The Pioneer

TRUSTED SINCE 1865

www.dailypioneer.com
facebook.com/dailypioneer @TheDailyPioneer
instagram.com/dailypioneer linkedin.com/in/dailypioneer

BHOPAL | SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2025 | PAGES 16 | ₹2.00

RNI Regn. No. MPENG/2004/13703, Vol.22 Issue 335

PUBLISHED FROM: DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL RAIPUR BHUBANESWAR RANCHI CHANDIGARH DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYAWADA

Kharge, Rahul not invited to Putin banquet: Congress 6

Lawyers, ex-judges object to CJI remarks on Rohingyas 7

Missing regulators in our lives 10

Nepal PM holds meeting with Gen Z leaders, political parties 12

Shafali shortlisted for ICC women player of the month 16

PIONEER IN SHORT

NEW ED TROUBLE FOR ANIL AMBANI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has attached fresh assets worth ₹1,120 crore belonging to Anil Ambani-led Reliance Group companies as part of its money-laundering probe linked to the alleged Yes Bank fraud. The action brings the total value of attachments against the group to ₹10,117 crore. Newly seized properties include Mumbai's Reliance Centre at Ballard Estate, a commercial building in Andheri East, residential assets and a guesthouse in Santacruz, along with 231 land parcels and seven flats in Chennai. Movable assets such as fixed deposits, bank deposits and unquoted shareholdings have also been frozen. The ED alleges that between 2017 and 2019, Yes Bank invested ₹5,010 crore in instruments of Reliance Home Finance and Reliance Commercial Finance, which later turned non-performing. Investigators claim over ₹11,000 crore in public funds reached the companies through a "circuitous" route involving Reliance Nippon Mutual Fund due to regulatory restrictions.

Modi, Putin reignite ties

Russian President Vladimir Putin inspecting the Guard of Honour at the Rashtrapati Bhavan PTI

ASHOKE RAJ ■ New Delhi

Russian President Vladimir Putin wrapped up a full day of engagements in New Delhi with a State banquet at the Rashtrapati Bhawan— the same venue where he began his morning with a ceremonial Guard of Honour. The high-profile visit, one of Putin's most prominent diplomatic outings since Russia's isolation following the 2022 Ukraine war, drew global attention as India extended an elaborate welcome.

Throughout the day, Putin held extensive talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, attended a business forum and announced the launch of *Russia Today* in India, the Kremlin-funded and controlled broadcast network. The red-carpet treatment was widely seen as New Delhi signalling its independent foreign-policy stance to western Governments.

During the bilateral discussions, Putin reaffirmed Russia's readiness to supply India with an "uninterrupted" flow of fuel, emphasising that Moscow's energy commitments to India remain "unaffected" by global political dynamics. Putin highlighted that despite sanctions, both the US and the European Union continue importing billions of dollars' worth of Russian energy, including liquefied natural gas and enriched uranium — a point he used to underscore what he called Western "double standards."

Reiterating Moscow's stance, Putin stressed that Russia's energy cooperation with India had not been disrupted by geopolitical tensions or the war in Ukraine. "Our energy cooperation with India remains unaffected by present political shifts," he said, according to the Russian Foreign Ministry. He added that "trade in petroleum products and the refining of Russian oil for Indian consumers proceeds in a completely stable and predictable manner."

At the conclusion of the two-day visit, Prime Minister Modi described India-Russia relations as a "friendship" grounded in "mutual respect and deep trust," noting that the partnership had "stood the test of time" through multiple global crises. He compared the relationship to the "pole star," symbolising its enduring stability.

Both leaders unveiled a range of initiatives to deepen economic ties beyond traditional oil and defence cooperation. A joint statement issued by both Governments stressed that "in the current complex, tense, and uncertain geopolitical situation, Russian-Indian ties remain resilient to external pressure." Putin's visit — defined by symbolic gestures, strategic messaging, and significant economic announcements — reinforced the strength of the India-Russia partnership at a time of shifting global alignments.

EAM S Jaishankar and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Kolokoltsev exchanging an MoU during a joint press statement after a meeting between PM Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin PTI

India, Russia push into new sectors

ASHOKE RAJ ■ New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin committed to broaden economic ties and enhance cooperation in defence and energy at the 23rd annual Russia-India Summit. The summit comes amid ongoing pressure from Washington, DC on New Delhi to reconsider its longstanding partnership with Moscow as the Ukraine conflict enters its fourth year.

Following the summit, India and Russia unveiled a comprehensive economic cooperation programme through 2030, aiming to boost bilateral trade to $100 billion from $68.7 billion in the fiscal year ending March, which has historically favoured Russia. India seeks to correct the trade imbalance by increasing its exports.

"To achieve this ambitious target, we have agreed on a programme for the development of Russian-Indian economic cooperation until 2030," Putin said, noting that India's ongoing free trade agreement negotiations with the Eurasian Economic Union could further accelerate growth. He also reaffirmed Russia's role as a reliable energy supplier, pledging uninterrupted fuel deliveries to support India's expanding economy.

Prime Minister Modi highlighted that India would work to fast-track the free trade agreement with the Eurasian bloc and announced plans for free electronic visas for Russian tourists and groups.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

The ByStander

IndiGo's messy meltdown

PRASHANT TEWARI ■ New Delhi

Indigo's case is one of self induced turbulence to put undue pressure on the government. Indigo has not failed or faltered but has scrupulously mismanaged itself with the ulterior motive of blackmailing the government itself. The result is catastrophic inasmuch as the people of India have been taken for a merry ride and hapless, unwary passengers throughout the length and breadth of the country have been lamentably held to ransom. This has had a deleterious effect on the entire economy and hotel fares and fares of other airlines have skyrocketed! And the Minister in charge is totally helpless to deal with this crisis of enormous proportions and has virtually gone into oblivion! ?

India, a nation of over 1.5 billion people and the world's fastest-growing aviation market, shockingly depends on just two major domestic carriers, IndiGo and Air India. This extreme concentration is not an accident but the direct result of chronic policy failure and regulatory inertia. Over the past two decades, the government has repeatedly allowed major airlines to collapse instead of restructuring them under new ownership. Jet Airways and Kingfisher Airlines are the most glaring examples: both could have been saved simply by removing promoters Naresh Goyal and Vijay Mallya, yet no revival mechanism was activated. India watched two full-service carriers die, thousands of jobs vanish, and crucial aviation capacity evaporate.

The pattern continued with Go First, despite clear evidence that the airline's downfall was triggered by engine supply failures rather than managerial incompetence. No meaningful intervention came from policymakers; no special framework was set up to assist the carrier, and no urgency was shown to ring-fence operations. As a result, Go First joined the long list of avoidable aviation deaths in India. When three airlines disappear within a decade in a market of this size, the problem is not corporate mismanagement but a systemic refusal to protect competition and consumer interest. This shrinking competitive landscape has delivered the nation into the hands of a duopoly that dictates prices, capacity, and service standards with little accountability.

Today, IndiGo controls more than half the domestic aviation market, while the Air India group holds most of the remaining share. Smaller carriers exist only on the fringes, unable to exert meaningful pressure.

An IndiGo aircraft seen at the Birsa Munda Airport in Ranchi PTI

CONTINUED ON >> P4

CARE FOR EVERY CHILD, CM EXHORTS ANGANWADI WORKERS

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

CM Dr Mohan Yadav called on newly appointed Anganwadi workers and helpers to embrace their duties with the affection and responsibility of *Yashoda Maiya*, urging them to care for every child "as if they were Shri Krishna".

Speaking at a ceremony in the Committee Hall of the State Assembly, the CM handed out appointment letters issued through a fully online recruitment system, the first such process in the country, and said the documents symbolised "a pledge to ensure children's smiles and the health and safety of mothers".

Officials said the state's recruitment model has drawn national interest for widening access and eliminating delays.

WCD Minister Nirmala Bhuria said orders have already been issued for 1,091 Anganwadi workers and 10,984 helpers, with recruitment for the remaining posts advancing quickly. The online portal received 81,704 applications for 2,077 worker posts and more than 3.17 lakh applications for 17,477 helper posts — numbers she said underscored public trust.

DGCA hits pause on rest rules as IndiGo brings skies to a halt

Stranded passengers searching for their luggage near an IndiGo counter at the Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru PTI

RAJESH KUMAR ■ New Delhi

The Civil Aviation Ministry on Friday withdrew its order on weekly rest hours for aviation crew, in a one-time relief, after India's largest airline faced disruptions bringing air travel to a near halt in the country. "The Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL) orders of the DGCA have been placed in abeyance with immediate effect," Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu said in a written statement. "We anticipate that complete restoration of services will be achieved within the next three days," the statement added.

The FDTL rules have been kept in abeyance till 10 February 2026.

Meanwhile, the Union Government has ordered four-member committee to probe into disruption caused by IndiGo. The committee will submit its findings and recommendations to the aviation regulator within 15 days to enable necessary regulatory enforcement action and ensure institutional strengthening. The Government also made it clear that in case of any flight cancellations, the airlines will issue full refunds automatically, without the need for passengers to make any requests. Passengers who are stranded due to prolonged delays will be provided hotel accommodation arranged directly by the airlines.

Airports across India are in a state of chaos as IndiGo struggles with a surge of cancellations and delays. Flights are being scrapped or postponed at short notice, leaving travellers stranded, confused, and stuck in long queues. The turmoil is largely attributed to new crew rest regulations and acute staffing shortages. In response, the airline has urged passengers not to head to the airport unless their flight has been confirmed, as it works to manage crowds and prevent further disruption.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

EOW NOTICE TO SHIVAKUMAR

The Delhi Police's EOW has issued a notice to Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar seeking detailed financials in connection with its probe into the *National Herald* case. The notice, dated November 29, asks Shivakumar to appear or submit records by December 19, citing that he may hold "vital information" relevant to the FIR registered against Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi. Investigators have requested Shivakumar's financials allegedly transferred by him or linked entities to Young Indian, and any communications with Young Indian or AICC officials.

FIFA UNVEILS EXPANDED WORLD

FIFA is set to hold its largest-ever World Cup draw on Friday at Washington's Kennedy Center, launching preparations for the expanded 48-team tournament across the US, Mexico and Canada from June 11 to July 19. First-time qualifiers Cape Verde, Curaçao, Jordan and Uzbekistan join a field that includes the world's top 11 ranked nations, while 22 others — including Italy — vie for six remaining playoff berths. Argentina, led by 39-year-old Lionel Messi, aims to defend its title and chase historic records. With matches staged in 16 venues — including 11 NFL stadiums and expanded capacity at Toronto's BMO Field — attendance is expected to surpass the 1994 benchmark.

India's latest decolonisation drive aims at British titles in textbooks

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA
■ New Delhi

After renaming Rajpath as Kartavya Path, Race Course as Lok Kalyan Marg, Prime Minister's residence as Seva Teerth, Raj Bhawan as Lok Bhawan and countless other pieces of infrastructure by the BJP in an attempt to decolonise the Indian mind, a party leader has now urged the Parliament to drop titles of British viceroys and governor generals in school textbooks and Government documents.

BJP leader Sujeeth Kumar, supported by the ruling party MPs in the Parliament, urged the Union Government on Friday to remove references like Lord Curzon, Lord Mountbatten, Lord Dalhousie and Lord Leighton, among others, from the NCERT textbooks, Government documentations and also from official websites. Raising the issue during Zero Hour in the Rajya Sabha on Friday, Sujeeth said the practice perpetuates a "colonial mindset" even 75 years after independence.

Former NCERT Director JS Rajput, however, differed from the ruling party's views and said that history can be tampered with. "These are the titles they earned for their colonial service. However, the important issue is to understand the logic behind what established these titles and their role. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi also referred to Macaulay's mindset, which means he has a significance even after 200 years," Rajput told *The Pioneer.*

Vijay Chowk on Kartavya Path, which was earlier called Rajpath PTI

Kumar has questioned why India should continue placing British officials "on a demigod-like pedestal" by calling them Lords, especially when many committed "horrendous and barbaric crimes" against Indians, while the country's own freedom fighters are not accorded similar reverence. "A vibrant democracy like ours, which also is the largest and oldest democracy on earth, should not continue this practice as it perpetuates a colonial mindset, goes against the spirit of social equality, and also goes against the letter and spirit of our own constitution," he said.

"I did a random check of all these websites, documents, and school textbooks, and this is what I found. During British rule, the colonial rulers used and abused their power to give titles for their imperialistic designs and to promote the false narrative of racial superiority. This was a title given by the British to the British for the British needs," the BJP MP said, highlighting the widespread use of the title across educational and official materials.

He claimed that official websites of the Ministry of Culture, Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and even the Raj Bhavan, now renamed 'Lok Bhavan' of Bihar, continue to use the title for British colonial administrators. He drew parallels with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's decision to rename Rajpath as Kartavya Path.

Madhya Pradesh to observe 2026 as year of agriculture: CM

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh will observe 2026 as a year of agriculture with a state-wide push to raise farm incomes, modernise allied sectors and expand employment opportunities for rural youth, Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav said on Friday. The announcement followed a meeting with ministers and senior officials at the Assembly committee room.

Dr Yadav said the decision reflects the government's view that farmer prosperity is central to the state's wider economic ambitions. The tagline, "Samruddh Kisan, Samruddh Pradesh", he said, underlines the belief that a stronger rural economy strengthens the state as a whole. Agriculture continues to support the poorest households, he said, and can open significant avenues of self-employment for young people when paired with innovation and technology.

He said the government wants to move beyond earlier goals of doubling farm incomes by shifting towards a profitable, sustainable and technology-driven agricultural model. Departments have been asked to accelerate work in natural farming, digital services, mechanisation, processing and export-linked cultivation. Madhya Pradesh's diverse geography, he said, offers scope for targeted work in pulses, oilseeds, horticulture, livestock and fisheries, allowing district clusters to be linked more closely with markets.

Dr Yadav said farmers would be introduced to global innovations through exposure visits to countries where new agricultural systems are emerging. The focus will include practices in paddy, wheat, horticulture, pulses, processing and fisheries. Paddy-growing districts will receive priority, while diversification into chana, oilseeds and high-value horticultural crops will be expanded to reduce risks and improve returns.

Officials presented a month-wise activity calendar for 2026, detailing fairs, exhibitions, soil-health camps, training sessions and demonstrations on modern techniques and balanced fertiliser use. District headquarters will host awareness drives on farmer schemes and market access, with progressive farmers and private experts invited to support outreach.

State-level programmes will focus on coarse grains, dairy and gopalan, makhana, mushrooms, beekeeping, paddy, mango, soybean, cotton, chillies, fisheries, farmer-producer organisations, crop-residue management and horticulture. Officials said these events are intended to promote diversification, strengthen value addition and help farmers engage with export-oriented opportunities.

A central component of the plan is rural employment. The government wants to promote new occupations such as drone operations, FPO management, hydroponics services, grading and packaging, food processing and agricultural logistics. Officials said these areas can generate work for young people who may not own land but wish to build careers within the agricultural economy.

Natural farming and organic cultivation will be expanded across villages. The state also plans to modernise mandis, improve soil conservation measures, upgrade post-harvest facilities and expand horticulture, dairy and fisheries infrastructure. Departments have been told to focus on productivity, disease management and better supply-chain systems to support small farmers.

Dr Yadav said the agriculture year must lead to measurable improvements, not remain symbolic. He directed officials to prioritise raising farmers' net incomes through stronger market linkages, fair pricing and better processing capacity so producers benefit across the value chain.

He said district-based cluster development will be key to ensuring integrated growth across agriculture and allied sectors. Improved logistics, supply chains and export pathways, he said, will help connect local producers to larger economic opportunities.

Agriculture Minister Adal Singh Kansana, Minister of State for Animal Husbandry and Dairy Lakhan Patel, former minister Gopal Bhargava, Chief Secretary Anurag Jain and other senior officials attended the meeting.

Speaker of Madhya Pradesh State Assembly Narendra Singh Tomar greets Chief Minister Mohan Yadav after the completion of his successful two years in office, on the last day of the winter session of MP State Assembly in Bhopal on Friday.

Assembly approves Rs 13,476 cr supplementary budget

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

The Madhya Pradesh Assembly on Friday approved a second supplementary budget of Rs 13,476.94 crore aimed at accelerating welfare delivery, capital investment and local governance reforms. Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav positioned the outlay as a core enabler of the state's commitment to contribute meaningfully to the national vision of a developed India.

In his address at the end of the session, Dr Yadav said the government remains focused on translating Prime Minister Narendra Modi's development aspirations into measurable outcomes on the ground. He described this mission as both an administrative priority and a responsibility towards citizens.

The chief minister thanked both Treasury and Opposition members for what he called a constructive and dignified session. He said the Assembly's strength lies in the balance between both sides, adding that the deliberations led by the Leader of Opposition were substantive and beneficial.

Housing, women's welfare and local infrastructure emerged as the biggest winners in the supplementary allocations. The government set aside Rs 4,000 crore for the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Rural), underscoring its push to provide housing to all eligible households. Another Rs 2,000 crore will support procurement agencies through credit assistance. The Ladli Behna scheme received Rs 1,794 crore to widen its reach and deepen economic support for women.

Local bodies will receive Rs 1,633 crore under the 15th Finance Commission, reflecting the state's strategy to strengthen basic civic services. Capital expenditure has been pegged at Rs 5,028.37 crore, with Dr Yadav asserting that infrastructure growth will not be slowed by budget constraints.

A key policy move during the session was the introduction of the Madhya Pradesh Municipalities Amendment Bill, 2025. The Bill proposes direct elections for chairpersons in municipalities and nagar panchayats, a shift the government believes will reduce administrative hurdles and enhance the efficiency of urban local bodies.

Dr Yadav said the session added a significant chapter to the Assembly's legacy as the state works to build long-term foundations for growth. He reaffirmed the administration's commitment to continuous progress, guided by the principle of "charaiveti", or moving forward relentlessly.

Kanha Reserve completes intensive first phase of All India Tiger Census

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

The three-day sign survey, the crucial opening phase of the All India Tiger Census-2026, wrapped up on Friday in Kanha Tiger Reserve after an intensive sweep of the landscape by forest teams and volunteers.

Over the three days, 44 volunteers from 15 states joined forest officials and frontline staff to comb the dense Kanha forests, documenting every possible sign of tigers, other carnivores and large herbivores. Using a specially designed mobile app, teams uploaded geo-tagged photographs, pugmark imprints and other indirect evidence in real time to build a scientific database for the national census.

Kanha acted as the nodal centre for the survey, coordinating operations across nearly 6,000 square kilometres covering its core and buffer zones, East and West Mandla Forest Divisions, North and South Balaghat Forest Divisions, Dindori Forest Division, and the Barghat and Mohgaon project areas. Staff from every division took part to ensure thorough coverage and accurate data.

At the closing programme at Khatia Eco Centre, Deputy Director Puneet Goyal presented participation certificates to volunteers and thanked them for supporting what he described as a landmark conservation effort.

With the carnivore sign survey completed, the next phase - transect line surveys and intensive monitoring - will begin soon in a staggered rollout across the landscape.

Stormy close to winter session as tree-felling row erupts

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

The winter session of the Madhya Pradesh Assembly concluded on a stormy note on Friday, with the Opposition staging a walkout over the proposed felling of six lakh trees in Singrauli. Congress members alleged that the clearance amounted to illegal deforestation intended to benefit a private corporate group, triggering one of the loudest confrontations of the session.

The uproar began when Congress MLAs pressed the government on whether the large-scale tree cutting violated environmental and wildlife regulations. Minister of State for Forest Dileep Ahirwar attempted to defend the move, saying the clearance covered 2,672 hectares and had been approved by the Central government, with compensatory afforestation and land replacement under way. His explanation, however, failed to satisfy the Opposition.

The situation escalated sharply when senior minister Kailash Vijayvargiya, rising to Ahirwar's defence, remarked that Singrauli's tribal population was limited. Congress members immediately objected, calling the comment insensitive and accusing the government of dismissing the concerns of tribal communities most affected by deforestation. Both sides traded accusations amid rising noise levels in the House.

Led by Leader of the Opposition Umang Singhar, Congress MLAs eventually walked out, shouting slogans against what they called the government's "pro-corporate and anti-tribal" approach. MLAs Vikrant Bhuria and Jaivardhan Singh alleged that forest land was being cleared to "favour Adani", and claimed that the replantation of trees in districts such as Sagar and Shivpuri was unjust. Singh also accused the government of violating the Wildlife Protection Act.

Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav, speaking after the Opposition's exit, said the debate had revealed "who genuinely understands the responsibilities owed to the people". He acknowledged, however, that the Opposition had adopted a constructive stance on several issues during the session. The government, he noted, had successfully passed important bills and the supplementary budget required for the state's development.

With continued shouting in the well of the House, the proceedings were eventually adjourned, bringing the winter session to a turbulent close marked by political confrontation and deepening disagreement over environmental governance.

BJP MLA hold placards to celebrate the completion of two successful years of Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav led BJP State Government, on the last day of the winter session of MP State Assembly in Bhopal on Friday. Pioneer photo

Leopard sighting in Sehore sparks concern over delayed response

Bhopal: Villagers in Bherupura under Shyampur tehsil of Sehore district reported a leopard on a farm on Friday morning, but no Forest Department team arrived for several hours, prompting growing concern in the area.

Farmers said they spotted the leopard while working in their fields and recorded videos on their mobile phones. Residents believe this is the first sighting in Bherupura.

Leopard movement has been reported in nearby villages in recent weeks. Kolukhedi and Jetla both recorded sightings earlier, including one near a school in Jetla around 6 pm on Thursday, which caused panic among locals.

Deputy Ranger HP Dagar told reporters that the department was acting as per protocol after receiving the alert. Villagers, however, alleged that despite repeated sightings, authorities had yet to take concrete steps to improve response and safety.

EOW raid on school principal exposes luxury fleet and assets worth crores

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

The Economic Offences Wing on Friday seized high-end vehicles, jewellery and multiple properties worth several crores during sweeping raids on the residences of Government High School Principal Abhimanyu Singh in Sidhi.

A 50-member team began coordinated searches at 5 am at Singh's sprawling 7,500-square-foot Sidhi residence, a high-rise mansion in Amha, his ancestral house in Madwas and another property in Kusmi. Officials said three additional houses valued at about Rs 2.5 crore were also traced during the operation.

Investigators recovered 14 vehicles - including a Toyota Fortuner, Ford EcoSport, Mahindra Bolero, Tata Indica, JCB, tractor and harvester - along with gold jewellery worth nearly Rs 7 lakh and silver worth Rs 5 lakh. Officials said important documents were seized and Singh's bank locker is now being examined.

The raids followed a complaint lodged two months ago at the EOW office in Rewa. Acting Inspector Harish Tripathi said an inquiry confirmed the allegations, prompting the disproportionate-assets case against Singh, who joined government service in 1998.

"When the team knocked, the principal himself opened the door," an official said. Local police have now secured all the raid locations.

The seizure of 10 four-wheelers, 4 two-wheelers and extensive real estate far beyond the known income of a school principal has rattled the district, with EOW teams expected to remain deployed until valuation and document checks are complete.

Bhopal mela samiti donates slit lamp to sewa sadan hospital

Bhopal: The Bhopal Utsav Mela Samiti has donated a slit lamp machine to Sewa Sadan Eye Hospital, strengthening the hospital's capacity for eye examinations. The samiti's vice president, Vijay Agarwal, also contributed Rs 2 lakh to support patient care.

Sant Siddha Bhauji praised the gesture, saying people understand the value of sight only after losing it. Mela Samiti president Manmohan Agarwal said the saint's presence was an honour and highlighted the group's social welfare work.

General secretary Sunil Jainavin said the samiti earlier organised just one cataract camp but now conducts free eye camps at 18 locations across Bhopal with the hospital's support. Jeev Seva Sansthan secretary Mahesh Dayaramani said Sewa Sadan has provided treatment to more than 3.8 million patients in 38 years and will soon shift to a new facility on Airport Road to expand services.

Cong slams government in assembly over 'luxury first' budget choices

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

On the last day of the Madhya Pradesh Assembly's winter session, Leader of the Opposition Umang Singhar launched a scathing attack on the state government during the discussion on the supplementary budget, alleging that the proposals ignored public needs and prioritised extravagant expenditure over welfare.

Singhar said the budget neither reflects development priorities nor addresses the distress faced by farmers, youth, women and ordinary citizens. Instead, he argued, the government is spending heavily on luxury while overlooking urgent public concerns. "How can the state justify spending Rs 5 crore on a jet and Rs 10 crore on the chief minister's residence when people are suffering?" he asked.

Calling the supplementary budget "entirely debt-driven", Singhar alleged that public money was being diverted toward the government's own comforts rather than essential services. He also accused the ruling BJP of dismissing every serious issue raised by the Congress as "drama", despite the concerns being directly linked to public welfare.

Citing recent incidents - including a woman farmer in Chhatarpur allegedly slapped by a Naib Tehsildar and a young man left hanging from an electric line in Tikamgarh for nearly three hours - Singhar said the administration's handling of such cases reflected "deep-rooted insensitivity".

He further alleged widespread corruption, claiming Rs 192 crore spent on the Investors' Summit yielded no jobs, and that crores were spent on helicopter and aircraft rentals while core schemes languished. He accused the government of mishandling the Jal Jeevan Mission, stating that the Centre had halted funds owing to irregularities. "Corruption has become so rampant that even the Centre has withdrawn its so-called double engine," he said.

On the state's rising debt, Singhar said the government had borrowed Rs 74,000 crore between January and November, questioning why loans were being taken at 8% interest instead of 4%. He described this as evidence of collapsing financial credibility. "The state is still repaying loans taken in 2011-12 - this is the BJP's financial mismanagement," he said.

Crime branch returns Rs 14 cr to cyber-fraud victims

PNS ■ Indore

The city Crime Branch has returned more than Rs 14 crore this year to residents cheated in cyber fraud cases, officials said on Friday. Additional DCP Rajesh Dandotia said Fraud Investigation Teams restored Rs 14,33,57,247 to victims in 2025, the highest monthly recovery recorded in June. The branch received about 4,500 complaints by November, prompting swift action in several cases.

Officers froze thousands of bank accounts linked to fraudulent transactions and retrieved more than 250 hacked social media accounts. More than 300 fake profiles created using victims' names and photos were also blocked. Monthly recoveries ranged from roughly Rs 60 lakh to nearly Rs 1.9 crore, with May, June, July and September recording the strongest returns, according to the Crime Branch.

Police urged citizens to use the Safe Clicks-AI Agentic Solutions chatbot for guidance and to report cyber fraud via helpline 7049124445 or the 1930/NCRP portal.

Ministers lead hands-on outreach at BJP office to resolve grievances

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh ministers Vijay Shah and Narendra Shivaji Patel held an extensive interaction with party workers at the BJP state headquarters on Friday, addressing public grievances brought in from across the state and directing immediate action on pending issues. According to party sources, cases that could not be resolved on the spot have been forwarded to the concerned departments for prompt disposal.

Speaking after the outreach session, Minister Vijay Shah said he and Minister Narendra Shivaji Patel personally reviewed complaints and ensured that workers received timely responses from administrative authorities. He emphasised that both the BJP government and the party organisation are committed to the holistic welfare of the poor and marginalised sections of society.

Shah said the initiative of making ministers regularly available at the party office is already yielding positive results. He thanked Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav and state BJP president Hemant Khandelwal for institutionalising the system, which requires two ministers to be present at the office daily from 1 pm to 3 pm.

Ministers' presence boosted coordination, sending grassroots concerns to authorities without delay

He added that ministers, despite holding government positions, remain fundamentally BJP workers whose foremost responsibility is to strengthen the organisation. "A strong organisation is the foundation of a strong government," Shah said, noting that the new arrangement allows workers-especially senior ones who earlier found it difficult to approach ministers in crowded settings-to raise issues directly and receive immediate guidance.

Shah said the model enhances coordination between government and party structures, ensuring grassroots concerns are quickly communicated and addressed. He described the system as one of the most responsive mechanisms introduced by any state government, where leaders from the mandal level to cabinet ministers prioritise worker feedback.

Sarod recital player Amaan Ali and Ayaan Ali Bangash perform during 8th edition of 'Hriday Drishyam-2025' cultural festival at Ravindra Bhawan in Bhopal on Friday. Pioneer photo

Armed Forces Flag Day fortnight to be observed from Dec 7

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh will mark the Armed Forces Flag Day fortnight from December 7 to 13 to honour fallen soldiers and support their families, officials said on Friday.

The annual observance on December 7 commemorates personnel who laid down their lives in the line of duty. As part of the fortnight-long programme, the District Sainik Welfare Office in Bhopal will conduct awareness drives and voluntary donation activities across government offices and public spaces.

On December 8, symbolic flags will be placed in all departments at the Collectorate, where staff and visitors will be encouraged to contribute to the fund that aids families of fallen soldiers, widows and disabled ex-servicemen. District Sainik Welfare Officer Col Rajiv Khatri appealed to residents of Bhopal, Sehore, Raisen and Vidisha to donate generously, stressing that the fund plays a crucial role in welfare initiatives.

Donations may be made via cheque, bank draft or cash to the "DISTT ARMED FORCES FLAG DAY FUND" at IDBI Bank. Officials noted that contributions are exempt from income tax under Section 80G (5)(VI) of the Income Tax Act.

The fortnight aims to strengthen public participation and highlight the importance of civilian support for military families, the department said.

Printed and published by Syed Naved Alam on behalf of CMYK Printech Limited and Printed at "SHRI BALAJI PRINTERS" Plot No.137,138,139 Sector I Special Industrial Area Govindpura Bhopal - 462023, (M.P.) and published at 152 Saif Complex - 2nd Floor, M.P. Nagar, Zone 1, Bhopal-462011 (M.P.), Telephone: 0755-2550977, Mob.: 09893130364. Executive Editor Deepak Kumar Jha, RNI Regn. No. MPENG/2004/13703, Regd. No. L-2/BPLON/41/2006-2008, AIR SURCHARGE of Re. 1.00 East: Calcutta, Ranchi, Bhubaneswar, North Leh West: Mumbai & Ahmedabad South: Bangalore & Chennai. Central : Khajuraho, Delhi Office:- 201-205, 208-210, 2nd Floor, Pratap Bhawan 5, B.S.Z. Marg, New Delhi-110002 Phone: 011-46035729, 011-69342500, Mumbai Office: Devendra Adhikari Mobile No.: 09867575933, 09892829259, Lucknow Office: 4th Floor, Sahara Shopping Centre, Faizabad Road, Lucknow 226 016. Telephones: 0522-2346443, 2346444, 2346445.

15 suspended after GMC campus brawl

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

Fifteen MBBS students of Gandhi Medical College were suspended on Friday after a late-night argument at a campus canteen escalated into a violent clash that left several students injured.

The fight broke out around midnight on December 4 at Sudharit Café inside the GMC campus. Students returning from AIIMS Bhopal's cultural fest 'Retina' reportedly got into a dispute with others over the serving of noodles. Some were believed to be in an inebriated state, worsening the confrontation.

The exchange between hostellers and day scholars quickly turned physical, with both sides allegedly using rods, batons and other objects. Students who attempted to break up the fight were also injured. Paras Maraiya and Shailesh Chaudhary suffered head injuries and were taken to the ICU. Paras was discharged after receiving first aid.

GMC Dean Dr Kavita N Singh convened an emergency meeting of the Disciplinary Committee on Friday morning. Fifteen students, mostly from the 2023 and 2024 batches, were suspended. Hostellers among them were ordered to vacate their rooms within 24 hours.

"Medical students are expected to uphold the highest standards of restraint and professional conduct," Dr Singh said. "Such violent behaviour on campus is utterly shameful and will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Strict action will be taken against anyone found indulging in similar indiscipline in future."

Established in 1955, GMC is one of the oldest and most prestigious medical institutions, with a sprawling campus in the state capital. It has a long-standing reputation for academic rigour and is attached to Hamidia Hospital, which ranks among the biggest tertiary-care centres in Madhya Pradesh.

Chief Minister pushes 'Lakhpati Bigha' goal in agriculture review

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav on Friday chaired a detailed review of the Farmer Welfare and Agriculture Development Department in the state capital, setting out priorities for productivity, market access and technology use in the state's farm sector. Opening the review, Dr Yadav said the government should identify and honour farmers who earn Rs 1 lakh from a single bigha, positioning it as a 'Lakhpati Bigha' model.

Dr Yadav further directed officials to strengthen fertiliser access using updated technology and to launch intensive campaigns to boost horticulture crops. He also called for a three-year plan for crop-residue management and said divisional nurseries must be developed as model units.

Farmer Welfare Minister Adal Singh Kansana, Animal Husbandry Minister Lakhan Patel, former minister Gopal Bhargava and Chief Secretary Anurag Jain attended the meeting.

A departmental presentation said Madhya Pradesh leads the country in pulses, oilseeds and maize output and ranks second in foodgrain and wheat production. Officials said Rs 961.68 crore in crop-insurance claims were paid to 1.77 crore insured farmers in 2023-24, rising to Rs 1,275.86 crore for 1.79 crore farmers in 2024-25. Assistance under the Mukhyamantri Kisan Samman Nidhi crossed Rs 4,800 crore in 2024-25. They added that all 259 mandis now operate on the e-mandi system, which earned a Scotch Gold Award. The MP Farm Gate app, which allows farmers to sell produce from home or farm, received a Scotch Silver Award.

A social activist and peace campaigner makes a blood portrait of Russian President Vladimir Putin to welcome his India's visit, in Bhopal on Friday. Pioneer photo

Visitors go through a Mithila art exhibition curated by an artist Naresh Paswan, jointly organised by Alliance Française de Bhopal and Eklavya Foundation, in Bhopal on Friday. Pioneer photo

Police uncover fake currency rackets in Ujjain and Neemuch

PNS ■ Ujjain

Police on Friday uncovered a major counterfeit currency operation in Ujjain, seizing Rs 17.5 lakh in fake notes and arresting two suspects. A separate incident surfaced in Neemuch, where another man was caught printing counterfeit Rs 500 notes at home.

In Ujjain, Chimanaganj Mandi police and the Crime Branch launched a joint operation after receiving a tip-off that a large consignment of fake currency was to be delivered near Raj Royal Colony and the Pandya Khedi railway track. When teams began checking vehicles and suspects in the area, two men attempted to flee but were quickly detained.

The suspects were identified as Himanshu alias Chinu Gosar (26) and Deepesh Chauhan (22). Police recovered 22 bundles of counterfeit Rs 500 notes from Gosar and 13 bundles from Chauhan, amounting to Rs 17.5 lakh. Officers said the seized notes carried imitation security threads, micro-printing and green ink patterns.

During interrogation, both men admitted to printing the counterfeit currency at a flat in Shri Ganga Vihar Colony, Indore, along with their associate Rajesh Barbate, who is now absconding. Acting on the information, police raided the flat and seized printing machines, high-security paper, chemicals, security threads, cutting machines and stacks of finished and partially printed notes. Police said the counterfeit notes were being supplied at the rate of Rs 1 lakh genuine money for Rs 10 lakh in fake currency.

In Neemuch, a separate incident came to light when police detained Ishwar Kharol (age not provided) of Sarjana village after receiving information that he was attempting to circulate counterfeit Rs 500 notes. A search of his home revealed that he had been printing fake currency using a colour printer.

