has emerged. Although the allegations against him have not yet been proven, any reasonable observer can infer the nature of the role he may have played. Equally evident is the fact that if Rakesh Mandawariya is indeed culpable, he cannot possibly be acting alone. He is merely the visible face of a much larger operation. Behind him, there must exist an extensive syndicate. Otherwise, how could question papers have travelled across such a vast geographical span from Rajasthan to Haryana, Bihar, Maharashtra, Jammu & Kashmir, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana? Educationist Khan Sir's observation appears entirely justified: When we purchase

something as ordinary as a diaper, it does not leak, yet here, an entire national examination system has collapsed through leakage. The National Testing Agency (NTA) was established nine years back precisely to preserve the sanctity and integrity of examinations. But did the situation improve after the agency was established? Apparently not!

It is my unambiguous view that the question paper leak is not an ordinary crime. The cartel of the education mafia responsible for such acts is, in many ways, more dangerous to society than even the drug mafia. If an unqualified person succeeds in clearing a competitive examination through such corruption and eventually becomes a doctor, one can only imagine the extent to which human lives may be endangered in the future. Crimes such as examination paper leaks should be treated as acts bordering on treason against the nation. The punishment must be so severe that the very thought of becoming part of such a syndicate instills fear among the perpetrators. After all, leaking question paper is also a form of terrorism!

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Indo-Dutch alliance: Breathing new life into Gujarat's Kalpsar project

OPINION

SUDHIR S. RAVAL



The geopolitical and economic landscape of the 21st century is increasingly defined by resource diplomacy, climate adaptation, and cross-border technology transfers. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's official visit to the Netherlands on May 16-17, 2026, marks a watershed moment in this paradigm. Invited by Dutch Prime Minister Rob Jetten, the Indian leader's engagement in The Hague went far beyond routine diplomatic protocols. Amidst shifting global dynamics, the two nations formally elevated their bilateral relations to a 'Strategic Partnership.'

While the visit yielded sweeping agreements on semiconductors, artificial intelligence, and maritime security, its most profound domestic impact for India lies in the domain of hydraulic engineering. By bridging Dutch maritime mastery with Indian infrastructural scale, the visit has breathed fresh life into one of India's most ambitious, yet long-delayed, mega-engineering blue-

prints: Gujarat's Kalpsar Yojana. Through a newly inked Letter of Intent (LoI) for technical cooperation, a vision conceptualized decades ago is finally transitioning from a bureaucratic stalemate into an actionable reality.

REDEFINING BILATERAL DYNAMICS

The elevation of India-Netherlands relations to a Strategic Partnership reflects growing convergences in economic stability and technological co-innovation. The Netherlands is not only one of India's top trading partners in Europe but also a critical gateway to the continental market. During high-level delegation talks and an intensive CEO roundtable, Prime Minister Modi positioned India as a stable, cost-effective manufacturing hub, citing next-generation reforms in governance, taxation, and labor codes.

The outcomes of the summit were multi-dimensional, spanning a comprehensive Security and Defence Partnership and the Dutch decision to join the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI). However, the centerpiece of the bilateral roadmap was sustainability and water management. The historical ties between the two nations, underscored by a shared vulnerability to climate-induced water crises, found their ultimate expression

during a joint visit by both Prime Ministers to the iconic Afsluitdijk—the legendary 32-kilometer-long Dutch sea dam. The Afsluitdijk (pronounced *AH-flyt-dike*) is a monumental 32-kilometer-long (20-mile) sea dam in the Netherlands. Constructed between 1927 and 1932, it is widely considered one of the greatest engineering marvels of the 20th century. This site visit served as the perfect backdrop for addressing India's complex coastal engineering challenges.

THE GENESIS OF KALPASAR YOJANA AND DECADES OF STAGNATION

To understand the significance of the 2026 Indo-Dutch pact, one must examine the history of the Kalpsar Project (the Gulf of Khambhat Development Project). Initially envisioned in the late 20th century, the project gained official political momentum under the leadership of Gujarat's then-Chief Minister, Keshubhai Patel. The fundamental core of the Yojana was simple yet revolutionary: construct a massive sea dam across the Gulf of Khambhat to convert a saline marine environment into a colossal freshwater reservoir.

Despite its immense promise to permanently resolve the acute water shortages plaguing the arid regions of Saurashtra and Kutch, the project faced a multi-decade impasse. When Narendra Modi assumed the Chief Ministership of Gujarat in the early 2000s, his administration initiated extensive marine surveys and funded exhaustive feasibility studies. Yet, the project remained gridlocked on the drafting table.

The stagnation was not born out of a lack of politi-



cal will, but rather the sheer, unprecedented scale of the engineering challenges involved. Closing a high-tidal gulf where seven major river systems—including the Narmada, Mahi, Sabarmati, and Dhadhar—empty into the sea requires navigating extreme hydrodynamic pressures, complex siltation patterns, and monumental marine construction requirements that pushed the limits of conventional civil engineering.

DECODING THE BLUEPRINT: SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATIONS

The revised scope of the Kalpsar Yojana outlines an engineering marvel designed to fundamentally reshape Western India's economy. The project centers on a 30-kilometer sea dam connecting Bhavnagar on the western coast of the gulf to Bharuch on the eastern coast. This barrier will trap an estimated 10 billion cubic meters of freshwater, effectively capturing nearly 25% of Gujarat's average an-

nual rainwater runoff that otherwise flows wastefully into the sea.

Beyond creating a massive freshwater basin, the dam will support a state-of-the-art, 10-lane transport corridor over its crest. This highway will cut the transit distance between South Gujarat and the Saurashtra peninsula from 240 kilometers to just 60 kilometers, saving millions of liters of fuel annually and revolutionizing regional logistics.

Furthermore, the revised plan integrates a robust clean-energy matrix capable of generating 1,500 MW of wind power and 1,000 MW of solar power. The reliable supply of freshwater will breathe life into agriculture across one million hectares of parched land spanning 42 talukas in nine districts, while simultaneously stimulating local fisheries, encouraging industrial manufacturing zones, and boosting eco-tourism.

