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PM Modi Hails Armed Forces on Flag Day, Urges Citizens to Contribute to Soldiers' Welfare

Vice-President Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan launches Silver Jubilee Year of Brahma Kumaris' Om Shanti Retreat Centre, Gurugram
The tapasya and meditation of India's sages, rishis, and munis form the spiritual backbone of the nation's timeless wisdom: Vice president expressed happiness that the spiritual enrichment of our citizens is being taken care by the women-led Brahma Kumaris Foundation

Meditation Key to Emotional Balance in a Fast-Paced World and Inner Peace Essential for Viksit Bharat@2047: Vice-President (Gns).

The Vice-President of India, Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan, today launched the Silver Jubilee Year celebrations of the Om Shanti Retreat Centre

(OSRC) of the Brahma Kumaris in Gurugram.

Addressing the gathering, the Vice-President expressed happiness at joining the celebrations of the Centre, which was founded 24 years ago with the spiritual vision of the Brahma Kumaris and has now entered its 25th year of service. He appreciated the diversity of professionals- scientists, doctors, administrators, politicians- who are drawn to the Centre's message of peace and meditation. He commended the Brahma Kumaris for emerging as the world's largest women-led spiritual organisation.

The Vice-President emphasised Bharat's rich civilizational heritage rooted in spirituality, meditation, and inner awakening. He

recalled the profound contributions of sages, rishis and munis, whose tapasya and meditative practices have shaped India's timeless wisdom. Traditions such as Rajyoga and Vipassana, he said, highlight that true strength and clarity emerge from within.

Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan lauded the Brahma Kumaris for carrying forward this spiritual legacy and guiding millions in India and abroad towards peace and purity of mind. He noted that in the Amrit Kaal, the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has envisioned a Viksit Bharat@2047, where economic growth is complemented by inner stability, happiness, and peace. Meditation, he said, must be embraced as an essen-

tial life skill in today's fast-

paced world. The Vice-President also appreciated the Om Shanti Retreat Centre's strong commitment to environ-

mental sustainability and LiFE - an initiative of the



alignment with Mission Prime Minister Shri

Narendra Modi, encouraging individuals to adopt pro-planet lifestyles. He praised the Centre's green initiatives, including a 1 MW hybrid solar power plant, rainwater harvesting systems, biogas and sewage treatment plants, green kitchens, free sapling nurseries, and large-scale tree plantation under the Kalp Taru project.

The Vice-President appreciated the Brahma Kumaris' contribution to the 'Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan' and other social initiatives promoting dignity for senior citizens and the practice of Karmayoga in all fields.

Referring to the recent inauguration of the Brahma Kumaris' annual campaign "Rajyoga Meditation for World Unity and Trust" by the President Smt. Droupadi Murmu in Lucknow, Shri C.P. Radhakrishnan expressed confidence that the Silver Jubilee year will open new avenues of service, deeper societal partnerships, and amplified spiritual outreach.

Shri Rao Narbir Singh, Minister of Environment & Forest and Industry & Commerce, Government of Haryana; and senior dignitaries of Brahma Kumaris were also present on the occasion.

PM Modi Hails Armed Forces on Flag Day, Urges Citizens to Contribute to Soldiers' Welfare

(Gns).

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday led the nation in expressing profound gratitude to India's brave armed forces on the occasion of Armed Forces Flag Day, celebrated annually on December 7.

In a post shared on X, the Prime Minister lauded the personnel for their commitment, courage, and discipline.

"On Armed Forces Flag Day, we express our deepest gratitude to the brave men and women who protect our nation with unwavering courage," PM Modi wrote. He further emphasised the army's role as a



national beacon, stating, "Their discipline, resolve and spirit shield our people and strengthen our nation. Their commitment stands as a powerful example of duty, discipline and devotion to our nation."

Highlighting the spirit of the day, PM Modi urged all citizens to actively support the welfare of military families and veterans by contributing to the Armed Forces Flag Day Fund. This essential fund is dedicated

to providing support for war-disabled soldiers, Veer Naris (war widows), and their dependents.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan also extended their greetings, acknowledging the resolute service and sacrifices made by the armed forces.

Armed Forces Flag Day has been observed since 1949, serving a dual purpose: honouring the martyrs and soldiers who safeguard the nation's honor, and raising funds vital for the welfare of armed forces personnel and their families.

Arvind Kejriwal Embarks on 3-Day Gujarat Visit, to Meet Farmers and Party Workers

(Gns).

Arvind Kejriwal is starting a three-day visit to Gujarat on 7 December, while Aam Aadmi Party faces political tension in the state. The trip includes several events, and party leaders see it as crucial for organisation growth. The visit follows a shoe attack on AAP MLA Gopal Italia during a rally in Jamnagar.

Arvind Kejriwal began a three-day visit to Gujarat on December 7th, following a shoe attack on AAP MLA Gopal Italia during a rally in Jamnagar. Kejriwal alleged the incident reflected a unified effort by the BJP and Congress as AAP's popularity increased in the state.



Arvind Kejriwal Gujarat visit AAP Gujarat rally incident and security concerns

The Jamnagar incident took place during an AAP rally on Saturday. A person from the audience suddenly threw a shoe at Gopal Italia while Italia was on stage. The attack created panic at the venue and disrupted the event. People on

the stage and in the crowd reacted immediately, leading to chaos.

As soon as the shoe was hurled, a woman AAP

reaction and BJP Congress claims

Police personnel present at the rally tried to intervene and rescue the man. However, the crowd was large and agitated, so officers struggled for some time. Footage shows police pushing through workers to free the accused from the group. The incident raised questions about security arrangements at AAP's public gatherings in Gujarat.

After the rally, a video of the incident circulated widely on social media platforms. The clip showed the exact moment the shoe was thrown and the immediate scuffle. It highlighted how quickly AAP workers surrounded the accused. The visuals also underlined the scale of the crowd and the difficulties faced by the police.

Kejriwal reacted sharply on X after the attack and linked it to AAP's growth in Gujarat.

worker jumped off the stage. Other party workers quickly joined and caught the accused. According to visuals from the event, several workers then beat the person for a long time. The situation on the stage and around it turned disorderly within seconds.

Arvind Kejriwal Gujarat visit AAP Gujarat political

Govt is carrying development in every assembly segment without political bias, asserts Rajasthan CM Sharma

(Gns).

Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma said his government has been carrying out development works in every assembly segment without discrimination on the basis of political parties representing them.

