



## Cow slaughter not part of Eid or Islam: Calcutta HC:

**KOLKATA(GNS):** Cow sacrifice is neither a part of Eid-uz-Zuha nor a religious requirement under Islam, Calcutta HC said on Thursday while refusing to quash the Bengal govt's order regulating cattle slaughter ahead of the festival or grant interim relief based on a batch of PILs challenging the administration's directive.

The division bench of Chief Justice Sujoy Paul and Justice Partha Sarathi Sen asked the state to consider within 24 hours whether an exemption could be granted under the same 1950 law cited in the order, pointing out the festival falls on May 27-28. The BJP govt's May 13 order mentions the West Bengal Animal Slaughter Control Act, 1950, and a 2018 HC order, both of which mandate the prohibition of cow and buffalo slaughter unless a certificate is obtained that the animal "is fit for slaughter."

HC asked the state to examine if Article 12 of the



1950 Act, which empowers govt to allow slaughter of otherwise restricted animals for religious, medicinal or research purposes, could be invoked in this case. The judges also directed the state to consider incorporating a condition that animal slaughter could not take place in open public places.

On the constitutionality

of the 1950 Act, challenged in several of the PILs, senior advocate Bikash Ranjan Bhattacharjee argued the law was meant only for Kolkata and other municipalities rather than the entire state. The bench declined to intervene on this.

Kolkata Municipal Corporation's counsel Nilotpal Chatterjee said the

civic body had slaughter-houses with the necessary infrastructure and designated officials to issue fit-for-slaughter certificates. HC said the onus was on the state to examine whether a proper mechanism exists for issuing such certificates. "If any deficiency is found by the state, we hope and trust that the same shall be cured at the earliest."

## Venezuela becomes India's third-largest oil supplier, surpassing Saudi Arabia and the US

### Indian companies increase purchases after the Strait of Hormuz closure

**New Delhi(GNS):**The closure of the Strait of Hormuz has thrown the global oil market into turmoil. At a time when oil supplies to Middle Eastern countries have been affected, Venezuela has suddenly emerged as India's third-largest crude oil supplier.

According to data from energy tracking agency Kpler, Venezuela surpassed both Saudi Arabia and the United States in May 2026. Currently, only Russia and the UAE supply more oil than Venezuela. According to the report, Venezuelan oil supplies to India this month increased by nearly 50 percent compared to April.

The US eased some restrictions on Venezuelan oil exports after the capture of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro in January. Venezuelan oil began arriving in India again in April.

India resumes oil purchases after 9 months

According to Kpler, India has purchased approximately 417,000 barrels per day of crude oil from Venezuela so far in May. This figure was 283,000 barrels per day in April, after nine consecutive months of zero oil purchases from Venezuela. There are two main reasons for this increase. First, the war in the Middle East and the Strait of Hormuz crisis have disrupted supplies. Second, Venezuela's heavy, high-sulfur



crude oil is becoming cheaper. Indian refineries like Reliance are capable of processing it, so they have increased their purchases.

According to Nikhil Dubey, an analyst at Kpler, Indian refiners have long been interested in Venezuelan oil because it is cheaper and compatible with India's refining system. Reliance's refinery in Gujarat, in particular, is considered particularly good for heavy oil.

According to him, most of the refineries in India can process Venezuelan oil only in limited quantities, but Reliance has such technology due to which it is getting maximum benefit.

## Two Indians died while descending Everest:

They were breathless due to excessive fatigue, Sherpa rescue team tried to save them.



**New Delhi(GNS):**Two Indian climbers attempting to climb Mount Everest died on their way down. Rishi Bhandari, general secretary of the Nepal Expedition Conductors Association, announced on Friday that the climbers, Arun Kumar Tiwari and Sandeep Arey, were exhausted and breathless while descending. Bhandari told news agency PTI that Arey summited Everest on

Wednesday, while Arun Tiwari summited on Thursday around 5:30 p.m. Tiwari died near the Hillary Step. Sandeep Arey, meanwhile, was brought to Camp 2 by a Sherpa rescue team. He died shortly after reaching the camp.