THE DUTCH CATALYST: LEVERAGING 90 YEARS OF

ENGINEERING MASTERY

The primary catalyst transforming Kalpsar from a stalled concept into a tangible reality is the introduction of Dutch hydraulic expertise. The Netherlands lives by the adage that while God created the sea, the Dutch made the shore. Nearly a third of the country sits below sea level, protected by an intricate network of dikes, surges, and barriers.

By visiting the Afsluitdijk, Prime Minister Modi directly inspected a structure that completed the exact transformation Kalpsar aims to achieve: blocking the North Sea to turn the saltwater Zuiderzee into the freshwater lake IJsselmeer. Under the newly signed Letter of Intent between India's Ministry of Jal Shakti and the Netherlands' Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, the Dutch government will share over 90 years of operational, ecological, and structural data from the Afsluitdijk.

Crucially, the collaboration addresses the project's most complex hurdle:

the 'closure methodology.' Safely dropping the final structural blocks across a roaring marine channel requires highly sophisticated hydraulic engineering. World-renowned Dutch maritime institutes, such as Royal Haskoning, are now working alongside Indian engineers to model tidal flows, mitigate heavy siltation, and deploy advanced eco-friendly dredging techniques that minimize disruption to marine biodiversity.

DOMESTIC AND REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS

For India, reviving the Kalpsar Project under an international partnership is a strategic masterstroke. While the landmark Sardar Sarovar Dam on the Narmada River successfully mitigated Gujarat's immediate drought vulnerabilities over the last two decades, relying on a single river system poses long-term ecological and strategic risks. Kalpsar provides vital diversification to India's water security strategy.

By retaining massive volumes of surface water that would otherwise cause coastal flooding or exit into the ocean, the project will naturally recharge depleted groundwater tables across coastal Gujarat. This effectively halts the dangerous march of salinity ingress that has long ruined fertile agricultural tracts along the coastline. Nationally, Kalpsar serves as a pioneering blueprint for coastal reservoir engineering, offering invaluable lessons for other water-stressed maritime states across India facing climate-induced groundwater depletion.

A LEGACY REALIZED

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 2026 visit to the Netherlands has successfully bridged the gap between historical vision and futuristic execution. Elevating the bilateral relationship to a Strategic Partnership has yielded far more than diplomatic goodwill; it has unlocked the specialized technical capabilities required to execute one of the most sophisticated marine engineering projects in human history.

By anchoring Dutch expertise to solve the complex hydraulic challenges of the Gulf of Khambhat, the Kalpsar Yojana is no longer an elusive dream inherited from Keshubhai Patel's era. Instead, it stands on the verge of becoming a reality. When completed, this monumental project will stand as an enduring monument to international cooperation, climate resilience, and forward-looking infrastructure engineering—fundamentally securing India's water and economic future for generations to come.

Sudhir S. Raval is Consulting Editor at the ITV Network.

NECK SWELLING, VOICE CHANGES? IT COULD BE A THYROID NODULE

How imaging helps detect them early.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The thyroid gland, located at the front of the neck, plays an essential role in controlling metabolism, energy production, heart rate, and overall hormonal balance. One of the most frequently detected thyroid concerns today is the presence of thyroid nodules—abnormal lumps that form within the gland. While hearing the word “nodule” can cause anxiety, most thyroid nodules are non-cancerous. The challenge is that many people do not realize they have them because these growths often cause no symptoms in the beginning. “A large number of thyroid nodules are discovered incidentally when patients undergo scans for unrelated concerns such as neck pain, cervical issues, or routine health check-ups. Since these nodules are often silent, imaging plays a crucial role in identifying them before they create complications,” says Dr. Bimalpreet Mohan, Director, Chief Radiologist and Women Health expert from Capital Health Clinic in

Hauz khas, New Delhi.

Because these nodules can remain unnoticed for years, many patients are diagnosed only when a doctor feels a lump during a physical examination or when an ultrasound, CT scan, or MRI done for another reason reveals an abnormality. In most cases, early detection allows doctors to monitor the condition and intervene only when necessary.

Why thyroid nodules often go unnoticed

Many nodules are extremely small and do not interfere with normal thyroid function. “Since they usually don’t cause pain or visible swelling in the initial stages, people may continue their daily lives without any indication that something is wrong” says Dr. Bimalpreet Mohan.

However, larger nodules may eventually lead to symptoms such as:

- A noticeable lump in the neck
- Difficulty swallowing food
- Changes in voice or hoarseness
- A feeling of pressure in the throat
- Breathing discomfort in severe cases



• Symptoms of hormone imbalance such as sudden weight changes or palpitations

HOW SCANS HELP DETECT THYROID NODULES EARLY

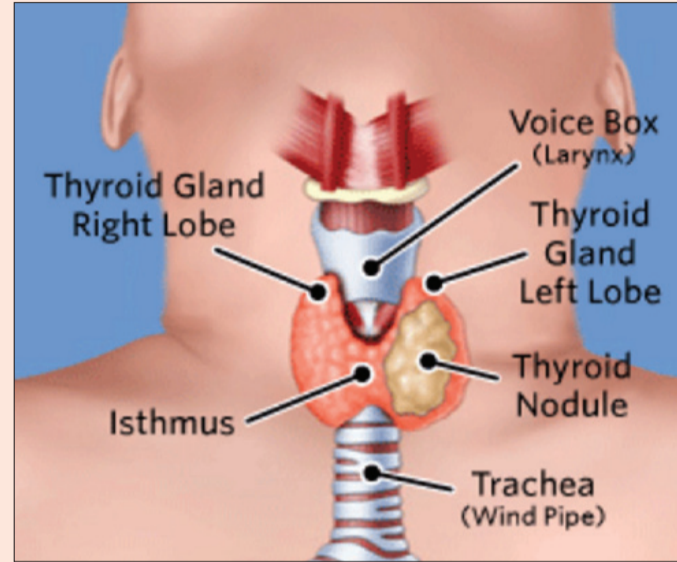
Modern imaging tools have significantly improved the early detection of thyroid abnormalities. Among them, thyroid ultrasound is one of the most commonly advised tests because it is non-invasive, painless, and

highly accurate in identifying even small nodules.