Addressing social media warriors at a meet organised by the ruling BJP, the chief minister said, "The government, without being partial or discriminatory in any way, has provided Rs 28 crore to each of the 200 assembly segments to fulfill commitment of all round development of the state



made in our manifesto".

"Our manifesto was based on aspirations and needs of the people and we have been making untiring efforts in realising people's aspirations and fulfilling our promises. During our two-year regime, we have fulfilled 70 per cent of our

commitments for works that we had promised to implement in five years of our term in office," the CM asserted.

He said contrary to the good governance under the incumbent regime, the state was subjected to misrule during the previous

Congress government. The process of development was hampered, crimes against women were on the rise, law and order situation was bad, repeated paper leaks defeated interests of the youths in multiple ways.

On the reach and impact of the social media platforms and outlets, he appealed to the warriors of social media to keep people updated on the state government's good governance and also the efforts of development being made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi led government at the Centre, for in the state and the country.

IndiGo Crisis: Rahul Gandhi Slams Govt, Airlines Company With 'Monopoly' Jibe; Aviation Minister Hits Back

(Gns).

Union Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu has rejected Rahul Gandhi's charge that the IndiGo flight disruptions reflect a "monopoly model" pushed by the government, stressing that the crisis is linked to safety rules and crew planning, not politics, even as passengers continue to face large-scale cancellations and delays across airports.

Naidu said the focus

should remain on public interest and aviation safety, while also defending the



government's record on market competition and airline expansion, as IndiGo works to restore normal schedules after a severe

crew shortage left thousands of travellers stuck nationwide over several days.

Union Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu refuted Rahul Gandhi's claim that IndiGo's flight disruptions reflect a government-pushed monopoly, citing safety rules and crew planning issues as the cause, while the DGCA has paused revised fatigue rules to help

stabilize IndiGo's operations.

Regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation had issued new flight safety rules in January last year, bringing Indian standards closer to global practice and addressing pilot fatigue, which is a major risk factor in aviation accidents, but IndiGo struggled to reorganise crew rosters under these norms, causing a system-wide collapse in its operations.

No laxity will be tolerated in SIR process: CM Yogi to BJP leaders of Aligarh division

(Gns).

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has directed all public representatives and BJP officials to reach their respective booths to ensure that 100% of voters fill out the enumeration forms for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR).

The chief minister arrived in Aligarh on Sunday on a day-long visit. He held a review meeting with public representatives



and party officials of four districts of the Aligarh division: Aligarh, Hathras, Etah, and Kasganj, in the Collectorate auditorium. The focus of the meeting

was the SIR campaign, towards which he indicated both seriousness and strictness.

Yogi stated that the voter list is the foundation of the democratic system and any error or negligence in it will not be acceptable.

Expressing displeasure over the slow progress, he stated that the campaign

should be run in mission mode and should reach each and every eligible voter.

The CM also directed that special attention be paid to filling out forms to ensure a transparent voter list is prepared by December 11. He warned that the names of ineligible or deceased individuals should not remain on the voter list. Such names should be removed immediately.

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Editorial

Under Pressure

The rupee drifting beyond the 90-per-dollar mark is not merely another data point in the market's daily churn. It is a marker of a deeper unease that has been building beneath the surface for months, fuelled by global uncertainty and domestic vulnerabilities that now stand exposed. A currency is often the most honest reflection of economic sentiment. With the rupee peaking at 90.42 before strengthening a little, the message is unmistakable: confidence is eroding faster than policymakers would like to admit.

The immediate trigger is easy to identify. Steep US tariffs on Indian goods have impaired the country's export engine at a moment when global demand is already weak. When your largest market raises barriers, the spillover effects are swift. Exporters hedge more aggressively, importers scramble for dollar cover, and the currency market starts moving in one direction. But the deeper concern is that investors see this as more than a one-off disruption. Tariffs can be negotiated, but rebuilding credibility in trade relationships takes far longer. Foreign portfolio investors, who have traditionally provided depth to Indian markets, are now pulling back just when the economy needs patient capital. The prospect of reduced earnings for several export-facing sectors has made local equities less attractive, and the hesitation is visible in the sharp rise in hedging costs.

A currency sliding past a psychological barrier often emboldens speculative behaviour, and that dynamic is clearly in play. When traders sense that policymakers are reluctant to defend a level, they test how far the breach can extend. Forward premiums and implied yields surging to their highest levels in months reflect this shift in expectations. What is equally worrying is the weakness in long-term capital flows. Foreign direct investment has been subdued, and offshore borrowings have not compensated for the shortfall. At a time when India aims to position itself as a resilient, investment-friendly alternative in a fracturing global economy, the capital account looks distressingly thin. This lack of depth leaves the rupee more vulnerable to external shocks and amplifies even modest swings in sentiment. Yet, this moment also offers an opportunity.

A currency under pressure can serve as a forceful reminder of the reforms that remain unfinished. Export competitiveness still hinges too heavily on favourable global conditions rather than productivity-led strength. Capital flows continue to depend on periodic bursts of optimism instead of structural assurance. And external-sector policymaking often reacts to crises rather than anticipates them. Stability will return only when investors see a coherent roadmap ~ one that strengthens export capacity, rebuilds trust with trading partners, diversifies markets, and signals a long-term commitment to predictable economic policy. Until then, the rupee's slide past 90 should be read not as an aberration but as an early warning. The currency is telling us something important. It would be unwise to ignore it.

Caring for the elderly in rural communities

(Gns).

A neglected aspect of health and development initiatives in rural areas is that the needs of elderly people, particularly those from weaker sections, do not get adequate attention. The problems of elderly people can be severer in areas where dependence on migrant work is high and younger members of a family must be away for considerable periods of time. Dr. Sharad Iyengar, who leads a programme called Prabal Yatra (PY) for improved health and wellness care for elderly people in about 100 villages of south Rajasthan says that their experiences so far have confirmed the urgent need for such interventions to specially help the elderly people from weaker sections in remote villages.



Gaya Prasad Gopal, an elderly and respected social activist from Chitrakut district of Uttar Pradesh has been closely observing the changes in rural poor households. He says that sometimes due to compulsion and sometimes due to neglect, increasingly there is a tendency on the part of younger members to not fulfill their responsibilities towards elders in their families satisfactorily. In such conditions, government policies need to give more attention to meeting the needs of older people in rural areas. For evolving the most appropriate policies it is important to collect information on priority needs and the wider social conditions in which these needs can be met based on constant interactions with the elderly as well as the wider rural community.