Police seized 100 counterfeit notes worth Rs 50,000, along with the printer, paper sheets and other materials. Kharol told officers that he had been working with his friend Sunil Bairagi, who has since fled. Police believe the pair had been pushing the fake notes at small shops and petrol pumps in the area.

Police are searching for the two absconding suspects as investigators look for links to wider counterfeiting rackets.

Imposter held in Rs 15L job scam

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

Misrod police on have arrested a man posing as an Intelligence Bureau officer after he allegedly arrived in the city to "verify" an engineer duped of Rs 15 lakh in a fake job racket promising the post of Chairman of the Quality Council of India.

Police identified the arrested man as Rajesh Kumar, a Delhi-based elevator technician who admitted he had been hired for Rs 70,000 to impersonate an IB officer. He was caught after the victim's friend grew suspicious and alerted police during the supposed verification meeting.

Investigators said the engineer, Ashish Kulshrestha (40) of Sagar Colony, was deceived by his long-time friend, Amod Kumar Pathak, who claimed he could secure the top QCI post through high-level contacts. Kulshrestha said Pathak took him to Delhi, where he met a man named Naveen posing as a senior ministry official.

Convinced, Kulshrestha later transferred Rs 15 lakh to Pathak's bank account from Bhopal. He was then told that IB clearance was the final step.

On Wednesday, when the impersonator contacted him for "verification", Kulshrestha - then in Goa - sent his friend Shailendra Mishra to meet him. Mishra's suspicion led to Rajesh Kumar's arrest.

Kulshrestha returned to Bhopal on Thursday and filed a complaint. Police have booked prime accused Pathak, accomplice Naveen and Rajesh Kumar under cheating, conspiracy and impersonation provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. Rajesh is in custody and a search is on for the others.

Indore to clear waste, prune trees near airport amid rising bird activity

PNS ■ Indore

Division officials on Friday said sanitation work will begin in eight panchayats around the municipal limits following concerns raised over waste, food scraps and tree overgrowth near the airport boundary.

The decision came during a meeting of the Airport Environment Management Committee chaired by Divisional Commissioner Dr Sudam Khade. Officials discussed the accumulation of garbage, improper disposal of food waste and delays in trimming large fruit-bearing trees, which often attract birds close to flight paths.

Airport authorities told the meeting that bird activity around the runway has sharply increased. While only six such instances were recorded in 2012, the number has risen to 26 this year, raising safety concerns for air traffic.

Dr Khade directed the Forest Department and the municipal corporation to act immediately to reduce bird habitation, clear waste from hotels and restaurants near the airport and ensure timely pruning of trees along the perimeter. Officials from the Airport Authority, district administration and airlines were present. Such clean-ups are critical because unmanaged waste and fruit-bearing trees attract birds, increasing the risk of bird strikes - a persistent threat to aircraft during take-off and landing.

Mayor inspects PMAY housing projects

Bhopal: Mayor Malti Rai on Friday inspected the Ganga Nagar-Aradhana Nagar residential complex under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana and ordered officials to speed up pending construction. She directed deployment of additional workers and resources to ensure housing units are completed on schedule.

At the Kotara site, she was accompanied by Additional Commissioner Tanmay Vashisht and other municipal officials. The team examined site maps and assessed work on gates, roads, tiles, lighting and sewage systems. Officials reported that 216 MIG units across three blocks are complete and being handed over. Construction continues on 144 LIG units and 192 EWS units, which the Mayor instructed be finished within deadlines and allotted promptly.

Karond suicide of male nurse prompts probe into harassment accusations

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

A 26-year-old male nurse was found dead in his rented room in Karond late Thursday night, prompting police to investigate whether harassment played a role in the suspected suicide.

Police identified the deceased as Chhotu Rajput of Shamshabad in Vidisha district. He worked at a private hospital in the Nishatpura area and had completed his BUMS degree in Bhopal. Officers said his roommate had stepped out briefly and returned to find Chhotu hanging. No suicide note was found. The body was sent for postmortem and handed over to the family on Friday.

Relatives said Chhotu had recently appeared cheerful. His elder brother, Deepak Rajput, said the family was struggling with the sudden loss and alleged that Chhotu had been facing emotional harassment from a woman he had been in a relationship with. He said he had spoken to Chhotu on Thursday evening and that the family had recently gifted him a new car. Deepak claimed the roommate told them Chhotu had been on a phone call with the woman shortly before the incident. He also alleged that after the news spread, the woman messaged a friend asking her not to disclose anything about their relationship.

Police have seized Chhotu's phone and are examining call and chat records. Officers said further steps will depend on evidence retrieved from the device. The investigation is ongoing.

MANIT to host global alumni meet on Dec 27

Bhopal: Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology (MANIT) will host its Global Alumni Meet 2025 on December 27, bringing former students from across the world back to the Bhopal campus. Organisers said the gathering aims to reconnect batchmates and celebrate alumni contributions that have strengthened the institute over the years.

MANIT highlighted recent support from former students, including four electric buses worth Rs 6.5 crore, a Rs 2.5 crore polyclinic, a Rs 1.5 crore steel dome auditorium and an advanced thermal lab valued at Rs 4 crore. Alumni have also funded battery simulation facilities, campus landscaping, paid internships for girl students and financial sponsorships for student events. Scholarships and laptops have been extended to students across departments.

Institute officials said alumni engagement has helped MANIT enhance its academic ecosystem through industry tie-ups, expert lectures, mentorship and vocational internships. They said this support contributed to MANIT achieving a placement rate of more than 90 per cent, a strong outcome amid a difficult global job market.

State Govt tells schools to step up safety measures after SC directive on dog-bites

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

The Madhya Pradesh government has issued stringent instructions to all schools across the state to prevent dog-bite incidents, following a directive from the Supreme Court. The Directorate of Public Instructions (DPI) has circulated an order to every District Education Officer (DEO), directing schools to adopt immediate safety measures and ensure that teachers remain vigilant in protecting students from stray dogs on and around campuses.

According to the DPI order, all schools - government, aided and private - must secure their premises and identify any areas where stray dogs might enter or hide. Institutions have been asked to carry out urgent inspections, block access points and work with local bodies to ensure stray animals are removed from school surroundings.

The directive stresses that teachers on duty must be actively involved in preventing children from wandering into unsafe spaces, particularly during arrival, recess, sports periods and dispersal. Schools have also been instructed to conduct awareness sessions to teach students how to avoid risky interactions with animals and to maintain readiness for immediate medical response in the event of a bite.

Acting on the DPI's instructions, all the DEOs issued a detailed circular on Thursday to all schools in their districts. The circular reiterates that teachers and school heads must carry out daily inspections, monitor student movement closely and report any presence of stray dogs near the premises. It also directs institutions to strengthen boundary protection, ensure cleanliness so animals are not attracted to rubbish or food waste and coordinate with municipal authorities whenever intervention is needed.

The DEO has further asked schools to document compliance and warned that any negligence in preventing dog-bite incidents will attract administrative action.

Amit Khatri appointed as dist YC chief

Bhopal: The Indian Youth Congress (IYC) has replaced Ankit Dubey as the Working President of its Bhopal (Urban) District Unit following an organisational inquiry that confirmed the pendency of a criminal case of "grave nature" against him. The decision was formalised through an office order issued on Friday by Shivi Singh Chauhan, General Secretary in charge of Madhya Pradesh.

According to the order, the IYC's Enquiry Committee examined complaints and background documents related to the recently held Youth Congress organisational elections. The committee found serious criminal charges pending against Dubey, rendering him ineligible to continue in a leadership role under the organisation's integrity and propriety guidelines.

The inquiry also confirmed that no adverse material was found against Amit Khatri, who had finished as the first runner-up in the election process. In view of this, and to maintain "organisational integrity, continuity and propriety", the IYC announced that Amit Khatri is hereby appointed as the Working President of the District Youth Congress, Bhopal (Urban), with immediate effect.

Smart meter bills spark heated exchanges in House

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

Concerns over soaring electricity bills linked to smart meters triggered sharp exchanges in the Madhya Pradesh Assembly on the final day of the winter session, with Congress MLA Vikrant Bhuria accusing the government of burdening consumers despite repeatedly claiming that the state is power-surplus.

Raising the issue during Question Hour, Bhuria said the government frequently asserts that Madhya Pradesh is a power-surplus state yet continues to purchase electricity. "If production is surplus, why has the state purchased power - 74 crore units in 2024-25 and 51 crore units in 2025-26?" he asked. "And on top of that, citizens are being hit with inflated bills due to smart meters. People are distressed."

Minister Tulsi Silawat confirmed the power purchases but said they were made to meet peak demand and ensure uninterrupted supply. Responding to Bhuria's charge about excessive bills, he said, "If there are complaints from any household, inform us separately. We will get them rectified." Silawat added that district-level grievance redressal committees were already functioning to handle billing-related disputes.

The issue of smart meters has triggered widespread public concern in recent months, with several districts reporting unusually high bills following their installation.

In another discussion, Congress MLA Mahesh Parmar raised the issue of farmers' land being taken under Ujjain's land-pooling scheme. Urban Development Minister Kailash Vijayvargiya assured the House that the matter would be resolved soon. "The Chief Minister has already made an announcement. The relevant orders will reach the Ujjain administration shortly, and farmers will get relief," he said.

Pench tigress captured for India's first interstate translocation

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

Concluding a week-long search operation involving AI camera traps, elephant squads and continuous field tracking, forest officials on Friday morning captured PN-224, the five-year-old tigress set to become the country's first tiger to be translocated from one state to another.

Under the translocation plan, PN-224 will be shifted to Ramgarh Vishdhari Tiger Reserve in Rajasthan's Bundi district once she is cleared for transport.

The search operation began soon after the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) approved the move. Pench Deputy Director Rajneesh Kumar Singh said AI-enabled camera traps placed across the reserve delivered the crucial breakthrough by pinpointing the tigress's exact location in real time.

Three trained elephant squads were then deployed to track her on foot, confirm her identity through stripe-pattern matching and guide her into a safe zone where she could be immobilised.

A specialist veterinary team led by wildlife veterinarian Dr Akhilesh Mishra, and monitored by NTCA representative Dr Amit Kumar, tranquilised the tigress following standard protocol. Officials said she was fitted with a satellite radio collar, given a comprehensive health examination and revived before being shifted to a temporary enclosure inside the reserve.

For the next seven to ten days, teams will monitor her movement, feeding behaviour, stress indicators and overall health through the radio collar and on-ground observations. She will be cleared for the journey to Rajasthan only after she is certified fully fit.

Officials described the operation as a coordinated effort that brought together scientific planning, real-time technology and teamwork between the Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan forest departments under NTCA guidance.

New Shikara rides brighten the Boat Club as visitors stream in

ANKUSH SINGH ■ Bhopal

A day after Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav launched the newly introduced Shikara boats at the Boat Club, the Upper Lake drew large numbers of visitors on Friday, turning the first full day of public rides into an unexpectedly busy outing for Bhopalis.

Ticket counter staff said the response surpassed what they had anticipated. Between morning and 4 pm, about 70 to 75 people boarded the Shikaras. Young adults arrived in groups, families came with children, and several elderly couples joined the queue early, creating a steady stream of riders throughout the day.

Among them was Shweta Verma, an MBA student in Tourism and Hospitality Management at Devi Ahilya University, Indore. She explained that a Shikara is a traditional wooden boat used on Kashmir's Dal Lake for leisure, transport and sightseeing. She described the boats as lightweight, colourful and attractively crafted. Verma and her friends had travelled to the Boat Club specifically to try the new attraction and see how the Shikara experience translated to Bhopal's lake.

Many visitors shared similar curiosity. Farheen Khan, a social media influencer who runs the page Awaaz-e-Bhopal, said the ride was delightful. She remarked that if artificial snow had been present, the scene would have resembled Dal Lake in Kashmir and the experience would have felt even more magical. She also noted that during the rides, visitors passed stalls selling shawls, sheets and traditional scarves, adding a distinctive element to the outing.

For some, the draw was the chance to view the city differently. Rahul Tiwari, a B.Com student, said the Shikara ride offered a clear and expansive perspective of Bhopal. He encouraged residents and tourists to try it at least once, saying that from the water it felt as if the entire city could be seen from a single vantage point.

Children, too, were eager to take part. Eight-year-old Rehan visited the Boat Club with his parents immediately after school. His father said the boy had watched footage of the Shikara rides on television and had been insisting on a visit ever since. Rehan was among the early riders on Friday afternoon.

The day also held special meaning for some visitors. Vikas and Ragini Tomar, an elderly couple celebrating 38 years of matrimony, said they had never been able to travel after their wedding and had never visited Kashmir. Riding a Shikara in Bhopal, Ragini Tomar said, allowed them to experience a small part of the charm they had long associated with the Himalayan region. The couple said they were happy to have the opportunity so close to home.

Not everyone was able to board the boats. Vidhi Jharia, visiting Bhopal from Narsinghpur, arrived late in the afternoon and found that rides had been halted due to strong waves on the large lake. She said she had read in the newspapers that the Shikara rides had begun and hoped to return the following day to try them.

Officials said the rides come with safety supervision and ticketing limits, both of which are being strictly enforced. They added that the service will be expanded if the strong public response continues in the coming days.

Madhya Pradesh Tourism has also released rates for boating activities at the Boat Club. Shikara boats are available for 20-minute rides at Rs 450 for six-person boats and Rs 300 for four-person boats. Visitors can also opt for 30-minute paddle-boat rides for four people at Rs 200, or individual water cycles for 20 minutes at Rs 100. Life jackets are mandatory for all rides.

With the crowds of the first two days, the Shikara boats have already begun to reshape the experience of visiting the Boat Club. The rides have quickly become a popular way for residents and tourists to take in the lake, offering a blend of tradition, scenery and a fresh perspective on Bhopal.

Commissioner orders two-week PUC drive amid pollution rise

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

Divisional Commissioner Sanjeev Singh on Friday directed traffic police, transport officials and the Pollution Control Board to enforce a two-week deadline for all vehicles in the division to obtain valid Pollution Under Control certificates amid worsening air quality in urban areas.

Singh reviewed the city's air-quality situation at a meeting in his office and instructed agencies to launch an extensive enforcement campaign.

Officials said vehicle owners have been given 15 days to update their PUC certificates, after which traffic police will begin large-scale penal action.

Heavy vehicles, school buses, medium-load carriers and car owners have been told to complete certification within the window.

Singh asked district RTOs and Bhopal traffic police to notify vehicle owners through the transport portal and prepare detailed reports on factors behind air-quality hotspots, including quarterly comparative assessments. Pollution Control Board officers were told to strengthen online monitoring and calibration checks for PUC machines.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Revenue Commissioner Kiran Gupta, RTOs from all districts, traffic police officials, representatives of PUC-certifying agencies and other officers.

The Pioneer
BHOPAL | SATURDAY | DECEMBER 6, 2025

IN FOCUS

Artists from Tamil Nadu performing Parai Attam traditional dance during the National Craft Fair, at North Central Zone Cultural in Prayagraj PTI

Govt to strengthen cooperative sector: Shah

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
Gandhinagar

Union Minister for Cooperation Amit Shah on Friday said as part of its 'definite strategy', the Government aims to triple the contribution of the cooperative sector to the country's GDP in the next few years and create more than 50 crore active cooperative members.

The Government has also set the target of raising India's share in the global organic market to 20 per cent by 2030 and 40 per cent by 2035, Shah said in his address at the Earth Summit held at Mahatma Mandir Convention Centre in Gandhinagar. The Government wants to strengthen the cooperative sector across the country, he said. Earth Summit is a national initiative led by National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) and the Internet and Mobile

Home Minister Amit Shah with Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and others during the inauguration of EARTH - Empowering Agriculture, Rural Tech and Humanity Summit, organized by NABARD, in Gandhinagar PTI

Association of India (IAMAI). Shah said that after Narendra Modi became the prime minister, rural development, agriculture, animal husbandry, and cooperative sectors were recognised as the crucial components of the country's economic system and overall development.

"The vision of a fully developed India includes the well-being of every citizen, and in order to achieve that goal, focusing on the cooperative, agriculture, animal husbandry, and rural development sectors is essential," said Shah. "Under a definite strategy, we have decided that in just a few years, we will establish a cooperative institution in every panchayat. We will create more than 50 crore active cooperative members and triple the contribution of cooperatives to the country's GDP,' he added.

The Union Home Minister informed the audience that Banas Dairy in Gujarat has developed a model for a circular economy in the dairy sector and that model is now available for replication across the country.

Now, the cooperation ministry is working on developing a similar circular economy model for the sugarcane sector in the country, Shah announced on the occasion. On the ministry's focus on the organic farming sector, Shah said the latest figures suggest that nearly 49 lakh farmers already adopted natural farming and there is a huge potential for the farmers.

"With the support of Bharat Organics and Amul, we are creating a chain of laboratories for conducting organic testing of farmers' land and produce as per international standards so that farmers can sell their organic food items easily. At present, nearly 40 such organic products, like wheat and rice, are already sold online,"Shah said.

"We have set a target that India will have more than 20 per cent share in the huge global organic market by 2030 and 40 per cent share by 2035. For this purpose, we have established two multi-state cooperatives. While one of them will buy organic products from farmers, another will sell them. Money will be directly deposited into the bank accounts of farmers," he said.

About the Sahkar Taxi service, a cooperative sector initiative launched on trial basis in Delhi recently, Shah said nearly 51,000 drivers have already registered for the service. 'Our taxi drivers will receive their full earnings into their bank accounts.

MP STSF, WCCB arrest wildlife offender

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

The Madhya Pradesh State Tiger Strike Force (MP STSF), in a coordinated operation with the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB), has arrested an international wildlife offender wanted under an INTERPOL Red Notice, the environment ministry said on Friday. Yangchen Lachungpa (44) was arrested on December 2 in Lachung, North Sikkim, after sustained intelligence efforts and coordinated ground action.

The ministry said Lachungpa is a resident of Lachung and a key member of an organised trafficking network with links to Nepal, Tibet and Bhutan and operations across several Indian cities, including Delhi, Siliguri, Gangtok, Kolkata, Kanpur, Itarsi and Hoshangabad. This is one of the most significant wildlife-crime arrests in the country linked to an INTERPOL Red Notice, it said.

The WCCB, acting as India's INTERPOL Liaison Office, had secured the Red Notice for Lachungpa on October 2.

The ministry said the Sikkim Police, the forest department, the judiciary and the district administration fully cooperated in the operation, and the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) in Sikkim and Siliguri provided secure transit support due to heightened public sentiment.

Officials took Lachungpa to Gangtok for a mandatory medical examination and produced her before a competent court on December 3.

The court rejected her bail plea and granted transit remand to Madhya Pradesh, the ministry said, adding that further proceedings will take place in Narmadapuram.

The Madhya Pradesh forest department had registered a case regarding poaching and illegal trade of tiger body parts and pangolin scales on July 13, 2015, in the Kamti range of the Satpura Tiger Reserve in Hoshangabad .

UP set to launch 'One District, One Product' 2.0

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
Lucknow

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday underscored the need to implement the 'One District, One Cuisine' (ODOC) concept to give each district a unified identity through its distinctive culinary heritage.

Adityanath, in a high-level meeting here, said, 'The 'One District, One Product' (ODOP) initiative, now a defining feature of 'Brand Uttar Pradesh', is set to advance to its next phase, ODOP 2.0, which will further boost local industries, self-employment, and exports.'

He noted that in the context of evolving global markets, modern consumer expectations, technological progress, and new benchmarks for quality and packaging, ODOP must be expanded in a more comprehensive, commercial, and outcome-driven manner. Together, ODOP and ODOC will propel Uttar Pradesh firmly on the path of 'local to global', the chief minister said. 'The aim of

ODOP 2.0 is to ensure that the state's traditional products become a strong foundation for larger markets, increased exports, and sustainable livelihoods,' he added. 'ODOC reflects the cultural essence of Uttar Pradesh, where every region boasts a unique food tradition, some renowned for their 'halwa', others for their 'dalmoth',' Adityanath said in an official statement.

Mapping each district's signature dishes, he emphasised, should be accompanied by efforts to improve their quality, hygiene, packaging, branding, and marketing.

Meanwhile, Lucknow city was officially inducted into UNESCO's Creative Cities Network (CCN), under the 'Gastronomy' category, marking a global acknowledgement of its culinary heritage. On October 31, UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay designated 58 cities as new members of the CCN. During the meeting, it was highlighted that since its launch in 2018, the ODOP initiative has become the backbone of Uttar Pradesh's exports and local industries. According to the statement, over 1.25 lakh toolkits have been distributed, loans exceeding Rs 6,000 crore have been sanctioned, and more than 8,000 entrepreneurs have received direct marketing support.

Thirty Common Facility Centres (CFCs) have been approved, and 44 ODOP products have been granted Geo tags. ODOP products are now sold on leading e-commerce platforms and account for more than 50 per cent of the state's total exports, the statement said.

The scheme has also earned a national award for the second consecutive year, it said.

Speaking about ODOP 2.0, the chief minister said, 'It is no longer just a scheme but a powerful catalyst for sustainable employment, local enterprise development, and export growth.'

He stressed the importance of prioritising the units and entrepreneurs who performed exceptionally well in the first phase, further enabling them to scale their businesses. He added that future plans must empower Uttar Pradesh's products across four key areas -- technology, packaging, quality, and market reach.

The Common Facility Centres under ODOP will be made more effective, the statement said.

The chief minister directed that each CFC should have expert involvement so that small entrepreneurs can access comprehensive support, including technical guidance, design, packaging solutions, and production assistance, all under one roof. The chief minister further instructed that ODOP products must not remain confined to traditional markets but should be integrated into major retail chains and modern marketplaces.

PTI, TASS signed a cooperation agreement for exchange of news content

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi

The Press Trust of India and Russian news agency TASS on Friday signed a cooperation agreement for regular exchange of news content on developments in India and Russia.

The agreement was inked by Vijay Joshi, PTI's CEO and Editor-in-Chief, and TASS Director General Andrey Kondrashov on the sidelines of the India-Russia Business Forum here coinciding with the visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin to India. Speaking at the event held at Bharat Mandapam, Kondrashov said the signing of the agreement was another important step towards strengthening friendship and mutual understanding between Russia and India. "We are opening a new page in Russian-Indian media cooperation. Our cooperation will help make the news exchange more efficient, diverse and transparent," he said.

Kondrashov said this is especially important now when Russian-Indian relations, despite the geopolitical turbulence around the world, demonstrate stable strategic depth in many areas and go far beyond just the economy, covering such aspects as energy, food security, military-technical cooperation, joint cultural and humanitarian projects.

"The mass media is a bridge between our peoples, between our cultures. Thanks to PTI and TASS, this bridge will be even more reliable and stronger," he added.

In his remarks, Joshi said the agreement was not simply a news exchange partnership but in fact the two news agencies were renewing their pledge to strengthen truth in an age of uncertainty.

Disease surveillance programme using AI tools to detect early warning signals: Govt

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

The Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme has been using Artificial Intelligence tools since April 2022 to detect early warning signals and generate alerts for timely management of potential outbreaks, Minister of State for Health Prataprao Jadhav told Lok Sabha on Friday.

The programme is mandated with surveillance and response to outbreak prone communicable diseases, Jadhav said in a written response. He was responding to a question on whether the Government proposes to expand the use of AI-enabled early-warning systems for real-time detection of disease outbreaks, antimicrobial resistance patterns and public health emergencies across States. The Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) uses Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools since April 2022, in media scanning and verification to detect early warning signals and generate alerts for timely management of potential outbreaks, Jadhav said. The Integrated Health Information Platform (IHIP) is a paperless, case-based, near real-time reporting system introduced in 2021 to strengthen national disease surveillance. All 36 States and Union Territories report through IHIP, which provides a unified platform for public-health monitoring at the district, state, and national levels, Jadhav stated. The Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) was launched by Government in September 2021 to support the development of an integrated, citizen-centric national digital health ecosystem.

Several national health programme platforms, including Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana and non-communicable diseases are integrated with ABDM enabling public health facilities in the states and UTs to use ABDM enabled software, to create Ayushman Bharat Health Accounts and digital health records for seamless interoperability across the ecosystem.

TMC MPs protest over pending Central dues

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

Trinamool Congress MPs staged a protest in Parliament complex on Friday over the issue of pending Central dues for West Bengal, and charged that a 'vindictive regime' is starving an entire State to settle political scores.

Holding placards, they raised slogans demanding that pending amount be given to the State. Party leaders have claimed that the Centre owed the State ₹52,000 crore under MGNREGA. "The State of West Bengal has been constantly deprived by the Modi Government because they can't win in Bengal. Today the 100 days job guarantee is a right given to people by an

Act of Parliament, but ₹52,000 crore is now pending from the Government of India," Rajya Sabha MP Sushmita Dev said.

"It is a complete lie by the Modi Government when it says there is no action taken report or utilisation certificate. All documents have been submitted, all paperwork is complete on the part of the Government of Bengal, but they are refusing to release MGNREGA money,"she said.

"This is illegal, this is inhuman, its deprivation of Bengal and discrimination against Bengal,' she said.

TMC MPs had also staged a protest on Wednesday and Thursday over the issue in Parliament complex.

In a social media post on Friday, the TMC said nearly ₹2 lakh crore is owed by the Centre. "Bengal has been held hostage by a regime that punishes states for refusing to bow before Delhi's imperial arrogance," it charged. "They have blocked MGNREGA wages, denied Awas Yojana houses, strangled Jal Jeevan Mission funds, because Bengal refused to kneel. This is the ugly truth: a vindictive regime is starving an entire state to settle political scores. But Delhi's zamindari delusion ends here," it said.

"This fight will now explode from Bengal's streets to the floor of Parliament. We will not allow a single rupee of Bengal's rightful dues to be looted, blocked, or siphoned by a power-hungry Centre that survives on coercion," it said.

FROM PAGE - 1

India, Russia push into new sectors

He emphasised energy security, along with collaboration in civil nuclear energy, clean energy, shipbuilding, fertilisers, and labour mobility, as key pillars of bilateral relations.

The summit occurred against rising tensions with the United States, following Washington's imposition of a 50% tariff on Indian goods in August, citing New Delhi's purchases of discounted Russian oil. India remains the world's second-largest buyer of Russian crude after China. The US maintains that these purchases indirectly fund Russia's war in Ukraine. In response, Indian officials stressed that energy sourcing is based on commercial considerations and aligned with international sanctions while prioritising the energy needs of its 1.4 billion citizens. Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri confirmed that sanctions and oil import issues were part of the summit discussions. Analysts note that Putin's visit highlights India's delicate balancing act between maintaining strategic ties with Russia and deepening its partnership with the US.

India also pressed Moscow to expedite delivery of two pending S-400 air defence systems under a $5.4-billion deal, which has been delayed due to wartime supply-chain disruptions. Defence ministers from both countries met prior to the summit, agreeing to encourage joint manufacturing of spare parts and components in India through technology transfer and partnerships. The two nations have also committed to deepening military cooperation through joint exercises, port visits, disaster relief coordination, and logistics support. India is seeking upgrades to its Su-30MKI fighter jets and faster delivery timelines for other Russian-origin platforms.

India is pursuing expanded exports of pharmaceuticals, agricultural goods, and textiles to Russia while seeking the removal of non-tariff barriers. Long-term agreements for fertiliser supplies were also discussed.

Both sides are working to establish a framework to ensure the safety and regulation of skilled Indian workers in Russia, reflecting an increased focus on labour mobility.

Putin last visited India in 2021, while Modi visited Moscow last year. The leaders also met briefly in September at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit in China, underscoring a sustained diplomatic dialogue between the two countries. The summit signals a renewed commitment to strengthening India-Russia relations across multiple strategic sectors, even as New Delhi navigates complex global pressures and shifting geopolitical dynamics.

India and Russia on Friday formalised a new cooperation initiative by signing a memorandum of understanding (MoU) aimed at training specialists to operate ships in polar regions. The agreement comes as Russian President Vladimir Putin continues his two-day official visit to New Delhi, during which both nations have sought to expand collaboration in emerging strategic sectors. In a joint statement released by the Ministry of External Affairs, the pact was confirmed as an agreement between India's Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways and Russia's Ministry of Transport. The MoU is designed to strengthen India's capabilities in navigating polar environments - a skillset increasingly relevant as interest grows in Arctic routes and polar research.

The training initiative will focus on developing technical expertise for handling vessels in extreme conditions, enhancing safety, and building a pool of specialised maritime professionals. The signing took place shortly after Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Putin concluded high-level talks that drew significant international attention. The summit highlighted both countries' intent to diversify their partnership beyond traditional defence and energy ties, marking a renewed push into maritime, scientific and polar cooperation.

DGCA hits pause on rest rules as IndiGo...

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said it has issued repeated directions and advance instructions from time to time to the airline for having timely preparation to implement the provisions related to the FDTL norms. The DGCA said the airline's non-adherence of its directions limited the carrier's ability to accurately forecast crew availability, conduct timely training and realign rosters despite advance regulatory intimation.

IndiGo issued an advisory urging passengers "not to travel to the airport unless they have received a confirmation notification" that their flight will operate. Following the airline's widespread flight cancellations, IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers confirmed that over 1,000 flights were cancelled on December 5, marking it as the most severely affected day. Elbers said the airline expects to have less than 1,000 flight cancellations on Saturday and that the situation is anticipated to normalise between December 10-15.

Elbers explained that the massive disruption was caused by the rebooting of IndiGo's entire operational system. He urged passengers not to visit airports for cancelled flights to avoid further inconvenience.

IndiGo's messy meltdown

This duopoly-like structure has created a suffocating environment for passengers: airfares on busy routes regularly exceed comparable distances in Europe, Southeast Asia, or even the United States. Two-hour domestic flights in India often cost more than four-hour international flights elsewhere. Such pricing is not the outcome of a free market but the predictable result of restricted supply, weak oversight, and a regulatory system that appears increasingly comfortable with limited competition.

India's aviation sector has long needed at least eight to ten serious operators to create genuine competition, stabilise fares, and reduce the risk of disruptions. Instead, new entrants face steep barriers, license approvals move at a glacial pace, and foreign airlines seeking to expand operations into India remain blocked by outdated protectionism masquerading as strategic nationalism. Ironically, these restrictions do not safeguard Indian consumers; they primarily protect two private carriers while passengers pay inflated fares and endure deteriorating service quality. The state's refusal to liberalise the sky has effectively turned India into one of the world's costliest domestic aviation markets.

What makes the situation even more disturbing is the perception that this restrictive ecosystem suits certain entrenched interests. With opaque decision-making, irregular enforcement, arbitrary slot allocation, and no dedicated passenger rights authority, India's aviation sector functions with minimal accountability. When fares soar unchecked, when airlines collapse without rescue, and when the government repeatedly avoids structural reforms, it becomes difficult to dismiss concerns of a silent understanding, or at least a systemic rot, sustaining this duopoly at the cost of the common traveller.

India's aviation future cannot be built on the convenience of two carriers. The government must urgently open the skies, encourage new domestic operators, revive grounded airlines under competent management, and allow credible foreign players to compete under regulated conditions. Only by restoring competition and prioritising passengers can India become the global aviation leader it claims to be. Until then, the Indian traveller will continue paying heavily, learning, again and again, an unnecessarily harsh aviation lesson.

The author is a public policy expert

The Pioneer
BHOPAL | SATURDAY | DECEMBER 6, 2025

Parween Sultana honoured with ITC Sangeet Samman

Hindustani classical legend Parween Sultana was on Friday conferred the ITC Sangeet Samman 2025 at the 54th edition of the Sangeet Sammelan, which described her as an artiste whose voice has inspired generations and enriched India's musical heritage.

Jharkhand CM urges Tribal unity to safeguard rights

Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren on Friday urged the tribal communities across the country to stand united warning that else they may face extinction. He used the "big fish eat little fish" proverb to buttress his point. Asserting that tribal community never gets its due place in census, Soren said it was time to fight for their rights as challenges will keep increasing.

Karnataka CM seeks GST compensation from Centre

Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah on Friday once again flagged his demand that the Centre compensate states for the revenue loss arising from GST rate rationalisation, warning that the trend poses a serious threat to state finances.

Congress slams PM, coining DDLJ moments in governance

The Congress on Friday took a swipe at PM Narendra Modi, saying that since he became the PM, India has endured prolonged "DDLJ moments" in governance "distort, defame, lie, justify". Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh used the DDLJ acronym to attack the Modi Government a day after actors Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol unveiled a bronze statue in London to mark the 30th anniversary of Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge's release.

Rajya Sabha members raise concerns on education, gig workers and sugar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

Members on Friday raised issues in the Rajya Sabha, including the deteriorating quality of India's higher education system, reduction in sugar recovery rate and plight of gig workers.

BJP leader Ryaga Krishnaiah expressed concern during the zero hour over the deteriorating quality of India's higher education system, warning that graduates are increasingly finding themselves unemployable.

He highlighted the mismatch between demand and supply in the job market, noting that even highly educated graduates face widespread unemployment due to their inability to meet industry standards.

The BJP member stressed that despite India having one of the world's largest education systems, quantity has expanded at the expense of quality.

Karnataka BJP leader Iranna B Kadadi urged the Centre to reduce the recovery rate of sugar from 10.25 per cent to 9.5 per cent and raise the minimum selling price of the sweetener to benefit both cane growers and millers. Sugar recovery rate is the percentage of sugar extracted from sugarcane.

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Raghav Chadha demanded the termination of 10-minute delivery services offered by quick commerce players, terming the practice as "cruelty" towards gig workers who risk their lives to meet deadlines under extreme pressure.

Raising the issue during the Zero Hour, Chadha said delivery personnel are not robots, but individuals who are someone's father, husband, brother or son.

Rajya Sabha Nominated MP Sudha Murty urged the Government to set norms on the portrayal of children on social media platforms, as it is essential to inculcate a good value system among the younger generation.

Congress member Shaktisinh Gohil demanded that the Centre must intervene to ensure adequate compensation for Gujarat's farmers who suffered crop losses due to unseasonal rains during the Diwali period.

AAP MP Raghav Chadha speaking in the Rajya Sabha during the Winter session of Parliament in New Delhi on Friday PTI

Anil Sukhdeorao Bonde of the BJP requested the Government to establish more hospitals to treat heart attacks and also set up "dedicated stroke units" in districts.

Ravi Chandra Vaddiraju, BRS, demanded that the central Government should approve the Hyderabad Metro Phase II project.

Mahendra Bhatt of the BJP raised the issue of rising human-animal conflict in Uttarakhand, leading to the deaths of many people.

AD Singh of RJD expressed concern over the increasing number of suicides in the age group of 15-29 and called for a coordinated national suicide prevention strategy.

BJP MP Samik Bhattacharya urged the Government to protect the ancient Adinath Hindu temple in Malda district, West Bengal, and declare it a 'ticketed monument' and ensure the protection of the artefacts at the site.

Pilots' body objects to IndiGo relief

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

The Airlines Pilots' Association of India on Friday raised strong objections to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation's (DGCA) decision to grant IndiGo relaxation on the implementation of Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL) rules amid widespread disruption and cancellation of flights.

In a letter to the DGCA on Friday, ALPA-India said the decision not only sets a "dangerous precedent" but also undermines the very principle and purpose of the civil aviation requirement under which the norms have been formulated.