“Ultrasound allows us to detect thyroid nodules at a very early stage, often before they become visible or start causing symptoms. It helps us assess the size, structure, and any suspicious features of the nodule, enabling timely intervention when required,” says Dr. Mohan.

It helps in the following ways:

1. DETECTS VERY SMALL ABNORMALITIES



Ultrasound can identify nodules that are too tiny to be felt manually during a physical examination. This helps doctors track them before they grow larger.

2. DIFFERENTIATES BETWEEN TYPES OF NODULES

Scans help determine whether the growth is solid, fluid-filled, or mixed, which helps guide treatment decisions.

3. IDENTIFIES SUSPICIOUS WARNING SIGNS

Radiologists look for specific features such as irregular edges, unusual calcification patterns, or rapid growth that may require further testing.

4. HELPS GUIDE BIOPSY PROCEDURES

If a nodule appears concerning, ultrasound-guided fine needle aspiration allows doctors to collect tissue samples with precision.

5. SUPPORTS LONG-TERM MONITORING

Not every thyroid nodule needs surgery or aggressive treatment. Many harmless nodules only require periodic imaging to ensure they remain stable.

WHO SHOULD PAY CLOSER ATTENTION?

Certain individuals may have a higher risk and should be more vigilant, including:

- People with a family history of thyroid disease or thyroid cancer
- Those who have had radiation exposure to the neck
- Patients experiencing persistent neck swelling
- Individuals already diagnosed with thyroid disorders
- Women, who are more commonly affected by thyroid conditions

“Timely diagnosis can make a significant difference in outcomes.

“People often ignore minor neck discomfort or assume it is stress-related, but timely imaging can provide clarity and peace of mind. Most thyroid nodules are manageable, and catching them early helps us avoid unnecessary complications,” summed up Dr. Bimalpreet Mohan.

WORLD HYPERTENSION DAY HIGHLIGHTED NEED FOR BP AWARENESS

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

World Hypertension Day was observed on May 17 every year as part of Hypertension Awareness Month. The theme for 2026 was “Controlling Hypertension Together: Check Your Blood Pressure Regularly, Defeat The Silent Killer.” The day aimed to raise global awareness about high blood pressure and encouraged detection, prevention, and action at the health-system, community, and individual levels.

Hypertension was considered one of the leading preventable causes of premature death across the world. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), around 1.4 billion adults between the ages of 30 and 79 were living with hypertension as of 2024, representing nearly 33% of the population in that age group. Nearly 600 million adults with hypertension were unaware of their condition.

In India, around 220 million people were living with hypertension without knowing it, and nearly one in four adults suffered

from high blood pressure, according to WHO estimates.

Hypertension was often referred to as the “silent killer” because it usually showed no visible symptoms. It significantly increased the risk of heart attacks, kidney disease, and strokes. Experts stated that most complications related to hypertension could be prevented through regular monitoring, early detection, and consistent treatment.

Sharing his thoughts on the occasion, Gaurav Verma, Chief Business Officer of PharmEasy, said that hypertension remained one of the most widespread yet most overlooked health conditions in India.

He stated that the disease progressed silently without dramatic symptoms or warning signs until it had already started affecting the heart, brain, kidneys, or eyes. He emphasized that awareness and early action were critical in preventing serious complications.

He further added that regular blood pressure monitoring and preventive

care were not just medical advice but the key difference between identifying a risk early and managing a major health crisis later. He also mentioned that PharmEasy had been working to make preventive healthcare easier through health checkups, doctor consultations, and at-home monitoring devices that fit into people’s everyday lives rather than only clinical settings.

Hypertension could be controlled through regular blood pressure measurement, physical activity, a healthy diet, reduced alcohol consumption, and proper medication.

Doctors also explained that hypertension did not develop overnight. It usually formed slowly over several years without obvious symptoms. Some of the major causes included unhealthy lifestyles, underlying medical conditions, age, and genetics.

Common symptoms associated with high blood pressure included dizziness, persistent headaches, blurred vision, shortness of breath, feeling light-headed, and a heavy sensation in the chest.

Early Rehabilitation: The Key to Faster Healing

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

It is quite common to hear people say, “Just rest and it will get better.” And while rest does matter, it is not always the full answer.

Take a simple example. Someone undergoes a knee surgery. For the first few days, movement feels uncomfortable, even intimidating. The natural instinct is to avoid using the leg altogether. But in many cases, doctors suggest starting gentle movement sooner than expected. Not intense exercise, just small, careful steps.

That is essentially what early rehabilitation is about.

It does not mean pushing through pain or rushing recovery. It simply means helping the body get back into motion at the right time, in a controlled way. When this happens, the body tends to respond better. Muscles stay more active, joints do not stiffen as much, and overall recovery feels a bit smoother.



WHAT CHANGES WHEN REHAB STARTS EARLY

One of the first differences people notice is that recovery does not feel as overwhelming. Instead of trying to regain strength after weeks of inactivity, progress begins earlier and builds gradually.

Even small movements help. They improve blood circulation, which supports healing. They also prevent the body from becoming too rigid. Anyone who has stayed inactive for too long knows how quickly stiffness sets in.

There is also a psychological shift. Recovery can sometimes feel slow and uncertain. Being able to move, even slightly, gives a sense of progress. It makes the process feel active rather than passive.

Over time, these small efforts add up. People who begin rehabilitation earlier often find that they return to daily routines with fewer difficulties. Walking, climbing stairs, or even sitting comfortably starts to feel more natural again.