An initiative like Prabal Yatra thus helps at two levels. On the one hand it contributes directly to the wellness of older people in villages where it works. On the other hand, sensitive

community workers get valuable insights which can be helpful for need-based and evidence-based policy. Each village of this work area in south Rajasthan has a Prabal Yatra Manch or a membership-based platform of older people. They come together in

meetings to take up physical exercises, mental simulation games, and conversations on their welfare. At the same time, with the help of PY community workers, elderly people can resolve problems and questions relating to benefits from government schemes.

The PY program is being implemented by a voluntary organization Action Research and Training for Health (ARTH) which is known for the strength of its health programmes. Hence health, nutrition, safety, and overall wellness have been emphasized more in PY. Broadly these interventions are in keeping with the World Health Organization's approach called Integrated Care for Older People or ICOPE. This approach emphasizes that six intrinsic capacities are essential for healthy ageing. These include mobility, nutrition, vision, cognition, hearing, and mood related matters. An assessment of 2,386 older persons revealed that 90

per cent have at least one diminished capacity and 79 per cent have two or more. Thus, PY has been involved in extensive efforts to provide glasses, cataract surgeries and walking aids. Hundreds of those suffering from serious illness have been

helped in getting medical care, with many being accompanied to health facilities.

To improve nutrition, raised bed vegetable gardens have been provided to several households. In addition, the fact that the elderly people can meet and discuss their issues in meetings has been a step forward for them and they look forward to such interactions. Recently I attended one such meeting. One of the issues that we discussed related to the increasing tendency for older people to live separately which in the case of death of one partner means that several older persons are living entirely alone. In the cases of some women like Jumli Bai, too old and weak to cook her own meal, this means that daily food needs now depend precariously on what a neighbour may agree to provide. I also visited a family in which a middle ground appeared to have been found. Here the older people were living separately but very close to their children.

In such a situation, it appeared more likely that the essential needs of old people would be noticed and taken care of. Such situations also indicate that apart from health and nutrition issues, wider social issues are also integral to finding satisfactory conditions for the care of elderly people. In the meeting we also discussed the factors that lead to neglect of the needs of elderly people. Those assembled agreed that where alcohol consumption is a problem for younger persons, the needs of the elderly people tend to be neglected more. According to a Nanalal Gayari, an experienced social worker of this area, there is a clear tendency in these villages for the care of elderly people not to get adequate attention, at least among those weaker sections with which he is familiar.

This is a worrying trend for anyone working for better overall care and wellness of elderly people. At the same time there is no denying that various communities have rich traditions of respecting the elderly and taking good care of them. These good traditions however can come under pressure in difficult conditions or under the influence of the expansion of some harmful trends. Can we work to revive some of these good traditions, generally and in the specific context of various communities which can lead to better care of the elderly people? Thus, a combination of health and social interventions are needed for improved health care of older people. Programmes like PY can make a helpful contribution to various communities among whom they work. The insights gained in the course of this work can also contribute to framing better policies for older people.

IndiGo fiasco: Who is accountable and why refund is not enough for passengers

- by 1 June 2024.
- The rules tightened

2. It gives the regulator wiggle room to grant selec-



several areas: longer weekly rest, stricter limits on night duties and landings, and clearer separation of personal leave from mandatory rest.

- After industry push-back, implementation was phased and repeatedly delayed, with the final, stricter phase ultimately tied to 1 November 2025.
- IndiGo was among the first to oppose the new norms when they were notified, arguing for more time.

So by late 2025, IndiGo had had well over a year of lead time to:

- recruit and train more pilots;
- moderate capacity growth;
- increase reserve buffers; and
- clean up its roster practices.

Instead, pilots' bodies allege prolonged under-hiring and aggressive scheduling, and even business media are now asking whether IndiGo simply waited too long to staff up for known rules.

DGCA's half-step on fatigue: CAR vs circular

On paper, DGCA did the right thing in 2024 by strengthening prescriptive FDTL regulations through a CAR. But by 2025, instead of embedding a full Fatigue Risk Management System (FRMS) regime in regulation, it floated draft FRMS guidelines/framework ~ essentially via circular-style guidance ~ to "complement duty time norms" and collect feedback.

That softer, guidance-based approach has two problems:

1. It signals to operators that fatigue management is still negotiable.
- Crew-planning is indeed

time exemptions and "temporary relaxations", as we have now seen with IndiGo.

After the chaos erupted, DGCA and the Ministry placed the revised FDTL CAR "in abeyance" or rolled back key rest protections, and issued selective relaxations to specifically help stabilise IndiGo's operations. Pilot associations now warn this will mean reduced rest and increased fatigue for IndiGo pilots ~ the exact opposite of what the rules were supposed to achieve.

Was this really unforeseeable ~ or engineered fragility?

IndiGo has reportedly admitted to regulators that the meltdown stems from "misjudgment and planning gaps" and has sought exemptions until February 2026. When a carrier of this size, using sophisticated software and years of data, claims that stricter rest rules suddenly made its schedule unworkable, a few hard questions arise:

- Did IndiGo consciously choose to keep minimal standby buffers to maximise utilisation and margins, gambling that the rules would again be delayed or diluted?
- Did it continue to publish and sell an ambitious winter schedule even after internal models showed that, under the new FDTL, it simply did not have the pilots to operate it?

- When early warning signs appeared (higher fatigue reports, rising sick rates, rosters getting tighter), were flights proactively trimmed ~ or were crews pushed until the system snapped?
- Crew-planning is indeed

tedious and continuous. But that is precisely why mass cancellations over multiple days point less to a sudden shock and more to a long-running planning failure.

Passengers as collateral damage: refund is not compensation

Passengers have borne the full brunt:

- Many were called to the airport, cleared security, and even boarded, only to be told there was no crew. Others discovered cancellations while standing in check-in queues.

- Last-minute alternatives on other airlines cost several times the original fare. One passenger quoted in the press paid about ₹46,500 per person after an ₹8,000 IndiGo flight was cancelled.

In such cases, a refund is not compensation. It does not cover:

- missed weddings, funerals, exams, job interviews;
- non-refundable hotels, taxis, visas;
- days of leave wasted and emotional stress.

Despite this being, in effect, a national mobility crisis~with the country's primary air corridor effectively choked~there has been no consistent public outreach at the terminals from political leaders, senior bureaucrats, or airline top management comforting passengers on the ground. Most communication has been via social media and press releases.