It also said on the pretext of passenger inconvenience, IndiGo is seeking relief despite having knowingly increased their winter operations while being fully aware of the implementation of the second phase of the pilots' flight duty and rest period norms.

The DGCA earlier in the day granted IndiGo temporary exemption from stricter night duty rules for pilots.

ALPA India had on Wednesday alleged that this (IndiGo cancelling huge number of flights) situation points to a "failure of proactive resource planning by dominant airlines, potentially exacerbated by an effort to pressurise the regulator to dilute the new FDTL norms for commercial gain".

An IndiGo passenger flight at Swami Vivekananda Airport in Raipur Chhattisgarh on late Thursday PTI

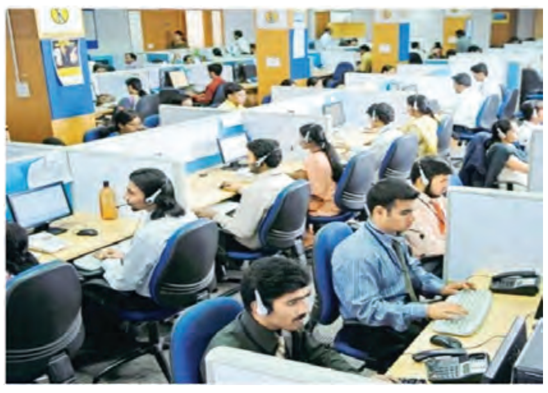
And on Thursday, the DGCA in a statement said it has directed the airline to submit the flight duty time limitation (FDTL) relaxations required to normalise the flight operations, after the airline informed the regulator that "it was facing significant transitional challenges in roster planning and crew availability under phase-2 FDTL requirement".

IndiGo was the first carrier to oppose the new FDTL norms for pilots when they were introduced in January 2024 with March 2024 as the timeline for implementation.

The latest FDTL norms, which entail increased weekly rest periods to 48 hours, extended night hours, and limiting the number of night landings to only two, as against six earlier, were initially also opposed by domestic airlines, including IndiGo and Tata Group-owned Air India.

But they were subsequently rolled out by the DGCA following the Delhi High Court's directives, albeit with a delay of over one year, in a phased manner, and with certain variations for airlines like IndiGo and Air India.

States Focus



BIHAR GOVT CREATES 3 NEW DEPARTMENTS TO BOOST JOBS

The Bihar Government on Friday announced the creation of three new departments, directorate of micro, small and medium enterprises and the state marketing promotion corporation to provide more employment opportunities for the state's youth.

According to an official, the newly created departments are the Youth, Employment and Skill Development Department, the Higher Education Department and the Civil Aviation Department. Announcing the decision, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar wrote on social media, "We have set a target to provide jobs to one crore youth in the next five years (2025–30). For this, it's essential that more youth be trained for skill development. For this, instructions have been given to create three new departments: Youth, Employment and Skill Development Department, Higher Education Department, and Civil Aviation Department."

WORLD BOOK OF RECORDS HONORS NITISH'S 10TH OATH

The World Book of Records, London, on Friday recognised Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's "milestone" of having taken oath as chief minister for the 10th time.

Announcing the development, Janata Dal (United) national working president Sanjay Jha posted on social media, "It is a matter of great joy and pride to share that the World Book of Records, London, has recognised the extraordinary milestone achieved by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, who has taken oath as Chief Minister for the 10th time."

Kharge, Rahul not invited to Putin banquet: Congress

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Congress on Friday said Leaders of Opposition (LoP) Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi have not been invited to the banquet for Russian President Vladimir Putin, and took a swipe at its own MP Shashi Tharoor for accepting the invite.

Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said, "There has been speculation whether the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha and the Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha have been invited for tonight's official dinner in honour of President Putin. The two LoPs have not been invited."

Congress' media and publicity department head Pawan Khera accused the Government of breaking protocols daily and not believing in democratic principles. "There is no invite to both the LoPs, (Mallikarjun) Kharge and (Rahul) Gandhi. This comes as a surprise but I don't think we should be surprised. This Government is known to be breaching all protocols. What else to say, ask the Government," Khera said.

Asked about party MP Tharoor getting invited to the banquet and accepting the invitation, Khera said, "Ask Tharoor. All of us who are in the party, if our leaders don't get invited and we get invited, we need to question our own conscience and listen to our conscience. Politics has been played in inviting or not inviting people, which in itself is questionable and those who accept such an invite is also questionable," Khera said.

Earlier, Tharoor said there was a time when the chairman of the external affairs committee was routinely invited but that practice seems to have stopped from some years.

"It has been resumed, I have been invited, yes. I will definitely go," the chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs said.

On the LoPs reportedly not getting an invite, Tharoor said, "I don't know on what basis invitations were sent. I think the custom that usually used to be followed was for a wide representation. Certainly, I remember in the olden days, they used to invite not only the LoPs, (but) various other cross section of representatives of different parties. It conveys a good impression."

"I dont know the basis (of invitation), this is all done by the Government, by the protocol by the Rashtrapati Bhawan, what do I know. All I can say I have honoured to have been invited. Of course I will go," Tharoor told reporters in the Parliament House complex.

Rahul on Thursday had alleged that the Government tells visiting foreign dignitaries not to meet the Leader of the Opposition due to its "insecurity". His remarks had come hours ahead of Putin's two-day visit to India.

The Congress leader had said it is a tradition that visiting foreign dignitaries meet the LoP but Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Ministry of External Affairs were not following this norm.

Champai Soren backs delisting converted Adivasis from ST list

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Jamshedpur

Former Jharkhand Chief Minister and BJP MLA Champai Soren on Friday said delisting Adivasis who have converted to other religions from the Scheduled Tribe category (ST) was essential to protect tribal identity and traditional practices.

Religious conversion is a major threat to the existence of the Adivasi society, Soren said in a statement.

"If conversions continued, no one would be left in the tribal community to offer prayers at our Jahersthan, Sarna Sthal and Deshawli in the future, and our tradition, culture and existence would be wiped out," he claimed.

Soren said people from the Adivasi community who choose to adopt another religion were free to follow their faith, but "should not be entitled to reservation benefits and other constitutional rights meant for Scheduled Tribes."

Delisting them, he claimed, "could save our orthodox systems and existence." He also alleged that rampant infiltration from Bangladesh posed a serious threat to the tribal community.

According to him, infiltrators were grabbing tribal land and misusing reservation quotas through marriages in some areas.

Strongly pitching for the Special Intensive Review (SIR) of electoral rolls in the state, the BJP leader said it would not only help identify infiltrators, but also make the process of "removal from the electoral system and deportation smoother".

Meanwhile, BJP Scheduled Tribe Morcha national executive member Ramesh Hansda said municipal elections in the state should be conducted only after the SIR is completed.

The proposed civic polls, which have to be completed by March 31, 2026, will not be impartial if held before SIR is completed, Hansda, a working committee member of BJP Jharkhand, said. The last revision of voters' list in the state was held before the 2024 Assembly polls.

Lok Sabha members seek new site for Nashik Sadhugram project

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

A strong demand was made in the Lok Sabha for an alternate site to develop a 'Sadhugram' in Nashik instead of building it in the Tapovan area by felling over 1,800 trees.

Raising the issue during Zero Hour, Shiv Sena-UBT member Rajabhau Waje urged the Centre to stop the development of Sadhugram at Tapovan ahead of the 2027 Kumbh Mela in Nashik-Trimbakeshwar.

Waje said locals of Nashik-Trimbakeshwar have been opposing the felling of trees in Tapovan and urged the Centre to look for an alternative site.

BJP member Anurag Thakur raised the issue of the Pong Dam project-affected persons from Himachal Pradesh who were to be rehabilitated in Rajasthan.

Thakur, a former Union minister, said 6,500 families were still awaiting rehabilitation in the project that was taken up in 1970 during the Congress Governments.

"Fifty years ago, the then Congress Government promised land allocation in Rajasthan to the displaced families from 339 villages — 20,772 families — for the construction of the Pong Dam in Kangra, Himachal, and that promise remains unfulfilled to this day," Thakur said.

He demanded that the Centre set up inter-ministerial consultations with Jal Shakti and Home ministries and setting up of a joint task force of Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh Governments to speed up rehabilitation efforts.

Congress MP from Meghalaya Saleng A Sangma said more than three lakh youth aged 15-29 are drug addicts, and thousands are suffering from HIV/AIDS in the north-eastern state.

"In Meghalaya, there is no rehabilitation centre and no system in place to offer convenience for patients. I request through you to the Government to set up at least 2-3 rehabilitation centres," Sangma said.

Calcutta HC declines to stop foundation of Babri-model Mosque

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ Kolkata

The Calcutta High Court (HC) on Friday refused to intervene in suspended Trinamool Congress (TMC) Humayun Kabir's decision to lay the foundation stone of a mosque at Beldanga in Murshidabad district on Saturday. The Mosque is to be christened and modeled after the Babri Mosque at Ayodhya which was demolished on December 6th, 33 years ago.

The Division Bench of Acting Chief Justice Sujoy Paul, after hearing a public interest litigation seeking stay on the foundation stone laying ceremony for the proposed mosque — as it could trigger law and order situation — observed that it was the duty State Government to maintain law and order.

The petitioner in his draft pleaded that "the MLA (Kabir) has been using filthy and derogatory statements and hate speech against a community, which causes breach of public tranquility.

Such kind of statements and hate speech over social media, being a Member of Legislative Assembly, may break the communal harmony of our state as well as our country," hence the petition sought to "stop foundation stone laying of Babri Masjid to maintain Law and order."

Meanwhile the suspended TMC MLA continued to fire salvos at his former outfit and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for committing "showing her true colours when it comes to the construction of constructing a mosque."

A fuming Kabir who was on Thursday suspended from the party for making "irresponsible remarks and refusing to follow the party line" on Friday said "it is the same Chief Minister who has been constructing temples, organising carnivals during Durga Pujas encroaching Government land in Kolkata and granting ₹1.10 lakh from public money to clubs organising Durga Pujas but when it comes to constructing a mosque and that too on a private land with private money she tries to stop me from laying the foundation stone of the mosque and suspends men, she has shown her true colours and the kind of secularism she practices, she has committed a big blunder and will have to pay high price in2026 Assembly elections."

Senior Congress leader and former MP Adhir Chowdhury too slammed the Chief Minister for opening the Pandora's box "by constructing Jagannath Temple at Digha and preparing to construct Durga Temple and Mahakaal Temple out of Government funds, she has set the trend in order to project herself as a Hindutva champion so as to contain the BJP, now she will have to face the music."

Bengal Opposition Leader Suvendu Adhikari on the other hand said that his party was not opposed to constructing any mosque but what bothered was its name. "Anyone can construct a mosque, temple, Gurudwara or church but when you construct it in the name of a Moghul invader every nationalistic person will object to it," he said.

Meanwhile, the State police on Friday made a massive security bandobast in Murshidabad, particularly at Beldanga block to preempt any law and order problem, sources in the State administration said.

Karnataka LoP hits out at Siddaramaiah, calls him shameless

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Bengaluru

Targeting Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and the Congress Government in Karnataka on alleged corruption, BJP leader R Ashoka on Friday said, being foolish was forgivable, but being "shameless" in public life was not.

The Leader of Opposition in the state Assembly claimed that in just 30 months of its tenure, the Congress administration has broken every previous record on corruption-related controversies.

He was responding to Siddaramaiah's post on social media on Thursday hitting back at the BJP, stating that Upa Lokayukta Justice Veerappa's claims of "63 per cent corruption" were based on his report in November 2019, when BJP's BS Yediyurappa was the CM.

"But Ashoka, without understanding the Upa Lokayukta's statement properly, has ended up tying the BJP's own bells of sins onto our heads and has effectively shot himself in the foot," the CM had said, as he accused Ashoka of foolishness for trying to twist Veerappa's statement to target the current Government.

Responding, Ashoka said, "it is one thing to be called foolish in politics, that can be forgiven."

"But in public life, especially in the Chief Minister's chair, one must never become shameless," Ashoka posted on social media on Friday addressing Siddaramaiah.

Noting that the CM himself had admitted on the floor of the Assembly that a ₹87 crore scam took place in the Valmiki Development Corporation, he said that when a CM acknowledges such a massive irregularity inside the floor of the House, the natural expectation is immediate action and accountability.

"But instead of taking responsibility, you continue in office as if nothing has happened. What should the people of Karnataka call this, if not sheer shamelessness," he asked.

Pointing out that the CM's Economic Advisor and senior Congress MLA Basavaraja Rayareddy had publicly stated that under Congress rule, Karnataka has become number 1 in corruption, Ashoka said, "Yet, you still cling to the Chief Minister's chair without a moment of introspection. What should the people of Karnataka call this, if not sheer shamelessness."

Senior Congress MLA CR Patil had exposed the "money for House" racket in the Housing Department and even warned that the Government would collapse if the details he has were made public, Ashoka said.

"Despite such serious allegations from within your own party (Congress), you neither initiated an inquiry nor acted against the concerned minister. What should the people of Karnataka call this, if not sheer shamelessness," Ashoka asked the CM.

Highlighting the "40 percent commission" allegation Congress made against the previous BJP Government, the Opposition leader said, the commission that the Siddaramaiah Government appointed concluded that the accusation was baseless.

"After your own panel demolished your own claim, what moral right do you have to continue repeating that allegation. What should the people of Karnataka call this, if not sheer shamelessness," he asked.

For the last two and a half years, Karnataka has been 'drowning' in corruption, scandals, irregularities and allegations across departments. Ashoka said, "If I begin listing every case that emerged under your Government, even 24 hours would not be enough."

"And the most tragic aspect of your administration is this: the unbearable pressure, corruption demands and administrative harassment under your Government pushed several officers and contractors into extreme distress — including the suicide of Chandrasekharan which exposed the Valmiki Development Corporation scam — a sign of how deeply broken the system has become under your watch," he said.

Instead of fixing this hopeless environment, the Government has tried to bury every complaint and silence every voice, he charged.

"Being foolish is forgivable, but being shameless in public life is definitely not."

"When your own ministers admit scams, when your own advisors certify Karnataka as number1 in corruption, and when your own MLAs expose rackets inside your departments - clinging to power without accountability is not leadership. It is shamelessness in its purest form." PTI KSU

Earlier on Thursday Ashoka had demanded that the corruption case and allegations in the state against the Congress Government be handed over to a CBI investigation, citing a reported statement by Upalokaykta Justice Veerappa alleging "63 per cent corruption.

Rijiju rules out extending registration deadline for Waqf properties

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju on Friday ruled out extending the deadline for registering Waqf properties on the UMEED portal but said a way would be found for those who attempted registration but could not complete and that they will be exempted from penalties for the next three months.

He also said that 1.51 lakh properties had been registered by Friday morning.

The minister stressed that those *mutawallis* (Waqf property caretakers) who have not registered on the portal at all can approach their respective Waqf tribunal.

The Centre launched The Unified Waqf Management, Empowerment, Efficiency, and Development (UMEED) Act central portal on June 6 to create a digital inventory after geo-tagging all Waqf properties.

According to the provisions of the portal, details of all registered Waqf properties across the country must be uploaded within six months. The six-month deadline for registration ends on Friday.

"After making the Waqf law, we had launched the UMEED portal and a six-month duration was given to the concerned parties to register all the Waqf properties on the portal. Today is the last day, and lakhs of Waqf properties have still not been registered," Rijiju said.

"Many MPs and social leaders came to me requesting that problems are being faced in registering more than 9 lakh Waqf properties and it is the last day today, so the deadline should be extended. Till now, more than 1.51 lakh Waqf properties have been registered on the UMEED portal," he said.

Some states have done well like Karnataka and Punjab and also Jammu and Kashmir but some others have lagged behind.

Rijiju said in some places, the UMEED portal was slow while some people did not have the papers.

"I assure all mutawallis' who tried but could not complete the registration process, we will find a way for you and for the next three months, we will not impose any penalties or take any strict action. In three months, get the registration done," he said.

Those who have not been able to come on the portal must approach their respective tribunals. The Supreme Court was clear on its instructions that the date cannot be extended, he said.

The Government, through the Ministry of Minority Affairs, has said it is committed to modernising Waqf administration and unlocking the full developmental potential of Waqf properties for the benefit of minority communities.

Lok Sabha row over lamp-lighting at Tamil Nadu hilltop temple

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

The issue of lighting of a traditional lamp at a hilltop temple near Madurai rocked the Lok Sabha on Friday, with DMK leader TR Baalu accusing the BJP of trying to "ignite" communal tensions in Tamil Nadu and Union Minister L Murugan hitting back at the Tamil Nadu Government for "denying the right to worship."

DMK members stormed the Well of the Lok Sabha and tried to raise the issue of the lighting of the 'Karthigai Deepam' at the stone lamp pillar on the Tirrupparankundram hillock near Madurai and forced the adjournment of the Question Hour.

Raising the issue during Zero Hour, Baalu accused the BJP of trying to "ignite" communal tension in Tamil Nadu and claimed that the Madras High Court judge, who permitted lighting of the lamp at the stone lamp pillar 'Deepathoon' on the Tirrupparankundram hillock, owed allegiance to a particular ideology.

"Who should light the deepam on the hill? Whether the Hindu Religious Endowment Board representative or some miscreants who have got a judgement from a Madras High Court's judge?" asked Baalu.

Baalu's reference to the high court judge's ideology drew a sharp riposte from Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju, who asserted that the DMK leader cannot cast aspersions on the judiciary and urged the chair to delete the remarks.

Hitting out at the DMK, BJP leader and Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs L Murugan accused the Tamil Nadu Government of denying the right to worship to devotees at the Arulmighu Subramaniya Swamy Temple.

As Murugan was speaking, some DMK members walked up to the seat of Rijiju, prompting TDP member Krishna Prasad Tenneti, who was in the chair, to appeal to protesting members to confine themselves to the Well.

The Pioneer

BHOPAL | SATURDAY | DECEMBER 6, 2025

Lawyers, ex-judges object to CJI remarks on Rohingyas

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

Former Judges, advocates and the Campaign for Judicial Accountability and Reforms (CJAR) headed by noted lawyer Prashant Bhushan have written an open letter to Chief Justice of India Surya Kant expressing their concern over the "unconscionable remarks" made regarding Rohingya refugees by the CJI's bench in a recent hearing.

The letter states that the CJI is not just a legal functionary but also the custodian and final arbiter of rights of the poor, whose words carry weight in the conscience of the country and have a cascading effect. "As the head of the judiciary, the Chief Justice is not just a legal functionary — but is also the custodian and final arbiter of the rights of the poor, the dispossessed, and the marginalised. Your words carry weight not simply in the courtroom but in the conscience of the nation and have a cascading effect on the High Courts, the lower judiciary and other Government authorities."

"The remarks from the bench are contrary to core constitutional values. They have had the effect of dehumanising Rohingya refugees whose equal humanity and equal human rights are protected by the Constitution, our laws and by international law," said the open letter to CJI.

Former Judges and advocates said that the remarks made on December 2 dehumanise those fleeing genocidal persecution and weaken the moral authority of the judiciary. "The Rohingya, as indeed any person residing in India, is entitled to the protections of Article 21 and not just protections from "third degree measures".

Chief Justice of India Surya Kant

This fundamental right is available to an individual who is a citizen or any other person residing in India. In NHRC v State of Arunachal Pradesh, 1996 SCC (1) 742, this Hon'ble Court has held that, "the State is bound to protect the life and liberty of every human being, be he a citizen or otherwise" the letter states. The letter goes a step further to say that the remarks provide a reasonable basis for apprehension of prejudice on the part of the CJI bench.

"The majesty of the Supreme Court and your office is measured not merely by the number of verdicts or administrative measures but more by the humanity with which those verdicts are delivered and considered", said the open letter to CJI.

The signatories are : Justice AP Shah, former Chief Justice, Delhi High Court Justice K. Chandru, Former Judge, Madras High Court Justice Anjana Prakash, Former judge, Patna High Court Prof. Mohan Gopal, Former Director, National Judicial Academy Senior Advocates Rajeev Dhavan, Chander Uday Singh, Colin Gonzalves, Kamini Jaiswal, Mihir Desai, Gopal Shankar Narayan, Gautam Bhatia, Shahrukh Alam and CJAR headed by Prashant Bhushan.

Transfer of HC judges are made in public interest: Law Minister

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

All transfers of High Court judges are made in "public interest" for promoting better administration of justice and there is no timeline for such transfers, the Government said on Friday.

In a written reply in the Lok Sabha, Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal said that as per the memorandum of procedure (MoP) for appointment and transfer of High Court judges, the proposal for transfer of High Court judges is initiated by the Chief Justice of India in consultation with four senior-most judges of the Supreme Court.

The CJI is also expected to take into account the views of the Chief Justice of the High Court from which the judge is to be transferred, as also the Chief Justice of the High Court to which the transfer is to be effected, besides taking into account the views of one or more Supreme Court judges who are in a position to offer views.

Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal

The personal factors relating to the judge concerned, including the chief justice, and his response to the proposal, including his preference of places, should invariably be taken into account by the Chief Justice of India.

"All transfers are to be made in public interest — for promoting better administration of justice throughout the country.

No timeline has been prescribed in the MoP for transfer of judges from one High Court to another," Meghwal said.

Order Order

Temple money belongs to deity, cannot be used to save cooperative banks: SC

Thirunelly Temple, Kerala

The Supreme Court on Friday said that money belonging to a temple deity cannot be used to prop up financially distressed cooperative banks.

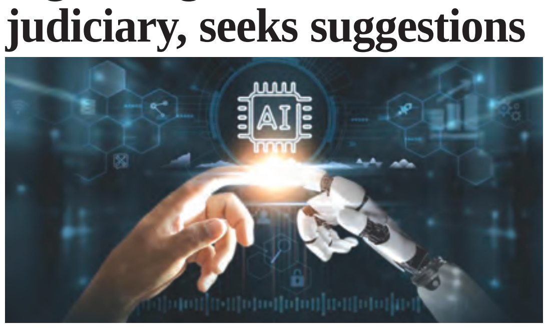
The sharp observations were made by a bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi while hearing appeals filed by a few cooperative banks challenging a direction of the Kerala High Court asking them to return the deposits to the Thirunelly Temple Devaswom.

"You want to use the temple money to save the bank? What is wrong with directing that the temple money, instead of being in a cooperative bank which is breathing with great difficulty, should go to a healthy nationalised bank which can give maximum interest," the CJI asked. Temple money belongs to the deity and hence, the money has to be "saved, protected and utilised only for the interests of the temple" and it cannot become a source of income or survival for a cooperative bank, the CJI said.

The pleas against the High Court order were filed by Mananthavady Co-operative Urban Society Ltd and Thirunelly Service Cooperative Bank Ltd.

The High Court had directed five cooperative banks to close the Devaswom's fixed deposits and refund the entire amount within two months, following repeated refusals by the banks to release the matured deposits. The case arose from a plea filed by the Thirunelly Devaswom after several cooperative banks refused to repay the temple's fixed deposits despite repeated requests.

SC declines PIL on regulating AI use in judiciary, seeks suggestions



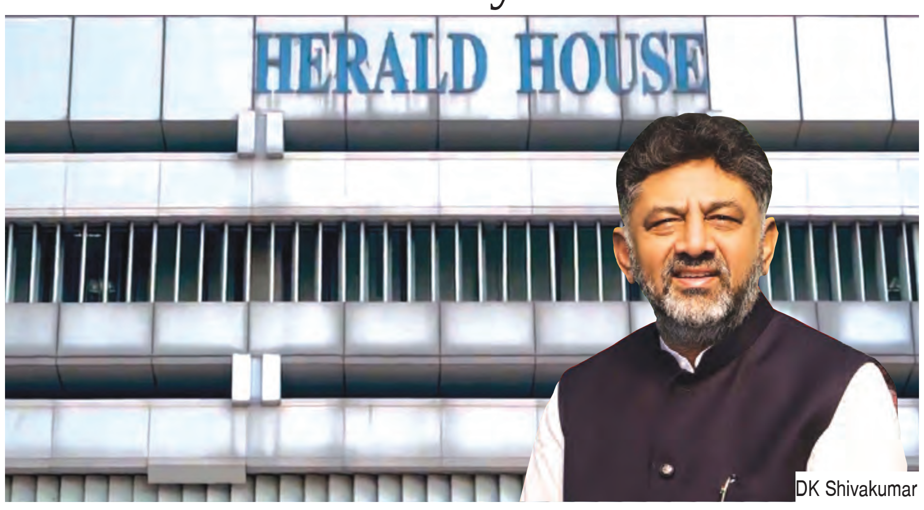
The Supreme Court on Friday refused to entertain a PIL seeking to curb the "unregulated" use of artificial intelligence and machine learning in the judicial system. The top court said it was aware of the ill effects of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) tools in the judiciary, but these issues can be appropriately addressed by it on the administrative side rather than through judicial directions.

A bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi heard senior advocate Anupam Lal Das, appearing for petitioner Kartikeya Rawal, who had sought safeguards against the risks posed by AI-generated content and its alleged misuse in judicial processes.

The senior lawyer said the AI tools create non-existent judicial precedents or judgements and they finally become part of judicial pronouncements.

While acknowledging the concerns, the CJI said this a lesson for the Bar and the judges both.

National Herald case: Delhi Police issues notice to Karnataka Dy CM Shivakumar



DK Shivakumar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

The Delhi Police has issued a notice to Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar seeking financial and transactional details as part of its probe into the National Herald case, an official said on Friday.

The notice issued by the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) states that Shivakumar is "supposed to be having vital information" pertaining to the National Herald case registered on October 3 this year, against Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi.

In the notice dated November 29, the EOW has asked Shivakumar to appear before it or provide the requested information by December 19 latest. Investigators have sought details about his personal background, his association with the Congress party, and a complete break up of funds allegedly transferred by him or associated entities to Young Indian.

"This is to inform you that the EOW, Delhi Police is investigating the above cited case FIR and that you are supposed to be having vital information in respect of the above case," the notice stated. The EOW posers include the purpose of Shivakumar's bank transfers, the source of these funds, details of any communication between him and Young Indian or AICC (All India Congress Committee) functionaries, if the payments were made on anyone's instructions, and whether he was aware of the intended use of the funds. The EOW has also asked for income tax records, financial statements and any donation certificates issued in relation to the payments.

The National Herald case, originally triggered by a 2013 private complaint by BJP leader Subramanian Swamy, is based on allegations that Associated Journals Limited (AJL) assets worth more than ₹2000 crore were acquired by the Young Indian for ₹50 lakh through a 2010 transaction involving the AICC.

The FIR registered by the EOW, based on a complaint from the Enforcement Directorate, alleges criminal conspiracy, cheating and criminal breach of trust in connection with the transfer of AJL assets to Young Indian, a company in which Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi together hold 76 per cent stakes. The ED has provisionally attached National Herald's properties in Delhi, Mumbai and Lucknow in April 2025. Congress leaders said Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister said he is being targeted for "not playing ball" with the BJP, and this underscores that he is among the key leaders "taking the hit" for Congress.

They further said Shivakumar is the "most persecuted" among Congress leaders, but the BJP will not succeed in "breaking him".

Reach consensus or court will appoint VCs: SC to Kerala CM, Guv

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Friday said it will intervene to resolve the ongoing deadlock over the selection of vice chancellors for two technical universities in Kerala if Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and Governor-cum-chancellor Rajendra Arlekar do not reach a consensus. A bench of justices JB Pardiwala and PB Varale was hearing the matter related to the appointments of VCs of the APJ Abdul Kalam Technological University, and the University of Digital Sciences Innovation and Technology.

The bench asked Attorney General R Venkataramani, appearing for the Governor, and senior advocate Jaideep Gupta, representing the Chief Minister, to find out some amicable solution to the impasse.

Venkataramani submitted that the Justice (Retd) Sudhanshu Dhulia committee had recommended two sets of names and the chancellor had picked two names. "The Chief Minister has some difficulty with some names. There are some common names," the AG said.

Advocate Gupta said that the name, which is not acceptable to the chief minister, is the only one that the governor-cum-chancellor agrees upon.

"I think a resolution has to be found by this Court," Gupta replied.

Justice Pardiwala told the senior counsels that Justice Dhulia led committee had recommended four names each for two universities and the governor and chief minister should appoint the most meritorious candidates from both the batches.

Noting that it will intervene and make the appointments itself if the consensus is not reached by December 9, the apex court said, "Reach consensus by Tuesday or we will appoint the vice chancellors and resolve the issue." The top court has posted the matter for hearing on Thursday.

Venkataramani said the chancellor found two of the names figures in both the lists, then they are the best candidates to be recommended.

On November 28, the top court took serious exception to Kerala Governor and chancellor "not looking" at the Dhulia committee report on the appointment of vice chancellors of two universities and remarked it is not just an ordinary piece of paper.

The top court had asked the Kerala Governor to take a call on the report within a week and apprise the decision to the apex court on December 5.

Governor of Kerala Rajendra Arlekar

Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan

SC shaped, reshaped contours of freedom of speech since Independence: Ex-CJI Gavai

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
Mumbai

The Supreme Court has steadily shaped and reshaped the contours of freedom of speech and expression in the last 75 years, former Chief Justice of India BR Gavai said here on Friday. "The evolution of free speech jurisprudence in India reflects a larger constitutional commitment to ensure that the State's power to restrict expression does not overshadow the citizen's right to think, to speak and to participate freely in the democratic set-up," he asserted.

He was delivering the Justice KT Desai Memorial Lecture 2025 on 'Freedom of Speech and Expression: Its Scope and Limitations Under the Constitution'. Citing several landmark judgments of the Supreme Court since Independence, the former CJI traced out the evolution of law over the years and role played by the judiciary in protecting citizen's rights.

Former CJI BR Gavai

"Over the last 75 years, the Supreme Court has steadily shaped and reshaped the contours of the freedom of speech and expression under Article 19 1(A), while simultaneously defining the permissible limit under Article 19 (2)," he said. "What emerges from this constitutional journey is a conscious and consistent judicial effort to preserve the breadth of free speech and constraint the scope of restrictions so that the right is not diluted through overreach, vagueness and excessive state control," Gavai said.

Recognising that freedom of speech and expression protects diverse and highly personal modes of expression integral to dignity, autonomy and democratic participation, the court has expanded the understanding of expression to include personal and identity based freedom, he pointed out. In this reference, he cited a judgement in which the apex court held that transgender persons have a constitutionally protected right to express their gender. He highlighted that as the 21 century began the "court also increasingly recognised that freedom of speech and expression is integral to the health of democracy, particularly in ensuring transparency and enabling citizens to make informed electoral choices".

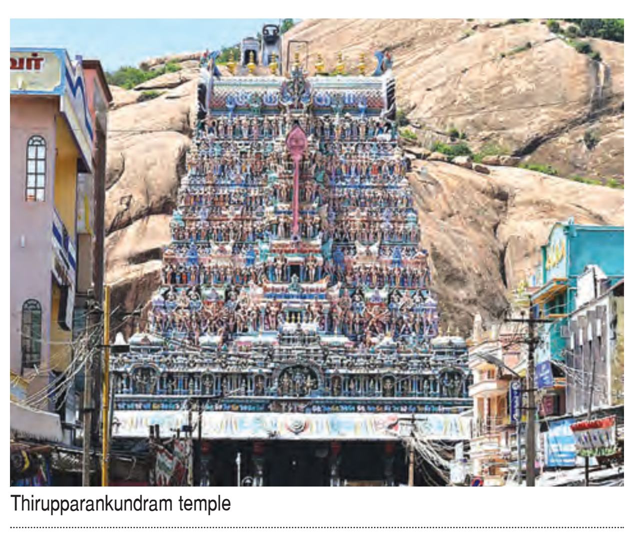
Gavai pointed out that, in the recent past, the SC has been increasingly called upon to navigate the complexities of digital communication, its unprecedented reach, its potential for misuse and its fundamental role in shaping public discourse. "Traditional free speech principles must be recalibrated to respond to the unique challenges posed by the online world, including misinformation, surveillance and the monopolistic powers of digital intermediaries," the ex-CJI said.

Don't test patience, Madras HC on comments on judge

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
Madurai

The Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court on Friday remarked that it will not tolerate comments degrading the judiciary. Those who comment should remember not to test the patience of the court, a division bench orally observed when advocate MR Venkatesh representing the writ petitioners in the Thirupparankundram lamp lighting (Karthigai Deepam) row, said personal remarks were being made against the single judge who allowed the lighting of the lamp on the ancient stone pillar atop the Thirupparankundram hill near a Dargah.

"Persons violating the law think that there won't be any reaction. Please instruct your clients not to test the patience of the court and degrade the judiciary," the court said. It warned that action would be taken if they continued to demoralise the judicial institution. "Whether you are in power or not, you have tongue or no tongue. Whatever it is, if you are going to demoralise the institution, the constitution will remain only on paper," the Bench comprising justices G Jayachandran and KK Ramakrishnan remarked. Merely because judges cannot openly react, persons should not keep on provoking the court. Strict action would be taken if they exceeded the limits, the Bench warned while hearing the appeal against the single judge, Justice GR Swaminathan's order directing the management of the Arulmighu Subrahmanya Swamy temple to facilitate the lighting of Karthigai Deepam at the Deepathoon (stone pillar) on December 3 evening. However, since the order was not complied, the petitioners sought Justice Swaminathan to initiate contempt proceedings against the temple authorities.



Thirupparankundram temple

On the other hand, the executive officer of the temple, Madurai District Collector and the police commissioner moved the division bench to quash the single judge order. The Bench said it would hear the Karthigai Deepam case verdict on December 12 after all the parties already involved in the case filed their appeals.

"We will hear everyone together. All those parties already involved in the case will be allowed to file pleas. No one will be allowed to implead," the Bench said. Meanwhile, Justice Swaminathan adjourned to December 9 the contempt petition filed by petitioner Rama Ravikumar over non-compliance of the December 1 verdict.

Editor's TAKE

Airborne crisis unfolds at Indian airports

IndiGo's cancellations expose structural weaknesses in the country's busiest airline, raising concerns about preparedness and sectoral resilience

This was the week of meltdown at Indian airports. Chaos ruled as passengers flying IndiGo did not know when their flight would take off, with no one to tell them the truth that the flight they had been waiting for was cancelled. Even those that took off were off the mark by hours. India's airports have descended into unprecedented chaos as IndiGo – the country's largest airline – struggles to keep its operations in the air. More than1,000 cancellations across major hubs like Delhi, Bengaluru and Hyderabad have left passengers stranded, frustrated and confused. This chaos is caused suddenly but is the culmination of accumulated structural weaknesses, regulatory tightening and a failure of planning on the part of airlines in question.

IndiGo hit an air pocket when the implementation of new Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL) rules – reforms designed to address pilot fatigue, long flagged as a serious safety concern in a rapidly expanding aviation market – kicked off. The DGCA issued revised norms which mandate increased weekly rest, stricter limits on night operations and capped duty hours for pilots engaged in late-night flying. These rules, long demanded by pilot bodies and aligned with global safety standards, were upheld by a recent court order.

But that sent IndiGo operations haywire, which has the lion's share of the Indian aviation sector.