IT IS MORE THAN JUST EXERCISE

Rehabilitation is often

misunderstood as a set of exercises, but it is not only about that. It is about helping the body readjust.

Sometimes, it starts with something as basic as learning how to stand properly again or putting weight on a limb without fear. These are things most people take for granted until they become difficult.

When rehabilitation begins early, there is more room to understand how the body is reacting. Doctors and therapists can adjust the approach based on what is working and what is not. This makes the process feel more personalised rather than fixed.

FINDING THE RIGHT BALANCE

Of course, starting early does not mean doing too much too soon. There is always a fine balance.

Every person heals differently. What feels right for one individual may not work for another. That is why guidance is important.

The idea is to move just enough to support healing, without putting unnecessary strain on the body.

In most cases, steady and consistent effort works better than trying to do too much at once.

A THOUGHT TO KEEP IN MIND

Healing is often seen as something that just takes time, and that is true to an extent. But how that time is used also matters.

Early rehabilitation is not about speeding things up in an aggressive way. It is about avoiding delays that come from staying inactive for too long. It helps the body stay engaged, even while it is healing.

In the end, recovery is rarely about one big step. It is usually a series of small ones, taken at the right time, in the right way.

Inputs from Dr. Dbaram P. Pandey, Director APARC Health & Motion, Premier Chian of Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation care Provider.

WATERMELON MAY SUPPORT HEART HEALTH AND BETTER NUTRITION

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Watermelon, a popular summer fruit, may offer much more than just hydration and refreshing taste. Recent studies suggest that regular watermelon consumption could improve overall diet quality and even support better heart and blood vessel health.

Researchers found that people who eat watermelon tend to follow healthier diets rich in vitamins, fiber, antioxidants, and essential nutrients while consuming less added sugar and saturated fat. Another study also showed that watermelon juice may help protect blood vessel function and improve cardiovascular health.

A study published in the journal *Nutrients* examined data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES)

across the United States. Researchers compared the diets of people who regularly consumed watermelon with those who did not.

The results showed that both children and adults who ate watermelon generally had higher-quality diets. They consumed more dietary fiber, magnesium, potassium, vitamin C, vitamin A, lycopene, and other carotenoids. At the same time, they had lower intake of added sugars and saturated fats. This finding is important because many Americans still fail to meet the recommended daily fruit intake. According to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, adults and children should consume between 1.5 and 2.5 cups of fruit daily. However, most people consume only about half of that amount.

Another clinical trial conducted by Louisiana State



University focused on whether watermelon juice could help protect blood vessel function during periods of high blood sugar.

The randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled crossover study involved 18 healthy young adults who consumed watermelon juice daily for two weeks. Researchers mainly stud-

ied two natural compounds found in watermelon—L-citrulline and L-arginine. These compounds help the body produce nitric oxide, which allows blood vessels to relax and expand. This process plays an important role in healthy blood circulation and heart function.

The study found that

watermelon juice helped maintain vascular function during hyperglycemia and also influenced heart rate variability, both of which are important indicators of heart health.

Dr. Jack Lusso, professor at Louisiana State University’s School of Nutrition and Food Sciences, said that although the sample size was small, the study added valuable evidence supporting watermelon’s role in cardio-metabolic health. He explained that besides L-citrulline and L-arginine, watermelon is also rich in antioxidants, vitamin C, and lycopene, all of which help reduce oxidative stress and may contribute to heart disease prevention. Further research and reviews have continued exploring watermelon’s role in improving blood vessel flexibility, circulation, and endothelial function.

POSSIBLE SYMPTOMS OF A HYPERTENSIVE EMERGENCY



Dizziness



Severe Headache



Vision Problems



Nausea and Vomiting



Trouble Breathing



Chest Pain

PLEA IN SUPREME COURT SEEKS CBT MODE FOR NEET UG

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A fresh petition has been filed in the Supreme Court seeking major reforms in the conduct of the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (Undergraduate) or NEET-UG, following the controversy surrounding the alleged NEET UG 2026 paper leak. The plea, filed by Sudhakar Singh along with other petitioners, has requested the court to direct the Central Government to conduct NEET-UG in Computer-Based Test (CBT) mode instead of the existing pen-and-paper format.

The petition comes at a time when the NEET UG re-examination is scheduled for June 21, 2026. The petitioners include social

activist Anubhav Garg, Dr. Dhruv Chauhan, and Hari Sharan Devgan. The plea was filed through Advocate Satyam Singh Rajput along with Advocate-on-Record Neema.

The petition challenges the recent NEET-UG notification and seeks immediate steps for a secure and transparent examination process. One of the main demands is that the upcoming re-exam should be conducted through a fully Computer-Based Test (CBT) system rather than the traditional offline method, which the petitioners believe is more vulnerable to leaks and malpractice.

The petition also seeks a direction for the authorities to submit a time-bound roadmap for shifting NEET-UG completely

to a CBT framework. This roadmap should include details about infrastructure development, the creation of more examination centres, cybersecurity arrangements, and accessibility measures for students across the country.

Another major demand is the replacement of the National Testing Agency (NTA) with a new independent body called the National Examination Authority. According to the petitioners, this new authority should be professionally regulated, transparent, and accountable under statutory law, with judicial oversight and advanced technological safeguards to prevent examination fraud.

The plea also requests the constitution of a high-level monitoring com-



mittee made up of retired Supreme Court judges, educationists, psychologists, cybersecurity experts, forensic scientists, and administrative profes-

sionals. This committee would be responsible for recommending long-term structural reforms for secure national-level examinations.

In addition, the petition asks for strict implementation of the recommendations made by the Radha Krishna Committee, which had earlier examined re-

forms in examination systems. It also seeks the use of encrypted digital paper transmission, biometric verification, AI-based surveillance, and strict cybersecurity protocols in all national examinations.

The petition strongly recommends "digital locking" of question papers and a complete shift to CBT mode to eliminate risks associated with the physical handling of exam papers. According to the petitioners, this would significantly reduce the possibility of paper leaks and organized cheating.