Abuse of dominance? Why the CCI must look into this

Under Section 4 of the Competition Act, a dominant enterprise abuses its position if it, among other things:

- "limits or restricts" production or services; or
- imposes unfair or discriminatory conditions on consumers.

IndiGo's ~60% share in domestic aviation gives it a position of extraordinary strength in the market. When such a player:

- continues aggressive ticket sales during peak season despite knowing that pilot numbers under new FDTL will not suffice;
- fails to trim schedules

in advance; and

- then cancels flights en masse over several days, effectively paralysing the market,there is at least a prima facie case for the Competition Commission of India (CCI) to investigate whether this amounts to an abuse of dominance through restriction of services and exploitation of consumers.

DGCA, as sector regulator, should not stop at a show-cause notice to IndiGo's CEO for failing in his duty to passengers. It should formally refer the matter to CCI, asking whether knowingly overselling capacity without adequate crew, and then cancelling at scale, constitutes abusive conduct in a market essential to national connectivity.

Accountability for both IndiGo and the State

Two layers of accountability are needed:

1. For IndiGo
- Full, audited disclosure of real pilot strength vs required strength under the new FDTL at least six months before November 1.
 - Examination of whether risk assessments were done and what options (capacity cuts, wet leases, recruitment) were considered and rejected.
 - Strong penalties if it is found that the airline knowingly continued ticket sales while aware that it could not honour them.

2. For DGCA and the Ministry

- Why were rules meant to reduce fatigue rolled back within days of being enforced, and that too selectively?

- Why was an FRMS framework left at the draft/circular stage instead of being embedded in binding regulation before FDTL tightening?

- Why did enforcement bend towards protecting one airline's schedule rather than protecting passengers and long-term safety?

When a single private carrier's planning failure can trigger a nationwide mobility crisis, this is no longer a routine operations issue.

Earth Summit Gandhinagar edition concludes with a strong call for technology-led rural transformation

Gandhinagar, December 7, 2025: The two-day Gandhinagar edition of the Earth Summit 2025-26, jointly organised by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) and the Internet & Mobile Association of India (IAMAI), concluded today at the Mahatma Mandir Convention & Exhibition Centre.

The Summit, themed 'Empowering Rural Innovation for Global Change,' brought together innovators, FPOs, agri-startups, women entrepreneurs, rural cooperative banks, community institutions, policymakers, and industry leaders. The Gandhinagar edition highlighted the important role of cooperatives in driving rural growth and supporting community-led development.

In a fireside chat on building sustainable rural economies, Mr Shaji K.V., Chairman, NABARD, highlighting the challenges of strengthening India's cooperative sector, said, "Cooperatives are central to achieving sustainable and equitable growth in a country like India, where every region is at a different stage of development. India now has more than 8.5 lakh cooperative societies with

close to 30 crore members, which is one in every four Indians. Yet its value is still underestimated, and its potential is still being explored." Looking ahead, he emphasised the importance of modernising gov-



ernance and strengthening inclusion.

During a panel discussion on how AI, robotics, and data-driven solutions are enabling India's shift from smart farming to truly resilient agriculture, Mr Goverdhan Singh Rawat, Deputy Managing Director, NABARD, mentioned that a key opportunity for accelerating Agri 5.0 lies in building a strong, structured digital data foundation for farms, farmers, and farming systems. The Government's agri-stack and Digital Agriculture Mission are important steps in this direction, helping standardise data and enable scalable digital solutions. He further added that if we advance, it will be essential to ensure that emerging technologies remain affordable and user-friendly, that can drive adoption at the grassroots.

Addressing a session on empowering FPOs through information, Dr Ajay Kumar Sood, Deputy Managing Director, NABARD, underscored the need for a unified digital platform that brings together all key

stakeholders, including farmers, banks, and government agencies, to unlock the full potential of agri-data exchange. He recommended developing an app on the lines of Sahakar Sarathi, adding that an FPO Saathi-type solution could transform the nearly 300 data points already available with FPOs from static records into a dynamic, real-time resource.

The Rural Innovation Expo emerged as a prominent attraction at the Gandhinagar Earth Summit, demonstrating the rapid advancement of technology-led entrepreneurship. It housed 90 booths, with strong participation from FPOs, cooperatives, and agritech innovators. The exhibitors highlighted how digital tools, improved market linkages and modern agri-solutions are increas-

ingly driving economic opportunity and operational efficiency in rural communities. The exhibition

also showcased a healthy representation of tribal and women-led enterprises, reinforcing the Summit's commitment to inclusive development.

The Expo reflected the vision of Shri Amit Shah, Hon'ble Union Home Minister & Minister of Cooperation, Government of India, who, in his inaugural address of the Summit, emphasised that the development of India's villages is integral to the country's progress.

The Earth Summit 2025-26 is supported by key national institutions, including the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, and the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India. This cross-ministerial collaboration highlights a unified national commitment to strengthening rural development through technology, innovation, and policy alignment.

WESTERN RAILWAY TO RUN A SUPERFAST SPECIAL TRAIN BETWEEN BANDRA TERMINUS - DURGAPURA - MADAR

For the convenience of passengers and with a view to meet the travel demand to clear extra rush of passenger traffic, Western Railway will run a Superfast Special Train on Special fare between Bandra Terminus – Durgapura - Madar station.

According to a press release issued by Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railway, Shri Vineet Abhishek, the details of the train is as under:

Train No. 09604/09603 Bandra Terminus – Durgapura – Madar Superfast Special [02 Trips]

Train No. 09604 Bandra Terminus – Durgapura Superfast Special will depart from Bandra Terminus on Tuesday, 09th December, 2025 at 19:25 hrs and will reach Durgapura at 15:10 hrs, the next day. Similarly, Train No. 09603 Madar – Bandra Terminus Superfast Special will depart from Madar on Monday, 08th December, 2025 at 18:45 hrs and will arrive Bandra Terminus at 16:30 hrs, the next day.

Enroute, the train will halt at Borivali, Vapi, Valsad, Navsari, Surat, Vadodara, Ratlam, Bhawani Mandi, Ramganj Mandi, Kota and Sawai Madhopur stations in both directions. Train No. 09603 commencing from Madar will have additional halt at Kishangarh, Jaipur and Durgapura stations.

The train comprises of AC - 2 Tier, AC - 3 Tier, AC - 3 Tier (Economy), Sleeper Class and General Second Class Coaches.

The booking for Train No. 09604 opens from 08.12.2025 at all PRS counters & on IRCTC website. For detailed information regarding timings of halts and composition, passengers may please visit www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in.