Three Indians conquer Everest On Wednesday, three Indian climbers, including Sandip Ray, reached the 8,848-meter-high peak.

### Successful test of the most advanced drone in Rajasthan:

## Can change target mid-way, 100km range, can fly in enemy territory for one and a half hours

**Jaisalmer(GNS):** The Vayu Astra-1, a suicide drone, was successfully tested at the Pokhran Field Firing Range in Jaisalmer. This drone can fly for up to one and a half hours in enemy territory, searching for targets. After that, it attacks upon detecting movement. At the same time, this modern drone can also be used to change its target or prevent an attack. Pune-based private defense technology company, Naib Limited, conducted the first test of its indigenous loitering munition system (suicide drone), the Vayu Astra-1.

According to news agency these tests were conducted in Pokhran on 18 and Joshimath (Uttarakhand) on 19 April 2026. Tests conducted in the desert and mountains

Its anti-personnel (to destroy enemy troops and positions) capability and precision shooting were tested amidst the sandy



dunes at the Pokhran Field Firing Range. Its high-altitude endurance was tested in the mountainous region of Joshimath-Malari (Uttarakhand) at a difficult altitude of over 14,000 feet and sub-zero temperatures.

Hit a target 100 km away In the test, the Vayu Astra-1 hit a



target 100 kilometers away on its first attempt. The drone was carrying a 10 kilogram explosive.

Most notably, its Circular Error Probable (CEP) was recorded at less than 1 meter. The drone did not deviate even a meter from the intended target and struck it directly.

## Delhi riots accused Umar granted 3-day bail

### Allowed only to go to hospital for his mother's treatment; has been in jail for 7 years

**New Delhi(GNS):**The Delhi High Court on Friday granted three days' interim bail to Umar Khalid, an accused in the Delhi riots conspiracy case who has been in jail for seven years. The bail will be effective from 7 a.m. on June 1st to 5 p.m. on June 3rd. Khalid will be required to furnish a personal bond of ₹1 lakh. The High Court said, "Umar has previously been granted interim bail for family events. He complied with the court's conditions. He is one of the main conspirators in this case, but a sympathetic view was taken considering his mother's medical condition."

Umar had sought interim bail for 15 days from May 22 to June 5. In the petition, he stated that he wanted to attend the chehlum (wedding) of his late maternal uncle and to care for his 62-year-old mother during her lump excision surgery scheduled for June 2.



## Rajnath inaugurates Indian War Memorial in Seoul, calls it a 'fitting tribute to Indian troops' valour, sacrifice during Korean War

**New Delhi, Agency:** Defence minister Rajnath Singh and South Korean minister of patriots & veterans affairs Kwon Oh-eul on Thursday jointly inaugurated the Indian War Memorial at Imjingak Park in Seoul. Rajnath called the memorial "a fitting tribute to Indian troops' valour, sacrifice and humanitarian contribution during the Korean War".

Constructed as part of the commemorative events marking the 75th anniversary of the Korean War, the memorial stands as a tribute to the courage, sacrifice

and humanitarian service rendered by the 60 Para Field Ambulance of the Indian Army and the Custodian Force of India (CFI) during the war. Laying a wreath at the memorial, Rajnath highlighted the enduring legacy of India's contribution to peace and humanitarian assistance on the Korean peninsula. He noted that the shared history and sacrifices of the two nations continue to serve as a strong foundation for the India-South Korea special strategic partnership. An MoU was signed by



the two ministers aimed at exchanges between them. A cooperation for honouring the veterans of the Korean war and strengthening less sacrifice of the soldiers.

The 60 Para Field Ambulance, commanded by Lt Col (Dr) A G Rangaraj, Maha Vir Chakra, earned widespread recognition for its exemplary medical service and dedication in treating thousands of wounded soldiers and civilians under extremely challenging conditions of crossfire. The Indian War Memorial has been constructed in the same area where the CFI had established the 'HIND NAGAR' in Sept 1954, housing almost 22,000 prisoners of war till their peaceful repatriation.