The plea further demands strict criminal prosecution and fast-track investigations against all those involved in exam leaks, including individuals, institutions, coaching centres, middlemen, and

officials linked to such rackets.

It has also requested the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to submit a status report before the Supreme Court within four weeks regarding the NEET UG 2026 paper leak probe. This report should include details of the network uncovered, arrests made, charges filed, and the progress of prosecution.

Lastly, the petition seeks a direction for NTA to publish NEET UG 2026 results centre-wise to ensure greater transparency and help detect irregularities more effectively.

The case adds to growing pressure on authorities to improve the credibility and fairness of India's most important medical entrance examination.

Supreme Court Reaffirms 'Bail Is the Rule' in UAPA Cases

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has once again underlined a key constitutional principle by stating that "bail is the rule and jail is the exception," even in cases filed under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). The important ruling came while granting bail to a Jammu and Kashmir resident accused in a narco-terror case, and it may have wider implications for pending UAPA cases involving long periods of imprisonment without trial, including those linked to activists like Umar Khalid and Sharjeel Imam.

A bench of Justices BV Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan granted bail to Syed Iftikhar Andrabi, a resident of Handwara in Jammu and Kashmir. Andrabi had been accused of involvement in cross-border heroin smuggling and terror financing allegedly linked to terror groups such as Lashkar-e-Taiba and Hizbul Mujahideen.

The court directed Andrabi to surrender his passport and report to the local police station every 15 days as part of the bail conditions. However,



the larger significance of the judgment lies in the court's strong observation that strict bail provisions under Section 43D(5) of the UAPA cannot justify endless imprisonment without trial.

The bench stated that personal liberty is protected under Articles 21 and 22 of the Constitution and cannot be taken away indefinitely simply because a person is charged under anti-terror laws. The judges observed that the presumption of innocence remains the foundation of a civilised legal system and must be respected even in serious criminal cases.

Section 43D(5) of the UAPA is con-

sidered one of the toughest bail provisions in Indian criminal law. It makes it extremely difficult for an accused to get bail if the court believes the accusations appear "prima facie true." In many cases, this has resulted in accused persons spending years in jail before their trials even begin or conclude.

The Supreme Court clarified that while the law allows strict scrutiny in terrorism-related cases, constitutional rights cannot be ignored. It said that anti-terror laws must function within constitutional boundaries and cannot override the right to liberty.

Delhi HC Grants Interim Bail to Baramulla MP Rashid Sheikh

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday granted interim bail to Baramulla MP Abdul Rashid Sheikh, also known as Engineer Rashid, till June 2, 2026, following the death of his father. The relief was granted on humanitarian grounds to allow him to attend the burial and perform customary family rites.

Rashid's father passed away at AIIMS Delhi during the intervening night of May 17 and 18. Following this, an urgent plea was moved before the Delhi High Court seeking interim bail so that Rashid could participate in the funeral and related ceremonies.

A Division Bench of Justices Prathiba M Singh and Madhu Jain heard the matter and granted him interim bail until June 2.

Advocate Vikhyat Oberoi, appearing for Rashid along with Nishita Gupta, requested urgent hearing of the plea. He submitted before the court that Rashid needed temporary release to conduct the burial, carry out the customary rites, and perform various ceremonies that are traditionally required from a son after the death of a parent.

After hearing both sides and examining the records, the bench observed that due to the demise of the appellant's father, interim bail



was justified. The court passed an order stating that interim bail would remain valid until June 2, 2026.

However, the court also imposed strict conditions while granting the relief. It directed that Rashid must remain accompanied by at least two police officials in plain clothes throughout the entire period of interim bail. These officials will accompany him from the moment he leaves jail until he returns after completing the ceremonies in Srinagar.

The Jail Superintendent has been given the authority to nominate the police officials who will remain with him during this period. This condition was imposed to ensure security and monitoring while allowing him temporary release.

The High Court also re-

stricted his stay to only two specified addresses in Jammu and Kashmir during the bail period. This was done to ensure that the interim bail remains limited strictly to humanitarian purposes and is not misused.

Earlier, the High Court had already allowed Rashid to visit his father at AIIMS when his health had deteriorated. At that time, the court directed prison authorities to take him from Tihar Jail to AIIMS and return him to jail on the same day.

Rashid is currently in judicial custody in connection with a terror funding case being investigated by the National Investigation Agency (NIA). He has been lodged in Tihar Jail while legal proceedings continue.

During an earlier hearing on April 17, the defence

had informed the court that Rashid's father was seriously ill and hospitalized. At that stage, his legal team had sought one month of interim bail on humanitarian grounds.

Special Public Prosecutor Gautam Khazanchi had opposed the request for interim bail on several grounds. However, it was suggested that custody parole could be granted to allow him to meet his father.

Rashid had previously also been granted custody parole to attend Lok Sabha sessions as a sitting Member of Parliament.

The latest order reflects the court's balancing of humanitarian concerns with legal restrictions, allowing temporary relief while maintaining strict supervision.

JSAD Condemns Viral Courtroom Video Row

TDG NETWORK
MADURAI

The Judicial Service Association of Delhi (JSAD) has strongly condemned the alleged illegal recording and circulation of video clips from courtroom proceedings involving District Judge-04 (North-West), Rakesh Kumar V, calling it a serious attack on the dignity, independence, and authority of the judiciary.

The controversy began after an alleged dispute during court proceedings on May 16 between Judge Rakesh Kumar V and Advocate Rajiv Tehlan. Following the incident, lawyers' bodies across Delhi district courts raised objections and demanded action against the judicial officer.