In more than two decades of its operations, IndiGo has not only survived but also flourished, servicing almost all major sectors. IndiGo survived while others came and left, but that came at the cost of air safety – long and often back-to-back duty hours for pilots, shorter turnaround times at airports by squeezing more flights into a given time, lower taxi times and reaching destinations ahead of schedule to cut costs. In fact, IndiGo went further – selling premium seats, doing away with cooked meals, no in-flight entertainment, leaner ground staff and using a single-type fleet – to slash costing and maximising profits.

While some cost-cutting measures are acceptable, others do compromise air safety – especially maximum utilisation of aircraft and reduced rest time for pilots. It has shied away from hiring more pilots earlier, leading to around 25 daily cancellations even before this week. The DGCA has done the right thing, as air safety is paramount. The big question, then, is: why did IndiGo not see it coming, as the new norms did not arrive overnight; they had been discussed for months. IndiGo underestimated the quantum of crew required under the revised framework, leading to what the airline itself now acknowledges as "misjudgment and planning gaps."

This is not merely a rostering issue but a failure to build scheduling buffers and enable higher-rest regimes. IndiGo's lapse has triggered turbulence across Indian skies, causing widespread airport chaos. The way forward demands a realistic schedule reset, clearer communication and close coordination with the regulators, prioritised routes and fewer night operations – without compromising safety of the passengers.

PIC TALK

Farmers warm themselves around burning stubble on a winter morning at Ranbir Singh Pura in Jammu district. PHOTO: PTI

Tributes to Baba Saheb Dr Ambedkar: From labour leader to a nation builder

As we honour the countless contributions of labourers in nation-building, guided by the enduring spirit of *Shramev Jayate*, Dr Ambedkar's Mahaparinirvan Diwas offers a fitting moment to reflect on the vision and actions of this great nation-builder

ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL

Today, we commemorate the 70th Mahaparinirvan Diwas of Baba Saheb Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar, a larger-than-life figure and a champion of progressive measures that have shaped the course of modern human society. As a jurist, economist, philosopher, reformer, and above all, a nation-builder, his tireless efforts laid the foundation of modern India. He did not merely draft a Constitution; he provided a blueprint for an inclusive and empowered nation, where every citizen enjoys dignity and opportunity. Inspired by these foundational values, the Modi government has undertaken numerous initiatives promoting welfare and good governance.

On November 27, 2025, at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, the world paused to witness the unveiling of a bust of Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Indian Constitution. Among global dignitaries, the statue stood not merely as a tribute to an Indian leader but as a universal symbol of justice. The plaque reads "Architect of the Indian Constitution," yet these words barely capture the legacy of a man who not only drafted laws but helped shape an entire nation in totality.

During his entire lifetime, Baba Saheb Dr Ambedkar carried forward the struggle for justice, championing labour rights and welfare. As the representative of the Depressed Classes at the Round Table Conference, he strongly advocated living wages, decent working conditions, freedom for peasants from oppressive landlords, and the eradication of social evils affecting the downtrodden. He had personally witnessed the suffering of workers and the marginalised. In Bombay, he lived for over 10 years in one-room tenements of the Bombay Development Department alongside mill workers, where there were no modern facilities and each floor had only one lavatory and one tap for all purposes. These conditions gave him firsthand knowledge of workers' lives. He mobilised the masses and founded the Independent Labour Party (ILP) in 1936 with a comprehensive programme for landless people, poor tenants, agriculturists, and workers. On September 17, 1937, during the Poona session of the Bombay Assembly, he introduced a Bill to abolish the Khoti land tenure system in Konkan. In 1938, he led a peasants' march to the Council Hall in Bombay, becoming a popular leader of peasants, workers, and the landless. He was the first Indian legislator to introduce a Bill to end the serfdom of agricultural tenants. He also strongly opposed the Industrial Disputes Bill, 1937, because it curtailed workers' right to strike.

When the world order was in uncertainty during the Second World War, Dr Ambedkar, as Labour Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, was guiding the path for labourers in India. As economies transformed and industries expanded, entrepreneurs gained opportunities for prosperity, but labour did not receive its fair share. Dr Ambedkar introduced key measures for labour welfare, laying the foundation of the Government's labour policy. He handled complex labour issues with great efficiency and earned the respect of both employees and employers.

In his 1943 All India Radio address from Bombay, Dr Ambedkar urged securing a "fair condition of life" for labour, grounded in liberty, equality, and fraternity. His efforts helped bring workers under social security. He made lasting contributions through key labour legislation, including the War Injuries (Compensation Insurance) Bill, the Indian Boilers (Amendment) Bill, 1943 — addressing unsafe inspections that caused many mill deaths — the Indian Mines and Trade Unions Amendment Bills, the Miners' Maternity Benefit Amendment, the Coal Mines Safety (Stowing) Amendment, and the Workmen's Compensation Amendment.

ON NOVEMBER 27, 2025, AT UNESCO HEADQUARTERS IN PARIS, THE WORLD PAUSED TO WITNESS THE UNVEILING OF A BUST OF DR BHIMRAO RAMJI AMBEDKAR, COMMEMORATIN G THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION. AMONG GLOBAL DIGNITARIES, THE STATUE STOOD NOT MERELY AS A TRIBUTE TO AN INDIAN LEADER BUT AS A UNIVERSAL SYMBOL OF JUSTICE. THE PLAQUE READS "ARCHITECT OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION," YET THESE WORDS BARELY CAPTURE THE LEGACY OF A MAN WHO NOT ONLY DRAFTED LAWS BUT HELPED SHAPE AN ENTIRE NATION IN TOTALITY

On December 9, 1943, Dr BR Ambedkar visited the Dhanbad coalfields, going 400 feet underground to inspect operations and labour conditions. This visit led to the Coal Mine Labour Welfare Ordinance of January 1944, creating a fund for workers' welfare. He strengthened this fund by doubling the tax on extracted coal, ensuring better health and safety measures for miners. On 8 November 1943, he also introduced the Indian Trade Union (Amendment) Bill, requiring employers to recognise trade unions.

On February 8, 1944, during the Legislative Assembly debate on lifting the ban on women's underground work in coal mines, Dr BR Ambedkar stated: "It is for the first time that I think in any industry the principle has been established of equal pay for equal work irrespective of sex." This marked a historic moment for the nation. Through the Mines Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Bill, 1943, he strengthened maternity benefits and addressed absenteeism. In 1945, he amended the Act further to prohibit women from underground work for ten weeks before childbirth and ensured fourteen weeks of maternity leave — ten weeks before and four weeks after confinement.

Addressing the Indian Labour Conference in New Delhi on November 26, 1945, he reviewed the State's obligations to labour and urged laws to raise Indian labour standards to international levels. Emphasising the need for progressive labour welfare legislation, he said:

"*Labour may well say that the fact that the British took 100 years to have a proper code of labour legislation is no argument that we should also in India take 100 years. History is not to be studied merely with a view to know how well to imitate the mistakes of other countries. We study history with a view to know the errors people have made and how they could be avoided. History is not always an example. More often it is a warning.*"

The next day at the same conference, he proposed legislation to reduce working hours to a 48-hour week in factories, introduce statutory industrial canteens, and amend the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1934. He also announced plans to draft laws for minimum wages and to amend the Indian Trade Union Act, 1926. On February 21, 1946, Dr BR Ambedkar moved the Factories (Amendment) Bill to reduce weekly working hours to 48, fix overtime rates, and provide paid leave. After review by the select committee, this landmark legislation — championed by Ambedkar — was passed on April 4, 1946.

The Mica Mines Labour Welfare Fund Bill, introduced by him to create a fund for welfare activities in the mica mining industry, was passed on April 15, 1946. It improved amenities and working conditions for child and women labourers, including hours and wage issues. Dr Ambedkar also moved a Minimum Wages Bill on April 11, 1946, proposing advisory committees and boards with equal employer-labour representation. This Bill was later enacted into law on February 9, 1948.

Dr Ambedkar opposed the labour movement led by communists, rejecting Marx's totalitarian approach of controlling all means of production. He disagreed with Marx's view that abolishing private property would end poverty and suffering. In his essay *Buddha* or Karl Marx, he writes:

"*Can the Communists say that in achieving their valuable end they have not destroyed other valuable ends? They have destroyed private property. Assuming that this is a valuable end can the Communists say that they have not destroyed other valuable end in the process of achieving it? How many people have they killed for achieving their end? Has human life no value? Could they not have taken property without taking the life of the owner?*"

While drafting the Constitution, Dr Ambedkar placed labour in the Concurrent List to ensure uniform legislation and alignment with international standards. His foresight also eliminated bonded labour by declaring it illegal in the Constitution.

Guided by the mantra of "Reform, Perform, Transform," and taking inspiration from Dr Ambedkar's values, the government has implemented four comprehensive labour codes — the Codes on Wages, Industrial Relations, Social Security and Welfare, and Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions. These reforms aim to ensure universal social security, protect workers' rights, boost productivity, create jobs, and strengthen India's economic growth towards a Viksit Bharat by 2047. The Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan Yojana, launched in February 2019, provides old-age protection for unorganised workers, while the Maternity Amendment Act, 2017, extends maternity leave from 12 to 26 weeks and mandates crèche facilities.

As we honour the countless contributions of labourers in nation-building, guided by the enduring spirit of *Shramev Jayate*, Dr Ambedkar's Mahaparinirvan Diwas offers a fitting moment to reflect on the vision and actions of this great nation-builder. His ideals remain a guiding light, inspiring us to achieve the goal of a Viksit Bharat by 2047.

Arjun Ram Meghwal is Union Minister of State for Law & Justice (I/c) and Parliamentary Affairs, Government of India
arjunrammeghwalofficial
@arjunrammeghwal
arjunrammeghwal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

HONOURING AMBEDKAR'S LEGACY OF EQUALITY AND JUSTICE

Ambedkar Vardhanthi is observed annually on 06 December, the day he passed away in 1956. His Jayanthi, celebrated on April 14, since 1928, is observed nationwide and abroad as Equality Day. Born into a Dalit family on April 14, 1891 in Mhow near Indore, Madhya Pradesh, this year marks the 69th death anniversary of a towering figure in Indian history. Academically brilliant, he studied at Elphinstone College, Mumbai, and went on to earn two doctorates in Economics from Columbia University and the London School of Economics - becoming the first Indian Dalit to obtain a doctorate abroad.

Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar was not only the principal architect of the Constitution but also India's first Law Minister, an eminent jurist, economist, and social reformer. He served as Principal of the Government Law College and as Professor of Political Economy in Mumbai. As Chairman of the Constitution Drafting Committee from 29 August 1947, he oversaw the adoption of the Constitution on 26 November 1949, which came into force on 26 January 1950. He was posthumously awarded the Bharat Ratna in 1990.

Ambedkar championed social justice, equality, civil liberties and Dalit empowerment. He founded the Bahishkrit Hitakarini Sabha and led temple-entry, anti-caste and equal-rights movements. He supported the establishment of the RBI, reduced working hours from 12 to 8, and remains the only Indian with a statue placed near Karl Marx in the London Museum.

BURRA M REDDY | KARIMNAGAR

Foreign dignitaries must meet opposition

Rahul Gandhi's allegation that the Government is discouraging foreign dignitaries from meeting the Leader of the Opposition raises an issue that deserves serious democratic scrutiny. If visiting leaders are being subtly prevented from interacting with the Opposition, it marks a clear departure from India's long-standing political conventions and our proud tradition of openness.

For decades, India's strength has rested on allowing foreign interlocutors to hear multiple political voices. Governments have changed, but the democratic convention of enabling meetings with Opposition leaders remained intact. The Government may insist there is no formal restriction, yet even the perception of behind-the-scenes gatekeeping is damaging. The Opposition represents a vast section of the electorate and has every right to present its views before international visitors. Denying that space creates the impression of a curated political landscape, where access is managed and political diversity is concealed.

A confident democracy does not fear dialogue. Visiting dignitaries must be free to meet all legitimate leaders, including the Leader of the Opposition — without barriers, signals, or subtle discouragement of any kind.

KV CHANDRA MOULI | MYSURU

Putin visit marks strategic shift

President Vladimir Putin's two-day visit to India will remain a watershed moment in bilateral relations. The evident warmth between the Indian Prime Minister and the Russian President sent a clear message to the world: both countries continue to remain steadfast, all-weather partners. The newly realised Strategic Economic Accord 2030, which facilitates freer trade and smoother labour mobility, could become a genuine game-changer in an increasingly uncertain global economy.

India can rely on Russia in its fight against terrorism, just as Russia can rely on India during its challenging geopolitical moments. Should both nations find common ground in helping resolve the Ukraine conflict, it would greatly strengthen the cause of global peace.

In today's multipolar world order, relations guided by mutual respect and pragmatic cooperation stand to influence other nations in positive ways. India and Russia, both resilient powers with long-standing ties, now have an opportunity to shape regional and global dynamics with maturity, balance and strategic foresight. Their partnership, anchored in trust and consistency, remains one of the most stable bilateral equations of the contemporary era.

SANKARA RAO | ANDHRA PRADESH

Indians must rethink America obsession

Indians continue to aspire to move to the United States even though visa rules have become stricter and far more unpredictable. The American authorities now screen applicants' social-media activity and repeatedly emphasise that a visa is a "privilege, not a right". Fear of sudden deportation, often without proper opportunity to counter allegations, adds to the anxiety. It is increasingly evident that the United States is becoming reluctant to welcome outsiders.

It is widely perceived as a land of opportunity, offering higher salaries, advanced research facilities, and employment in global companies. Families hope for better education, healthcare, and a safer environment for their children. Many professionals believe India offers slower growth due to competitive job markets, limited avenues, and lower wages. They see moving abroad as a quicker route to recognition and stability.

The large and successful Indian diaspora in the US provides emotional and logistical support, making the transition appear smoother. For many, the risks posed by stricter rules are outweighed by hopes of success, global exposure, and a brighter future. Yet Indians must reconsider this instinctive craving for America and recognise the growing opportunities within India itself.

O PRASADA RAO | HYDERABAD

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

How global indices mislead the world and mask the real crises

The backdrop to this reliance is a world in crisis. Humanitarian disasters from Gaza and Sudan to the Sahel and Myanmar have pushed global displacement to its highest levels since the Second World War. Conflicts in Eastern Europe, the Red Sea, and the Horn of Africa reinforce a broader pattern of instability that no longer feels exceptional but systemic

FIRST Column


HEMANGI SINHA
PRAVIN KUMAR SINGH

Global indices have never carried as much influence as they do today. Rankings on development, hunger, democracy, the environment, happiness, and peace shape how nations are perceived, how policies are debated, and how investments flow. In moments of uncertainty, the world turns instinctively to these numerical summaries to make sense of global progress. Yet this dependence has grown precisely when the world itself has become more fragmented, more unequal, and more difficult to measure with conventional tools.

The backdrop to this reliance is a world in crisis. Humanitarian disasters from Gaza and Sudan to the Sahel and Myanmar have pushed global displacement to its highest levels since the Second World War. Conflicts in Eastern Europe, the Red Sea, and the Horn of Africa reinforce a broader pattern of instability that no longer feels exceptional but systemic. Climate distress deepens this sense of upheaval.

The year 2024 was the hottest ever recorded; extreme weather events have become almost seasonal, and their impacts fall hardest on the Global South - regions least responsible for historical emissions.

The global economy, too, is splintering. Sanctions, export controls, technology bans, and now tariff escalations reflect a widening trend of coercive economic statecraft. Strategic decoupling, rivalry over critical minerals and semiconductors, and the securitisation of supply chains have begun to replace the old narrative of globalisation.

Meanwhile, trust in global governance continues to erode. Institutions meant to uphold multilateral order — whether the UN system, the WTO, or global climate mechanisms - struggle to deliver equitable outcomes or restrain geopolitical exceptionalism.

It is in this volatile landscape that global indices assert their authority. They claim to offer clarity amid chaos, order amid disorder. But there is an overlooked reality: when the world becomes more complex, simplistic measurement becomes more dangerous. The very tools designed to interpret global reality are themselves riddled with methodological flaws, cultural assumptions, and structural biases, raising the question of whether they illuminate global progress or distort it.

> THE GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX FACES A MORE FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEM THAN DATA INCONSISTENCY OR STATISTICAL ASYMMETRY: NARRATIVE OVERREACH. THE INDEX PRESENTS ITSELF AS A DEFINITIVE GLOBAL BAROMETER OF "HUNGER", YET THE CONSTRUCT IT MEASURES IS NOT HUNGER IN ANY HOLISTIC OR LIVED SENSE

Hemangi Sinha is Project Head, World Intellectual Foundation, and Pravin Kumar Singh is Senior Project Associate, World Intellectual Foundation

dailypioneer
@TheDailyPioneer
The Pioneer

When the World Is Fractured, Measurement Must Be Exact — Yet It Is Not

Global indices were once conceived as instruments to democratise development knowledge. Their mission was noble: simplify complex realities to create global reference points. However, the growing political and economic consequences of these indices mean their limitations are no longer academic concerns; they now have material and normative implications. At a time when the world desperately needs trustworthy, culturally plural, and empirically robust measurements, many internationally influential indices rely on methodological shortcuts, cultural assumptions, and opaque data foundations.

A clear example is the World Happiness Report (WHR), which has gained disproportionate global influence. According to its published methodology, the ranking is derived solely from a single subjective life-evaluation question — the Cantril Self-Anchoring Striving Scale — which asks respondents to place their life on a ladder from 0 to 10. This is not a multi-indicator composite index, nor does it incorporate objective well-being metrics into its ranking formula.

This simplicity enhances transparency but raises major concerns about cross-cultural comparability. Psychological research shows that populations differ in how they respond to self-evaluation questions: Nordic societies tend to answer more directly; East Asian societies may avoid high self-ratings due to cultural modesty norms; Latin American societies often give more affective responses. The WHR does not claim any cultural bias and presents the ladder as a universal tool, yet the possibility of cultural response biases cannot be dismissed - especially when life-evaluation patterns align more closely with cultural self-expression norms than with objective well-being indicators.

The Global Hunger Index faces a more fundamental problem than data inconsistency or statistical asymmetry: narrative overreach. The index presents itself as a definitive global barometer of "hunger", yet the construct it measures is not hunger in any holistic or lived sense. Instead, it merges disparate indicators - child stunting, child wasting, child mortality, and population-level undernourishment - into a single score, even though these phenomena do not move together, do not share determinants, and do not reflect the same type of deprivation. Compressing multidimensional nutritional realities into one rank creates a misleading storyline: that a country's complex food landscape can be captured by a solitary ordinal position. The result is less an analytical tool and more a narrative device — one that travels easily through headlines, reinforces simplistic comparisons, and shapes global perceptions while doing little to illuminate the structural causes of food insecurity.

Democracy and freedom indices reveal yet another concern. Freedom House, V-Dem, and the Economist Intelligence Unit generate global authority but depend heavily on expert-coded assessments. The identities of these experts, their epistemic frameworks, and their evidentiary standards are only partially disclosed. Many indicators hinge on interpretive questions - such as whether public discourse is "pluralistic" or whether media autonomy is "adequate" — that vary significantly with ideological predispositions. These indices often present precise numerical scores without confidence intervals, giving perception-based judgments the illusion of scientific certainty. Because they feed into broader governance tools like the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators, they influence sovereign ratings and investment patterns.

Environmental indices such as the Environmental Performance Index (EPI) and the Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) face a different critique: they tend to apply uniform decarbonisation expectations to societies with vastly different historical emissions, development responsibilities, and energy transitions. By rewarding alignment with European policy pathways, they risk penalising countries that prioritise developmental equity or energy-access imperatives. Taken together, these examples show that the crisis of measurement is not about flaws in individual indices; it is structural, epistemic, and systemic. It raises a fundamental question: Who measures the world — and through whose worldview? Today's global ranking ecosystem does not merely reflect global asymmetries - it reinforces them. The current global ranking system is deeply flawed because it rewards self-interest, privileging nations and institutions whose worldviews, data capabilities, and ideological assumptions align with the metrics they design.

A Measurement Architecture Dominated by One Part of the World

More than 85 per cent of the world's population lives in the Global South, yet close to 90 per cent of global indices are conceptualised, designed, and produced by institutions in the Global North. This asymmetry shapes what is measured, which indicators are deemed meaningful, and which developmental pathways are legitimised. It generates narrative power: indices become the lens through which the world interprets itself.

It generates policy power: rankings influence negotiations, investments, and climate finance priorities.

And it generates civilisational power: most indices embed Western philosophical assumptions — individualism, liberal-democratic norms, institutional templates — even when applied to societies grounded in entirely different ontologies. Most importantly, it produces epistemic power: the authority to define progress itself.

Reimagining How the World Should Be Measured

The world needs not fewer indices but better indices — those transparent in methodology, explicit in epistemology, and cognisant of civilisational diversity. A new global metrics architecture must begin with radical transparency: raw data, methodologies, expert identities (with safeguards), margins of error, and sensitivity analyses must all be publicly accessible.

Cross-cultural response patterns must be recognised rather than ignored. Clear distinctions must be made between empirical indicators, model-generated estimates, and perception-based judgments. Above all, the Global South must move from being a passive consumer of indices to an active producer of them.

Plurality is the antidote to epistemic concentration. When multiple frameworks exist — rooted in Global South realities, civilisational ethics, ecological justice, and social responsibility — the world gains not confusion but balance. In an age of polarisation and fragmentation, the objective should not be to rank nations in a single global hierarchy but to understand them on their own terms.

Conclusion: Reclaiming the Right to Measure

At a time when the world is struggling with wars, environmental collapse, economic fragmentation, and failing global governance, the very tools we use to understand progress must themselves be trustworthy. Today, they are not. The crisis of global governance is mirrored by a crisis of global measurement. This crisis is also a clash between inadequate quantitative proxies and unexamined qualitative judgments — a reminder that measurement without context can distort more than it reveals.

Reclaiming the right to measure is therefore not only a statistical necessity but a civilisational and epistemic imperative. Only when the world measures itself through plural, transparent, and culturally grounded lenses will it be able to imagine a more equitable future.

Is centrism the alternative to extremism?

ACHARYA PRASHANT

The question is like asking a physician: which disease should I choose? The physician will say: choose health. But health, the state of not being seated in any ideological row, seems unimaginable to us. We have grown accustomed to sitting in camps, identifying ourselves by which chair we occupy. The very terms "Left" and "Right" came from an accident of seating. In 1789, during the French Revolution, supporters of the King sat to the right of the president's chair in the National Assembly; supporters of the revolution sat to the left. What began as a furniture arrangement hardened into identity. Rows became doctrines. Positions became personalities.

The Left now speaks of equality, redistribution and collective welfare. The Right speaks of tradition, order and the preservation of inherited structures. The Left says, "A better future awaits, once equality arrives." The Right says, "The best is behind us; preserve what was." One leans into the future, the other clings to the past. Broad distinctions, yes, but this tension between the pull of what should be and the weight of what has been is ancient: Plato imagined the ideal and Confucius honoured the ancestral. What 1789 offered was not a new conflict but new seats, and we have since mistaken the seating for the substance. Yet notice something deeper: both camps, while quarrelling over their chairs, keep gazing outward — to society, systems, others. Neither asks the question that dislodges the entire arrangement: who is the one so eager to sit on either side? Who is this "I" that seeks nostalgia or utopia?

Without asking this, the Left and Right become opposite costumes worn by the same actor.

Opposites Are One

In 1954, psychologist Hans Eysenck surveyed hundreds of British subjects and found that the radical Left and radical Right shared almost identical psychological traits: dogmatism, authoritarian submission, a hunger for certitude. The extremes, supposedly enemies, curved towards each other like ends of a horseshoe. They resembled each other not in ideology but in psychology. Look around today and you will see the same pattern, amplified. Social media now performs what parliaments once did: it seats us into rows, rewards outrage and convinces each camp that hatred is loyalty. The extremist Leftist and extremist Rightist despise each other's conclusions, yet share the same inner architecture: the same fear of ambiguity, the same dependence on enemies, the same relief that comes from belonging to a row. Is centrism the alternative to extremism? No. The centrist who prides himself on balance, and splits every difference as a habit, is merely an extremist of moderation — just as seated, just as identified. The problem is not which chair you occupy, but the inner compulsion that you must occupy one. History exposes this vividly. In 1939, Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union - two ideological opposites - signed the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and divided Eastern Europe between them. Enemies by speech, twins by method. The pact was not an aberration but a revelation: when pushed far enough, ideologies converge into the same structure of fear, domination and dependence on unquestioning followers.

Mussolini offers the same lesson. Until 1914 he was a rising star in the Italian Socialist Party; within years he founded fascism. The man had not changed in essence, only in seating. The ego kept its taste for totalism; only the banner shifted.

The Ego's Need for Ideology

Why do the extremes converge? Because every ideology, when carried to its limit, serves the same master: the unexamined human ego.

The ego is terrified of groundlessness, so it grabs a chair. It clings to labels because labels give it continuity. When someone says, "I am a Leftist" or "I am a Rightist," this is not identity but insecurity. The chair is a crutch. The row is a refuge. The ego loves ideology because ideology is a respectable form of bondage. The prisoner paints his cage in party colours and calls it conviction. Ideological people are rarely found acknowledging virtues on the opposite side. I must criticise whoever sits across the aisle. This is bondage. Something outside has acquired the right to dictate what you must think, approve and attack. Before analysing the world, ask the sharper question: what is this mind that needs an ideology in the first place? This is the pivot. The investigation must now turn inward.

The Illusion of External Order

If the Left speaks of equality, ask: where is true equality possible? Not in the body, for bodies differ. Not in the mind, for minds vary infinitely. Not in circumstances, for no two lives match. Equality is genuinely possible only at the level of the Self, which is the same in all beings. Whatever truth the Left points towards is already completed in this understanding.

If the Right speaks of order, ask: whose order? Which tradition? Every tradition was once an innovation; every order was once a disruption. The conservative clings to the past because the ego fears the unknown. But if there is a tradition worth preserving, it is the tradition of self-inquiry, the willingness to know oneself without bias. And order? True order arises from individuals aligned with their inner clarity. A society of inwardly chaotic people will produce outward chaos despite endless laws. The order the Right seeks cannot be imposed, only discovered. Not all positions are equally distant from truth. The abolition of slavery was not "Leftist" but a recognition of the Self in the other. The preservation of genuine wisdom traditions is not "Rightist" but fidelity to what liberates. But insight becomes poison when it hardens into a camp identity.

Engagement Without Enslavement

In the real world, policies must be made, elections happen. Must I not choose a side?

A fair question, and it deserves a fair answer. Freedom from ideology does not mean withdrawal from action; it means acting without being owned. In a world of limited time and information, some heuristics are inevitable. Coalitions require coordination. The person who refuses all labels may find herself politically homeless.

But the issue is not whether you take positions. The issue is whether your positions take you.

Can you revise your stance when evidence demands it — even if your row disapproves? Can you advocate without demonising? Can you see the human being behind the opposing chair? The test is not detachment but honesty. Self-inquiry alone enables such honesty — not the adoption of yet another ideology of "non-ideology," but a relentless questioning: Why do I believe what I believe? What fear is being defended? What image is being preserved? Who am I beneath all this seating arrangement?

The Freedom of Fearlessness

When roots are deep, the tree welcomes storms; when roots are shallow, even a mild breeze terrifies. The weak sapling needs walls and fences. The strong tree stands open to the sky. So too with the ideological mind. The frightened ego closes windows; the fearless mind says: show me everything. No thought scares me; no tradition threatens me. Because truth is limitless, inquiry cannot be fenced. "All the scriptures of the world are mine," says the seeker rooted in truth. "I can read Marx and Adam Smith. I can sit with a Hindu or a Muslim. No danger arises, for there is no seat I must defend." Civilisations grow through such openness. India's oral wisdom received paper from elsewhere; the camera and microphone came from other lands; other cultures received zero and algebra from us. Exchange is natural when there is no inner boundary to maintain.

The Question Beyond Ideology

An era of narrowness sweeps the world. Walls rise everywhere: ideological, national, religious. We divide and subdivide, then subdivide again. Rows within rows, seats within seats.

But wisdom exists to dissolve seating plans. If truth is limitless, then every boundary is self-imposed. The real question is not Left versus Right. The real question is: who am I, and what is the purpose, if any, of life?

Any answer that binds you to a row, demands enmity, sacrifices your independent inquiry, is not truth but an ideological prison. You were not born to sit on the Left or the Right. You were born to stand free.

The Teacher, founder of the PrashantAdvait Foundation and author of wisdom literature

@acharya_prashant_paf
@Prashant_Advait
prashantadvait

New grammar of governance

RAHUL KAUSHIK

Bharat is undergoing a profound transformation in the grammar of statecraft — one that is not cosmetic but structural. Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the architecture of governance has been stripped of its feudal and colonial residues and reoriented towards its most fundamental purpose: service. This shift is not a matter of administrative rebranding; it is an ideological reset rooted in the belief that political authority is not a pedestal of power but a discipline of duty. Over the past eleven years, this philosophy has been implemented with consistent, almost monastic precision.

Prime Minister Modi's own positioning set the tone. By calling himself Pradhan Sevak, he replaced the traditional, hierarchical vocabulary of high office with one grounded in humility and responsibility. This was not a rhetorical flourish. It became the organising principle of his governance model — seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day — marked by accessibility rather than aloofness. For more than a decade, the highest office in the land has functioned less like a throne and more like a workbench.

That single shift altered the culture of governance across the system. The renaming of the Prime Minister's Office as Seva Tirth crystallises this transformation. Far from symbolic, it represents an ideological intervention. The PMO is no longer to be viewed as an administrative citadel insulated from the public. It is reframed as a sanctified space of service — a pilgrimage site of duty. Such terminology forces a psychological reset. It removes the imprint of colonial hierarchy embedded in earlier institutional names and instead aligns the office with a native Bharatiya ethos of seva, kartavya, and people-centric governance.

The parallel decision to replace Raj Bhavan and Raj Niwas with Lok Bhavan and Lok Niwas extends this logic across constitutional offices. These buildings, historically symbols of colonial authority, retained an air of distance between the administrative elite and the citizenry. Renaming them as the people's houses reorients their purpose and cultural significance. Authority is reminded that it must be accountable, public-facing, and grounded in democratic legitimacy rather than ceremonial grandeur.

Similarly, calling the Central Secretariat Kartavya Bhavan further embeds this ideological framework. The Indian bureaucracy has long struggled with inertia, opacity, and a self-preserving mindset. The new name imposes a doctrinal expectation: duty is not negotiable. Every official entering the building is reminded that the state exists to serve — not to rule, delay, or evade responsibility. It is a behavioural nudge woven into the very identity of the institution. Taken together, these renamings form a coherent architecture of governance. They dismantle a power-centric state and replace it with a service-centric one. They revive a civilisational lineage in which leadership is measured by responsibility rather than entitlement, by labour rather than privilege. Bharat is being steered towards a governance paradigm grounded in accountability and moral clarity.

Over the past eleven years, the Modi government has attempted to embody this ethic through relentless operational execution. The speed of implementation has been non-negotiable. Infrastructure expansion, welfare delivery, digital governance, foreign policy, cultural revival, and administrative reform have moved simultaneously — not sequentially. The goal has been to make the state visible, efficient, responsive, and rooted in service. The emphasis on seva is not branding; it is a directive for action. India's development trajectory reflects the results of this shift.

The decade has seen unprecedented infrastructure growth. These achievements rest on the belief that governance is a continuous sadhana, not a five-year political performance. It is an ethic of execution without noise, excuses, or delay. This administrative transformation runs parallel to a cultural and civilisational renaissance. The revival of heritage, restoration of temples, strengthening of cultural institutions, and renewed assertion of national identity are part of the same ideological continuum. A nation connected to its roots is more confident in shaping its future. Governance, identity, and cultural self-belief are no longer separate streams but converging paths. In this context, the renaming of institutions is not ornamental — it is instructional. These names guide behaviour: they urge the political leadership to serve, constitutional offices to remain accountable, and the bureaucracy to perform with discipline. They reflect the government's attempt to redefine the ethos of state institutions in Indian terms.

The shift from Raj Bhavan to Lok Bhavan, from PMO to Seva Tirth, and from Secretariat to Kartavya Bhavan marks a decisive break from the colonial mindset. It signals that power must yield to duty, and governance must return to purpose. These are structural signals, not symbolic gestures. They communicate that the journey to Viksit Bharat will be carried not by slogans but by seriousness.

As India moves through this pivotal phase of nation-building, such steps help create the mental architecture for long-term transformation. A developed Bharat cannot be built on the language of rule. It must be built on the language of service. This shift defines the moment.

The writer is commentator on socio-political issues

dailypioneer
@kaushkrahul
The Pioneer

AXIS BANK LIMITED

Public Notice for - Auction of Pledged assets being Gold Ornaments

The Borrowers, in specific and the public in general are here buy notified that public auction of the gold ornaments pledge in the below accounts is proposed to be conducted by the Axis Bank at the below mentioned Branch. The below mentioned Borrowers have availed the credit facility from the Axis Bank Limited against the pledge of gold ornaments ("Gold Loan Facility") in favour of the Bank towards the security. The Demand notices were issued to the Borrowers/ Guarantors calling up the Borrowers/ Guarantors to pay their outstanding amount towards the Gold loan facility availed. As the Borrowers/ Guarantors have failed to repay the outstanding loan amount, the bank is constrained to invoke the pledge and proposed to conduct an e-auction sale of pledged gold ornaments more particularly described in schedule of property hereunder on **16-12-2025 at 12.30 pm to 3.30 pm** on "As In Where Is", "As Is What Is", "Whatever There Is" and "No Recourse Basis". Details of Borrowers and outstanding amount.