South Africa Coach Shukri Conrad Humbled After ODI Series Defeat to India, Regrets 'Grovel' Remark

(Gns).

South Africa head coach Shukri Conrad has expressed regret over the wording he used during the Guwahati Test, acknowledging that the term "grovel" drew unnecessary controversy and overshadowed his team's remarkable Test series win against India.

South Africa's head coach, Shukri Conrad, regretted using the term "grovel" during the Guwahati Test, which overshadowed their Test series win against India; he also reflected on India's 2-1 ODI series win, highlighting Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma's performances and South Africa's missed opportunity for a double-format victory.

Conrad admitted that the comment unintentionally shifted attention away from the players and onto himself. He said the term, which in South Africa carries sensitive historical connotations, "took the sheen" off what should have been a celebratory moment after a significant red-ball victory.

"On reflection, it was never my intention to cause any malice or be anything other than humble," Conrad said. "Could I have been smarter with the word I used? Absolutely. It left space for people to attach their own context, when all I meant was that India should have to work really hard."

He added that the ensuing noise conflicted with his core coaching values. "Being humble is a cornerstone of our Test team and all our teams, really. People shouldn't even know who the coach is, it should always be about the players. Unfortunately, the noise became about me."

Coach Vows More Careful Communication

Acknowledging how quickly context can be reshaped in the public space, Conrad said he would choose his words more cautiously going forward. "I'm going to be careful with what I say because any word can be pulled into a different frame. It's a pity it spiralled the way it did, but there was definitely no malice intended."



Gautam Gambhir's Big Statement On World Cup 2027 Team

(Gns).

India's nine-wicket win over South Africa in the deciding ODI not only sealed the series but also highlighted the impact of non-regulars Rituraj Gaikwad and Yashasvi Jaiswal, whose centuries backed Virat Kohli's Player of the Series show in the India vs South Africa ODI series.

Head coach Gautam Gambhir, however, refused to look too far ahead when asked whether Gaikwad and Jaiswal could be part of India's 2027 ODI World Cup plans after the India vs South Africa ODI series, stressing that long-term projections were not his focus at this stage.

India's nine-wicket victory over South Africa in the final ODI secured the series, thanks to centuries from Rituraj Gaikwad and Yashasvi Jaiswal, with head coach Gautam Gambhir emphasizing the importance of present performance over focusing on the 2027 World Cup.

Gaikwad and Jaiswal stepped in due to injuries, with Gaikwad scoring 105 in the second ODI and Jaiswal hitting 116 in the deciding match.

India vs South Africa ODI series: Gambhir's view on 2027 World Cup talk

"Look, first we have got to realise that ODI World Cup is two years away from now. The most important think is to stay in the present," he said at the press conference after India's nine-wicket win over South Africa in the deciding ODI in Visakhapatnam.

Gambhir explained that performances in the India vs South Africa ODI series mattered more than early World Cup debates. "It's also important that young boys coming into the set-up are grabbing their opportunities," Gambhir said, pointing to how the current environment rewarded players who delivered immediately for India.

India vs South Africa ODI series: Centuries from Gaikwad and Jaiswal

Gaikwad and Jaiswal only entered the XI in the India vs South Africa ODI series because Shubman Gill and Shreyas Iyer were injured, yet both made strong cases. Gaikwad hit 105 off 83 balls in Raipur's second ODI, while Jaiswal struck an unbeaten 116 in the series decider.

Gambhir highlighted that Gaikwad's hundred in the India vs South Africa ODI series came in a pressure situation. "Someone like Rituraj Gaikwad, who batted out of position. He is a quality player, we all know. We wanted to give him an opportunity in this series for the kind of form he was in with India A. He actually grabbed that opportunity with both hands, getting a hundred in the second game, when we were under pressure. We were 40 for 2 and then getting that kind of hundred was proper quality," he added.

On Jaiswal's first ODI ton, also in the India vs South Africa ODI series, Gambhir underlined the potential. "Yashasvi as well. We have seen how much quality he has. What he does in Test cricket. Obviously, it just the start of his career, especially in white-ball cricket. Hopefully, he has a massive future ahead, and so is the case with Rituraj," the head coach said.



Right to Disconnect Bill, 2025: No office calls after work hours, penalty for employers in case of violations, and more

(Gns).

NCP-SCP leader and Opposition INDIA Bloc's MP Supriya Sule has moved a private members' bill in the Lok Sabha that proposes granting employees the right to refuse to take work-related calls and emails once official working hours are completed.

Although unlikely to clear the House since the Opposition doesn't have the majority, the Right to Disconnect Bill, 2025, seeks to create an Employees' Welfare Authority.

The bill says that employees should not be forced to take calls after working hours or on holidays. It seeks to grant them immunity from disciplinary action if they refuse calls and emails outside their official working hours.

Key provisions of the Right to Disconnect Bill, 2025

As per the provisions of the Right to Disconnect Bill, 2025, which Sule introduced in the Lok Sabha on December 1, employees are entitled to disconnect from office-related communication after working hours.

As per the provisions, employees will not face any disciplinary action for refusing to respond to calls, messages, and emails after working hours. This will apply to all forms of communication, including phone calls, text messages, emails, and video calls.

While the bill seeks to protect employees' rights and grants them better work-life balance opportunities, it also has a provision for employers to reach out to their employees in case of genuine emergencies.

Employers, as per the bill, may be able to contact employees during pre-negotiated timings. However, the timings must be agreed upon by both sides. In case an employee is working beyond official working hours, he/she would be entitled to overtime pay.

If employers violate the rules, the bill also proposes a penalty of 1 per cent of the total employee remuneration.

Presenting the bill, Sule argued that today's digital culture has created an atmosphere of constant availability, severely affecting work-life balance. "The Right to Disconnect Bill, 2025, provides every employee the right to disconnect from work-related electronic communications. It fosters a better quality of life and a healthier work-life balance by reducing the burnout caused by today's digital culture," she said.

Citing various studies, the bill says that this culture of constant availability has led to sleep deprivation, stress, and emotional exhaustion. It has also contributed to telepressure, a kind of pressure to respond immediately, and infobesity, a term associated with the habit of constant monitoring of work messages.



Benin Faces Uncertainty as “Military Committee” Claims Control, Ousts President Patrice Talon

(Gns).

Political uncertainty gripped Benin on Sunday after a group of soldiers appeared on state television claiming they had removed President Patrice Talon from power, just months before the end of his second term.