## "Challenging the Press Freedom Index!" Has Modi missed a golden opportunity?

Rajiv Khandelwal

One question? That has brought India's global image back into debate."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's historic visit to Norway concluded successfully. This was the first official visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Norway in 43 years. The visit marked a new direction for India-Norway relations in areas such as clean energy, maritime security, digital technology, and space cooperation. Prime Minister Modi was also awarded Norway's highest civilian honor, the Grand Cross of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit. This is his 32nd international honor.

But in politics and diplomacy, it is often said, "A small mistake can overshadow even the greatest

achievements." Unfortunately, one such incident during this visit became the subject of worldwide discussion.

"A joint press conference is a normal event to conclude a foreign tour."

At the conclusion of the joint press conference held in the capital Oslo, a Norwegian journalist asked Prime Minister Modi a question while leaving, "Prime Minister Modi, why don't you take some questions from the world's most independent press?"

The Prime Minister moved on without answering. Subsequently, at the Indian Embassy's press briefing, the same journalist posed another sharp question.

"Why should we trust you when we're strengthening our partnership? Will you ensure human rights

violations in your country?"

According to an information, India ranks 110th and 130th respectively in the Human Freedom Index and Human Development Index.

Senior Indian Foreign Service officer C.B. George gave a detailed answer, lasting nearly 13 minutes. But the question is, couldn't the Prime Minister himself have given a short, restrained, and confident answer? He could have said it simply.

"India is a vibrant democracy with freedom of the press. Constitutional institutions are working tirelessly to protect human rights. Your question is based on incorrect facts."

By saying just this much, India's point of view would have been presented to the world in a much more

effective manner.

"What the hell is the Press Freedom Index?"

Because Norway (where the Prime Minister recently visited) remains the leader, it is currently being discussed more. The Paris-based international non-governmental organization Reporters Without Borders has been publishing the "World Press Freedom Index" since 2002. Norway has consistently ranked first among 180 countries globally, while India ranked 157th in the 2026 list. Surprisingly, countries like Pakistan (152nd) and Bangladesh (153rd) are ranked higher than India. However, the Indian government and many experts have periodically questioned the credibility of this index. Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag

Thakur stated in Parliament in 2020 that the rankings are based on a limited sample, non-transparent procedures, and biased perspectives. These methods appear to have some merit. Nevertheless, this index is the most widely cited method for measuring press freedom globally.

"The fundamental religion of the media - asking questions?"

The primary responsibility of journalism is to question the "powers that be." The question posed to Prime Minister Modi by Helen Eggen, an unknown female journalist for Norway's DXB Sen daily, was part of this democratic tradition. However, the way sections of Indian social media and mainstream media channels trolled the female journalist was both unfortunate and self-defeating.

### Editorial

## The Prime Minister is not a traitor

Rahul Gandhi is the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha. This is the second most important and constitutional position! In terms of protocol and politics, the Leader of the Opposition is considered a "shadow Prime Minister." After the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition's parliamentary party holds the largest mandate, so this honor and prestige must be respected. However, by publicly calling the country's third-term elected Prime Minister Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah "traitors," Rahul Gandhi has crossed the "red line." When Prime Minister Modi is representing India abroad and the Leader of the Opposition labels him a "traitor," India is also insulted. The Prime Minister can never be a "traitor," because he has the mandate; of course, you can oppose him ethically. Rahul's use of the "traitor" insults the country's population of over 1.47 billion. This is undoubtedly condemnable, shameful, unparliamentary, unconstitutional, and indecent. We also believe, and are constantly analyzing, that the country is facing economic, oil, and fertilizer crises, and shortages, but we disagree with the notion that an "economic storm" is brewing. If Rahul Gandhi, as the leader of the opposition, harbors anger and resentment, and that farmers, youth, women, laborers, and small businesses are truly crying, then instead of calling the Prime Minister, the Home Minister, and the RSS "traitors," he should have called for a mass movement. Opposition leader Rahul Gandhi could have presented the nation with a blueprint for an "alternative economic situation," but instead resorted to taunting language. Rahul Gandhi used derogatory language against the Prime Minister, saying, "One day, the Prime Minister will come on TV and cry again. Just like he did during COVID, he will cry again and apologize to the country." This is not the language of a national, democratic leader; rather, Rahul's feudal mindset is driving him to speak like this. It was in this very context that he coined the phrase "Chowkidar Chor Hai" (the watchman is a thief) against Prime Minister Modi in 2019.