Customer Name	Loan A/c No.	Outstanding Amount (₹)	Date of Recall Notice	Gross Weight	Net Weight
BRANCH : ANNAPOORNA, INDORE [MP]					
Rahul	XXXXXXXXXXX2627	113362	10-10-2023	28.100	25.100
Yajushi Vyas	XXXXXXXXXXX5435	244021	27-07-2025	46.500	38.500
BRANCH : ANUPPUR ANU [MP]					
Ajay Singh Chandel	XXXXXXXXXXX0848	352621	27-07-2025	61.400	60.000
Ashok Patel	XXXXXXXXXXX8789	42219	16-11-2025	9.400	8.900
Chandrashekhar Sharma	XXXXXXXXXXX2047	161856	16-06-2025	31.900	30.300
Dinesh Singh Rajput	XXXXXXXXXXX8417	111008	05-06-2025	25.400	23.900
BRANCH : ASHOK NAGAR [MP]					
Bhoomika Chobddar	XXXXXXXXXXX7612	63389	16-11-2025	10.600	10.500
Girraj Dhakad	XXXXXXXXXXX9500	86324	27-10-2025	14.500	14.300
Gulab Singh Yadav	XXXXXXXXXXX5804	67560	16-11-2025	14.200	12.700
Guruvindar Kour	XXXXXXXXXXX0502	357429	16-06-2025	70.600	67.500
Madhavi Pundheer	XXXXXXXXXXX1871	113529	16-11-2025	29.600	27.800
Nitin Pal	XXXXXXXXXXX1264	118355	16-11-2025	29.600	20.000
Omprakash Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX3761	81541	27-10-2025	19.000	18.200
Vimaldeep Kour	XXXXXXXXXXX0436	98237	28-11-2024	24.300	22.800
BRANCH : ASHOKA GARDEN, BHO [MP]					
Lakshmi Vishwakarma	XXXXXXXXXXX5733	669852	27-09-2025	127.130	124.030
BRANCH : BAGDONA BAGD [MP]					
Yogesh Kumar	XXXXXXXXXXX4603	48237	27-10-2025	9.300	9.200
BRANCH : BAIRAGARH, BHOP BHO [MP]					
Govind Nagar	XXXXXXXXXXX0700	123391	16-11-2025	23.310	22.900
BRANCH : BANIKHEDI [MP]					
Ganganarayan Singh Sisodiya	XXXXXXXXXXX9844	237202	14-09-2025	52.880	49.000
BRANCH : BARWAHA [MP]					
Haresingh Mandloi	XXXXXXXXXXX0212	122461	06-11-2025	35.500	24.000
Mohammd Sadik	XXXXXXXXXXX7131	221012	27-07-2025	40.100	38.200
BRANCH : BARWANI [MP]					
Janki Bai	XXXXXXXXXXX5725	426766	27-10-2025	86.160	70.700
Vipul Sharma	XXXXXXXXXXX9545	81668	27-10-2025	13.750	12.000
BRANCH : BAWADIA KALAN [MP]					
Pradumn Patidar	XXXXXXXXXXX3467	720809	31-07-2025	201.590	178.290
BRANCH : BEETUL [MP]					
Manish Misar	XXXXXXXXXXX5997	428080	16-11-2025	73.500	72.600
Manish Kumar Pawar	XXXXXXXXXXX6295	51556	24-03-2025	21.400	21.000
Mohhamad Hassan	XXXXXXXXXXX6845	318256	06-11-2025	66.300	65.400
Praveen Surywanshi	XXXXXXXXXXX8248	33175	06-11-2025	5.800	5.600
Ramesh Rathore	XXXXXXXXXXX6501	86418	17-10-2025	15.300	15.000
Ramesh Rathore	XXXXXXXXXXX3774	53492	16-11-2025	8.400	8.300
BRANCH : BEOHARI C0710 [MP]					
Anuj Kol	XXXXXXXXXXX4486	69826	27-10-2025	13.100	12.500
Dileep	XXXXXXXXXXX5612	87818	27-10-2025	16.600	15.900
Jitendra Kumar Gupta	XXXXXXXXXXX0899	581342	29-09-2025	350.000	345.000
Karuna Devi Patel	XXXXXXXXXXX7151	157727	27-10-2025	28.500	26.000
Ramnaresh Prajapati	XXXXXXXXXXX7176	56051	16-11-2025	9.700	9.300
Santoshi Patel	XXXXXXXXXXX4352	128024	27-10-2025	21.900	21.200
BRANCH : BHIND [MP]					
Abinash Kushwah	XXXXXXXXXXX2918	319206	27-10-2025	76.500	57.900
Brajesh Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX1345	45092	16-06-2025	9.300	9.000
Devendra Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX5114	111614	20-07-2024	49.700	26.700
Jogindra Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX6228	311985	31-07-2025	74.600	71.700
Naagar Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX1529	192917	26-06-2025	82.300	62.900
Neeraj Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX0864	54021	05-06-2025	22.700	12.500
Poonam Sharma	XXXXXXXXXXX2670	61995	16-05-2025	19.700	14.500
Rahul Garg	XXXXXXXXXXX3331	165189	06-11-2025	34.800	30.700
Rahul Garg	XXXXXXXXXXX9822	58697	06-11-2025	17.300	10.800
Rani Devi	XXXXXXXXXXX5650	37355	24-03-2025	9.100	8.500
Shiv Pujan	XXXXXXXXXXX5570	122895	16-11-2025	23.500	22.700
Shivdatt Sharma	XXXXXXXXXXX2801	122600	27-10-2025	25.800	23.300
Susheel Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX7739	660536	08-04-2025	178.700	170.000
Vinod Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX2877	40204	04-11-2024	14.600	13.900
BRANCH : BICHOLI HAPSI, IND [MP]					
Garima Chauhan	XXXXXXXXXXX2314	148105	19-05-2025	36.400	36.100
Pramod Deshmukh	XXXXXXXXXXX5911	194419	17-10-2025	35.400	34.700
Santosh Malviya	XXXXXXXXXXX4286	157379	16-11-2025	30.700	29.700
Santosh Malviya	XXXXXXXXXXX2215	92364	27-10-2025	16.000	15.900
BRANCH : BIJURI [MP]					
Anuradha Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX7511	152867	17-10-2025	35.380	34.950
Deepak Kumar Paswan	XXXXXXXXXXX2408	56590	16-05-2025	13.990	13.590
Seeta W/o Shivanand Mishra	XXXXXXXXXXX4409	220134	16-06-2025	45.690	45.090
Seeta W/o Shivanand Mishra	XXXXXXXXXXX1705	127832	06-11-2025	21.410	21.010
Shivanand Mishra	XXXXXXXXXXX1702	211892	27-10-2025	35.010	34.010
BRANCH : BILHARI JABALPU JAB [MP]					
Thaggu Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX0683	27711	16-06-2025	5.540	5.200
BRANCH : BUDHWADA					
Vimal Kishor Chourey	XXXXXXXXXXX9616	76283	31-07-2025	17.800	16.500
BRANCH : BURHANPUR [MP]					
Harishankar Soni	XXXXXXXXXXX3603	1218733	16-11-2025	269.700	195.300
Mohammad Parvez	XXXXXXXXXXX8886	38192	16-05-2025	7.600	7.500
Mohini Sandeepkumar Jain	XXXXXXXXXXX0689	103875	17-10-2025	19.900	18.000
Narayan Yaduvansi	XXXXXXXXXXX0279	108929	17-10-2025	30.300	21.000
Sachin Patil	XXXXXXXXXXX7024	52003	27-10-2025	8.000	7.890
Salman Kureshi	XXXXXXXXXXX6890	41612	27-10-2025	7.900	7.500
BRANCH : BURHAR [MP]					
Awadhraj Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX8077	81477	17-10-2025	21.500	19.600
Rakesh Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX3383	466295	21-07-2025	102.300	97.200
Sahil Aswani	XXXXXXXXXXX0048	106784	27-10-2025	33.300	29.800
BRANCH : CHAPPAN DUKAN IND [MP]					
Mehmuda Bee	XXXXXXXXXXX7119	425305	27-07-2025	80.600	72.400
BRANCH : CHHATARPUR [MP]					
Chhannu Lal Sahu	XXXXXXXXXXX5415	72356	27-10-2025	12.180	12.000
Faim Khan	XXXXXXXXXXX9795	71498	05-06-2025	18.300	17.100
Faim Khan	XXXXXXXXXXX5298	61937	17-10-2025	14.200	14.000
Govindas Patel	XXXXXXXXXXX5457	97765	16-11-2025	19.000	18.000
Kamlesh Pal	XXXXXXXXXXX1956	48212	06-11-2025	9.520	9.000
Rajendra Yadav	XXXXXXXXXXX9525	194095	06-11-2025	42.200	33.400
BRANCH : CHINDWARA [MP]					
Gajendra Mehandole	XXXXXXXXXXX7025	83410	31-07-2025	14.800	14.300
Neeraj Banwari	XXXXXXXXXXX5703	68535	27-10-2025	11.990	11.550
Rehana Mansoori	XXXXXXXXXXX8071	88364	16-11-2025	17.790	16.990
Santoshi Joshi	XXXXXXXXXXX9255	44374	31-07-2025	8.300	7.900
BRANCH : DABRA GLR [MP]					
Dharmendra Soni	XXXXXXXXXXX3453	340900	17-10-2025	121.400	86.800
Hitendra Rajput	XXXXXXXXXXX7643	650534	30-01-2025	157.100	150.000
Malkeet Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX4442	531449	06-08-2025	157.100	138.000
Narendra Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX7531	315969	16-06-2025	65.100	60.800
Narendra Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX7806	76581	16-06-2025	18.000	16.400
Nirpendra Singh Jat	XXXXXXXXXXX5899	185024	17-10-2025	65.800	42.700
Radha	XXXXXXXXXXX0465	567326	26-06-2025	186.800	152.000
BRANCH : DAMOH [MP]					
Sunil Jain	XXXXXXXXXXX5944	1204741	27-10-2025	188.300	187.000
BRANCH : DAMOHNAKA, JABALPUR [MP]					
Pratibha Agrawal	XXXXXXXXXXX7893	973689	16-11-2025	194.100	188.000
BRANCH : DATIA [MP]					
Amit Kumar Pathak	XXXXXXXXXXX4106	369371	26-09-2021	150.200	147.000
Amit Kumar Pathak	XXXXXXXXXXX9505	281701	02-12-2020	112.400	110.200
Amit Kumar Pathak	XXXXXXXXXXX1690	267810	26-09-2021	104.600	102.500
Amit Kumar Pathak	XXXXXXXXXXX2968	232212	02-12-2020	90.500	90.500
Naresh Yadav	XXXXXXXXXXX7560	197810	27-10-2025	35.800	34.300
Nitesh Kumar Dangi	XXXXXXXXXXX7406	131503	17-10-2025	28.500	23.400
Sanjay Yadav	XXXXXXXXXXX6107	78301	06-11-2025	15.900	13.900
Sanjeev Dohare	XXXXXXXXXXX7517	54367	27-10-2020	17.600	16.500
Upendra Pratap Singh Parmar	XXXXXXXXXXX6294	870723	27-10-2025	179.200	152.800
Yadvendra Singh Parmar	XXXXXXXXXXX7537	72631	27-10-2025	14.300	13.500
BRANCH : DEWAS [MP]					
Ashok Chouhan	XXXXXXXXXXX4297	46494	16-11-2025	7.300	6.900
Kuldeep Sisodiya	XXXXXXXXXXX4528	146434	16-11-2025	28.400	27.400
Manohar Lal Verma	XXXXXXXXXXX6751	220551	16-11-2025	39.500	39.000
Vinod Singh Solanki	XXXXXXXXXXX5890	122682	06-11-2025	20.100	19.800
BRANCH : DHAR [MP]					
Shivani Thakur	XXXXXXXXXXX4554	313322	06-11-2025	49.700	47.900
BRANCH : DONGAR PARASIA CHW [MP]					
Amratrao Pawar	XXXXXXXXXXX8824	30702	16-11-2025	7.000	6.500
Chandrashekhar Dubey	XXXXXXXXXXX2319	178841	16-11-2025	31.200	30.100
Devki	XXXXXXXXXXX4114	77030	27-09-2025	20.500	16.000
Farren Naj	XXXXXXXXXXX7902	36273	06-11-2025	6.900	6.400
Kirti Dehariya	XXXXXXXXXXX1381	61544	06-11-2025	14.800	14.400
Mo Farukh Qureshi	XXXXXXXXXXX5412	35991	16-11-2025	9.900	9.000
Pradumya Chourasia	XXXXXXXXXXX3615	106925	05-06-2025	23.200	22.100
Ramakant Yaduwanshi	XXXXXXXXXXX0843	82443	16-11-2025	15.000	14.200
BRANCH : GADARWARA [MP]					
Niranjan Kourav	XXXXXXXXXXX7859	75632	27-10-2025	14.300	13.400
BRANCH : GANDHIGANJ CHHI CDA [MP]					
Ravi Kumar Rajput	XXXXXXXXXXX1002	223862	29-09-2025	45.540	44.850
Virendra Usrethe	XXXXXXXXXXX5995	53914	27-10-2025	10.850	10.350
BRANCH : GANJ BASODA [MP]					
Ramnaresh Gurjar	XXXXXXXXXXX2661	51561	16-11-2025	14.500	12.000
BRANCH : GAWLI PALASIA [MP]					
Swapnil Mandloi	XXXXXXXXXXX2307	162795	16-11-2025	31.500	31.300
BRANCH : GULMOHAR, BHOPAL [MP]					
Vivek Kumar Yadav	XXXXXXXXXXX6104	50145	16-11-2025	9.200	8.900
BRANCH : GUNA [MP]					
Anurag Sharma	XXXXXXXXXXX8044	86393	16-11-2025	15.100	14.900
Girraj Meena	XXXXXXXXXXX6555	167318	06-11-2025	31.500	30.500
Sonu Ahirwar	XXXXXXXXXXX1544	201302	27-10-2025	36.800	35.300
Vishal Kirar	XXXXXXXXXXX8242	142227	27-10-2025	25.500	25.100
BRANCH : GURADIYA MUNDA [MP]					
Ganga Kunvar	XXXXXXXXXXX0642	79022	16-11-2025	12.500	12.000
BRANCH : GWALIOR [MP]					
Anoop Kumar Sharma	XXXXXXXXXXX1241	2826877	27-09-2025	487.100	461.200
Krishnav Sharma	XXXXXXXXXXX0593	1203900	14-10-2025	261.600	250.900
BRANCH : HAMIDIA ROAD					
Gaurav Shekhawat	XXXXXXXXXXX5391	48499	27-10-2025	10.800	10.500
Lalsingh Thakur	XXXXXXXXXXX4719	380349	27-09-2025	104.400	83.000
BRANCH : HANSA KHEDI SANW [MP]					
Sharif	XXXXXXXXXXX1726	79022	31-07-2025	13.800	13.700
BRANCH : HOSHANGABAD [MP]					
Jagriti Sahwani	XXXXXXXXXXX5813	3349573	14-09-2025	689.700	638.000
Shivram Yadav	XXXXXXXXXXX7934	75759	06-11-2025	15.650	13.950
BRANCH : HOSHANGABAD ROAD, BHOPAL [MP]					
Abdul Asif	XXXXXXXXXXX5864	128758	25-03-2025	34.700	34.000
Hemant Kumar Chaturvedi	XXXXXXXXXXX9090	128392	05-06-2025	32.100	31.000
BRANCH : INDORE [MP]					
Anand Bhaskar	XXXXXXXXXXX3905	41327	09-07-2025	329.200	302.200
Nitin Sharma	XXXXXXXXXXX5164	181786	16-11-2025	31.100	30.100
Pukhraj Dave	XXXXXXXXXXX3314	311111	27-10-2025	69.800	53.500
BRANCH : ITWARIA BAZAR RAJWADA, INDORE [MP]					
Jaydev Kapoor	XXXXXXXXXXX3931	113719	16-06-2025	19.900	19.600
BRANCH : JABALPUR [MP]					
Sanjana Choudhary	XXXXXXXXXXX6573	27276	21-07-2025	5.800	5.600
Sanjay Dubey	XXXXXXXXXXX6053	208286	31-07-2025	40.400	40.100
BRANCH : JHABUA [MP]					
Jagdish Chouhan	XXXXXXXXXXX0252	122466	31-07-2025	20.500	20.000
Jyoti Nayak	XXXXXXXXXXX7063	1318977	27-07-2025	233.500	212.000
Raghvendrasingh Chouhan	XXXXXXXXXXX5911	560866	27-07-2025	97.400	90.900
BRANCH : KALAPIPAL [MP]					
Harinarayan Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX9051	166518	27-10-2025	26.390	26.090
BRANCH : KANNOD [MP]					
Guruvendra	XXXXXXXXXXX1841	388450	16-06-2025	76.300	75.000
BRANCH : KARELI C2841 [MP]					
Reetesh Thakur	XXXXXXXXXXX6980	47853	24-03-2025	11.100	10.700
Sagar	XXXXXXXXXXX0400	277564	27-10-2025	51.000	49.500
BRANCH : KATNI [MP]					
Raju Kumar Yadav	XXXXXXXXXXX0544	62850	16-11-2025	12.500	11.900
Santosh Singh Chouhan	XXXXXXXXXXX8779	175706	27-07-2025	36.700	34.200
BRANCH : KAYRA [MP]					
Dinesh Kumar Patidar	XXXXXXXXXXX8189	121386	16-11-2025	20.400	20.000
BRANCH : KHACHROD [MP]					
Omprakash Panchal	XXXXXXXXXXX8232	70364	17-10-2025	10.900	10.300
BRANCH : KHANDWA [MP]					
Ravi Hemwani	XXXXXXXXXXX0562	695137	14-10-2025	141.300	129.700
Salman Khan	XXXXXXXXXXX5709	214982	27-10-2025	44.800	43.800
BRANCH : KHARGONE [MP]					
Jitendra Yadav	XXXXXXXXXXX1288	40123	06-11-2025	8.700	7.500
Jyoti Bajpai	XXXXXXXXXXX8594	202787	16-11-2025	35.500	34.900
Manjubai Solanki	XXXXXXXXXXX6584	49069	27-10-2025	9.800	8.200
Rajesh Chouhan	XXXXXXXXXXX3487	65121	16-11-2025	11.400	11.100
Udaysingh	XXXXXXXXXXX1177	89875	25-11-2019	29.600	29.600
Vijyandra Solanki	XXXXXXXXXXX4891	103652	16-06-2025	20.900	20.700
BRANCH : KOLARAS SVI [MP]					
Jitendra Dhakad	XXXXXXXXXXX5045	603999	29-09-2025	158.600	137.200
Nitin Das Bairagi	XXXXXXXXXXX9967	152197	06-08-2025	39.700	30.700
Ravi Kumar Rajak	XXXXXXXXXXX5437	1716587	24-03-2022	511.600	475.000
BRANCH : KOTMA [MP]					
Durgesh Gupta	XXXXXXXXXXX4150	134566	31-07-2025	23.000	22.600
Javed Akhtar	XXXXXXXXXXX9828	56297	24-03-2025	12.600	12.200
BRANCH : LAHAR C2868 [MP]					
Bandana Devi	XXXXXXXXXXX7768	107894	27-10-2025	25.200	21.700
Deepa	XXXXXXXXXXX5279	208299	27-10-2025	43.500	37.500
Ravindra Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX4009	112804	31-07-2025	35.800	30.900
BRANCH : LASHKAR, GWALIOR [MP]					
Ajay Rawat	XXXXXXXXXXX6902	122968	16-11-2025	22.150	20.350
Arun Jatav	XXXXXXXXXXX9032	94075	27-10-2025	20.800	19.700
Hemant Jatav	XXXXXXXXXXX2376	123438	16-06-2025	25.920	24.620
Pankaj Rathore	XXXXXXXXXXX1151	134649	27-10-2025	23.600	22.600
BRANCH : LASUDIA MORI,INDORE [MP]					
Arti	XXXXXXXXXXX5364	28057	27-10-2025	4.900	4.800
Dharmendra Pal	XXXXXXXXXXX4988	97012	16-11-2025	17.000	16.700
Raghuveer Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX5144	41587	27-10-2025	7.400	7.100
BRANCH : MADAN MAHAL JAB [MP]					
Sunil Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX0993	99477	16-11-2025	15.950	15.650
Yas Jagwani	XXXXXXXXXXX5476	74466	16-06-2025	22.960	22.960
BRANCH : MAIHAR [MP]					
Ashok Kumar Gupta	XXXXXXXXXXX2709	56924	16-06-2025	13.900	11.500
Durgesh Ahirwar	XXXXXXXXXXX3857	237564	22-02-2019	112.000	112.000
Jimi Hamid	XXXXXXXXXXX1492	64972	27-10-2025	12.200	12.200
Mahendra Kumar	XXXXXXXXXXX2114	30934	16-11-2025	7.500	7.000
Priya Kachwaha	XXXXXXXXXXX3135	164433	16-06-2025	32.400	31.600
Purnima Mishra	XXXXXXXXXXX9145	490337	27-07-2025	93.600	92.000
Raj Kishore Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX3537	59607	16-11-2025	10.000	10.000
Rohit Tripathi	XXXXXXXXXXX2756	83694	27-10-2025	14.600	14.300
Roopa Kushwaha	XXXXXXXXXXX9826	69940	27-09-2025	12.400	12.400
Sakhiya Bai Saket	XXXXXXXXXXX2992	36318	31-07-2025	7.800	7.500
Vipin Kumar Tiwari	XXXXXXXXXXX6540	133044	16-11-2025	28.900	27.200
BRANCH : MALNPUR GLR [MP]					
Brajesh	XXXXXXXXXXX2453	593621	06-11-2025	124.100	101.100
BRANCH : MARIMATA SQUARE IND [MP]					
Abhay Kaithwas	XXXXXXXXXXX3541	203865	16-11-2025	39.440	35.390
Madhuri Mobiya	XXXXXXXXXXX7040	67585	06-11-2025	14.800	14.500
Priyanka Thakur	XXXXXXXXXXX5116	219652	27-07-2025	56.070	51.870
BRANCH : MAUGANJ [MP]					
Ayush Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX6915	233896	12-09-2025	56.800	51.980
Bhaiya Lal Dwivedi	XXXXXXXXXXX5694	168931	16-11-2025	33.180	27.950
Guru Prasad Pandey	XXXXXXXXXXX7768	138252	16-06-2025	35.830	32.730
Kamlesh Shukla	XXXXXXXXXXX1454	145511	16-11-2025	34.260	25.850
Pinki Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX3006	123391	27-10-2025	26.910	21.190
Sanjay Kumar Kol	XXXXXXXXXXX1558	30902	16-11-2025	7.430	5.560
Sonu Vishvakarma	XXXXXXXXXXX9077	52701	16-11-2025	10.250	9.730
BRANCH : MHOW [MP]					
Kusum Garg	XXXXXXXXXXX4037	2053882	16-11-2025	368.100	285.400
Shyam Sharma	XXXXXXXXXXX2278	1754374	29-09-2025	372.900	347.700
BRANCH : MORENA [MP]					
Himanshu Yadav	XXXXXXXXXXX5794	207039	27-10-2025	37.700	34.900
BRANCH : MTH COMPOUND, I IND [MP]					
Dheeraj Parashar	XXXXXXXXXXX0776	73492	31-07-2025	19.800	17.200
BRANCH : MULTAI [MP]					
Ravi Thakur	XXXXXXXXXXX8037	36060	27-10-2025	9.200	8.700
Rukhma	XXXXXXXXXXX5113	27581	16-11-2025	4.800	4.700
Sangeeta Chadokar	XXXXXXXXXXX2526	54676	16-06-2025	10.300	10.100
Shyamsingh Sisodiya	XXXXXXXXXXX0585	25620	08-04-2025	7.200	7.000
BRANCH : MURAR,GWALIOR [MP]					
Harish Paal	XXXXXXXXXXX8929	102985	27-10-2025	17.400	16.600
Naresh Singh Yadav	XXXXXXXXXXX0973	499113	16-11-2025	127.700	92.300
Pratik Jain	XXXXXXXXXXX3178	65765	17-10-2025	12.700	11.800
Rajvir Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX5971	367813	06-11-2025	83.200	66.900
Ram Prakash	XXXXXXXXXXX6634	245834	16-11-2025	47.300	44.800
Veer Pratap Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX4964	396729	16-11-2025	79.800	76.000
Veer Pratap Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX8161	134648	06-11-2025	29.400	28.200
BRANCH : NAGDA, UJJAIN (UJJ [MP]					
Mayank Jain	XXXXXXXXXXX5737	989849	05-06-2025	208.600	201.300
Shabbo Bee	XXXXXXXXXXX7122	905019	29-09-2025	164.000	163.000
BRANCH : NAGOD C3241 [MP]					
Abhishek Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX7117	382470	27-10-2025	76.970	63.500
Neeraj Dwivedi	XXXXXXXXXXX8098	60477	16-11-2025	9.270	9.000
Poonam Singh Lodh	XXXXXXXXXXX9517	107540	03-04-2025	42.350	39.850
BRANCH : NARSIMHAPUR [MP]					
Ankit Sahu	XXXXXXXXXXX9067	67591	27-10-2025	12.400	12.100
Chandrabati Dubey	XXXXXXXXXXX2425	1482744	16-11-2025	449.000	448.500
Pratibha Mehra	XXXXXXXXXXX2047	195854	16-11-2025	30.500	30.000
BRANCH : NAWAKHEDA [MP]					
Shyam Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX0394	390968	27-10-2025	71.800	60.400
BRANCH : NEEMUCH [MP]					
Aarju	XXXXXXXXXXX6025	28169	17-10-2025	11.310	11.000
Mayadevi Meghwal	XXXXXXXXXXX6892	106068	27-10-2025	19.280	18.000
BRANCH : NEW MARKET, BHOPAL [MP]					
Haidar Ahmed	XXXXXXXXXXX0975	206586	16-11-2025	28.300	28.000
BRANCH : NIPANIA [MP]					
Pooja Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX7228	55098	16-05-2025	17.200	12.200
BRANCH : PANNA PANN [MP]					
Kamlesh Vishwakarma	XXXXXXXXXXX0476	52180	06-11-2025	10.600	9.500
Yogendra Tiwari	XXXXXXXXXXX3437	163398	27-10-2025	40.700	37.500
BRANCH : PIPARIYA [MP]					
Santosh Kumar Sharma	XXXXXXXXXXX2150	72205	26-07-2022	19.600	17.600
BRANCH : PITHAMPUR [MP]					
Heeralal Birla	XXXXXXXXXXX8963	73042	16-11-2025	12.300	12.200
Viren	XXXXXXXXXXX8367	57341	16-06-2025	9.600	9.500
BRANCH : RAGHOGARH-VIJAY GNA [MP]					
Shahrukh Khan Mansuri	XXXXXXXXXXX1393	693161	16-11-2025	114.300	102.700
BRANCH : RAISEN [MP]					
Arif Kha	XXXXXXXXXXX1394	151102	16-11-2025	28.900	27.900
Balvan Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX0500	128422	26-07-2022	34.900	30.000
Bhupendra Ahirwar	XXXXXXXXXXX8184	107988	26-07-2022	29.900	27.000
Dhup Singh Ahirwar	XXXXXXXXXXX5730	246668	26-07-2022	64.100	62.000
Dhup Singh Ahirwar	XXXXXXXXXXX3028	147123	26-07-2022	35.800	35.000
Dhup Singh Ahirwar	XXXXXXXXXXX8447	134612	26-07-2022	32.400	32.000
Dhup Singh Ahirwar	XXXXXXXXXXX3644	136767	29-01-2022	34.800	34.300
Dhup Singh Ahirwar	XXXXXXXXXXX4340	115783	26-07-2022	28.300	27.500
Harnath Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX4625	132335	26-07-2022	30.400	30.000
Harnath Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX2625	114750	29-07-2022	26.200	26.000
Kailash Gour	XXXXXXXXXXX2287	70266	31-07-2025	13.300	13.260
Madan Lal	XXXXXXXXXXX0013	101666	26-07-2022	33.800	25.000
Paras Dhakad	XXXXXXXXXXX4235	100260	16-11-2025	19.400	19.000
Ranjeet Lodhi	XXXXXXXXXXX6644	122273	27-10-2025	19.900	19.700
Sadik Khan	XXXXXXXXXXX6040	162413	17-10-2025	35.600	35.400
Sadik Khan	XXXXXXXXXXX6337	97555	27-10-2025	18.200	17.700
Shubham Dangi	XXXXXXXXXXX9661	28144	06-11-2025	5.600	5.200
Vikram Yadav	XXXXXXXXXXX0480	135054	29-07-2022	34.200	33.500
Vikram Yadav	XXXXXXXXXXX8209	119825	26-07-2022	32.700	30.000
Vikram Yadav	XXXXXXXXXXX7919	113247	29-07-2022	30.800	29.500
BRANCH : RAJGARH [MP]					
Lal Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX7442	410020	29-07-2022	108.500	97.500
BRANCH : RATLAM [MP]					
Navdeep Vyas	XXXXXXXXXXX2887	158529	27-10-2025	24.800	23.900
BRANCH : RAU, INDORE IND [MP]					
Rakesh Marothe	XXXXXXXXXXX2125	73894	27-10-2025	20.200	17.800
BRANCH : REWA [MP]					
Aashish Patel	XXXXXXXXXXX1019	103677	16-11-2025	23.800	23.000
Jitendra Jaisawal	XXXXXXXXXXX6045	184763	27-09-2025	55.500	50.000
BRANCH : REWA [MP]					
Mohammad Naseem	XXXXXXXXXXX2062	91804	27-10-2025	16.300	16.100
Pusparaj Prajapati	XXXXXXXXXXX0469	40335	27-10-2025	9.600	9.200
Raju Patel	XXXXXXXXXXX2433	76545	15-02-2024	20.400	19.600
Shilpi Patel	XXXXXXXXXXX0425	85623	16-06-2025	17.400	16.800
BRANCH : SAKET NAGAR BHO [MP]					
Jitendra Joshi	XXXXXXXXXXX6311	112212	27-10-2025	19.310	18.910
BRANCH : SAMAN TIRAHA REW [MP]					
Jitu Kumari Chaurasiya	XXXXXXXXXXX5342	99117	06-11-2025	17.670	17.200
Sumit Mishra	XXXXXXXXXXX4787	95412	27-10-2025	16.460	16.000
Suresh Kumar Kol	XXXXXXXXXXX6181	40068	16-11-2025	8.990	8.000
BRANCH : SANAWAD KHR [MP]					
Radha Bai	XXXXXXXXXXX2503	139166	27-10-2025	28.900	23.600
Rajendra Pawar	XXXXXXXXXXX5944	62445	27-09-2025	10.900	10.400
Ramkrishna	XXXXXXXXXXX7231	224792	17-10-2025	50.400	47.500
BRANCH : SAPNA SANGITA ROAD, INDORE [MP]					
Aakash Malakar	XXXXXXXXXXX4634	65957	27-10-2025	11.800	11.300
Dharmendra Malviya	XXXXXXXXXXX4929	165795	31-07-2025	34.100	33.700
BRANCH : SATNA [MP]					
Indu Tiwari	XXXXXXXXXXX9470	71356	16-06-2025	14.700	13.900
Om Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX0445	119948	03-04-2025	30.900	28.900
Sarla Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX6956	354446	16-06-2025	101.600	71.300
Vivek Sharma	XXXXXXXXXXX1266	61798	17-10-2025	10.000	9.700
BRANCH : SATNA MARKET STA [MP]					
Mahima Sen	XXXXXXXXXXX6918	447530	16-11-2025	68.700	68.000
BRANCH : SEHORE [MP]					
Ishwar Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX1045	93670	06-11-2025	15.200	15.000
Pursottam Meena	XXXXXXXXXXX0247	1316052	14-10-2025	246.480	225.230
Vinayak Chourasiya	XXXXXXXXXXX6044	334458	17-10-2025	66.590	59.090
BRANCH : SELDA [MP]					
Bhaiyalal Birla	XXXXXXXXXXX0281	84063	14-10-2025	17.000	15.900
Hemendra	XXXXXXXXXXX5486	102707	27-07-2025	18.300	18.000
Kamla Bai Tavde	XXXXXXXXXXX3661	79419	06-11-2025	13.400	13.300
Sanjay Gulya	XXXXXXXXXXX8422	653260	06-11-2025	111.900	104.400
Shivam	XXXXXXXXXXX5394	162857	16-11-2025	28.500	26.250
BRANCH : SEONI [MP]					
Abhishek Baghel	XXXXXXXXXXX7006	89551	27-10-2025	15.800	15.100
Abhishek Baghel	XXXXXXXXXXX3021	85405	27-10-2025	17.900	17.600
Deeksha Patle	XXXXXXXXXXX5024	36003	27-10-2025	6.200	6.000
Himanshu Rahangdale	XXXXXXXXXXX4851	321121	21-07-2025	72.800	68.500
Santosh Kumar Chandel	XXXXXXXXXXX5009	104844	27-10-2025	18.600	18.270
BRANCH : SEOPUR [MP]					
Anju	XXXXXXXXXXX1173	51937	16-11-2025	10.000	9.700
Anju	XXXXXXXXXXX1387	27581	16-11-2025	10.200	9.500
Deep Kawar Parmar	XXXXXXXXXXX2547	149905	31-07-2025	27.000	26.100
Firoz Beg	XXXXXXXXXXX8182	324278	16-11-2025	56.800	54.900
Ghanraj Meena	XXXXXXXXXXX6228	413922	27-09-2025	75.200	69.500
Harimohan Sharma	XXXXXXXXXXX0079	124712	27-10-2025	22.200	21.200
Jagdeesh Yadav	XXXXXXXXXXX5059	28550	16-06-2025	6.600	6.000
Sharukh Khan	XXXXXXXXXXX1396	157529	06-11-2025	26.900	26.200
Sunil Kumar Sharma	XXXXXXXXXXX5306	90137	17-10-2025	23.900	23.200
Vikash Dubey	XXXXXXXXXXX7088	45123	27-10-2025	12.500	12.200
BRANCH : SHAHDOL [MP]					
Meena Bai Kol	XXXXXXXXXXX9242	73588	05-06-2025	14.600	13.650
BRANCH : SHAJAPUR [MP]					
Kamal Singh Panwar	XXXXXXXXXXX5134	76799	06-11-2025	20.200	19.700
Kamal Singh Panwar	XXXXXXXXXXX7317	50130	06-11-2025	15.800	14.800
Sunil Karada	XXXXXXXXXXX2785	103405	16-11-2025	19.800	19.300
BRANCH : SHIVPURI [MP]					
Aakash Parausi	XXXXXXXXXXX1638	37392	31-07-2025	9.500	9.000
Arpit Avasthi	XXXXXXXXXXX2613	749500	17-10-2025	148.500	135.700
Divyanshu Verma	XXXXXXXXXXX7195	61454	21-07-2025	15.200	14.500
Kehshav Dhakad	XXXXXXXXXXX2443	636888	27-09-2025	234.000	142.000
Prashant Chhari	XXXXXXXXXXX4348	125865	27-10-2025	24.400	24.000
BRANCH : SHUJALPUR					
Arun Kumar	XXXXXXXXXXX1267	91841	16-11-2025	18.000	15.500
Lakhan Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX4347	153851	27-10-2025	26.300	24.700
Radheshyam Meena	XXXXXXXXXXX1793	99209	05-06-2025	22.700	19.000
BRANCH : SIDHI [MP]					
Mahaveer Baheliya	XXXXXXXXXXX0841	72098	17-10-2025	14.400	13.500
Mahaveer Baheliya	XXXXXXXXXXX8377	54203	17-10-2025	12.900	10.000
Neeraj Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX6682	39734	31-07-2025	10.700	10.500
Sagar Kumar Jayswal	XXXXXXXXXXX3124	60798	06-11-2025	16.600	14.000
Sandeep Kumar Shahu	XXXXXXXXXXX6859	89841	16-05-2025	20.600	20.000
Shivendra Kumar Shukla	XXXXXXXXXXX6754	49952	27-10-2025	11.300	9.000
Shubham Kumar Tiwari	XXXXXXXXXXX8114	55785	27-10-2025	10.300	10.000
Vinod Kumar Jaiswaal	XXXXXXXXXXX3688	868654	27-10-2025	169.690	151.990
BRANCH : SIHORA [MP]					
Deepoo	XXXXXXXXXXX1175	242538	16-11-2025	45.800	41.600
Sagar Patel	XXXXXXXXXXX1977	83684	16-11-2025	19.000	17.600
BRANCH : SILKUWA SKA [MP]					
Vimal Solanki	XXXXXXXXXXX6631	142603	20-09-2023	30.600	30.000
BRANCH : SINGRAULI [MP]					
Abhishek Pandey	XXXXXXXXXXX5787	139277	27-10-2025	29.400	28.900
Abhishek Pandey	XXXXXXXXXXX8433	109301	27-10-2025	23.080	22.000
Abhishek Pandey	XXXXXXXXXXX1572	74592	27-10-2025	16.000	15.000
Md Sameer Ahamad	XXXXXXXXXXX2808	264832	27-10-2025	53.500	52.000
Rohit Kumar Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX6429	165378	16-11-2025	31.540	31.000
Sanjay Bhushan Chaubey	XXXXXXXXXXX6332	57762	16-11-2025	11.300	10.800
Santosh Yadav	XXXXXXXXXXX7559	300542	16-06-2025	65.300	62.000
Shalu Khairwar	XXXXXXXXXXX6205	87687	16-11-2025	16.300	16.000
BRANCH : SIRONJ C4903 [MP]					
Mustufa Husain Faizi	XXXXXXXXXXX7096	500411	12-09-2022	110.500	108.500
Randhir Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX5407	87455	12-10-2022	29.900	20.000
Vipin Agrawal	XXXXXXXXXXX1307	131289	24-03-2022	32.300	30.300
BRANCH : UJJAIN [MP]					
Dilip Upadhyay	XXXXXXXXXXX6885	84064	27-10-2025	24.000	15.000
BRANCH : VIDISHA [MP]					
Arun Raghuwanshi	XXXXXXXXXXX7865	141601	16-11-2025	30.700	24.700
BRANCH : VIJAYANAGAR, INDORE [MP]					
Ashutosh Kumar Singh	XXXXXXXXXXX1346	344763	16-11-2025	56.500	51.300
Gaurav Bajaj	XXXXXXXXXXX4102	1357070	17-10-2025	276.600	238.000
Maya Solanki	XXXXXXXXXXX7019	48305	27-10-2025	10.300	8.100
BRANCH : VIJAYNAGAR JABA JAB [MP]					
Deepak	XXXXXXXXXXX9151	105321	27-10-2025	19.480	18.880
BRANCH : WAIDHAN [MP]					
Asif Hameed	XXXXXXXXXXX5729	272769	09-07-2025	50.800	47.000
Hiramani Varma	XXXXXXXXXXX6862	69786	27-10-2025	14.080	12.500
Jitendra Kumar Gupta	XXXXXXXXXXX3646	318294	27-10-2025	69.690	59.200
Nand Lal Shahu	XXXXXXXXXXX2220	69577	16-11-2025	13.660	11.500
Ramashankar Bais	XXXXXXXXXXX3918	60497	06-11-2025	12.630	11.300
Sandeep Kumar Kushwaha	XXXXXXXXXXX1141	60447	27-10-2025	15.900	14.000
Santosh Kumar Shah	XXXXXXXXXXX8644	81316	27-10-2025	15.240	14.240
Sunil Kumar Jaiswal	XXXXXXXXXXX1627	23164	27-09-2024	36.730	36.200
Yadavendra Singh Yadav	XXXXXXXXXXX6205	362934	25-03-2025	96.720	88.500
BRANCH : WARASEONI [MP]					
Saiyyad Imtiyaz Ali	XXXXXXXXXXX6268	56760	27-07-2025	25.700	24.800

Axis Bank Ltd. has the authority to remove account/change the auction date without any prior notice. Auction will be held online **https://gold.samil.in** between 12.30 pm to 3.30pm. For detailed Terms and conditions, please log into given website **https://gold.samil.in**

Place : Madhya Pradesh

Authorized Officer
Axis Bank LTD.