The soldiers, operating under the name "Military Committee for Refoundation" (CMR), said they had taken the decision collectively and declared that Talon was no longer the country's head of state. Their announcement marked a dramatic escalation in tensions and raised fears of a military takeover.

On Sunday, a group of soldiers identifying as the Military Committee for Refoundation (CMR) announced on state television that they had removed President Patrice Talon from power, months before the end of his second term, creating political uncertainty in Benin; the president's location remained unconfirmed, and the French Embassy in Benin issued a warning to its citizens.

Meanwhile, questions remained over Talon's safety and location, as officials did not confirm where he was following the broadcast. Reports of gunfire near Camp Guezo - a military site close to the presidential residence - intensified concerns about security in the capital.

The French Embassy in Benin issued a warning to its citizens, urging them to remain indoors and avoid travel after hearing reports of gunshots in the area. Authorities have not yet issued a wider official statement, leaving the country and observers awaiting further clarity.



IndiGo Gradually Returns to Normal as Government Monitors Recovery

(Gns).

IndiGo is restoring operations after major disruption, with the government closely watching every step. The airline plans over 1,650 flights, compared with 1,500 on the previous day, and reported 137 of 138 destinations active. On-time performance has risen to 75 per cent, a sharp jump from 30 per cent a day earlier.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation has pushed IndiGo to speed up refunds, improve schedules and clear baggage backlogs. Officials said air travel across India is stabilising fast, as other carriers are running at full capacity with normal schedules. IndiGo is also waiving fees on cancellations and rescheduling for tickets booked up to 15 December.

IndiGo is restoring operations after disruptions, with the Ministry of Civil Aviation closely monitoring the situation; the airline plans over 1,650 flights, that trips changed due to these disruptions must not

IndiGo said services are improving each day, with more flights added back to the schedule. The airline reported that 137 of its 138 destinations are now connected again. It also said the rate of luggage tracing and refund processing is increasing. IndiGo stated, "We are working round the clock to resume normal service. Please bear with us," in its latest update.

Airport heads from Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad and Goa reported normal conditions at terminals. Passenger flow was described as smooth, with no heavy queues at check-in counters, security points or boarding gates. Airport operators and CISF have raised on-ground help, including more staff and closer monitoring of passenger areas.

Officials said the aviation network is moving towards full normal operations, but strict supervision continues. A 24x7 control room at the Ministry of Civil Aviation tracks IndiGo operations, airport conditions and passenger support. Teams on the ground are monitoring crew plans and service standards so that all directions are followed and travellers are treated properly.

has processed ₹610 crore in refunds, and aims for baggage delivery within 48 hours while maintaining a 75% on-time performance. To protect passengers' money, the Ministry of Civil Aviation ordered IndiGo to complete all pending refunds for cancelled or heavily delayed flights by 8 pm on the same day. IndiGo has processed Rs 610 crore in refunds so far. Airlines have also been told attract any extra rescheduling charges.



India-US Framework Agreement Likely Soon, Full Trade Pact to Take Longer

(Gns).

India and the United States are pushing to lock in a framework trade deal before the end of the year, with fresh talks in New Delhi on December 10 expected to speed up work on the first tranche of the proposed bilateral trade agreement, according to officials familiar with the ongoing discussions.

Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal recently stated that India expects this early framework to ease tariff barriers hurting Indian exporters, while a full Bilateral Trade Agreement will take longer because India and the US are running two parallel negotiation tracks, one near term on tariffs and another on a wider, long-term pact.

India and the United States are aiming to finalize a framework trade deal before the year's end, with discussions in New Delhi on December 10 to accelerate work on the proposed agreement, focusing on easing tariff barriers that affect Indian exporters, and aiming to increase bilateral trade to USD 500 billion by 2030 from the current USD 191 billion.

The December 10 meetings in New Delhi are not labelled as a formal negotiating round, yet officials expect both sides to focus on the specific elements needed to move the India US trade agreement towards closure, especially after Washington imposed a 25 per cent tariff and a further 25 per cent punitive duty on several senior US trade officials since these higher duties were announced, while the broader negotiation process is being steered by Assistant USTR for South and Central Asia Brendan Lynch and Joint Secretary Darpan Jain from India's Commerce Department.

The latest engagement comes after months of regular contact, as US negotiators were last in India on September 16 and Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal travelled to Washington twice this year, in May and again on September 22, while both governments have instructed officials to complete the first tranche of the India US trade agreement by fall 2025 after already holding six negotiation rounds.

Indian exports linked to India's purchase of Russian crude. The visiting US team will be led by Deputy United States Trade Representative Rick Switzer, marking the second visit by



From electrifying protests to landmark debates: Parliament back to legislative business

(Gns).

The Winter Session of Parliament, which erupted into a storm of protests and adjournments in its opening week, geared up for a decisive second week starting Monday December 8. A breakthrough all-party consensus has cleared the legislative roadblock, setting the stage for an intense focus on both symbolic and high-impact discussions.

Flashpoint Week One: The SIR protests shake parliamentary floors

The session's first week, beginning December 1, was marked by relentless disruptions led by the Opposition, demanding urgent debate on the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls—a contentious exercise by the Election Commission across 12 states and UTs. Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge pushed for priority debate under Booth Level Officers' (BLOs) deaths and national security risks. Despite the turbulence, the Upper House welcomed Vice-Chaired by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla charted a packed agenda:

December 8: A 10-hour special debate on the 150th anniversary of the national song 'Vande Mataram', with Prime Minister Narendra Modi opening and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh concluding the discussion. Congress MPs, including Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, will participate.

However, the IndiGo fiasco is likely to mar the proceedings of the two Houses on Monday, with Opposition members expected to rent their ire on the sudden massive flight disruptions.

Over 1,000 IndiGo flights were cancelled, leaving thousands of passengers stranded across India.

President CP Radhakrishnan as Rajya Sabha Chairman and shared a rare moment of unity celebrating Indian sports achievements.

Week Two Agenda: Vande Mataram tribute and electoral reform talks

An all-party meeting



Bihar to form dedicated security force on CISF lines to boost investor confidence

(Gns). To ensure safety of industries in Bihar, the state government will form a special security force called the Bihar Industrial Security Force (BISF) to operate on the lines of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF). The new force will help make security arrangements in Bihar's industrial areas more effective.

Announcing the move, Bihar Industry Minister Dilip Jaiswal said the primary objective of BISF is to make the state an investment-friendly and secure industrial state. "Security is a crucial aspect of attracting industrial investment in the state and increasing the confidence of industrialists. With the establishment of the BISF, industries will not

only receive better protection, but effective control over theft, harassment, criminal activities, and other potential threats will also become possible," he said.