Soon after, the Coordination Committee of All Delhi District Bar Associations announced abstention from judicial work on Monday. The committee demanded the immediate transfer of Judge Rakesh Kumar V and called for an inquiry into his alleged conduct during the proceedings. In a circular issued on Sunday, the committee described the conduct during the hearing as "highly objectionable and unbecoming," stating that it had caused deep resentment and serious concern among members of the district court Bar. Advocate Vijay Bishnoi appealed to



members of the Bar to support the boycott in order to protect the dignity and collective respect of the legal fraternity. Amid the growing controversy, the Delhi High Court issued transfer orders with immediate effect on Sunday evening. Judge Rakesh Kumar V was attached to the office of the Director of the Delhi Judicial Academy, while judicial officer Dhiraj Mittal was transferred from the Academy to Rohini Courts as District Judge-04 (North-West District). The order was issued by Delhi High Court Registrar Arun Bhardwaj. However, in a strongly worded letter dated May 17, JSAD expressed its "strongest condemnation and profound anguish" over the circulation of courtroom videos on social media.

The association stated that

secretly recording judicial proceedings and making such clips viral is not only improper but also unlawful. It said such acts are attempts to scandalize courts, weaken public confidence in the justice delivery system, and place judicial officers under intimidation, public pressure, and unnecessary vilification while they perform their constitutional duties. JSAD stressed that no judicial officer can function fearlessly if coercion, threats, and public shaming become normal in a democracy governed by the rule of law. The association also criticized the continued boycott by lawyers despite the Delhi High Court's efforts to restore normalcy. Referring to settled Supreme Court judgments against strikes by advocates, JSAD stated that such boycotts disrupt

court functioning, delay justice, and negatively affect litigants who depend on the judicial system. The association firmly stated that "the independence of the judiciary is non-negotiable" and expressed complete solidarity with Judge Rakesh Kumar V and all judicial officers performing their duties with integrity and courage.

The condemnation letter was signed by JSAD President Devender Kumar Jangala and Secretary Shefali Barnala Tandon.

JSAD has also requested the Delhi High Court to issue directions for removing the viral courtroom clips from social media platforms and urged all stakeholders to maintain institutional discipline and restore normal judicial functioning in the larger interest of justice.

Delhi HC Issues Notice in POCSO Bail Case

TDG NETWORK
MADURAI

The Delhi High Court on Monday issued notice to a school caretaker accused of sexually assaulting a three-year-old nursery student after Delhi Police challenged the bail granted to him in the serious case registered under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

Justice Saurabh Banerjee sought the response of the accused and listed the matter for further hearing on May 29. The plea was filed by Delhi Police seeking cancellation of the bail granted by a Dwarka court to the accused, identified as Lalit Kumar.

The case relates to an FIR registered at PS Janakpuri under Section 64(1) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and Section 6 of the POCSO Act. According to the pros-



ecution, the incident came to light on May 1, 2026, when the child's mother approached the police alleging that her three-year-old daughter had been sexually assaulted during school hours inside a private school in Janakpuri.

The child, who had reportedly attended school only for the second time, complained of pain and discomfort after returning home. Later, she allegedly identified the school caretaker as the person responsible for the assault.

Following the complaint, Delhi Police registered an FIR and arrested the accused. However, the trial court granted him regular bail within a few days of his arrest. Appearing for Delhi Police, Additional Solicitor General SV Raju strongly opposed the bail and urged the High Court to cancel it. He told the court that the allegations involve a grave offence under the POCSO Act, which carries a minimum sentence of 20 years and can extend to life imprisonment. Calling it an extremely se-

rious matter, he argued that the trial court failed to properly consider the seriousness of the allegations and the evidence collected during the investigation. He also stated that the child victim had identified the accused during the investigation.

Advocate Rishikesh Kumar, appearing for the victim's family, informed the court that the family had also filed a separate plea seeking cancellation of bail. He added that another accused in the case, a teacher from the same school, had also been arrested, and her bail plea is expected to be heard soon. The prosecution also referred to CCTV footage, which allegedly showed the accused moving toward the school passage during the time of the incident. The State argued that the trial court wrongly treated this as evidence in favor of the accused.

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THE BUSINESS GUARDIAN

TUESDAY | 19 MAY 2026 | NEW DELHI

CM GUPTA LAUNCHES 'METRO MONDAY'

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Monday launched the 'Metro Monday' initiative, following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal to conserve oil and fuel amid the ongoing West Asia crisis. To kickstart the campaign, Chief Minister Gupta boarded a Metro train from the Kashmere Gate station to the ITO Metro station. After reaching the station, she took an electric feeder bus to reach her office at the Delhi Secretariat. She was accompanied by Cabinet Ministers Parvesh Verma and Ravindra Indraj during the journey.

Aimed at promoting public transport, fuel conservation under the wider 'Mera Bharat, Mera Yogan' framework, the initiative saw widespread adoption on its first day. Following the Chief Minister's call, various ministers and senior officials of the Delhi Government used public vehicles to commute via the Metro and other modes of public transport to reach their respective offices.

During the launch, Chief Minister Gupta appealed to citizens to use public transport as much as possible,



Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Monday launched the 'Metro Monday' initiative

"Delhi government offices will operate from 10:30 to 7, while MCD offices run from 8:30 to 5. We appeal to Delhi citizens to observe 'No Vehicle Day' once a week, choosing a day to leave their private cars and use public transport," CM Gupta added.

emphasising that the move would significantly help conserve fuel for the nation and reduce pollution in the city.

"I would like to request all citizens that we all should use public transport as much as possible. This will not only save fuel for the country but is also extremely essential for our Delhi. Today, under the call of 'Metro Monday,' I, all my fellow ministers, legislators, and officials have

made efforts to ensure that today there is maximum use of the metro or public transport. In the same vein, we too have reached here by metro today. It is heartening to see that many people of Delhi have also decided to travel via metro today. My heartfelt thanks to everyone. Let us together make Delhi even better," said CM Gupta.

Earlier, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta announced a series of administrative

and public initiatives, which included "two days work-from-home," "Metro Monday," a one-year freeze on official foreign visits and an appeal for a weekly "No Vehicle Day."