Chinese media spotlight Putin's New Delhi visit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Beijing

GLOBAL TIMES CARRIED A REPORT ON PUTIN'S REMARKS ON HOW HE VIEWED RUSSIA'S RELATIONS WITH INDIA AND CHINA

Chinese official media on Friday highlighted President Vladimir Putin's remarks calling both India and China the closest friends of Russia while emphasising that Moscow has "no right" to interfere in their bilateral ties. China, a close ally of Russia, is yet to officially comment on Putin's visit to India, while keeping a close watch on the outcome.

While Putin's visit to India is largely ignored by the official media, which focused more on French President Emmanuel Macron's current visit to Beijing, State-run Global Times, however, carried a report on Putin's remarks on how he viewed Russia's relations with India and China.

The daily, which is part of the ruling Chinese Communist Party's official publications, quoted Putin's remark to India Today stating that "India and China are our closest friends - we treasure that relationship deeply."

But at the same time, it highlighted Putin's guarded comment that despite sharing close ties with India and China, Russia has "no right" to interfere in their bilateral ties."We know this very well — India and China are our closest friends. We treasure that relationship deeply, and I do not believe we have the right to interfere in their bilateral relations," the daily quoted Putin as saying in the interview. Quoting a report by Russian news agency TASS, the daily's report said Putin expressed confidence that Indian and Chinese leaders are committed to finding solutions to all intergovernmental issues, including the most sensitive ones.

He cited their wisdom as the key factor enabling the two countries to reach agreements. "At the same time, Russia does not feel entitled to intervene, because these are your bilateral affairs."

Experts say that while China and Russia enjoy a close strategic partnership, Moscow's enduring ties with New Delhi remain a source of unease for Beijing. While developing its close ties with Beijing, Moscow for its part has ensured its close with New Delhi remained intact even when Sino-Indian relations reached their lowest in 2020 following the Ladakh confrontation.

Besides Putin's comments on India-China ties, his remarks refuting US accusations over India's purchases of Russian oil were briefly carried by state-run Xinhua news agency.

For its part, China tops the list of countries purchasing Russian oil and gas and rejected US calls to halt the imports to penalise Moscow for continuing its war on Ukraine.

"The US itself still buys nuclear fuel from us for its own nuclear power plants. That is also fuel," Xinhua quoted Putin as saying in his India Today interview.

He further added, "If the US has the right to buy our fuel, why shouldn't India have the same privilege? This question deserves a thorough examination, and we stand ready to discuss it, including with President Trump," Putin said.

Significantly, days ahead of Putin's visit to India, China and Russia held their annual strategic dialogue in which they discussed security interests of both countries, including "Asia-Pacific and neighbouring regions".

The "two sides also had in-depth communication and coordinated positions on other international and regional issues of mutual concern, including the maintenance of global strategic stability, major-country relations, and the situation in the Asia-Pacific and neighbouring regions, and reached a broad consensus", a Chinese Foreign Ministry press release here said on Wednesday.

Public Notice

I, Army Number-1260648A NK (Naik) Arun Kumar, son of Dhanna Lal Dongre (Retired Army), ARTY NASHIK Record Office, Nashik, Resident of Jawahar Marg Ward No. 06, Mandleshwar, District Khargone, M.P., hereby declare under oath that my wife's name is recorded as USHA BHAI in my service record, which is incorrect and the date of birth is not recorded. My wife's actual name is (USHA BAI DONGARE) and the date of birth is 01/01/1969. My wife's correct name should be read and written as (USHA BAI DONGARE), date of birth 01/01/1969 and should be recorded in my service record. I hereby give affidavit no. BW 547029 dated 05/12/2025, notarized Khandwa M.P.

Incorrect name: USHA BHAI

Correct name: USHA BAI DONGARE

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

I, MEHLAM holding Indian Passport No: T4377779 issued at DUBAI on 22/12/2020 and Permanent Resident of VPO DAULAT GANJ MANDSAUR PIN 458002 MADHYA PRADESH INDIA and presently residing at DUBAI UAE do hereby change my name from MEHLAM to MEHLAM(Given name)GHADIYALI (Surname) with immediate effect.

PD(36159)C

I, hitherto known as Sapna Kirti Jain D/o Prem Chand Jain R/o 201, Saptsangi Nagar, Indore, Rajendra Nagar, Indore, Madhya Pradesh-452012 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Sapna Jain.

PD(36161)C

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY

Material Management Department

('e' Tender Notice for the supply of Stores, No.EPS/108/2025)

PCMM/WCR on behalf of the President of India invites the following advertised tenders through E- procurement System. No manual/postal offers shall be entertained. Tenders can be accessed under the link website https:/ireps.gov.in" for details and for submission of Tender.

Sr No.	Tender No.	Short Description	Tendered Qty.	Due Date
1	38251756	Crib/End Angle for BOXNHL Wagon	7245 Nos.	19/12/2025
2	20253186A	Vacuum circuit breaker of electric loco	26 Nos.	31/12/2025
3	65255011	Supply, Installation and Commissioning of 15 TON Capacity EOT CRANE	02 Nos.	14/01/2026
4	38253386	Bolster Spring Outer	2735 Nos.	15/01/2026
5	50235072E	PIJF Cable	89.8 Kilometre	21/01/2026

"For tenders with estimated value below Rs. 50 lakh, interested firms are advised to visit **www.ireps.gov.in**".

Sd./-
For Principal Chief Material Manager, WCR, Jabalpur

स्वच्छ भारत अभियान एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर

बैंक ऑफ महाराष्ट्र Bank of Maharashtra
भारत सरकार का उपक्रम

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

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR SALE

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

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower/s and Guarantor/s that the below described immovable properties mortgaged/charged to the Bank of Maharashtra, the possession of which have been taken by the Authorised Officer of Bank of Maharashtra, will be sold on **"As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" & "WITHOUT RECOURSE BASIS" on 23.12.2025, 29.12.2025 & 15.01.2026** for recovery of the balance due to the Bank of Maharashtra from the Borrower (s) and Guarantor(s) as mentioned in the table. Details of the Borrower/s and Guarantor/s, amount due, Short description of the immovable property and encumbrances known thereon, possession type, reserve price and the earnest money deposit are also given as under-

Name & Address of Borrower / Guarantor	Outstanding Dues for Recovery of which Property are being sold	Description of properties	Type of Possession	Date of Auction	Reserve Price EMD Amount Bid Increase Amount
1) Branch - Satna Borrower : Mr. Mohammad Shahid Khan, S/o Mr. Suleman Khan Mrs. Saishta Khan, W/o Mr. Mohammad Shahid Khan S/o: Mr. Suleman Khan Ward no. 29, Gali no.1, Pateri road, Jawahar Nagar, Satna-485001	Rs.7189614 (LB Rs.6958726/-+unapplied interest Rs.230888 and other charges and expenses w.e.f 02.05.2024	Residential Property, area admeasuring 1200 sq.ft. with construction thereon situated at Mouza Umrahi Mathuriyan, Circle AMarpatan, Land bearing Khasara no. 129/9, Ward no.1, Krishna Nagar Colony , Tehsil-Amarpatan, Dist:Satna	Symbolic	23.12.2025	Rs.2859000/- EMD : Rs.285900/- Rs. 10000/-
2) Branch - Sanjeevni Nagar Borrower : Sundarlal Mehra, Mrs. Indra Mehra, H.No.-28/3, Bhulan Basti, Kachhpura, Malgodam Ke aage, Kamla Nehru ward, Garha Purwa, Jabalpura-482003	Rs.24,68,079.00 +plus interest theron @13.05 thereon @ contractual rate + w.e.f. 14.01.2025 Rs.300232/- plus interest theron @13.30 thereon @ contractual rate + w.e.f. 14.01.2025 Rs.19,04,856/- plus interest theron @10.95 thereon @ contractual rate + w.e.f. 14.01.2025	All those piece and parcel of property and construction on at Muza Kachhpura, NB no.501, PH no. 25/31, Khasra no. 127/2, Situated at Bhulan Basti Area,Near "JDA Scheme no.41, Kamla Nehru Nagar, Ward no. 19, Teh & Dist Jabalpur.	Symbolic	23.12.2025	Rs.3600000/- EMD:Rs.360000/- Rs. 10000/-
3) Branch - Sanjeevni Nagar Borrower : M/s Rudraksh Restaurent Prop. Shri Sunderlal Mehra, Mouza Sagda, Near Garha Railway Station, NH-30, Tripuri Ward, Gorakhpur, 482001	Rs.24,68,079.00 +plus interest theron @13.05 thereon @ contractual rate + w.e.f. 14.01.2025 Rs.300232/- plus interest theron @13.30 thereon @ contractual rate + w.e.f. 14.01.2025 Rs.19,04,856/- plus interest theron @10.95 thereon @ contractual rate + w.e.f. 14.01.2025	Commercial property at Mouza Sagda, NB253, PH No- 33/07, RNM Purva Jabalpur-1, Diverted khasra No-43/4, Tripuri Ward, Near Garha railway Station, Tehsil- Gorakhpur, Dist- Jabalpur, Area Admeasuring 1680 Sq.Ft.	Symbolic	23.12.2025	Rs.6800000/- EMD: 680000/- Rs. 10000/-
4) Branch - Sanjeevni Nagar Borrower : Mohd. Javed, Mrs. Kaushar Jahan Ansari R/o 111, Amkhera Main road, Near Pani ki Tanki, Motilal Nehru Ward, Jabalpur	Rs. 2525976.00 +plus interest Theron @9.00 thereon @ contractual rate + w.e.f. 08.02.2025	Under construction house at Plot No. / S. No. / CTS No. / Gat No. / Milkat No. Khasra no 86 (old) New 86/1/20/1/1/2 ,Part of Plot No. 140,Mouja Baitla NB 52, PH No 22/25 Ram Nagar Colony, Motilal Nehru Ward No 38 , Ram Nagar Colony in the Area / Village – Gohalpur , Taluka / Tehsil / Sub Dist. – Adhartal , City - Jabalpur , District – Jabalpur , State – Madhya Pradesh , 482002 Plot Area: 1200 Sq Ft	Symbolic	23.12.2025	Rs.3360000/- EMD: Rs.336000/- Rs. 10000/-
5) Branch - Katni Borrower : M/s Rajesh Trading Company, Prop:- Mr. Rajesh Mishra	Rs.2079086/- (Rupees Twenty Lakh Seventy Nine Thousand Eighty Six Only) (Ledger Bal: Rs.1998909/-+Unapplied interest Rs.75410/-@11.05% p.a at monthly rest + penal interest thereon and other charges and expenses w.e.f 10.02.2025)	All those pieces and parcels of land situated being and lying at village Chaka in the Registration dist. Katni Sub-dist. Katni , admeasuring 3000 sq.ft and bearing CTS/Survey Nos. 180/106, 182/106, 190/106, 194/106, Ph No 40, NB 234 plot no. 8 & 9	Symbolic	23.12.2025	Rs.2160000/- EMD:Rs.216000/- Rs. 10000/-
6) Branch - Lamti Borrower : Mr.Vinod Sahu S/O Ramgopal Sahu, Mrs. Sapna Sahu W/O Vinod Sahu, House No 2741, Tripuri Chowk, Garha ward, Purwa Jabalpur - 482003	Rs. 2865850/- (Rupees Twenty Eight Lakh Sixty Five Thousand Eight Hundred Fifty only) plus applicable unapplied interest + penal interest thereon and other charges and expenses w.e.f 01.10.2024	Single Story Residential house situated at Mouza Soortalai, N.B 419,P.H no. 75, Kh.No. 41, Sanskar City, Plot no. 276, RNM Baroda, Tah: Panagar Dist. Jabalpur	Physical	23.12.2025	Rs.2467000/- EMD:Rs.246700/- Rs. 10000/-
7) Branch - Asset Recovery Branch Borrower : M/s. Super Rebar Re-Rolling Mill Prop- Mr.Nawab Ahmed Ansari s/o Mr. Abdul Hameed Ansari, Guarantors - 1.Mrs. Bushra Ansari w/o Mr.Nawab Ahmed Ansari 2. Mr Altaf Ahmad Ansari s/o Mr.Nawab Ahmed Ansari Address: Ward no. 30, Purani Basti, Sohagpur, Shahdol, Distt. Shahdol , (M.P.) 484001	Rs.24576780/- (Rupees Two Crore Fourty Five Lakh Seventy Six Thousand Seven Hundred Eighty only plus applicable unapplied interest + penal interest thereon and other charges and expenses w.e.f 09.10.2023	All those pieces and parcel of land & property with construction & Fixtures there being and lying at- Vill Gortara, Taluka Sohagpur, Dist-Shahdol, Khasra No. 363/1/2, area known as Gortara, area admeasuring 65556 Sq.ft.(Factory, land and building) machinery and machinery embedded on earth. **Owner: Mr. Nawab Ahmed Ansari**	Symbolic	23.12.2025	Rs.7375000/- EMD:Rs.737500/- Rs. 10000/-
8) Branch - Asset Recovery Branch Borrower : M/s. Super Rebar Re-Rolling Mill Prop- Mr.Nawab Ahmed Ansari s/o Mr. Abdul Hameed Ansari, Guarantors - 1.Mrs. Bushra Ansari w/o Mr.Nawab Ahmed Ansari 2. Mr Altaf Ahmad Ansari s/o Mr.Nawab Ahmed Ansari Address: Ward no. 30, Purani Basti, Sohagpur, Shahdol, Distt. Shahdol , (M.P.) 484001	Rs.24576780/- (Rupees Two Crore Fourty Five Lakh Seventy Six Thousand Seven Hundred Eighty only plus applicable unapplied interest + penal interest thereon and other charges and expenses w.e.f 09.10.2023	All those pieces and parcel of land & property with construction & Fixtures there being and lying at- Vill. Bhuibandh, Taluka Sohagpur, Dist Shahdol,Survey no. 230/2/2,Khasra no.230/2/2 area known as Bhuibandh, admeasuring 1517 Sq. Ft. **Owner: Mrs. Busra Ansari**	Symbolic	23.12.2025	Rs.4500000/- EMD: 450000/- Rs. 10000/-
9) Branch - Asset Recovery Branch Borrower: Shri Shiv Kumar Uikey, Smt. Sunita Uikey, Address 1: Maharana Pratap Ward, Ward no 44, Village - Jhinjhiri, Katni, (MP) - 483501 Address 2: Plot no 9, Maharshi Valmiki ward no78, Mouza- Bilpura, Tehsil- Ranjhi, Distt – Jabalpur (M.P.) - 482005	Rs. 2604292/- (Rupees Twenty Six Lakh Four Thousand Two Hundred Ninety Two only).(Led.Bal. Rs. 2532116/-+ unapplied interest Rs.71868/- @ 9.60% p.a at monthly rest + penal interest thereon and other charges and expenses w.e.f 16.07.24)	Single storied Residential House constructed on private layout Plot No. 9, P.C. No. 21/16 (New 53) New Ward No. 78 Plot area 1000Sq. Ft. Kushwaha Colony, Indra Nagar Mouza Bilpura, Distt. Jabalpur	Physical	23.12.2025	Rs.16,22,000/- EMD:Rs.1,62,200/- Rs.10000/-
10) Branch - Asset Recovery Branch Borrower- Mr. Nirmal Jain s/o Shri. Ramcharan Jain,86, Cholla Road, District- Bhopal-462041, Guarantors- 1. Mr. Nirmal Jain s/o Shri. Ramcharan Jain, 86, Cholla Road, District- Bhopal - 462041 2. Mr. Punit Jain s/o Shri. Nirmal Jain,86, Cholla Road, District- Bhopal-462041 3. Mr. Suman Jain w/o Shri. Nirmal Jain,86, Cholla Road, District- Bhopal-462041 4. Shri. Bhairon Singh s/o Shri. Bhagirath Pal, Village- Karhaiya, Kotra Chopra, Tehsil Huzur,Bhopal (M.P.) 462042,5. Shri. Nannulal Pal s/o Shri. Bhagirath Pal, Village Karhaiya, Kotra Chopra, Tehsil Huzur, Bhopal (M.P.) 462042	Rs. 2,43,47,603/- (Rupees Two Crore Fourty Three Lakh Fourty Seven Thousand Six Hundred Three Rupees only plus applicable unapplied interest + penal interest thereon and other charges and expenses w.e.f 13.04.2015	Diverted Land and double stored Residential building and other structure on PH No. 4 R.N. 32/17 Khasra No. 227/2, 228/2,229/3 situated at Gran Barkheda Abdulla, Tahsil- Huzur Distt. Bhopal Area 0.50 Hct. **Owned by - Mr. Punit Kumar Jain**	Symbolic	29.12.2025	Rs.6144000/- EMD:Rs.614400/- Rs.10000/-
11) Branch - Asset Recovery Branch Borrower - M/s Gurukripa Dehydrated Vegetables Through its Proprietor Mr. Narendra Hammad (Deceased) s/o Shri. Laxman Hammad Through its Lrs (1) Mrs. Pooja Hammad w/o Late. Shri. Narendra Hammad (2) Master Poorvansh Hammad (minor) s/o Late. Shri. Narendra Hammad (Through its Natural Guardian Mrs. Pooja Hammad w/o Late. Shri. Narendra Hammad) Address - Plot no.7 to 11, Industrial Area, Segaon, Badwani, Tehsil and Dist. Badwani. Guarantor: Shri. Laxman Hammad s/o Shri. Dhanaji Hammad Address - House no. 401, village: balkuan, Tehsil and Dist: Badwani	Rs.2,43,79,247/- (Rupees Two Crore Fourty Three Lakh Seventy Nine thousand Two Hundred Fourty Seven only) (Ledger Bal: Rs.2,43,79,247/- + Unapplied Interest @ 13.45% p.a. with monthly rate w.e.f. 07.10.2016 + penal interest and other charges / expenses	Diverted land and construction thereon bearing Survey No. 105/3 P.H no 09 (New no 23), situated at gram Balkunwan, Tehsil and district Barwani M.P. ; **Owned by : Shri. Laxman Hammad s/o Shri. Dhanaji Hammad**	Symbolic	29.12.2025	Rs.1560000 EMD: 156000/- Rs.10000/-
12) Branch - Asset Recovery Branch Borrower - M/s. Ruchi Traders Proprietor: Mr. Suraj Singh s/o Mr. Fateh Singh Address1:Imaliya Swaroop, Berasia, Laxminarayan Krishi Upaj Mandi, 80 feet road, Bhopal (M.P.) Pin 463106, Address2: Village Ramgada, Tehsil Berasia, Bhopal (M.P.) Pin 463106	Rs.1,26,05,017.70/- (Rupees One Crore Twenty Six Lakh Five thousand Seventeen rupees and Seventy Paise only) + Unapplied Interest Rs. 3,09,621.88/- upto 24/01/2024 + penal interest @ 2% and other expenses w.e.f. 25.01.2024	**(A)** All those pieces and parcel of property with construction & fixatures there being & lying at diverted commercial land & Building on Khasra No. 3/1/1/3/kha/2/ka (Re no Kh No. 3/1/1/3/2/2/1 area 0.40 Hect or 1.00 Acre situated at village Imaliya Swaroop, patwari Hlka No. 53/25, adjacent to main Berasia to Narsingh Garh Road, R.N.M. 02, Tehsil Berasia, Distt – Bhopal (M.P.) **(Owned by Mr. Suraj Singh)** **(B)**All those pieces and parcel of property with construction & fixatures there being & lying at diverted commercial land & Building on Khasra No. 3/1/1/3/kha/2/kha (Re no Kh No. 3/1/1/3/2/2/2 area 0.405 Hect or 1.00 Acre situated at village Imaliya Swaroop, patwari Hlka No. 53/25, adjacent to main Berasia to Narsingh Garh Road, R.N.M. 02, Tehsil Berasia, Distt – Bhopal (M.P.) **Owned by - Mr. Suraj Singh**	Physical	29.12.2025	Rs11058000/- EMD: 1105800/- Rs.10000/-
13) Branch - Asset Recovery Branch Borrower - M/s. LKT Hi Tech Hospital Proprietor: Dr. Kunj Lata Richhariya D/o Shri. Ramesh Chandra Richhariya, Address1: LKT Hi Tech Hospital, Mugaliya Hat, Bhopal (M.P.) Pin 462024,Address2: LKT Hi Tech Hospital, ward No 8, Vidisha By-Pass road, Near Police station, Ashok Nagar (M.P.) Pin – 473331	Rs.71,95,005/- (Rupees Seventy One Lakh Five thousand Seventeen rupees andSeventy Paise only) + Unapplied Interest Rs. 3,09,621.88/- upto 24/01/2024 + penal interest @ 2% and other expenses w.e.f. 25.01.2024	**(A)** All those pieces and parcel of property with construction & fixatures there being & lying at flat no. MIG S 203, 2nd Floor, Silver In Homes, Old Ashoka Garden, Ward No 69, Distt – Bhopal (M.P.) admeasuring area 500.79 sq ft/ 46.54 Sqm.	Physical	29.12.2025	Rs.1262000/- EMD:Rs.126200/- Rs.10000/-
		(B) All those pieces & parcel of property with construction & fixature there being & lying at Flat No. MIG G 001, Ground floor, Silver Inn Homes, Old Ashoka Garden, Northern part of plot no 95,96,97, ward No. 69, Distt – Bhopal (M.P.) admeasuring area 436 Sq. ft / 40.52 Sqm.	Physical	29.12.2025	Rs.880000/- EMD: 88000/- Rs.10000/-
14) Branch - Narayanpur Borrower -1) Mrs. Varsha Soni w/o Mr. Heera Soni 2) Mr.Heera soni s/o Gayaprasad Soni Mr Ratnesh Jain 187/1 Malkhamb Durga Mandir, Phootatal Jabalpur - 482001	Rs.1404958/-(Rupees Fourteen Lakh Lakh Four Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty Eight Only) (Ledger Bal: Rs.1354801/- + unapplied interest Rs.49961/-@8.40 % p.a at monthly rest + penal interest thereon and other charges and expenses w.e.f 16.11.2023)	Single Story Residential house situated at Mouza Soortalai, N.B 419,P.H no. 75, Kh.No.41, Sanskar City, Plot no. 276, RNM Baroda, Tah: Panagar Dist. Jabalpur	Physical	15.01.2026	Rs.4096000/- EMD: Rs.409600/- Rs.10000/-
15) Branch - Asset Recovery Branch Borrower - M/s Saksham Electricals & Contractors Regd add: H.No.11, Phase -11 Sagar avenue Narela Shankari Ayodya by pass road, Tehsil: Huzur, District- Bhopal- 462041,Factory Add: Plot no-14, sector-A, Industrial Area Bagroda, Dist: Bhopal 462026. Through partners A. Shri Narayan, S/o: Shri Govindram Shrivastav Add: Flat no. 139, first floor, Rachana Nagar, Huzur-Govindpura, Tehsil: Huzur, Dist: Bhopal, MP-462023 B. Shri Rajeev Ranjan, S/o: Shri Maharaj Singh , House no.11, Phase-II, sagar Avenue Narela Shankari Ayodhya bypass road, Tehsil- Huzur, Dist- Bhopal, MP_462041 Guarantors- 1.Shri Narayan, S/o: Shri Govindram Shrivastav Add: Flat no. 139, first floor, Rachana Nagar, Huzur-Govindpura, Tehsil: Huzur, Dist: Bhopal, MP-462023 2. Shri Rajeev Ranjan, S/o: Shri Maharaj Singh House no.11, Phase-II, sagar Avenue Narela Shankari Ayodhya bypass road, Tehsil-Huzur, Dist- Bhopal, MP-462041 3. Shri Subham, S/o Shri Narayan Shrivastav Add: Flat no. 139, first floor, Rachana Nagar, Huzur-Govindpura, Tehsil: Huzur, Dist: Bhopal, MP-462023	Rs. 2,27,55,759/- (Rupees Two Crore Twenty Seven Lakh Fifty five Thousand Seven Hundred Fifty Nine Rupees only plus applicable unapplied interest + penal interest@2% thereon and other charges and expenses w.e.f 22.09.2022	House no.11 situated at land bearing khasra no. 114/2/3, 114/2/5, Sagar Avenue, Phase-II Village Narela Shankari, P.H. No. 20, The: Huzur, Dist: Bhopal, MP-462041 **Owner: Shri Rajeev Ranjan**	Physical	15.01.2026	Rs.4200000/- EMD: Rs.420000/- Rs.10000/-
		Plot No 14, Sector A, Industrial Area / Estate, Bagroda, Bhopal (M.P.) 462026, **Owner: (1) Shri Subham, S/o Shri Narayan Shrivastav** **(2) Shri Rajeev Ranjan, S/o: Shri Maharaj Singh**	Physical	15.01.2026	Rs.5170000/- EMD: Rs.517000/- Rs.10000/-

Inspection of Properties by bidder: 18th to 20th of December, 2025, 10 a.m to 5 p.m
Last Date & Time for Submission of Bid application/KYC documents/EMD etc. For sale dt:23.12.2025 on 23.12.2025, Date:29.12.2025 on 29.12.2025 & Date:15.01.2026 on 15.01.2026 (till 11.00 a.m)

Date & time of E-auction with auto extention for 10 minutes from 12.00 p.m to 04:00 p.m.
(For Prop. 1 - 9) 23.12.2025 • (For Prop. 10 - 13) 29.12.2025 • (For Prop. 14 - 15) 15.01.2026

The auction sale will be On-line E-Auction / Bidding through website **https://baanknet.com, email: support.baanknet@psballiance.com. Mob.- 8291220220** The intending Bidders / Purchasers are requested to register on portal using their mobile number and email id. Please take note that the registration and KYC approval etc take 2-3 working days. For detail terms and conditions of sale please refer to the link provided in **https://bankofmaharashtra.bank.in/asset-for-sales-search** and **https://baanknet.com** .Also prospective bidders may contact the authorized officials **Bhushan Mohite (Authorised Officer) - 9923257090, Hariom Trivedi 9405719723**

Date: 06/12/2025

Authorised Officer, Bank of Maharashtra

India eyes Ro-Ko show in series decider

G UNNIKRISHNAN
Visakhapatnam

The spotlight, like most times, will be on Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, but the pressure will also be on India's younger crop when the home side looks to avoid another embarrassing series loss to South Africa in the must-win third and final ODI here on Saturday.

A Raipur-like fumbling by India will see South Africa bag the ODI series too, closely after their 2-0 triumph in Tests.

Consecutive series defeats are unthinkable for India in the current scenario, particularly when the dressing room is perceived to be pulling in different directions.

A victory in this rubber can quell the chatter around the team for a while, and for that, Kohli and Rohit have to do the heavy lifting once again.

Both have been the undisputed masters of the 50-over format and are no strangers to such tight situations. After all, their legacy is built around taking down difficulties — an exhilarating ride in itself in the last decade and a half.

Now, standing at the door that opens only to the sunset, Kohli and Rohit will want another glorious chapter to be added to the long book of achievements. It's not a mere ambition either.

Kohli has two hundreds and a fifty in his last three innings, while Rohit has a hundred and two fifties in his last four outings.

Those numbers tell about their touch, class and hunger even in their late 30s, indicating that they can still save the day for the team.

But they would not complain about some meaningful support from the younger batters as it came forth in the last match through Ruturaj Gaikwad, who struck his maiden ODI hundred.

But Yashasvi Jaiswal is still to find his range in this series as an opener, and the gifted young man will be keen to convert his starts into a bigger score, for his and the team's sake.

There is an obvious flaw in his batting against left-arm quicks, be it Jayden Seales of the West Indies or Marco Jansen and Nandre Burger in this series.

He has been dismissed by left-armers 30 times (9 in Tests, 19 in T20Is and 2 in ODIs) in his career, predominantly while attempting a cut and its many versions, his staple diet outside the off-stump.

Jaiswal and the team management cannot remain oblivious to something so obvious, and the work might have already begun to rectify it.

But if the trend continues, the management might just be forced to look at other options, and they have a genuine opener in Gaikwad in their ranks.

Tilak for Washington? Pitch and dew

The pitch at the ACA-VDCA stadium often tends to favour the batters, and India have a wonderful record here — seven wins in 10 ODIs from 2005, even though the last encounter against Australia ended in a defeat.

But that aside, India will think deeply about whether to rest Washington Sundar and bring in Tilak Varma to beef up the middle-order batting line-up, which struggled to force the pace in the business end of the last two matches.

Rishabh Pant too can be a candidate, but Tilak is a utility spinner and also adds value as a gun fielder. KL Rahul's breezy fifties carried India to a par score, but dew helped South Africa come close to the target in Ranchi and go over the line in Raipur.

But in this coastal town, the humidity factor comes into play at night despite a recent dip in temperature, thanks to cyclonic weather.

A training session under lights on Friday will help India understand the conditions and thereby decide the combination a bit better.

Irrespective of that, India will hope that their young pacers Prasidh Krishna and Harshit Rana will tidy up their act and strongly support the impressive Arshdeep Singh.

SA's worries

On the other hand, South Africa will want to inflict on India their second ODI series defeat after 2022-23, when the Aussies went back as a 2-1 winner.

If so, it will be the Proteas' first-ever ODI series victory on these shores. But they will be monitoring the fitness of pacer Burger and batter Tony de Zorzi, as both had to limp off the field at Raipur.

Teams (from):

India: KL Rahul (C/WK), Rohit Sharma, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Virat Kohli, Tilak Varma, Rishabh Pant (wk), Washington Sundar, Ravindra Jadeja, Kuldeep Yadav, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Harshit Rana, Prasidh Krishna, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Prasidh Krishna, Arshdeep Singh, Dhruv Jurel.

South Africa: Temba Bavuma (C), Ottneil Baartman, Corbin Bosch, Matthew Breetzke, Dewald Brevis, Nandre Burger, Quinton de Kock, Tony de Zorzi, Rubin Hermann, Keshav Maharaj, Marco Jansen, Aiden Markram, Lungi Ngidi, Ryan Rickelton, Prenelan Subrayen. *(PTI)*

Narine backs 'X-factor' Umran to light up IPL

TAPAN MOHANTA Dubai

Mystery spinner Sunil Narine says Kolkata Knight Riders will miss Andre Russell's on-field powerhitting but is excited at the prospect of a fit-again Umran Malik unleashing 150kph thunderbolts in next year's IPL.

Tearaway pacer Umran is set for his KKR debut after missing last season due to a hip injury, and Narine feels the Jammu and Kashmir quick has the ingredients to become the franchise's next X-factor.

"He is an exciting bowler. I think you need that X factor when it comes to pace in IPL because of the small grounds and the good pitches. I think he's going to do pretty well. He came (and joined the side) at the back end of the last IPL, and he looked good... So I think it says a lot," the Abu Dhabi Knight Riders spinner told PTI on the sidelines of the ILT20 here.

Umran returned to competitive cricket this domestic season after more than 18 months on the sidelines and immediately hit his straps for Jammu and Kashmir, taking five wickets in the ongoing Syed Mushtaq Ali.

In the match against Uttar Pradesh, he grabbed 3/37, consistently hustling batters, including his KKR teammate Rinku Singh, with pace and steep bounce.

After being released by Sunrisers Hyderabad, Umran was picked by KKR for his base price of Rs 75 lakh ahead of IPL 2025.

But an untimely injury ruled him out, prompting KKR to name Chetan Sakariya as his replacement.

Umran's rise as the 'Jammu Express' came during his four-year stint with SRH, where he clocked the third fastest delivery by an Indian in the IPL (157kph) and would clock 150kph consistently during that particular season.

He took 29 wickets in 26 matches at 26.62, including a career-best 5/25. His peak came in IPL 2022 when he took 22 wickets at 20.18, fifth in the tournament, earning him an India call-up the same year. He has since played 10 ODIs and eight T20Is for India, taking 13 and 11 wickets respectively. His last India outing was in July 2023 last played in the IPL for SRH in 2024.

"Hopefully, he stays fit. I'm looking forward to seeing some 145-150kph balls," said Narine, a key member of KKR's three IPL titles.

Big shoes to fill

Russell, who was not retained for the upcoming auction, made a surprise announcement to retire from the IPL and move into KKR's backroom staff instead of entering the December 16 auction, where he was seen as a marquee attraction.