He added that the force would ensure security in industrial areas through cutting-edge technology and specially trained personnel.

The minister said the state government wants to assure investors that their business is in safe hands. "This new security arrangement will instill confidence in investors and industrialists, encouraging them to expand their investments in the state. At the same time, this step will strengthen the

state's industrial landscape and promote the establishment of new industries," he added.



Dr. Jaiswal further said that the NDA government is working in mission mode to establish Bihar among the top investment destinations. To accelerate industrial development, the 'Ease of Doing Business' framework is being further strengthened, and rapid progress is being made toward the

development of five mega food parks, 10 industrial parks, and 100 MSME parks.

In a message posted on X, he said that the government's commitment to making the state the new tech and industrial hub of Eastern India is being realised by providing industry-oriented skill training to young people. "The NDA government is also working at high speed on advanced projects such as a Defence Corridor, Semiconductor Manufacturing Park, Global Capability Center, Mega Tech City, and Fintech City. Through these initiatives, the goal of developing Bihar as a Global Back-End Hub and Global Workplace has become even stronger," he added.

Rajasthan becomes first among 12 states to achieve 100% voter digitisation in SIR exercise

(Gns). Rajasthan has achieved 100% digitisation of all 5,46,56,215 voters in the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls, five days ahead of the deadline set by the Election Commission of India (ECI).

Chief Electoral Officer Navin Mahajan said that, with dedicated efforts during this marathon exercise, BLOs and state officials have also completed 97% elector mapping.

The remaining three percent of voters are required to produce certain documents before election officials to establish eligibil-

ity during the month-long claims and objections phase, which will begin after the publication of the



draft electoral rolls on December 16.

Expressing satisfaction over the early completion of

the major targets, CEO Mahajan said, "With time-bound performance, Rajasthan has become the

voters for their cooperation and coordinated efforts that enabled Rajasthan to secure the top position.

Mahajan added that 5,46,56,215 voter enumeration forms were distributed and processed during the exercise.

In the next stages of the SIR process, draft electoral rolls will be published on December 16. Claims and objections can be filed from December 16, 2025, to January 15, 2026.

Hearings on these will take place between December 16 and February 7, 2026, and the final electoral rolls will be published on February 14, 2026.

US drops South Africa from 2026 G20, invites Poland to join

(Gns). The United States, which assumed the presidency of the Group of 20 on December 1, said it will not invite South Africa to participate in the 2026 G20 Leaders' Summit in Miami, accusing the ANC-led government of sabotage, hostility toward the United States, and an agenda that undermined the forum's economic mission.

New Delhi is expected to follow the development closely, given India's own recent presidency and sustained role in shaping G20 priorities.

Outlining Washington's plan for the 2026 cycle, Secretary of State Marco Rubio said the G20 would return to core priorities focused on economic

growth.

In a sub-stack post, Rubio said the United States will highlight "innovation, entrepreneurship, and perseverance" during America's 250th anniversary year, and will centre its presidency on "removing regulatory burdens, unlocking affordable and secure energy supply chains, and pioneering new technologies and innovation."

The first Sherpa and Finance Track meetings will take place in Washington on December 15-16. The year-long calendar will culminate in the

G20 Leaders' Summit in Miami in December 2026.

Rubio said the US would "be inviting friends,



neighbors, and partners to the American G20," including Poland, which he said now "ranks among the world's 20 largest economies." Poland's inclusion, he argued, reflects the success of a country that embraced reforms and

"a focus on the future."

In sharp contrast, he issued a sweeping indictment of South Africa's leadership, saying that after the Mandela era, its government "replaced reconciliation with redistributionist policies that discouraged investment and drove South Africa's most talented citizens abroad." He said "racial quotas have crippled the private sector, while corruption bankrupts the state," leaving the country "firmly outside the group of the 20 largest industrialized economies."

Rubio accused the ANC of scapegoating minorities and the United States, alleging "an appetite for racism and tolerance for violence against its

Seth Anandram Jaipuria School, Lucknow, Celebrates 10th Founders' Day

Seth Anandram Jaipuria School, Shaheed Path, Lucknow, celebrated its 10th Founder's Day 'Dream Decade' an occasion enriched with cultural splendour, artistic finesse, and collective pride. The event was graced by Chief Guest, Swami Prem Parivartan (Peepal Baba), a distinguished environmentalist. Chairman of the Jaipuria Group of Educational Institutions, Mr. Shishir Jaipuria, the school's Principal, Vice Principal, staff, students, and parents added to the significance of the day.

The programme opened with the lighting of the ceremonial lamp, followed by a prayer song- Shiv Stuti, which imbued the gathering with serenity and auspiciousness. The Principal, Ms. Poonam Kochitty, accompanied by the Vice Principal, extended a warm welcome and presented the Annual Report, highlighting



key academic benchmarks, co-scholastic triumphs, and the school's strategic initiatives in nurturing innovation and holistic development. Chairman Mr. Shishir Jaipuria commended the school's steady ascent and reiterated the importance of future-forward education rooted in strong values.

The Prize Distribution Ceremony felicitated students for exemplary accomplishments across scholastic, co-scholastic, and sports domains at school, district, state, national, and international levels. Achievers in

Olympiads, elocution, art and cultural competitions, sports tournaments, MUN conferences, and technology contests were honoured for their dedication and distinction.

In his speech Chief Guest Swami Prem Parivartan urged students to cultivate environmental sensitivity and purposeful living.

The Cultural Programme unfolded with vibrancy and thematic richness. The Curtain Raiser, an imaginative English skit, presented a thought-provoking conversation

between Einstein and Aristotle as they metaphorically traversed time to reflect on the school's achievements and its inspiring learning environment. Araz-Suno Banwari added melodic grace, followed by the spirited rhythms of Musical Blast.

Safarnama – The Journey of Life, inspired by a symbolic train journey, portrayed life's transitions through expressive storytelling. Folk Fusion seamlessly combined the charm of traditional Indian folk forms with the dynamism of western dance.

Accused dropped plan to attack Kerala actress in Goa as she changed mode of travel: Prosecution

(Gns). As the Ernakulam Principal Sessions Court is set to deliver its verdict in the sensational Kerala actress assault case on Monday, details have emerged during the trial.

The prosecution revealed in the court that attempts had been made to sexually assault the actress earlier on January 3, 2017. The crime was planned to be committed in Goa when she reached there for shooting for a film in which the actress played the female lead.