The announcement was made following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent appeal urging citizens to reduce fuel consumption, adopt sustainable practices and support economic resilience amid global uncertain-

ties linked to the West Asia conflict.

Addressing a press conference in the national capital, the Chief Minister said the government is taking coordinated steps at both administrative and private sector levels to bring down fuel consumption and improve mobility in the national capital. "We are acting at two levels, government and private. In the Delhi government, there will be 2 days of work-from-home each week. The same advisory will go to private companies and institutions. The Labour Department will monitor this. For companies with a larger number of employees, our ministers, officers, and I myself will personally request them to allow 2 days of work-from-home, at their convenience," she said.

She also urged Delhi citizens to observe 'No Vehicle Day' once a week, choosing a day to leave their private cars and use public transport.

"Delhi government offices will operate from 10:30 to 7, while MCD offices run from 8:30 to 5. We appeal to Delhi citizens to observe 'No Vehicle Day' once a week, choosing a day to leave their private cars and use public transport," CM Gupta added. (ANI)

Atishi accuses BJP of attempting to 'steal organisational data'

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the Delhi Assembly and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA Atishi on Monday lambasted the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of trying to "acquire organisational data" of her party after Enforcement Directorate (ED) searches were conducted at the residence of AAP leader Deepak Singla in Goa.

In a post on X, Atishi said the searches come amid what she described as AAP's "growing popularity" in Goa, alleging that the BJP was attempting to intimidate party workers through enforcement actions.

"With Aam Aadmi Party's popularity growing in Goa, BJP's loyal foot-soldier, ED has been sent here as well! From early morning today, there is an ED raid at the residence of AAP Goa co-incharge, Deepak Singla, as well as the home of some volunteers in Goa. Not only is this an attempt to scare our volunteers, but also to acquire all our organisational data for the BJP!" Atishi wrote in the post.

In a separate video mes-



LoP in the Delhi Assembly and AAP MLA Atishi on Monday lambasted the BJP of trying to "acquire organisational data"

sage shared on X, Atishi alleged that the BJP used the ED and IPAC against TMC to win the West Bengal assembly elections. She alleged that the BJP acquires TMC's organisational data through the raids, inferring that the same politics is being played in Punjab and Goa ahead of the elections.

She said that the ED raided the residence of the AAP leader Sanjeev Arora after he refused to join the BJP, while those who joined the party, including former AAP MP Ashok Mittal, were spared.

"The whole country saw how the BJP used ED against TMC in the Bengal elections. The agency IPAC, which was fighting the elections for TMC, sent the workers to jail. All the

data of TMC's organisation was stolen through ED before the elections. After the elections, everyone was released from jail. After the Bengal elections, the next attack was on Punjab. In Punjab, raids were launched on the houses of common party leaders. No action was taken on the BJP leaders who ran away. But leaders like Sanjeev Arora, who refused to join the BJP, were sent to jail. And now, after Punjab, the next target is Goa," she said in the video message.

She questioned the "raids" on the residences of AAP Goa co-incharge Deepak Singla and other party workers, describing it as the BJP's attempt to downplay AAP in Goa, amid the party's "growing popularity."

He refused to join BJP: Kejriwal on AAP leader Singla's arrest

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal on Monday came out in defence of party leader Deepak Singla after he was arrested by the ED in an alleged money laundering case, saying he was facing the repercussions of refusing to join the BJP.

Singla was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) after searches in Delhi and Goa led to the alleged recovery of incriminating documents, according to officials. "Deepak Singla was not arrested because he did anything wrong. Rather, he was arrested because he was working against the BJP and refused to join the BJP. Deepak is brave and fighting for the country," Kejriwal said in a post on X in Hindi.

The ED on Monday conducted searches at premises linked to AAP's Delhi poli-

tician Singla and some others in an alleged bank loan fraud-linked money laundering case, officials said.

They said the raids are being undertaken at locations in Delhi and Goa. Singla

Sanjeev Arora, calling him "brave and patriotic".

"Sanjeev ji, you are brave. You are patriotic. Entire Punjab is proud of you," Kejriwal said in another post on X in Hindi. Arora,



AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal on Monday came out in defence of party leader Deepak Singla

had been a candidate for the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) from the Vishwas Nagar assembly seat. He was raided by the ED in 2024 too as part of an investigation.

Kejriwal also praised arrested Punjab minister

62, was arrested by the ED on May 9 from his official residence in Chandigarh after raids were carried out against him in an alleged Rs 100 crore GST fraud case linked to the sale of mobile phones.

DU Law Faculty alumnus writes to VC seeking closure of portable cabin classrooms

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A month after a fire broke out at some portable cabins of ARSD College, reigniting concerns around the safety of these structures, an alumnus of the Faculty of Law at Delhi University (DU) has written to the university authorities seeking the immediate closure of these makeshift classrooms being used at the faculty.

Advocate Umesh Kumar, an alumnus of Law Centre-I, in a representation to the vice-chancellor, the dean of the Faculty of Law and the dean of students' welfare, has flagged concerns about the condition of portable cabins and urged the university to shift classes to safer alternative spaces.

While the portable cabins at the Law Faculty are not new, several DU colleges have begun installing these

temporary structures over the past year to accommodate a surge in student intake following the introduction of the four-year undergraduate programmes last year under the National Education Policy, 2020. Echoing concerns, a second-year student from the Campus Law Centre (CLC), said, "The condition of the portable cabins is bad and dangerous. Two of the rooms being used for CLC classes have AC, while the third one doesn't."

"Fire safety is, of course, a cause of concern, and now the exams are being conducted there. Many representations have been given to the administration regarding the same, but no solution has come out of it," the student added, requesting anonymity.

Another student, Sneha Aggawal from Law Centre-II, concurred and said that these semi-permanent struc-

tures have become unsafe during summer.