# Supreme Court's historic seal on caste census

Advocate Kishan Sanmukhdas Bhavani

- Challenge petition dismissed on May 20, 2026 - A comprehensive and comprehensive analysis of constitutional validity, social justice, and the direction of India's new policy system

Census of India 2027 is considered to be one of the biggest administrative exercises of Digital India and data-driven governance.

The Supreme Court's May 20, 2026, decision is not merely a dismissal of a petition, but a decision that will shape the future of India's democratic system, the concept of social justice, and data-driven governance.

The decades-long debate over the caste census in India, globally, reached a decisive turning point on Wednesday, May 20, 2026, when the Supreme Court of India dismissed a public interest litigation (PIL) against the caste census. This decision not only ended a legal dispute but also sent a clear message that the 2027 Census in India is being conducted within the ambit of constitutional, legal, and policy rights. It should be noted that on Friday (April 11, 2026), the Supreme Court had dismissed a petition directing the Central Government to halt the caste census and strongly criticized the petitioner for the language used in the PIL. For the past few months, there has been a heated political, social, and ideological debate regarding the caste census. Some groups were calling it a foundation for social justice, while the opposition was calling it a step that would increase social divisions. But the recent Supreme Court decision has established that any democratic government has the right to collect data to understand the country's social structure, especially the actual number and status of backward classes, so that welfare schemes can be formulated on that basis. I, Advocate Kishan Sanmukhdas Bhavani, Gondia, Maharashtra,

believe that the Census of India 2027 is not just being considered a traditional census, but it is being considered as one of the biggest administrative campaigns of Digital India and data-driven governance. The census system, which has been in place for almost one and a half centuries, has now entered a technologically modern form.

Friends, this census is being conducted in two major phases. The first phase began on April 1, 2026, and included house listing and residential enumeration. This phase, which ran from April 16 to May 15, 2026, collected data on households, properties, buildings, residential amenities, water sources, electricity, internet, toilets, kitchens, vehicles, and socio-economic infrastructure across the country. This phase was not limited to a population count, but also served as a comprehensive socio-economic survey of the country's living conditions. The second phase of the census, which will begin in 2027, will record detailed personal information about each household and its members. This will include age, education, employment, language, marital status, migration, social category, and, especially, caste details. For the first time, such a comprehensive digital system is being adopted, utilizing modern technologies such as mobile apps, tablet-based data entry, online verification, and centralized data monitoring. The government's objective is not merely to collect data but to strengthen data-driven policymaking. This is why caste data is now being considered important precisely from the perspective of social justice and resource distribution.

Friends, during the hearing, the Supreme Court bench clearly stated that conducting or not conducting a caste census is the government's policy prerogative. The court stated that unless a policy violates the Constitution or law, the judiciary cannot interfere.

This observation also reinforces the principle of separation of powers in Indian democracy, where policymaking is considered the domain of the executive, and the judiciary only reviews legality. The Chief Justice made a significant observation during the hearing, stating that it is essential for the government to know the actual number of Other Backward Classes and socially disadvantaged groups in the country so that appropriate welfare schemes can be formulated for them. The court stated in its order that a caste-based census is not unconstitutional in itself. If the government wishes to collect data to make social and economic policies more effective, this is its legitimate administrative right. The court also stated that the mere fear of potential misuse of a policy cannot be a reason to stop it. This observation is significant because the petitioner's primary argument was that caste data could be misused for political and social purposes. The petitioner also argued that the government already has sufficient social data, and therefore, there's no need for a separate caste census. However, the court rejected this argument, stating that the government requires contemporary and authentic data, as effective policymaking based on outdated data is impossible.

Friends, this decision is being considered historic for both the politics of social justice and administrative policy. There has been a long-standing debate in India about the true basis of reservations, welfare schemes, and social representation. Many experts believe that social justice policies remain incomplete without updated caste data. In independent India, caste data has not been available on a comprehensive scale since 1931, leading to persistent controversy regarding the actual number of backward classes and their socio-economic status. Consequently, Census 2027 is being seen as a historic opportunity that could reveal a

true picture of the country's social structure.