Pulsar Suni, the first accused in the actress sexual assault case, picked up the actress from the airport. He was the driver for the actress the following days too.

Anticipating that she would travel to Kochi from Goa by road after the shoot,

the gang had planned to abduct and rape her during the journey. However, the plan failed as the actress changed her mode of travel.



After the first attempt failed, the assault was carried out on February 17, 2017, the prosecution informed the court.

The rape victim, in a statement in the trial court, stated that Dileep had a grudge against her since 2012 and told many people that she was the one who broke up his marriage with

Manju Warrior. During a trip to London in 2012, Dileep asked her why she told Manju about his relationship with Kavya. When the

survivor replied that Manju came with proof, Dileep said no one who stood against him has reached anywhere in Malayalam cinema.

Meanwhile, the letter that Pulsar Suni, the first accused, sent to Dileep was out. The letter sent secretly from prison by Pulsar Suni, the first

accused in the case, through a fellow inmate, was crucial in linking Dileep to this case. The letter was said to be a clear indication of the friendship and past relationship between the two. Pulsar Suni says in the letter that 'it is as if my life has ended with me being involved in this case.' Each piece of evidence that came out later was against Dileep. Following this, on July 10, 2017, a special investigation team arrested Dileep in the case.

There are 10 accused in the case, including actor Dileep. The first accused is Pulsar Suni, a native of Perumbavoor. Dileep is the eighth accused in the case. The actress was sexually assaulted on the evening of February 17, 2017 while she was returning to Ernakulam from Thrissur after a film shoot.

Babur was no messiah, No Mosque should be built in his name: Iqbal Ansari

(Gns). Former litigant in the Babri Masjid-Ram Janmabhoomi dispute, Iqbal Ansari, said Babur was no Messiah, and no mosque should be built in his name. He was reacting to the alleged laying of the foundation stone for a mosque in the name of Babri Masjid by suspended TMC MLA Humayun Kabir in Beldanga, West Bengal.

Kabir on Saturday laid the foundation stone for a Babri Masjid-like mosque at Beldanga in West Bengal's Murshidabad. The event was deliberately timed for December 6, the

anniversary of the 1992 Babri Masjid demolition in Ayodhya.

Speaking to reporters on Sunday, Iqbal Ansari said that on November 9, 2019, the Supreme Court delivered its final verdict on the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid land dispute, after which Muslims across the country respected the

court's decision and maintained peace. "The court gave its verdict, and not a single leaf stirred in the

entire country. This is the biggest proof that there is no dispute regarding this issue in the country today."



He further said that with elections approaching in West Bengal, some leaders are once again starting the

temple-mosque politics. He alleged that "the elections haven't even started yet, and they've suddenly remembered the mosque in Babur's name. This is just politics. It's an attempt to divide the country."

Iqbal Ansari said that Babur was neither a messiah for anyone, nor did he do anything in this country that was in the interest of the people, Hindus, Muslims, or the nation. "Babur neither built any schools nor hospitals, nor did he do any development work. Therefore, there is no need to build a mosque in Babur's name."

Two killed in accidental firing during wedding in UP's Etah

(Gns). A wedding ceremony turned into tragedy in the Etah district when a gunshot fired accidentally during a DJ dance killed an 11-year-old boy and his 17-year-old uncle, police said on Sunday.

The incident took place in Ubhai Asadnagar village under the Nayagaon police station area on Saturday night.

According to the police, the bullet first pierced the neck of the young victim, Sohail (11) before striking his uncle, Shahrukh (17), in the head. Both had come to attend the wedding of their maternal uncle's son. The groom, Salman, was scheduled to set off in a wedding procession (baraat) on Sunday.

The family was celebrating the traditional bhaat ceremony on Saturday

night. Guests were gathered inside the lawn while

where doctors declared Sohail dead on arrival.



some youths, including Shahrukh and Sohail, were dancing to the DJ outside. At around 9 pm, suddenly a sound was heard. Both boys collapsed on the dance floor with blood splattering across the area.

Family members rushed the victims to the local Community Health Centre

Shahrukh, who was critically injured, was referred to Agra for advanced treatment, but he too succumbed to his injuries during treatment.

The police took the bodies of both victims into custody and sent for post-mortem examination. Three to four people have been

detained for questioning in the case.

ASP Shwetabh Pandey said a gunshot was fired during the dance, but it is still being investigated who pulled the trigger and how the bullet was discharged.

Relatives said Shahrukh was a Class 11 student at a school in Satnapur Kathingara, while Sohail was an eighth-grade student from Nehru Nagar, Delhi. Sohail had returned home only a day before the incident and was the only son of his parents. He is survived by a nine-year-old sister, Joya.

Police officials have inspected the spot and are investigating the exact circumstances under which the gun was fired. The tragedy has cast a pall of sorrow over the wedding festivities, devastating both families.

Pakistan formalises Asim Munir's powerful new military role as Chief of Defence Forces

(Gns). Field Marshal Asim Munir has been formally appointed as Pakistan's first-ever Chief of Defence Forces (CDF), a newly created and powerful military position in the country.

The appointment is for a period of five years. The Pakistan President's office said in an X post that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's summary recommending Munir for both Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) and Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) was approved. "President Asif Ali Zardari approved the appointment of Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir as COAS concurrently as CDF for 5 years," the official X handle of the President of Pakistan said in the post.

The CDF position consolidates authority over all three service branches (Army, Navy, and Air Force)

and includes oversight of the National Strategic Command, which manages the country's nuclear weapons and missile sys-

tem, making Munir the single most powerful military figure in the country.

The appointment comes after a lot of speculation over Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's willingness to hand over more power to Asim Munir. The Sharif government was supposed to notify the



to end. The Chief of Defence Forces' role was established last month under the 27th Amendment to the Constitution, aiming to centralise military command. The new position replaces the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCS), which has now

been abolished.

Additionally, the Pakistani president also approved a two-year extension in the service of Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmad Babar Sidhu, which will take effect from March 19, 2026. Asif Ali Zardari conveyed his best wishes to both officers of the Pakistan Armed Forces.

Asim Munir, who was promoted to the Field Marshal rank this year, will also simultaneously hold the office of the Chief of Army Staff, along with his duties as CDF. He is the first military officer in Pakistan's history to hold both the five-star rank of Field Marshal and the combined command of COAS and CDF simultaneously. He is the second army officer in the country's history to hold the Field Marshal title after General Ayub Khan.