"Obviously will miss DreRuss on the field... Once he's there and you're chasing a big total, you're never out of it until he's out. So it's going to be some big shoes to fill," Narine said.

"But hopefully we get the right combination, and we could go out there and deliver the goods when IPL starts next year." Looking to reset after missing the play-offs last season, KKR have overhauled their coaching unit for IPL 2026

Abhishek Nayar takes over as head coach, with Dwayne Bravo as mentor, Shane Watson as assistant coach, Tim Southee as bowling coach and Russell as power-coach. *(PTI)*

Slight desperation to win ODI series after below par Test performance: Doeschate

G UNNIKRISHNAN
Visakhapatnam

Assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate on Friday said a below-par performance in the preceding Test series has put a certain amount of "desperation" in the Indian team to win the ongoing ODI series against South Africa.

India lost the two-match Test rubber 0-2 to the Proteas recently, and the one-day series is now levelled at 1-1.

"It's a very different personnel of players but the guys are very aware of the responsibility of what they're representing," ten Doeschate said here on the eve of the series-deciding third ODI.

KL Rahul's side won the first match at Ranchi by 17 runs, but SA pulled one back at Raipur with a four-wicket victory.

"We always want to win, but yeah, certainly, when a few losses start stacking up, and performances have been below what we expect from ourselves, I think it's a slight desperation from the series point of view," he added.

But ten Doeschate was quick to add that the team members have been quite used to tackling such pressure situations.

"I don't think pressure ever goes away for this team. You know, bilateral series, when the series is on the line, there is an element of pressure there in itself. We try to focus on the process. We try and assess what's going to be a good score and then the batting unit has to go about getting it," he said.

The former Dutch all-rounder admitted the dew played a massive role in the last two matches, and was aware that it could be a factor here too on Saturday.

"The dew factor is so big here. It's obviously not our fault, but it is our responsibility to find a way to get around that. I think we're doing pretty well in the defending department now (if India is bowling second).

"And obviously, we have assessed this as a high-scoring ground with fairly small boundaries. But the biggest challenge again is going to be sorting out the disparity between batting first and batting second, and that is the biggest challenge for us," he explained.

Right now, the match starts at 1.30 pm, and does a slightly early start negate the dew factor?

Ten Doeschate said it was a good line of thought, but acknowledged the futility considering the broadcast needs.

"Just on the timing, I think it's, you know, the fact that the dew kind of falls as the second innings starts, and it means that the dew is there for the whole time. So, a different start time could bring that effect down a little bit and slow it to hours earlier.

"There is a solution, but obviously, there are so many moving parts to play in terms of broadcasting, etc. So I guess it's a futile conversation," he said.

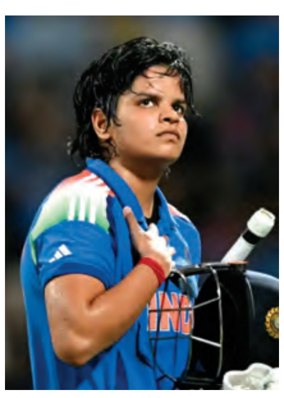
Ten Doeschate said the Indian team as a batting group did try to tailor to the need of extra runs in these conditions, and trained accordingly at nets.

"We actually tried to factor it into our batting. You know, at the start of the first game, we thought 320 was sort of high, and then we put a frame on that 350; even given the ball coming, it was a good effort to get that score.

"You always want more runs, and again the conversations have been around how can we maximise it, even then sometimes the conditions make it tough, but again the responsibility is to find ways in tough conditions," he noted. *(PTI)*

Shafali shortlisted for ICC women player of the month

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Dubai



India opener Shafali Verma, whose blazing 87 and two key wickets powered the country to its maiden ICC Women's World Cup title, was on Friday named in the ICC Player of the Month shortlist for November.

Shafali, drafted into the squad as an injury replacement, delivered a match-winning all-round performance in the final against South Africa in Mumbai, earning the Player of the Match award and now a place among the three nominees for the monthly honour.

She is joined on the women's list by Esha Oza of the UAE and Thailand's Thipatcha Putthawong, both standout performers in the inaugural ICC Women's Emerging Nations Trophy held in Bangkok.

Oza, the UAE captain, aggregated 187 runs at a strike rate of 137.50 and picked up seven wickets across seven T20Is, winning the Player of the Tournament award.

Putthawong finished as the joint leading wicket-taker with 15 scalps, including a four-wicket burst in the final against Scotland to propel Thailand to the title.

In the men's category, South Africa's off-spinner Simon Harmer, Bangladesh's left-arm spinner Taijul Islam, and Pakistan all-rounder Mohammad Nawaz made the shortlist.

Harmer played a pivotal role in South Africa's historic 2-0 Test series win over India - their first in the country in 25 years - claiming 17 wickets at an astonishing average of 8.94, including a match-winning 6/37 in the second Test.

His dominance earned him both Player of the Match and Player of the Series honours.

Taijul led Bangladesh's 2-0 sweep of Ireland with 13 wickets at 26.30, also walking away with the Player of the Series award.

Nawaz shone with both bat and ball during Pakistan's triumphant Tri-Series campaign against Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe.

He struck 104 ODI runs at 52.00, added 11 T20I wickets at 12.72, and claimed match-winning figures of 3/17 in the final to secure yet another Player of the Series accolade.

An independent ICC Voting Academy and fans worldwide will now vote to decide the winners, with fan voting open on the ICC website.

Hope, Justin Greaves shine against weak New Zealand on Day 4

ASSOCIATED PRESS
Christchurch

A New Zealand team with a crowded medical ward met stiff resistance and was unable to finish off the West Indies on the fourth day of the first test, Friday, after setting the tourists 531 to win.

Shai Hope led the resistance with his fourth test century in an unbroken partnership of 140 with Justin Greaves, which began when New Zealand captured four wickets relatively quickly in the second session.

At stumps, Hope was 116 not out, Greaves was 55 not out, and the West Indies were 212-4, trailing New Zealand by 319 runs.

New Zealand led by 530 runs when its second innings came to an end Thursday at 466-8. It was a moot point whether New Zealand declared or simply ran out of fit batters. Wicketkeeper Tom Blundell was unable to bat because of a hamstring injury, and all-rounder Nathan Smith was inactive with a side strain.

Matt Henry bowled 11 overs in the West Indies' second innings before leaving to visit the hospital, handily adjacent to Hagley Oval, for scans on a painful calf muscle.

With Henry and Smith out of action, Jacob Duffy and

Zak Foulkes, with only two previous tests between them and in their first tests at home, were left as New Zealand's only fit pacers.

To add injury to injury, Hope is still affected by a serious eye infection, which has forced him to bat in sunglasses in both innings, to make a half-century in the first innings and a century. He was unable to field for most of New Zealand's second innings and needed antibiotic eye drops.

That made his effort throughout the fourth day all the more meritorious as the medical staff of both teams were kept busily employed.

"I don't want to give away too much, but it's just about understanding what you have to do to overcome a situation," Hope said. "They've got quality bowlers in test cricket, nobody's a walkover in this format."

New Zealand had no choice from the second session but to tie up one end with the spinners Michael Bracewell and Rachin Ravindra, then rotate Duffy and Foulkes at the other end with the nagging wind at their backs.

Bracewell bowled 22 overs, taking 1-54; Ravindra bowled nine overs, Duffy bowled 19 overs and took 2-65, and Foulkes bowled 13 overs.

India will come hard at us, but we have nice balance in our batting: Breetzke

G UNNIKRISHNAN
Visakhapatnam

South Africa batter Matthew Breetzke understands that India will come hard at them in the series-deciding third ODI here, but is banking on their balanced batting side to overcome the challenge.

The three-match series is levelled at 1-1, and India will require a win on Saturday to avoid a second successive series defeat against the Proteas after succumbing 0-2 in the preceding Tests.

"We're going to have to play good cricket against a really good side. We know that they're going to be really hungry to win. It's a must-win game, so it's going to be a really good contest," said Breetzke on the eve of the third ODI.

The 27-year-old batter took heart from the fight South Africa's middle and lower-order showed in the last two matches.

For him, the presence of handy batters like Marco Jansen and Corbin Bosch down the order was a boon.

"We've got a nice balance on our side with a couple of guys who are proper batters, and then you've got powerhouses like (Dewald) Brevis, (Marco) Jansen and Corbin (Bosch) that can change the game on its head.

"So I think we complement each other really well, and there's a lot of confidence in the batting group at the moment. We will have to do it again tomorrow." Breetzke said the presence of power-hitters down the line helped the top-order batters play some risk-free cricket.

"It gives you confidence as top order batters, knowing that you have Jansen and Bosh at the bottom. I think we've seen Bosh in the last two matches play some really special innings.

"The top four gives you a lot of confidence. You can take a little bit more time, because you know you've got that explosive power at the back end," he noted.

Breetzke said the recent tour to Pakistan helped him adapt to the new role of batting at No. 4.

"Yeah, a little bit. I think obviously the conditions were a lot different in Pakistan, but obviously I'm just getting more experience now batting at 4, where I'm starting to feel a little bit more comfortable. Hopefully I'll get better," he added.

South Africa chased the target both in Ranchi and Raipur, and the presence of dew made their task that much easier as the Indian bowlers struggled to grip the ball in the middle overs.

Breetzke said the SA as a group has plans on how to tackle the situation if they have to bat first here.

"We have seen that the dew has played a big part (in the first two matches), obviously, in our advantage. Batting second, it's been really nice to bat.

"If we have to bat first, I'm sure we'll chat about it after a couple of meetings after this conference and see what the best way to go about it. But yeah, the dew has definitely played a big part," he said.

Meanwhile, the South African team manager said in the pre-match press conference that pacer Nandre Burger and batter Tony de Zorzi have undergone scans this morning.

Both Burger and De Zorzi had to walk off the field with injuries at Raipur.

"Pacer Nandre Burger and batter Tony De Zorzi have gone for scans after limping off during the 2nd ODI in Raipur. Their continued availability will be decided depending on the results," the manager informed.

The Pioneer
BHOPAL | SATURDAY | DECEMBER 6, 2025

BLASÉ CAPITAL

RBI REACTIONS

Benign inflation outlook provides policy space to support the growth momentum. The language seems to indicate one more rate cut in the coming months as current year CPI inflation has been revised lower to two per cent, and GDP growth upwards to 7.3 per cent. As per the RBI Governor, core inflation pressure is still low given that 50 basis points of increase in core inflation is contributed by the metal prices.

Murthy Nagarajan,
Head-Fixed Income, Tata Asset Management

For the real estate sector, this rate cut builds on the momentum created during the recent festive season and GST rationalisation of key construction materials. Lower borrowing costs will improve affordability and buyer sentiment, particularly in affordable and mid-income housing segments.

Vimal Nadar,
National Director, Colliers India

The RBI delivered what the bond market was hoping for. The unanimous decision underscores confidence in the disinflation trend and signals a supportive stance for growth. Moreover, front-loading OMOs creates the possibility of additional liquidity.

Siddharth Chaudhary,
Head (Fixed Income), Bajaj Finserv AMC

The MPC's decision was assertive. The governor noted disinflationary pressures in the economy, which created room for a rate cut despite ongoing trade uncertainties, and early signs of weakness in indicators such as the IIP and electricity demand. We anticipate an additional 25 bp rate cut in February '26 based on our forecast of further downside surprises in inflation over the next 2-3 months.

Radhika Piplani,
Chief Economist, Motilal Oswal Group

With inflation printing significantly below projections, real rates were getting too high, potentially choking future growth. Nominal growth needed a boost in order that fiscal targets remain realistic. The policy addresses the live issues in comprehension, and is expected to significantly boost growth in coming quarters. Going ahead, as the possibilities for further rates remain alive, interest rates are expected to ease gradually and marginally.

Mahendra Kumar Jajoo,
CIO (Fixed Income), Mirae Asset Investment

It reinforces a supportive monetary environment for boosting consumer sentiment. Coupled with the income-tax relief measures announced in the Union Budget, and the landmark GST 2.0 reforms, this creates strong enablers for further enhancing affordability and accessibility. SIAM remains optimistic that this alignment of monetary and fiscal measures will accelerate growth of the Indian auto industry.

Shailesh Chandra,
President, SIAM

The central bank clarified that the primary purpose of the OMO was to manage liquidity, and not to directly influence yields. The RBI governor assured to provide ample system liquidity in the current rate environment, with OMOs to be conducted across maturities. He noted that the tolerance towards the rupee depreciation had not changed, and repeated that it will be allowed to move as per the market forces. Growth-inflation dynamics continues to provide space to support the growth momentum, implying that conducive financial conditions are here to stay.

Naval Kagalwala,
COO, Shriram Wealth

The repo-rate cut would bring more relief to both prospective and existing home loan borrowers. Transmission of the rate cut would be faster for floating rate loans linked to repo rate. The date of transmission would depend on the interest reset dates set by their lender. As banks would fully pass the benefits over time, we should see stronger demand for credit for the next few months. The rate cut should boost spending and investments from existing borrowers.

Santosh Agarwal,
CEO, Paisabazaar

The RBI's decision is a timely signal that the larger economic cycle is shifting toward growth, and it comes at a particularly important moment for the mid-segment where affordability plays a defining role. The mid-income category has been the backbone of residential demand through 2024 and 2025, and this policy move strengthens that foundation further. This adds to the confidence that the real estate market is entering a more balanced, expansionary phase.

Mohit Goel,
MD, Omaxe

The RBI's decision will significantly support housing demand in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, where affordability plays a central role in purchase decisions, and homebuyers are sensitive to EMI movement. Improved borrowing costs are expected to bring greater confidence to end-users, and accelerate decision-making among families. For developers in emerging cities, reduced funding pressure helps maintain construction momentum and encourages investment.

Amrita Gupta,
Director, Mangalam Group

OUR TAKE

Missing regulators in our lives

Across sectors, many firms operate without checks and balances

Sutanu Guru
Author, Journalist and Academician

A few weeks ago, I suffered multiple fractures and muscle ruptures on my left shoulder. Although the hospital did not have a cashless facility for medical insurance, I presumed that I could pay upfront, and claim reimbursement. Post-surgery, even as I was recovering in the hospital, I started reading up on insurance claims. It was horrifying to learn that more than ₹26,000 crore of medical claims were not paid by the insurers. According to the portal managed by the Insurance Regulatory Development Authority of India (IRDAI), the sector's regulator, more than 95 per cent of the claims and complaints against the firms are about the failures to repay claims that the policyholders felt were legitimate and genuine.

There were more shocks. As I began to fill up the reimbursement form to claim the medical expenses, I struggled with the complicated paperwork that ran into dozens of pages, which included supplementary documents, attachments, proof, and photocopies. This was despite the help from my elder brother. Fortunately, the hospital was cooperative, and aided with the requisite documents. When I reached the insurer's office, I was informed that the paperwork was incomplete and, despite my pain, I had to get more documents from the hospital. Thankfully, the reimbursement came quickly.

However, the episode made me realise how insurers make life hell for the policyholders despite the claims of ease, simplicity, and efficiency. IRDAI makes huge claims of how effectively it regulates the companies, but the on-ground reality is different, and people struggle to get the claims. If an educated professional like me needs to spend so much time, what is the state of normal, semi-literate, and illiterate individuals? What about those in the small towns and villages? Maybe, this state-of-affairs is limited to insurance.

Weeks after my surgery, I toyed with the idea of taking a flight, but gave up since it was not urgent. Thank God for it! Usually, I would have booked a IndiGo flight, and I was relieved that I did not when I saw the newspaper headlines about how the airline, and its passengers were battered and shattered with canceled and delayed flights. Things are so bad that tens of thousands of passengers were across the airports in Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kolkata, and even the smaller cities like Bhubaneswar.

In Bhubaneswar, for example, 18 flights were cancelled. On December 4, 2025, more than 400 flights were cancelled. The next morning, the headlines screamed that not a single domestic flight would leave the Delhi airport until midnight. This is scandalous. Even more scandalous is the reason, or shall we say, the excuse given by the airline for the inexplicable and unacceptable delays and cancellations. According to IndiGo, the situation is due to a shortage of staff. The pilots' union contends that the airline has limited its hirings due to its business model that focuses on costs and expenses.

Just imagine a situation if the Indian Railways suddenly, and without prior notice, cancels thousands of trains, and because it does not have enough engine drivers, and ticket collectors. The commonsensical question, which is not being asked by the media, is that how can an airline, which is operating for close to 20 years, has expanded at a rapid rate, is highly profitable in most of the years, and boasts of a 95 per cent punctuality rate, suddenly, find itself without adequate crew and staff. How is this possible?

According to a recent report by the aviation regulator, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), IndiGo's domestic market share is almost two-thirds, and its cancellation rate for scheduled flights in August this year was an amazingly-low 0.51 per cent. How can a seemingly-efficient airline resort to gross mismanagement tactics that it has to cancel not 1-2 flights, but hundreds of them? It seems mysterious, intriguing, disturbing, and glaring. There is something inherently wrong in the manner IndiGo operates, and none of us have looked at its business model closely or carefully.

Of course, apart from the airline, the behaviour of the DGCA is perhaps more scandalous. What exactly has the regulator done in the recent past, and what is its monitoring exercises that it could not pinpoint that things were so wrong with IndiGo. In any case, DGCA's performance in 2025 is not something to be proud of. Most of us can recall the horrifying crash of the Air India flight, which was travelling from Ahmedabad to London a few months ago, and in which all, but one, passengers died. Inquiries were ordered. DGCA ordered one, and the preliminary inquiry report was submitted in time.

Shockingly, the internal confidential report was selectively leaked to foreign media outlets, which suggested that the crash was possibly due to pilot error. The 83-year-old father of the captain of the unfortunate flight approached the Supreme Court to clear his son's name, and demand a fair inquiry into what exactly happened during the flight. The DGCA, of course, while publicly claiming that the investigations were on, did not explain how the inquiry report was leaked. The ongoing IndiGo's imbroglio probably adds to the growing image of either a lax regulator, or an inefficient one.

Unfortunately, in India, this is the story with most regulators across major sectors. The harsh reality is that in the twenty-first century, most industries have moved towards a phase of consolidation, with repeated takeovers, mergers, and acquisitions. This wave of M&As have created either duopolies or oligopolies in the marketplace. One sees this across sectors and segments, from steel to tires, aluminum to telecom, aviation to e-commerce. While there is sufficient, and seemingly-stiff competition on paper, there is little or no doubt that there are indications of cartels, or dominance in market shares.

Sadly, the regulators have not done much to reverse the trends. India has the Competition Commission of India, which takes crucial decisions to pinpoint, and stop anti-market, anti-consumer, and monopolistic practices by the large firms. Although it does a commendable job legally, the actions and judgments have had a weak impact in some sectors, and minimal impact on the consumers. Perhaps, the policymakers need to think of how to make the regulators better, and more efficient. In contrast, political pressures, and industry lobbies aim to influence some of the regulators.

Do not forget that 60 per cent of India's GDP is related to private consumption expenditure. The consumers, therefore, need better protection, and more incentives to open their wallets.

The author has worked for leading media houses, authored two books, and is now Executive Director, C Voter Foundation

The Tech Wrecker

New-age vs old-age tech vs IT

Tech firms are valued differently in India and the US

Valuations of technology firms in the US and India are being fiercely debated among analysts, experts, and investors. They make comparisons between the gaps between US-based mega-cap tech firms, and India's IT and "new-age" tech stocks. DSP Mutual Fund's recent report highlights that Indian IT stocks underperformed the Nasdaq 100 by roughly 48 per cent since the Artificial Intelligence (AI) trade took off. There is overvaluation in US tech rather than in Indian IT. The former is "overbought, over-owned, and overvalued," and the latter "under-owned, oversold, and underperforming."

Saddled, and nestled between the two is India's young but growing cohort of "new-age" tech firms such as Zomato, Nykaa-parent FSN, PB Fintech, Delhivery, MapmyIndia, and Nazara that allow exposure to platforms, logistics, and gaming. Their revenues, and stock prices seem to follow the trajectories of the US-tech growth stories. But the former's valuation logic is dominated by price-to-sales ratio, rather than price-to-earnings one, and unit economics, rather than cash flows. Thus, there is a mismatch when one compares Indian new-age tech to America's old-age tech, and the latter to Indian IT.

In a July 2025 note, Jarvis Invest places Indian IT stalwarts such as TCS and Infosys at about 22-6 times earnings with 12-15 per cent five-year earnings growth. Compare these to global tech names like Nvidia and Apple, which are at 35-90 times earnings with 20-40 per cent growth. The analyst firm feels the IT stocks are "reasonably valued," and global tech ones "overvalued, (with) high expectations." Clearly, the valuations of core tech firms (especially beyond AI) are at different junctures. In addition, tech in New York, and Bengaluru are not the same thing, even though they are often lumped together.

In the US, a handful of names drive earnings and sentiments. These include Apple, Microsoft, Alphabet, Amazon, Meta, and Nvidia, and are accompanied by a long tail of suppliers of software services, cloud infrastructure, payments, and semiconductor. As of early December, the Nasdaq 100 traded at a price-to-earnings multiple of 34, which was above its five-year average of 27-33 times. The S&P IT was at almost 40 times earnings, versus a five-year average closer to 27-35 times. The Nifty IT index is still overwhelmingly an IT services basket, with names such as TCS, Infosys, HCL Tech, and Wipro.

The Nifty IT trades at about 27 times earnings, and 7.2 times book value, with a dividend yield just under three per cent. Recent reports suggest that the Nifty IT fell 16.7 per cent in terms of total returns this year, while the broader Nifty 500 eked out a small gain. While Indian IT looks cheaper than US tech, investors are not paying for the same thing. In the former, they buy exposure to products and platforms with embedded pricing power and, in the latter, they are excited about billing-hour leverage on global IT budgets.

In a recent report, Goldman Sachs outlines how the AI trade amplified an already-extreme concentration in the US tech indices. Valuation excesses, index concentration, and investor exuberance combine to give global equities some of the "early stage bubble" characteristics of the late 1990s. But Goldman Sachs concludes that the global stocks are "not yet" in a classic bubble because the earnings and balance sheets are stronger, and the universe of the beneficiaries is narrower. BlackRock expects AI to dominate markets in 2026, and remains constructive on US equities. It does flag the risks related to heavy concentration, crowded positioning, and high leverage among hedge funds that can lead to sharp corrective episodes, as was evident in this November's pullback.

The tech market has narrowed in the US because an extraordinary volume of global capital is concentrated in a small cluster of mega-cap companies. Their dominance creates a self-reinforcing cycle. As the prices of these stocks rise, index funds allocate more capital to them, and their size and liquidity attract institutional money. The narrowness is thus a product of excess capital clustering around perceived certainty rather than a shortage of opportunities. Hence, at the top sit firms with immense pricing power, deep cash reserves, and the ability to fund multi-year investment cycles.

India's IT market is narrow for a different reason. Here, capital has thinned because the sector's core growth is under questioning. Large IT exporters deliver steady margins, strong balance sheets, and dependable cash flows, but the investor appetite is restrained by doubts about the future of their labour-led, billing-hour-driven model in an era defined by automation, cloud consolidation, and generative software. This hesitation is reinforced by a cyclical slowdown in global tech budgets after years of digital spending. Unlike the US, where money crowds into dominance and scale, India reflects a deficit of conviction about the durability of businesses.

Another interesting layer to look at is what the investors pay for. At the top in the US market are the AI-adjacent mega-caps. Nvidia trades at rich price-to-earnings, and price-to-sales multiples. Microsoft, Alphabet, and Amazon combine earnings from mature cloud and advertising franchises with options on AI productivity tools and foundation models. Apple sits apart, sustained more by brand, ecosystem, and buybacks, and trades at a high multiple. A second tier of "old tech" names like Cisco, Intel, IBM, and Oracle are the previous generation's market darlings, and are now valued more for their high cash flows, and huge dividends, rather than growth.

A third tier of high-beta chip and software plays, from AMD and Broadcom to Arm and more-specialised AI software firms, makes the valuation debate acute. Their earnings are less diversified, business models more dependent on the durability of the current upgrade cycle, and their share prices more sensitive to changes in the narrative about AI spending and macro conditions. In India, the classic IT services group is the equivalent of US old tech, except that it is treated as a growth sector. But this feeling can change due to the disruptions, and the impact of generative AI.

The Indian new-age consumer tech and fintech names give a more direct parallel with the US. Zomato and PB Fintech are profitable, but still priced on revenue growth and market share. Nykaa, Delhivery, and Nazara face intense competition, shifting regulation, and consumer demand cycles, which makes their high price-to-sales ratios fragile, and unstable. These businesses rely on domestic discretionary spending, and regulatory stability. They may become the future darlings, and replace the software giants.

RBI to focus on transmission of rate cuts: Governor

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Mumbai

Governor Sanjay Malhotra on Friday said the transmission of policy rate cuts to lending rates for borrowers will be a key focus for the Reserve Bank going ahead.

He also said that there is a likelihood of moderation in deposit rates going forward, and urged people to look at the real rate for putting their money into savings instead of the absolute number, which may seem low.

"Having reduced the policy repo rate by a further 0.25 pc, we have to now concentrate on the monetary policy transmission," he told reporters at the customary post-policy review briefing.

The central bank has cut rates by 1.25 per cent over the year, responding to the needs of the economy and the space created by the cooling down of inflation.

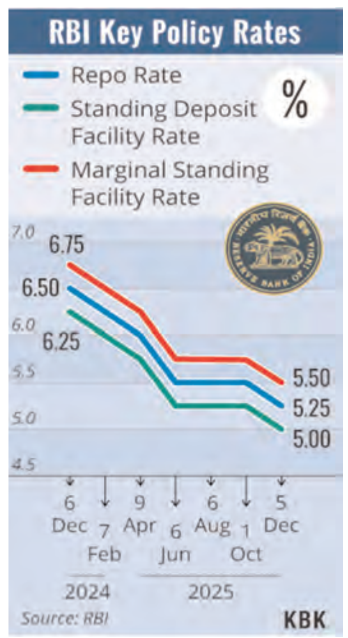
The governor pointed out that the RBI expects deposit rates to moderate further.

"...we do expect that going forward, especially after this rate cut, deposit rates will to some extent moderate," he said.

Malhotra said the low inflation helps a depositor earn more from a real perspective, as the inflation deflator is very low.

"We have to be looking at the real interest rates. When the inflation is so low and going forward as well, it is going to be low, then even though the nominal interest rate may seem to be low, the real interest rates today are quite high," he said.

On the lending side, Malhotra said the RBI does not expect bank credit growth to double the GDP growth, pointing out that it was so before FY12 and the system amassed a huge quantum of dud loans in the process.



Replying to a specific question, Malhotra said the central bank has received a communication from the capital markets regulator Sebi to permit banks to trade commodity derivatives, and is studying the same.

However, he was quick to point out that making any change will require amendments in the Banking Regulation Act, and added that a similar move was shot down over eight years ago.

Meanwhile, Deputy Governor Swaminathan J said that there has been a 0.08 per cent uptick in the slippages from the unsecured loans category in the September quarter, but added that the same does not change things from a systemic perspective. Unsecured personal loans constitute less than 17 per cent of the banking system's advances, and the RBI is not planning any regulatory measures because of the uptick.

Giving an update on the central bank digital currency or e-rupee, Deputy Governor T Rabi Sankar said India has 80 lakh users on the pilot platform, who have done 12 crore transactions of ₹28,000 crore in value.

The RBI's focus will be on increasing the use cases for the currency from here on, he said.

Meanwhile, on the issue of unclaimed deposits, Deputy Governor S C Murmu said there is a reduction of ₹100-150 crore in the overall quantum every month, and the Reserve Bank expects more progress on the back of focused steps on the same.

RBI sends clear signals to boost economic growth, say experts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Mumbai

The Reserve Bank has sent a clear and reassuring signal that policy instruments are being actively deployed to safeguard India's economic growth amid persisting global headwinds, said experts on Friday.

Home, auto and other loans are likely to cost less as the RBI cut key benchmark interest rate for the first time in six months and vowed to provide ₹1 lakh crore liquidity boost to the banking sector to support a "goldilocks" economy in the face of high US tariffs.

The experts were commenting on the central bank's decision to reduce short-term lending rate by 25 basis points and continue its neutral monetary policy stance.

President of industry body Ficci Anant Goenka said this calibrated easing will help stimulate credit offtake, reduce borrowing costs for industry and consumers, and reinforce the current growth momentum.

"Today's monetary policy sends a clear and reassuring signal that policy instruments are being actively deployed to safeguard India's growth trajectory and support economic expansion amid a challenging global environment," he said.

President of Assocham Nirmal Minda said the RBI rate cut, coming after cumulative reduction of 125 bps this year, will lower borrowing costs, spur industrial expansion, and create significant employment opportunities across sectors.

A repo rate cut will lead to lower borrowing costs for individuals as well as corporates because it reduces the interest banks pay to borrow from the RBI. With cheaper funding, banks can lower lending rates such as MCLR and base rates, making home, auto, and business loans more affordable.

This reduces EMIs, encourages consumers and businesses to borrow more, and supports economic activity.

Commenting on the RBI's decision, Mandar Pitale, Head of Financial Markets at SBM Bank (India) said that from the policy decision, it can be interpreted that Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) members are not foreseeing overheating in the economy despite very strong growth numbers and are more concerned on weak lead indicators which may retard the growth in near future if not acted upon.

SC Ralhan, President of exporters' body FIEO, said a 25-bps cut in the repo rate will significantly lower the cost of credit for exporters, enabling them to invest more freely in working capital, technology upgradation, and international marketing efforts.

"This is a much-needed boost at a time when global demand is volatile and input costs remain unpredictable," he said.

Navin Dhanuka, Director of ArisUnitern RE Solutions said lower home-loan EMIs will materially improve affordability and boost homebuyer confidence, especially in the mid-income and aspirational segments.

"This policy shift strengthens project viability, accelerates on-ground execution and is likely to spur fresh supply as demand gains momentum, supporting broader growth across the real-estate sector, Dhanuka added.

Pyush Lohia, Director, Lohia Worldspace said RBI's decision on repo rate reinforces market stability and signals a measured approach to balancing growth and inflation. "The upward revision of GDP growth to 7.3 per cent is particularly positive for Tier-2 markets, where rising aspirations meet the need for affordable, quality housing," he added.

Shikhar Aggarwal, Chairman of BLS E-Services said the central bank's decision to reduce the repo rate by 25 basis points to 5.25 per cent will give relief to homebuyers.

Anand Mody, Group COO and Co-Head Investment Banking, Aikyam Capital Group said the decision to cut repo rate to 5.25 per cent marks an important moment for India's startup and early-stage ecosystem.

With borrowing costs down, banks and NBFCs can offer cheaper loans, reducing interest outgo and easing working-capital pressure for young companies, Mody said.

Ranen Banerjee, Partner and Economic Advisory Leader at PwC India said the MPC has also acted on the liquidity aspects, and the announcement on the rupee–US dollar swap is going to address the rupee volatility.

The higher inflation projection for Q4 of FY26 will help the nominal GDP growth numbers, which will provide the additional fiscal headroom needed for the Union Budget, he added.

Jash Panchamia, Executive Director, Jaypee Infratech Limited said the RBI's decision to cut the repo rate by 25 basis points comes at an opportune moment, with inflation under control and the economy on a stable footing.

"The housing sector, particularly affordable and mid-segment housing, stands to benefit as lower home loan rates are likely to encourage cautious buyers to make their purchase decisions," Panchamia added.

CEO and Co-Founder of Biz2X and Biz2Credit Rohit Arora said the rate cut, together with a clear commitment to durable liquidity via ₹1 lakh crore of OMO purchases and a three-year USD 5 billion USD/INR swap is a welcome, timely move to shore up growth while inflation remains subdued.

"For MSMEs this combination of lower rates and durable liquidity can translate into affordable, more predictable credit. This is, however, crucial as they manage rising input costs and look to expand capacity," he said.

Madhusudhan G, CMD of Sumadhura Group said lower home-loan rates and reduced EMIs are set to meaningfully strengthen buyer sentiment, particularly among end-users and first-time homeowners who have been waiting for the right moment to enter the market.

This move not only enhances affordability but also broadens the pool of eligible buyers, reinforcing the steady demand seen across major metros, Madhusudhan added.

Friday's rate cut decision will supplement the government's recent initiatives like GST rationalization, tax breaks, notification of labour codes, etc., to minimize the adverse impact of global headwinds, AU Small Finance Bank MD & CEO Sanjay Agarwal said.

"The RBI decided to conduct OMO purchases of government securities worth ₹1 lakh crore which will certainly enhance credit growth in the economy and stimulate consumption. Banks and NBFCs are stand to gain from this," Indel Money CEO Umesh Mohanan said.

Next meeting of the MPC is scheduled for February 4-6, 2026.

Sensex jumps 447 pts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Mumbai

Stock market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty rallied on Friday after the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) cut key benchmark interest rate for the first time in six months and took steps to boost liquidity to support a "goldilocks" economy in the face of high US tariffs.

Rising for the second day in a row, the 30-share BSE Sensex advanced 447.05 points, or 0.52 per cent, to settle at 85,712.37. During the day, it jumped 531.4 points, or 0.62 per cent, to 85,796.72.

The 50-share NSE Nifty climbed 152.70 points, or 0.59 per cent, to 26,186.45.

On the weekly front, the BSE benchmark eked out a marginal gain of 5.7 points, while the Nifty dipped 16.5 points. The six-member monetary policy committee, led by RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra, voted unanimously to lower the repurchase or repo rate by 25 basis points to 5.25 per cent and retained a neutral stance, which gives room for further rate cuts.

In doing so, the RBI seems to have shrugged off concerns over fall in the rupee, which breached 90 to a dollar this week.

The RBI lowered its inflation forecast for the fiscal year through March to 2 per cent from 2.6 per cent, while raising its GDP growth projection to 7.3 per cent, from the previous estimate of 6.8 per cent.

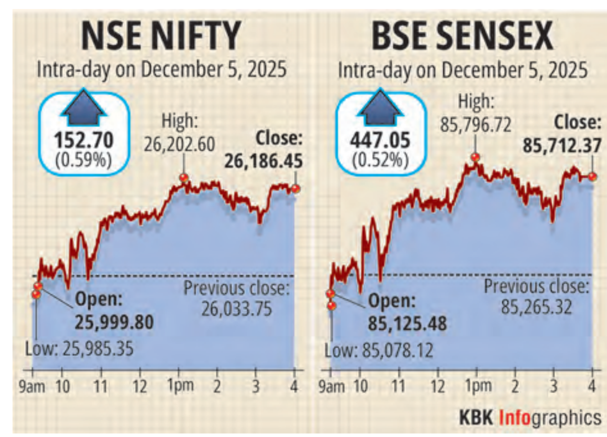
From the Sensex firms, State Bank of India, Bajaj Finserv, Bajaj Finance, Maruti, HCL Tech, Larsen & Toubro, Mahindra & Mahindra and Infosys were among the major winners.

However, Hindustan Unilever, Eternal, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles, and Sun Pharma were among the laggards.

Rate-sensitive stocks — bank, auto and realty — ended higher.

"Equity markets moved higher as investor sentiment received a major boost after the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) cut the repo rate by 25 bps and upwardly revised its FY26 GDP forecast to 7.3 per cent from 6.8 per cent, easing concerns over tariff-related pressure on domestic growth," Ponmudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth tech firm, said.

The BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.21 per cent, while smallcap index declined 0.67 per cent. Among sectoral indices, BSE Focused IT jumped 0.90 per cent, bankex (0.86 per cent), financial services (0.84 per cent), metal (0.74 per cent) and teck (0.73 per cent).



However, BSE Services, capital goods, industrials and FMCG were the laggards.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹1,944.19 crore on Thursday, while Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) bought stocks worth ₹3,661.05 crore, according to exchange data.

In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi, Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index settled in positive territory while Japan's Nikkei 225 index ended lower.

Markets in Europe were trading higher. US markets ended on a flat note on Thursday.

EU hits Musk's X with 120m euro fine for breaching social media law

ASSOCIATED PRESS
London

European Union regulators on Friday fined Elon Musk's social media platform X 120 million euros (USD 140 million) for breaches of the bloc's digital regulations that they said could leave users exposed to scams and manipulation. The European Commission issued its decision following an investigation it opened two years ago into X under the 27-nation bloc's Digital Services Act, also known as the DSA.

It's the first time that the EU has issued a so-called non-compliance decision since rolling out the DSA. The sweeping rulebook requires platforms to take more responsibility for protecting European users and cleaning up harmful or illegal content and products on their sites, under threat of hefty fines.

The Commission said it was punishing X, previously known as Twitter, because of three different breaches of the DSA's transparency requirements. The decision could rile President Donald Trump, whose administration has lashed out at digital regulations, complaining that Brussels was targeting US tech companies and vowing to retaliate.

The company did not respond immediately to an email request for comment.

EU regulators had already outlined their accusations in mid-2024 when they released preliminary findings of their investigation into X.

Gujarat's per capita income crosses ₹3 lakh mark

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Ahmedabad

Gujarat's per capita income has surpassed ₹3 lakh for the first time, and the state now ranks among India's top five economies, an official said on Friday. A government release said Gujarat's per capita income has reached ₹3,00,957, which is is higher than that of Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh, reflecting high labour productivity and broad-based economic participation.

"According to the latest data, Gujarat has achieved remarkable expansion over the past decade. With a Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) of ₹24.62 lakh crore in 2023-24, the state now ranks among India's top five largest economies, following Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, and Karnataka," it added.

"In the second quarter ending September, India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth came in at 8.2 per cent, with Gujarat delivering a particularly strong performance. This consistent strength has helped the state maintain its position among India's most robust economies, earning it the reputation of being the country's growth engine," the release informed.

It is imperative to view long-term economic performance in real terms at constant prices, which strip out inflation and capture the true rise in production and economic activity, the release said.

Based on this, between 2012-13 and 2023-24, Gujarat recorded an average growth rate of 8.42 per cent, the highest among all major states with economies exceeding ₹10 lakh crore. The state outpaced Karnataka (7.69 pc) and Tamil Nadu (6.29 pc), the release said.

"At a time when large economies often experience a slowdown due to structural saturation, Gujarat has continued to expand at a rapid pace, powered by its strong industrial backbone, investment-friendly climate, robust infrastructure, and effective governance. The latest GSDP figures indicate Gujarat's economy is transforming rapidly due to the strong performance of multiple sectors," it said.

ALPA India slams DGCA's 'selective, unsafe' breather to IndiGo

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Mumbai

Pilots' body Airlines' Pilots Association (ALPA) India on Friday took "strong" objection to safety regulator DGCA's "selective and unsafe" relief to domestic carrier IndiGo, amid widescale cancellations, saying the decision sets a dangerous precedent.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) earlier in the day granted IndiGo temporary exemption from stricter night duty rules for pilots. In a letter to the DGCA on Friday, ALPA-India said the decision not only sets a "dangerous precedent" but also undermines the very principle and purpose of the civil aviation regulatory environment under which the norms have been formulated.

It also said on the pretext of passenger inconvenience, IndiGo is seeking relief despite having knowingly increased their winter operations while being fully aware of the implementation of the second phase of the pilots' flight duty and rest period norms.

ALPA India had on Wednesday alleged that this (IndiGo cancelling huge number of flights) situation points to a "failure of proactive resource planning by dominant airlines, potentially exacerbated by an effort to pressurise the regulator to dilute the new FDTL norms for commercial gain".

And on Thursday, the DGCA in a statement said it has directed the airline to submit the flight duty time limitation (FDTL) relaxations required to normalise the flight operations, after the airline informed the regulator that "it was facing significant transitional challenges in roster planning and crew availability under phase-2 FDTL requirement".

IndiGo was the first carrier to oppose the new FDTL norms for pilots when they were introduced in January 2024 with March 2024 as the timeline for implementation.

The latest FDTL norms, which entail increased weekly rest periods to 48 hours, extended night hours, and limiting the number of night landings to only two, as against six earlier, were initially also opposed by domestic airlines, including IndiGo and Tata Group-owned Air India.

But they were subsequently rolled out by the DGCA following the Delhi High Court's directives, albeit with a delay of over one year, in a phased manner, and with certain variations for airlines like IndiGo and Air India.

While the first phase of these FDTL norms came into force in July, the second phase, which reduced the number of night landings from six to two earlier, was implemented from November 1.

"By granting selective exemptions to IndiGo, the DGCA has opened the door for all other operators to cite their own operational, commercial, or scheduling reasons to demand similar dispensations," ALPA India said in its Friday statement.

"It also said that if dispensations can be granted based on each operator's requirements, then the relevance, authority, and intent of the FDTL CAR is defeated entirely."

Stating that the decision has been taken despite repeated representations, formal letters, and direct discussions with the DGCA office, ALPA India said, "During our meeting on November 24, it was unequivocally agreed that no dispensation, exemption, or variation, particularly those motivated by commercial interests would be granted to any operator."

"The consensus was clear: FDTL norms exist solely to safeguard human life, and any dilution of these limits would expose pilots, passengers, and aircraft to unacceptable risks. Yet, in complete contradiction to this understanding, your office has extended selective dispensation to IndiGo for Phase II implementation, allowing them to operate beyond the safety envelope prescribed by the CAR," it said.

Interestingly, at the time of implementation of these regulations, then Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia had said, "these changes — that are very much in line with international best practices — will ensure India has the necessary arsenal, as it prepares to clinch the largest domestic aviation market title in the future."

INDIGO SHARES DOWN OVER 7 PC IN FOUR DAYS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Mumbai

Shares of InterGlobe Aviation, the parent of IndiGo, dropped over 7 per cent in the past four days ever since a crisis engulfed the airline, where it cancelled a large number of flights, leaving thousands of passengers stranded for several hours.

In the past four trading days, the stock has lost 7.23 per cent on the BSE. On Friday, the stock declined 1.22 per cent to settle at ₹5,371.30 apiece. During the day, it dropped 3.15 per cent to ₹5,266. On the NSE, shares of the firm ended 1.27 per cent lower at ₹5,367.50 each. In the last four days, the stock has declined by 7.30 per cent. The company's market valuation has eroded by ₹16,190.64 crore to reach ₹2,07,649.14 crore since December 1.

Air travel across India remained in chaos for a fourth straight day on Friday as IndiGo, the country's largest airline, cancelled more than 1,000 flights, including all departures from New Delhi, leaving thousands of passengers stranded for several hours at a stretch with little clarity on alternatives.

Airline's CEO Pieter Elbers on Friday said the situation is anticipated to normalise between December 10-15.

Elbers, in a video message, apologised for the major inconvenience caused to the passengers due to the disruptions.

"Regrettably, earlier measures of the last few days have proven not to be enough. So we decided today for a reboot of all our systems and schedules, resulting in the highest number of cancellations so far, but imperative for progressive improvements starting tomorrow onwards.

"With these actions, we expect Saturday to have cancellations below 1,000. The support of DGCA, in providing specific FDTL implementation relief, is of great help," Elbers said. Aviation regulator DGCA has kept in abeyance the implementation of the new Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL) norms, and gaps in planning the second phase implementation of these norms are one of the key factors for the current flight disruptions.

PROSPECT

Union Minister Jyotiraditya M Scindia accompanied by Nagaland CM Neiphiu Rio and Deputy CM Yanthungo Patton participated in a traditional 'Stone Pulling Ceremony' in Tuophema village of Nagaland

GIFT City banking assets exceed $100 billion

Banking assets in GIFT City have exceeded $100 billion, with growing demand for trade finance, treasury and structured products, an HSBC and EY India compendium said. The compendium offers a structured view of the regulatory, tax, and operating environment that underpins the International Financial Services Centre at GIFT City in Gandhinagar. The compendium notes that banking continues to anchor GIFT City's growth, with significant expansion in the International Banking Units (IBUs), with consolidated assets now exceeding $100 billion. Trade finance, treasury operations and cross-border lending have seen a marked uptick as global and Indian banks increasingly use IFSC to centralise offshore operations, it said. It highlights a clear shift from basic booking activities to more sophisticated business lines such as structured finance, global treasury centres, and risk management functions. According to the compendium, capital market activity at IFSC exchanges has expanded steadily, with average monthly turnover around $90 billion. "Cumulative debt listings have crossed $67 billion, making IFSC a preferred venue for global bond issuances by Indian corporates, multilateral institutions, and international issuers," it added.

GIFT City has crossed 1,000 registered entities, marking a significant milestone in market maturity, said the compendium – The GIFT City Advantage: Doing Business in India's International Financial Services Centre (IFSC).

Fund management is the fastest-growing vertical with 310 AIFs and $26 billion in total commitments, said the compendium unveiled on Thursday by K Rajaraman, Chairman of IFSCA and Anuradha Thakur, Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Government of India.

A release said the compendium serves as an essential resource for both global and domestic firms, offering a comprehensive overview of the financial services ecosystem at GIFT City, IFSC. It highlights the impact of progressive policymaking, state-of-the-art infrastructure, and a unified regulatory framework provided by IFSC Authority (IFSCA). GIFT City is advancing towards becoming a global aviation and maritime leasing hub with 303 aviation assets and 28 ships leased.

Army's first-ever successful ascent of Mount Kangto

TONY DAS
Itanagar

In a landmark achievement and a proud moment for the nation, an Indian Army mountaineering team from Eastern Command has successfully summited Mount Kangto (7,042 m / 23,103 ft) — the highest and hitherto unconquered sentinel peak of Arunachal Pradesh — approaching from the challenging Southern route.

This accomplishment marks the first recorded successful ascent of the formidable Mount Kangto, long regarded as an unclimbed guardian of the Kameng Himalayas.

The team was formally 'Flagged In' by Lt Gen RC Tiwari, Army Commander, Eastern Command, who commended the mountaineers for their extraordinary courage, professionalism and perseverance.

Flagged Off on 03 November 2025 from a forward base by the General Officer Commanding, Gajraj Corps, the 18-member team undertook a grueling expedition across rugged Himalayan terrain.

Braving extremely rarefied air, harsh sub-zero conditions, treacherous icy ridgelines, deep crevasses and near-vertical ice walls, the climbers showcased the hallmark attributes of the Indian Army — unmatched grit, discipline, teamwork and an indomitable spirit.

The historic ascent stands as a tribute to the majestic Eastern Himalayas and reflects the Indian Army's unwavering commitment to pushing the boundaries of human endurance and operational excellence.

Illaiyaraja

Film producer settles dispute with Ilayaraja by paying ₹50 lakh for using his songs

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
Chennai

The film producer, Mythri Movie Makers, settled a dispute with Music director Illaiyaraja by paying ₹50 lakh to him for using his songs "Nooru Varusham" and "Karutha Machan" in its film 'Dude'.

Recording the joint memorandum of compromise, dated November 28, 2025, Justice Senthilkumar Ramamoorthy of Madras High Court, in his recent order, closed the application arising out of a suit filed by Illaiyaraja.

The order states that the suit was filed seeking relief with respect to the alleged copyright infringement. The parties entered into negotiations and concluded a settlement. The terms thereof have been reduced to writing in the joint memorandum of compromise.

The said document has been signed digitally by the plaintiff and by the defendant. The respective counsel have also signed, the judge added.

On examining the joint memorandum of compromise, "I find no legal impediment for decreeing the suit in terms thereof," the judge said.

India turns to Belgium, Egypt, others for specialty fertilisers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

Amid reports of China withholding exports of specialty fertilisers to India over the past few months, domestic companies have turned to alternative suppliers in Belgium, Egypt, Germany, Morocco and the United States to bridge the supply gap, the Government informed Parliament on Friday. In a written reply to the Lok Sabha, Minister of State for Fertilisers Anupriya Patel clarified that specialty fertilisers fall outside the Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) scheme overseen by the Department of Fertilisers, and are thus unsubsidised.

"Fertiliser companies are free to import these products based on market dynamics," she said. Patel highlighted ongoing efforts by Indian research bodies to foster self-reliance in nutrient management.

Institutions such as the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and State Agricultural Universities are developing indigenous alternatives, including zinc EDTA, boron blends, nano-fertilisers and bio-fertilisers enriched with micronutrients like zinc-solubilising bacteria. These innovations, she noted, are aimed at reducing import dependence while promoting sustainable agricultural productivity.

ICAR's institutes, including the Indian Institute of Soil Science (IISS) in Bhopal, the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) in Delhi, and the Indian Institute of Horticultural Research (IIHR) in Bengaluru, have pioneered technologies such as nano-fertilisers, bio-fertilisers and customised nutrient blends. These advancements are bolstered by Government initiatives like Soil Test-Based Fertiliser Recommendations and Site-Specific Nutrient Management (SSNM), which form the backbone of a comprehensive Integrated Nutrient Management Strategy.

Under the Fertiliser Control Order (FCO) of 1985, no category is explicitly classified as "specialty fertiliser". However, it includes provisions for 100 per cent water-soluble complex fertilisers and 100 per cent water-soluble mixtures.

Official data underscores China's dominant role in India's imports of water-soluble fertilisers.

Russia's Sberbank rolls out first-India fund tied to Nifty50

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

Sberbank, Russia's largest bank, and JSC First Asset Management have introduced a new mutual fund, First — India, which offers investments linked to the performance of the Nifty50 Index (NSEI) — the flagship index of the National Stock Exchange of India Ltd (NSE).

The index comprises stocks of India's top 50 companies by market capitalisation, providing Russian retail investors with direct exposure to the Indian stock market.

The launch was announced at an event at the National Stock Exchange of India by Sberbank's CEO and Chairman of the Executive Board, Herman Gref, during his business visit to India.

The Nifty50 is one of the most widely followed equity indices among market participants worldwide. It comprises 50 large-cap, highly liquid stocks listed on the NSE, representing 15 diverse sectors of the Indian economy.

In India, more than 45 passive funds track the Nifty50, while an additional 22 passive funds outside the country follow the index.

The Nifty50 was launched in 1996 and will mark its 30th anniversary on April 22, 2026.

Ashishkumar Chauhan, MD and CEO of NSE, said this initiative reflects strong confidence in India's markets and deepens India – Russia financial cooperation.

"NSE is committed to partnering with Sberbank to enhance market connectivity, uphold regulatory and investor-protection standards, and build liquidity and transparency for these products as we create new opportunities for investors in both countries," he said.

Herman Gref, CEO and Chairman of the Executive Board, Sberbank, said: "Our new product provides a convenient way to gain exposure to one of the world's key economic markets — the Indian stock market.

Until now, no straightforward options existed for Russian investors seeking personal investments in Indian assets.

However, we have created a new and efficient financial bridge between the two countries."

British American Tobacco sells 9% stake in ITC hotels for ₹3,856 crore

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

British multinational BAT Plc on Friday divested a 9 per cent stake in ITC Hotels to Abu Dhabi Investment Authority, Societe Generale and Morgan Stanley, among others, for ₹3,856 crore through open market transactions. In a statement, British American Tobacco (BAT) said, "The proceeds of the stake sale will be used to progress to within the target 2-2.5x adjusted net debt/adjusted EBITDA leverage corridor (adjusted for Canada) by the end of 2026." After the transaction, the net proceeds from the block trade "amount to INR 38.2 bn (approximately £315 million at current exchange rates)". Also, BAT retains a 6.3 per cent holding in ITC Hotels, it added.

A total of 18.75 crore equity shares representing a 9 per cent stake were offloaded by BAT's three affiliates, Tobacco Manufacturers India Ltd, Myddleton Investment Company and Rothmans International Enterprises, in ITC Hotels. Tobacco Manufacturers India sold more than 12.33 crore equity shares of ITC Hotels, Myddleton Investment Company offloaded 4.86 crore scrips of the firm, and Rothmans International Enterprises disposed of nearly 1.55 crore shares of ITC Hotels, as per the block deal data on the NSE. The shares were offloaded at an average price of ₹205.65 apiece, taking the combined transaction value to ₹3,855.94 crore.

Nippon India Mutual Fund, HCL Capital Pvt Ltd, BNP Paribas Arbitrage, and Vanguard Group were among the entities that purchased ITC Hotels' shares, as per the data on the National Stock Exchange (NSE). Shares of ITC Hotels slipped 1 per cent to close at ₹205.65 apiece on the NSE.

On Thursday, BAT announced that it will sell stake through its three arms in ITC Hotels. "Our direct shareholding in ITC Hotels was a result of the demerger process that was completed by ITC earlier this year.

"As previously stated, a direct stake in ITC Hotels is not a strategic holding for BAT, therefore, I am pleased that the proceeds from this transaction will further support continued progress towards our stated 2026 leverage corridor," Tadeu Marroco, Chief Executive of BAT, said. Established in 1975, the business of ITC Hotels has grown to encompass over 140 hotels across 90+ destinations in the Indian subcontinent.

CBI books ex-AAI chairman for corruption in contract for food and beverage operator at airports

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

The CBI has registered a corruption case against former Airports Authority of India (AAI) chairman V P Agarwal for allegedly favouring a consortium of airport-lounge operators and a company that runs popular fast-food chains across the country in the contract for operating food and beverage services at the Chennai and Kolkata airports in 2012-13.

After three years of a preliminary enquiry into allegations of "cheating and gross misconduct", the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has also booked then Member (Finance) S Suresh, then Executive Director R Bhandari, lounge operators Travel Food Services Chennai Private Limited and Travel Food Services Kolkata Private Limited, and Devyani International Limited, which runs several fast-food chains in India. The questions sent to the companies remained unanswered. The case concerns tenders for the master concessionaire contract for food and beverage services at the Chennai and Kolkata airports in 2012-13, officials said on Friday. It is alleged that senior AAI officials engaged in gross misconduct, manipulated the tender process and made unauthorised changes to the terms and conditions of the master concessionaire contract in 2012-13 to favour the private parties.

The AAI had appointed IL&FS Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (IIDC) as its consultant in August 2011 to help enhance non-aeronautical revenue, including earnings from food and beverage outlets, retail shops, advertising and car parking, at the Chennai and Kolkata airports. Under the proposed master concessionaire model, a single agency would be awarded the contract to develop, operate and maintain all food and beverage outlets at each airport for 10 years to boost non-aeronautical revenue.

The CBI launched the enquiry in 2022 and submitted an extensive report material, suggesting cheating and a criminal conspiracy by public servants to extend undue benefits to private entities, prompting the agency to convert the enquiry into a formal case by filing an FIR.

The tender was a two-stage process. The first one was the Request for Qualification (RFQ) stage, with the shortlisted bidders moving to the finance stage in Request for Proposal (RFP).

According to the CBI, key terms in the RFQ were altered and conditions tweaked to favour certain companies at the RFP stage, and the minimum annual guarantee (MAG) was lowered and collusive bidding done by the two shortlisted bidders, who allegedly had conflicting interests.

The then Executive Director of the AAI, A K Mishra, had raised concerns about the collusive bidding and recommended recalling the tender with revised eligibility norms. "However, the said apprehension was ignored deliberately by the accused public servants," the FIR says.

The FIR mentions the role of Amit Arora, who is under investigation in the Delhi excise policy case. However, he has not been named as an accused in this case. "Amit Arora was also one of the prospective bidders at RFQ stage. On May 29, 2013, Amit Arora joined as Director of Devyani Airport Services (Mumbai) Pvt. Ltd, a subsidiary of Devyani International Ltd. "The entity, Devyani Airport Services (Mumbai) Pvt. Ltd, was incorporated on April 18, 2013. Amit Arora got associated with one of the bidders, Devyani International Ltd, after RFQ stage but prior to RFP stage," the FIR has alleged. The second shortlisted bidder was a consortium of Travel Food Services Private Limited and its subsidiary, Authentic Restaurants Private Limited. "Amit Arora acquired 99.99 per cent shares of Authentic Restaurants Pvt. Ltd and had also joined it as Additional Director," the FIR has alleged. The CBI said the bids of the two shortlisted contenders were "nearly same and just higher than the mandatory minimum annual guarantee", with the consortium emerging as the H-1 bidder. The enquiry found that Arora had direct and indirect interests in both bidders, which should have led to their disqualification.

"But, the Master Concessionaire Contracts were awarded to newly formed companies ... And the shareholders in both the companies who participated in the bidding process were same," the agency said. According to the FIR, the bidders failed to inform the AAI about the changes in the ownership and shareholding, violating the undertakings submitted at the RFQ stage and creating a conflict of interest.

The enquiry showed that the Commercial Advisory Board (CAB) of the AAI was given three separate options for fixing the MAG for the Kolkata and Chennai airports, but it chose the lowest of the three options for both airports. "Enquiry revealed that MAG was to be decided in a rational manner to achieve optimum revenue for AAI.

However, the accused public servant, in criminal conspiracy with private persons, deliberately and in order to facilitate undue benefits, ignored the opinion of consultant and opted for much lower amount," the CBI has said.

BRIEFLY

SENTHILKUMAR, ANAHAT WIN SQUASH INDIAN TOUR

National champions Velavan Senthilkumar and Anahat Singh clinched the men's and women's titles respectively at the Squash Indian Tour 4, which concluded at the Indian Squash Academy, here Friday.
Top seed and World No. 46 Senthilkumar overcame Egypt's Adam Hawal 11-7, 11-9, 9-11, 11-4 to lift the men's crown. The Chennai player displayed superior control in the closing stages to quell the challenge of the rising Egyptian. In the women's final, Delhi teenager and World No. 29 Anahat Singh battled past former World No 10 and veteran compatriot Joshna Chinappa in a pulsating five-game contest, winning 11-8, 11-13, 11-13, 11-6, 11-8. This was Anahat's second straight victory over the seasoned campaigner after the Daly College Indian Open last month.

MAN UNITED HELD 1-1, MISS PREMIER LEAGUE TOP-5 SHOT

Manchester United blew the chance to move up to fifth in the Premier League when West Ham salvaged a late 1-1 draw at Old Trafford.
Soungoutou Magassa's 83rd-minute equalizer on Thursday cancelled out Diogo Dalot's opening goal that had put United on course to move level on points with fourth-place Chelsea.
Bruno Fernandes squandered two chances to score a winner in added time – blazing a shot wide from inside the box and then volleying another off target.
It was another setback for United, which has only won one of its last five games – drawing three.

Australia takes 44-run lead in second Ashes test

ASSOCIATED PRESS
Birsbane

Australia took a 44-run first-innings lead after two days of the second Ashes cricket test, with the top order all getting starts Friday to help the hosts reach 378-6 at stumps.

Five dropped catches and some wayward bowling dented England and allowed the batters to capitalise.

Opener Jake Weatherald led from the start of Australia's innings with 72 from 78 balls, Marnus Labuschagne (65) completed back-to-back half centuries, and stand-in skipper Steve Smith made 61 as bat dominated ball despite some uneven bounce at the Gabba.

Alex Carey was dropped before he'd scored and again on 25, but survived to be unbeaten on 46 off 45 balls at stumps. Michael Neser also got a reprieve before finishing not out 15 in a 49-run seventh-wicket stand.

The series-opener in Perth was all over on Day 2, with Australia winning by eight wickets, but this day-night test in Brisbane seemingly still has a long way to go.

Joe Root's unbeaten 138 — his first Ashes century for England in Australia — remains the standout innings. The Australians were coasting at 291-3 in the night session until Brydon Carse took two wickets in four balls against the run of play. He ended a 95-run fourth-wicket partnership when Cameron Green (45) backed away too far from a half-volley and was bowled.

Carse then got a thick edge with a short ball to Carey from the next delivery but Ben Duckett grassed a regulation chance at gully.

Two balls later Smith pulled a short ball and Will Jacks reached out one-handed to pluck it out of the air at deep backward square. Australia suddenly was 292-5. Carey and Josh Inglis, both wicketkeeper batters, added 37 for the sixth wicket to get Australia within range of England's first innings 334.

Duckett put down another catch, going with one hand at gully when Inglis edged Ben Stokes. But the England captain didn't rely on any help two balls later when he angled a cutter back into Inglis' middle stump, bowling the Australian No. 7 for 23.

Stokes hit Neser on the pad first ball but it was given not out, and England wasted a review. Carse then put down a catch off Jofra Archer's bowling when Neser was on six, yet another reprieve for the Aussies. It got worse for England when Root put down a catch to his right when Carey edged between wicketkeeper and slip.

The England pace bowlers had heavy loads and weren't able to stick to a consistent length, with Archer bowling 20 overs and returning 1-74, Stokes having figures of 2-93 in 17 overs and Carse going for 3-113.

England resumed Day 2 at 325-9 and added nine runs in 14 balls before No. 11 Archer was dismissed.

Root, the number 1-ranked batter in test cricket, was 135 overnight and remained unbeaten when the 70-run last-wicket stand ended.

Travis Head, the star of Australia's series-opening win, added 30 more runs after a getting a reprieve when he was dropped on three by wicketkeeper Jamie Smith off Archer in the ninth over.

Head ran out of luck when he rushed through his shot to a ball from Carse and skied a catch to Gus Atkinson, ending a 77-run opening stand.

Weatherald made the scoring look easy as he raced to 50 from 45 balls, stroking nine boundaries and a six with a series of cut shots and uppercuts. He moved to 72 before he was hit on the foot by a full delivery from Archer that trapped him in front.

England's captain Ben Stokes, centre, celebrates with teammates the wicket of Australia's Glenn Maxwell, left, during the second Ashes cricket test match between Australia and England in Brisbane PTI

Chandigarh retain title at KIUG 2025 with 67 medals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Jaipur

Chandigarh University defended their overall championship crown at the Khelo India University Games, finishing their campaign with 67 medals, comprising 42 gold, 14 silver and 11 bronze.

Olympian and India's top swimmer Srihari Nataraj was the most successful athlete of KIUG 2025 as he ended with nine gold and two silver medals to help Bengaluru's Jain University clinch a total of 27 gold, nine silver and nine bronze.

Chandigarh University won 23 out of the 30 gold medals on offer in Canoe and Kayaking, a sports discipline which made its debut at the KIUG, six in swimming and five in athletics, two in wrestling and one each in weightlifting, shooting, cycling, archery, table tennis and kabaddi.

Lovely Professional University (LPU) finished their KIUG campaign as the runner-up with 78 medals, 11 medals more than the champions, but with less number of gold medals. LPU took home 32 golds, 25 silver and 22 bronze.

Guru Nanak Dev University (GNDU) also finished with 32 gold medals but their tally of 22 silver and 18 bronze meant that they had to settle for the third spot.

The fifth edition of KIUG was being held across seven cities in Rajasthan with a whopping 4448 athletes from 222 Universities competing in 23 medal disciplines. The Games were held under the aegis of the Sports Authority of India (SAI) in collaboration with the Rajasthan State Sports Council and is being hosted by Poornima University.

Himanta inaugrates new Umrangso cricket stadium

Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma batting in the newly inaugrated stadium

TONY DAS
Guwahati

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma today inaugurated a state-of-the-art cricket stadium featuring an impressive earthen gallery with 15,000-seat capacity in the picturesque surroundings of Umrangso in Dima Hasao district. Developed by the Assam Cricket Association (ACA), the modern facility also includes the newly constructed Senga Tularam Pavilion. The initiative forms part of the State government's efforts to encourage Assam's emerging cricket talent and foster a positive sporting environment.

The foundation stone of the stadium was laid on 25 September 2021. Built amid a serene natural landscape, the complex features five centre wickets and practice arena with five dedicated practice pitches ensuring year-round training opportunities. To support its operations, the complex also houses eight residential quarters for staff. The project area also houses an advanced pavilion with accommodation for around 32 players.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister announced that a new football stadium will also be constructed adjacent to the cricket ground. Once completed, the twin stadiums will create a vibrant sporting ecosystem in Umrangso, he said. Sarma added that plans are underway to host cricket matches in the presence of national star players in the near future in the stadium. He noted that night matches at the scenic venue would enhance the viewing experience for sports lovers.

The Chief Minister urged BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia, ACA president Taranga Gogoi and North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council CEM Debolal Gorlosa who attended the event to initiate steps for installing floodlights at the stadium. He further announced that a synthetic track would be laid at the proposed football stadium, with full financial support from the State government. He said the Assam Cricket Association had spent ₹11 crore on constructing the cricket stadium and thanked ACA for developing such a facility in Umrangso.Sports Minister Nandita Gorlosa, ACA president and MLA Taranga Gogoi, North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council CEM Debolal Gorlosa, Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council CEM Tuliram Ronghang, NCHAC chairman Mohit Hojai, BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia, ACA secretary Sanatan Das, members of the District Council and several dignitaries were present at the event.

McIlroy's late birdie burst keeps him alive at Australian Open

ASSOCIATED PRESS
Melbourne

Not before a bit of back-nine drama at Royal Melbourne, Rory McIlroy has made the weekend at the Australian Open after shooting a 3-under 68 on Friday to finish inside the 36-hole cut line.

McIlroy, who was 2-under on the tournament, was seven strokes behind leaders Daniel Rodriques (64) and Rasmus Neergaard-Peterson (66), who had 9-under totals of 133.

The leading pair were one shot clear of third-place Min Woo Lee, who shot 65 Friday. Adam Scott (66) was in a tie for fourth with Cameron Smith (65), who avoided adding to his tally of seven consecutive missed cuts. Scott and Lee were playing in the same featured threesome as McIlroy.

McIlroy started the day at 1-over after a 72 on Thursday, tied for 57th and trailing the leaders by seven shots. At the time, that was just one shot inside the expected cut of 2-over.

He birdied one hole and had eight pars on his front nine Friday, then had four more pars before making a bogey on the par-5 14th. He missed the fairway to the right off the tee and ended up under a tea tree. McIlroy then whiffed on his next shot as his club got stuck in a branch but he recovered to make a 6.

That put him outside the 36-hole cut, but he birdied the next hole, the par-3 15th, to put himself back at even-par and safe, at least, at that stage.

He parred the 16th to stay at even-par then perhaps made his shot of the tournament — from the patchy rough on 17, swinging through a small bush this time, where he tapped in for birdie after a long eagle putt went just wide.

Germany beats France to enter junior hockey WC semi-final

SAUMOJYOTI S CHOUDHURY
Chennai

Seven-time champions Germany had to dig deep to keep their hopes of title defence alive as they progressed into the semifinals of the FIH Men's Junior World Cup, edging out a gutsy France 3-1 in shoot-out after both the teams were locked 2-2 at the end of regulation time here on Friday.

In the 2023 edition, seven-time champions Germany eked out a narrow 2-1 win over France in the final to claim the title.

In the shoot-out, Jonas von Gersum, Justus Warweg and Lukas Kossel, who scored from a penalty stroke, were the goal getters for Germany, while France's lone strike in the shoot-out came from Aristide Michaelis. All credit goes to German goalie Jasper Ditzer, who produced a superlative show, not just in the shoot-out but all throughout the enthralling contest.

On Friday, it turned out to be a hard-fought contest between the two sides but France had better share of circle penetrations and chances.

France had the first real scoring chance in the form a penalty corner in the 13th minute but the effort was saved by German keeper Ditzer.

But both the teams matched each other stick-for-stick as the deadlock continued after the first 15 minutes.

The second quarter produced enthralling contest with the tempo and intensity of the game increasing to a different level. If not for German goalkeeper Ditzer, France would have had a sound lead by halftime.

France secured their second penalty corner in the 23rd minute but Ditzer produced another fine save.

The Germans too had their chances but failed in final execution. (PTI)

US prioritises visas for fans travelling for World Cup and Olympics

ASSOCIATED PRESS
Washington

The Trump administration has instructed US Embassies and consulates around the world to prioritise visa applications from foreigners wishing the visit the United States to either invest in America or attend the 2026 World Cup, 2028 Olympics and other major sporting events.

At the same time, the administration has added new criteria for highly skilled foreign workers seeking a particular visa.

The new rules would deny entry to those deemed to have directed or participated in the censorship of American citizens on social media through content moderation initiatives that have sprung up throughout Europe and elsewhere to combat extremist speech.

In a series of cables sent this week to all US Diplomatic missions that were obtained by *The Associated Press*, the State Department said visa applications for businesspeople considering "significant investments" in the United States should be at the top of the list for consideration along with applications from those wanting to travel "for major sporting events which showcase American excellence."

It is the latest effort by President Donald Trump's administration to crack down on migrants and visitors entering the US But with major sports events planned in the United States, the administration is looking to ensure that fans are able to attend those competitions.

The policies are getting heightened attention ahead of Friday's World Cup draw.

As part of a broader initiative to control the entry of foreigners into the U.S., the State Department has said all those who require visas to enter the country would need to submit to an in-person interview and screening to vet them for potential national security risks.

This has led to lengthy wait times at many embassies and consulates for interviews to apply for what are known as "B1" and "B2" visas despite a surge in consular staffing.

Last month, Trump announced a new initiative, dubbed "FIFA Pass," for foreigners travelling to the U.S. For the World Cup that will allow them to get interviews for visas more quickly. Nonetheless, he still encouraged them to apply for their visas "right away."

Secretary of State Marco Rubio said the administration had dispatched more than 400 additional consular officers around the world to handle the demand for visas for the World Cup and that in about 80% of the globe, travellers to the U.S. can get a visa appointment within 60 days — something reflected in the cable. The new steps in the cable this week go beyond the FIFA Pass initiative to expedite applications for those looking to travel to the United States for the Olympics and other major sports events.

Posts "should ensure sufficient appointment capacity to accommodate spectators and other fans travelling for events surrounding the (World Cup) tournament," said one of the two cables sent Tuesday.

"These should take priority over all other B1/B2 applications, except those related to American re-industrialization."

Others to be prioritized include foreign diplomats, government officials travelling on official business, temporary agricultural workers, religious workers, physicians and nurses, and students attending academic institutions with less than 15% foreign enrolment. "Posts should ensure that applicants of higher ranked groups get priority over applicants and lower rank groups, regardless of demand by lower ranked applicants," the cable said.

"Posts may significantly reduce the number of appointment slots available to lower rank groups in order to accommodate demand from higher rank groups."

A second cable sent Tuesday to all embassies and consulates set out new criteria for considering H-1B visa applications, instructing diplomats to "be on the lookout" for those who may have been or are "responsible for or complicit in the censorship of Americans" online and elsewhere. Those visas allow American companies to bring in people with technical skills that are hard to find in the United States, and President Donald Trump has said he would slap a USD 100,000 annual fee on them.

The department said evidence of this could lead to visa denial. It defined such information as having "adopting global content moderation policies inconsistent with freedom of expression, complying with global content moderation or censorship demands from a foreign entity and providing access to private data on American citizens in connection with content moderation."