Friends, this issue has also become extremely important politically. Caste surveys and social censuses have already become central to political discourse in several states. Caste surveys conducted in Bihar, Karnataka, and other states have further intensified the debate at the national level. The central government's move toward a national caste census is being seen as a signal that future policies will be more data-driven and target-oriented. This will also increase the likelihood that resources for social schemes can be distributed based on actual population proportions and needs.

Friends, the Supreme Court had previously dismissed a similar petition on April 11, 2026, seeking to direct the Central Government to halt the caste census.

At that time, the Court also made strong comments on the language used in the petition. This consistent stance of the Court clearly demonstrates its desire to avoid unnecessary judicial interference in administrative and policy matters like the census. It also conveys the message that in a democratic system, the primary responsibility for policymaking rests with elected governments. Supporters of the caste census argue that accurate data is essential to ensure equal opportunity and social justice in a country like India, with its multi-layered social structure. If the government does not know the population size of each community, their education, employment, health, and economic status, accurate targeting of schemes will be impossible. This is why the Court also acknowledged the government's need to know the number and status of backward classes, which is essential for governance. On the other hand, opponents fear that bringing caste identity back to the forefront could increase social polarization.

## The anger of 1975 and the restless India of 2026?

Sanat Jain

In India's democratic history, 1975 is not just a year, but also a symbol of the clash of power, economic crisis, and public anger. Looking at the country's situation in 2026, the same question arises again and again: Is India heading towards another major political and social explosion? This included a change of power. In the 1971 war, India defeated Pakistan and created Bangladesh as an independent nation. India bore the burden of nearly 10 million refugees. More than 95,000 Pakistani soldiers surren-

dered and remained in India. After the war, the oil crisis and economic sanctions imposed by the US and Western countries crippled the Indian economy. Shortages of petrol, diesel, and food grains fueled explosive inflation. Indira Gandhi was called "Durga" after winning the 1971 war, but by 1974, her government had become a symbol of inflation and unemployment in the eyes of the public. The Allahabad High Court declared Indira Gandhi's election invalid, adding fuel to the fire and intensifying the protests. Students, employees, trade unions, and the opposition came togeth-

er. Jayaprakash Narayan raised the slogan of systemic change. From railway strikes to university student movements, the country was in turmoil. JP called on the police and army to disobey government orders. When the government realized that controlling the protests was impossible and that power could slip out of its hands, it imposed the Emergency on June 25, 1975. Congress ultimately paid the price for this suppression of democracy in the 1977 elections. It suffered a crushing defeat in North India. While today's India may be technologically advanced, economic and social unrest appears to be

rising to dangerous levels, similar to those of 1975. The rupee is steadily falling, reaching levels of 97. Inflation is crushing the common man, and imports have surged. There is a foreign exchange crisis. Anger among the youth is growing over unemployment. Millions of degree-holding youth are plagued by competitive exam paper leaks, recruitment scams, and temporary employment. The very youth who were promised dreams of "good days," millions of jobs every year, and a "Vishwaguru Bharat" (World Leader India) are now struggling for job security and future security. The biggest

challenge for the government is that public trust in the current government is rapidly eroding. Farmers' protests, protests against the Agniveer scheme, paper leaks, reservation disputes, and allegations of corruption related to deletions from voter lists are raising questions about democratic institutions. Discontent and distrust towards the judiciary have increased. The Chief Justice's recent alleged remarks regarding unemployed youth have further fueled youth anger. When the public begins to feel that the government, administration, and justice are not listening to their plight, distrust

towards the system reaches a dangerous point. Inflation, unemployment, and debt have made life difficult for the common man. In Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Nepal, intense youth discontent has led to a change of government. In India, too, resentment is spreading more rapidly in the era of social media. The only difference is that India is much larger in size and in its thinking. If the economic crisis, if unemployment, debt and political and religious polarization continue to increase in this manner, then in terms of social change, we may see more serious consequences than in 1975.