"Many colleges, including Shivaji, Dayal Singh, Ramanujan, Faculty of Law, have put up portable cabins. Though the Law Faculty has increased the fees by almost three times, classes are still being held in these portable cabins," Aggawal added. Referring to the fire incident at ARSD College in April, Umesh Kumar said the incident exposed the "grave risk" posed by such temporary structures being used for academic purposes. "It is submitted that on 18.04.2026, a major fire incident occurred in the porta cabins at ARSD College, wherein the cabins were completely gutted. Fortunately, no loss of life has been reported," Kumar said in the representation to the administration. He further alleged that several portable cabins across the university, including those at the Fac-

ulty of Law, lacked adequate fire safety infrastructure, such as updated fire extinguishers, alarms, emergency exits and proper electrical safeguards. The representation also highlighted concerns over extreme summer conditions in Delhi, stating that metallic and poorly ventilated structures become hazardous during high temperatures and increase the likelihood of fire outbreaks.

Kumar further claimed that structures intended for temporary use were being used as permanent classrooms and administrative spaces. According to the representation, admissions at the Faculty of Law have increased since 2013, while infrastructure has become overburdened. Speaking to PTT, Kumar said, "In 2024, a petition had been filed pointing out several issues with infrastructure and facilities. I was one of the petitioners."

"Now, following the ARSD fire, I have filed for an urgent hearing. The hearing is set to happen on July 6," he added. Referring to an amicus curiae report in the pending writ petition, he said it had suggested shifting three portable cabin classes to alternative buildings until new infrastructure was installed. The representation alleged that the classrooms had inadequate seating, damaged walls and ceilings, poor ventilation and lacked proper drinking water facilities for students during summer.

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Printed and Published by Rakesh Sharma for and on behalf of Good Morning India Media Pvt. Ltd. at 275, Piccadilly house, Floor - 1, Captain Gaur Marg Srinivaspuri, New Delhi-110065.

Printed at: Good Morning India Media Pvt. Ltd., Khasra No. 39, Village Basai Brahuddin Nagar, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Noida, Uttar Pradesh, (U.P.-201301), & Vibha Publication Pvt Ltd, D-160B Sector-7, Noida - 201301

The Editorial offices: 275 Captain Gaur Marg Srinivaspuri Okhla New Delhi - 110065

Mumbai Office: Juhu Hotel, Juhu Tara Road, Santa Cruz-West, Mumbai-400049.

Chandigarh Office: SCO-7, Sector 17-E, Chandigarh-160017

RNI REGISTRATION NO. DELENG/2022/83224

TITLE CODE DELENG19835

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The views expressed by the columnists do not necessarily represent those of The Sunday Guardian.

DTC bus mounts divider near Rajghat after brake failure

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) bus mounted a road divider near the Rajghat traffic signal in central Delhi on Sunday after the alleged brake failure, police said on Monday.

The bus was travelling from Sarai Kale Khan to Rajghat when its braking system reportedly developed a technical problem, police said.

Several videos of the incident surfaced on social me-



DTC bus mounted a road divider near the Rajghat traffic signal in central Delhi on Sunday

dia platforms, showing the bus landing on the divider near the busy intersection.

During a preliminary inquiry, it was found that the

bus was running empty at the time of the incident, and only the driver and conductor were inside the vehicle, a senior police officer said.

"When the vehicle reached near the Rajghat traffic signal, the brakes failed to function properly. Realising the danger and to prevent any untoward incident, the driver steered the bus onto the divider in an attempt to stop it safely," the officer said.

The bus eventually came to a halt after climbing onto the divider, causing panic among commuters and motorists passing through the stretch. However, no other vehicle was hit during the incident, police said.

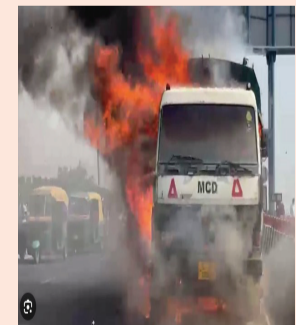
MCD cleaning truck catches fire on Geeta Colony flyover

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

An MCD cleaning truck caught fire on the Geeta Colony flyover in Delhi's Shahdara on Monday afternoon, causing a massive traffic jam in the area, an official of the Delhi Fire Service (DFS) said.

According to the DFS, a call regarding the blaze was received at 2.56 pm, following which two fire tenders were rushed to the spot.

The fire engulfed the truck within minutes, with



thick plumes of smoke seen rising from the flyover, alarming motorists and nearby residents.

Firefighters brought the blaze under control after a

brief operation and prevented it from spreading further, the officer said.

No injuries were reported in the incident, he added. The truck driver said smoke suddenly started emanating from the vehicle while it was on the flyover. Sensing danger, he immediately stopped the truck and jumped out to safety before the flames intensified. Due to the incident, traffic movement on the busy stretch remained affected for some time, with vehicles piling up on both sides of the flyover.

Police busts counterfeit bearings racket, recovers over 5,000 fake units

The Anti-Robbery and TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Snatching Cell (ARSC) of Delhi Police has busted a major counterfeit goods racket following raids at two illegal workshops in the Farsh

Khana area, arresting two accused individuals, officials said on Monday.

According to the police, the accused were engraving fake trademarks of reputed manufacturing companies, including HCH and NBC, onto cheap imported

bearings before selling them in the market as genuine products.

During the operation, the police team recovered 5,067 fake and duplicate bearings. In addition, four stamping and engraving machines, one packing machine,

and substantial raw materials used for printing and packaging were also seized from the spots.

Police stated that the counterfeit products were being actively supplied to various markets across Delhi and its nearby areas, caus-

ing significant financial losses to both consumers and the original brands.

Further details are awaited. In a separate incident, the Cyber Cell of the Delhi Police Crime Branch busted a major immigration fraud

racket involved in cheating people on the pretext of providing Canada visas and work permits. During the raid, police arrested an immigration consultant, who was accused of duping a woman of Rs 1.83 crore. According to the Crime

Branch, the accused lured the victim by promising Canada immigration, a work permit, and business ownership opportunities. He allegedly claimed that he would help the woman settle permanently in Canada.