# No relief for Delhi-NCR as IMD warns of prolonged heatwave, 'orange' alert issued

**NEW DELHI(GNS):** Residents across Delhi-NCR are likely to continue facing intense heatwave conditions till May 27, with the India Meteorological Department (IMD) issuing an "orange alert" for the national capital and adjoining areas. The city is not only experiencing scorching daytime temperatures but also unusually hot nights, raising concerns over prolonged thermal stress.

According to the IMD, Delhi recorded its first "warm night" of the season on Thursday as the minimum temperature at Safdarjung, the city's base station, settled at 31.9°C, which is 5.2 degrees above normal. This marked Delhi's hottest May night in the past 14 years. The last such warm night conditions were recorded on April 9 and 10, 2025.

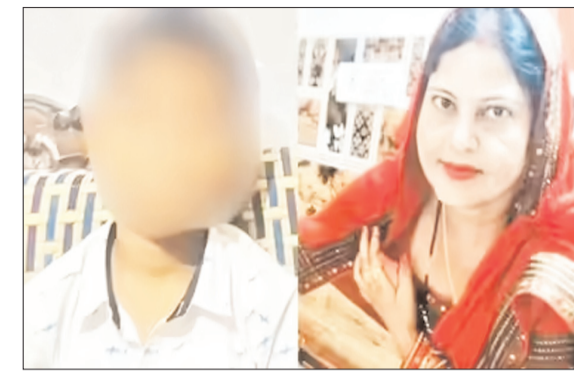


A "warm night" is declared when the maximum temperature exceeds 40°C in the plains and the minimum temperature remains 4.5 degrees or more above normal. A heatwave is declared when the maximum temperature crosses 40°C and is at least 4.5 degrees above normal, or when temperatures exceed 45°C. According to the IMD, a severe heatwave is recorded when the maximum temperature is above 40°C and at least 6.5 degrees above normal. The weather department said heatwave conditions are expected to persist over the next

few days, affecting both daytime temperatures and nighttime comfort levels. As per news agency PTI, Delhi also reported its first major heatstroke case of the season after a 24-year-old man travelling by train was admitted unconscious to Dr Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital on Thursday morning. With temperatures soaring, hospitals and authorities across the city have stepped up preparations to handle heat-related illnesses. Delhi chief minister Rekha Gupta said the government was working in "mission mode" to minimise the impact of the heatwave on residents. "13 mobile heat relief units are continuously reaching crowded areas to provide cold and clean drinking water, ORS packets, first aid, cotton gamchhas and caps," she said in a post on X.

# Woman and son murdered in Delhi; valuables worth Rs 50 lakh looted, domestic help missing

**NEW DELHI(GNS):** A 38-year-old woman and her 13-year-old son were found murdered with multiple stab wounds and throats slit at their home in southeast Delhi's Govindpuri early Thursday.



Family members claimed valuables worth Rs 50 lakh were missing, including a recent payout of Rs 8-10 lakh from a local chit fund scheme. Police said multiple angles, including robbery, were being probed.

The family has alleged that their domestic help has been missing since the incident. "She usually arrives by 7 am, but police are trying to contact her today," said Yash Sahu, the nephew of the deceased homemaker, Sharda Sahu. Her son Kushal Sahu, was a Class VII student.

Some valuables untouched, cops probe all angles. Sharda's husband, Vishnu Sahu, a fruit and vegetable trader, told police that he found the front door latched

from the outside when he returned home around 12.30 am. He found the bodies of his wife and son lying in the kitchen. Police received a PCR call at 1.11 am to inform about the crime.

Family members said Vishnu usually returns late, something the killer might have been aware of. Jewellery worn by the woman, including bangles, earrings, and a chain, along with other valuables, was missing, and the almirah locks had been broken, relatives added.

## Dalit woman alleges rape and forced conversion

**'New Delhi(GNS):** A 23-year-old Dalit woman was allegedly raped by several men over the past few years and confined in a house in southeast Delhi's Jamia Nagar after her alleged forced conversion to Islam. Police have arrested four people. The main accused, Fahim, is already in jail in another case and police have filed a production warrant against him.

An FIR was registered on May 14 at the Jamia Nagar police station after the woman approached police with allegations of rape, criminal intimidation, wrongful confinement, forced religious conversion and physical assault.

The woman alleged that in Nov 2021, a man, identifying himself as Sahil, contacted her on Instagram and introduced himself as a Hindu. She went to a house in Batla House with him in March 2022 where "Sahil" allegedly sexually assaulted her and filmed the act. He started blackmailing her using the videos and threatened to upload them on social media. She was then taken to Meerut where she found out that Sahil was actually Fahim, the complainant claimed.

## Despite the unprecedented surge in demand, PSU OMCs have continued to supply petrol, diesel and LPG.

The State Level Coordinator (SLC) Gujarat has informed that the public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs) - Indian Oil, BPCL and HPCL - are continuously maintaining operations and logistics coordination across the country to ensure uninterrupted availability of petrol (MS), diesel (HSD) and LPG amid the increase in fuel demand in the state and some regions of the country.

Various factors are responsible for this increased demand for fuel, such as seasonal activities of ploughing and harvesting in rural agricultural areas. In addition, the price differential between private suppliers

other than Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) has led to consumers shifting towards public sector retail outlets (petrol pumps) and institutional / commercial customers shifting towards retail fuel outlets. Public Sector OMCs maintain uninterrupted supply through their extensive nationwide network of terminals, depots, pipelines, LPG bottling plants and retail outlets. Supply teams, transport network, terminal operations and select retail outlets are functioning round the clock (24 hours) to ensure uninterrupted movement of products and timely replenishment in the markets. Public Sector OMCs

are maintaining close coordination with the State Administration for uninterrupted supply of fuel. The oil industry would like to assure consumers that adequate stocks of petrol, diesel and LPG are available across the country and all necessary steps are being taken to maintain smooth and uninterrupted supply. Citizens are advised to continue their normal shopping and not indulge in panic buying. Consumers are requested to rely only on official communications issued by authorized agencies and oil marketing companies for accurate information regarding fuel availability.

## Dowry demands, beatings never stopped claims family of Delhi woman who fell to death:

**NEW DELHI(GNS):** "A bike, a 32-inch LED TV, furniture... all this still wasn't enough. They kept asking for more, beating her up," claimed Suresh, a farmer and father of 25-year-old Veena Kumari, who died on Monday night after allegedly falling from the terrace of her home in west Delhi's Dasghara village. Veena was the second among six siblings in a farming family from UP's Sambhal. She had studied till Class XII and briefly worked a private job between 2017 and 2018, sending her earnings home to support the education of her younger brother, Rajkumar (22), now a law student. According to the family, despite their limited means, they gave the dowry as demanded when Veena got married to Raju, a helper at a private firm, in Dec 2022. The family alleged that the harassment began within six months of the marriage after Veena moved to



Delhi. "The first fight happened a year after they wed," Rajkumar told Media. "Didi called me over. I saw nail scratches all over her, and they had slammed her head against the wall." He further alleged that during one assault, a slap ruptured her eardrum. Even while pregnant, she was forced to cook on a traditional wood-fired stove, and the beatings continued right after she gave birth to a child, Rajkumar alleged, adding that the in-laws taunted her over medical expenses despite the baby being delivered at a govt hospital.

# Delhi University women's hostel residents hold sit-in protest over 'forced evictions', 'extortion'

**New Delhi(GNS):** Women residents of the University Hostel for Women (UHW) at Delhi University staged a late-night sit-in protest, alleging "forced evictions" and "extortion" by the hostel administration, according to a statement issued by the All India Students' Association (AISA). The protest began around 9:30 pm on Thursday and continued past midnight, with students sitting on campus roads amid ongoing semester examinations and preparations for the NEET exam.



In its statement, AISA alleged that students had been "pushed to the brink" over the past week due to actions taken by the hostel administration, including disruptions to basic facilities. The student body

claimed that water supply had been cut off in parts of two hostel blocks, while chairs were removed from the reading room, hampering students' exam preparations.

AISA further alleged that the hostel Provost was conducting a "forced eviction drive" despite students having already paid

hostel fees in advance for June and July.

"This institutional apathy has crossed all limits of human dignity," AISA said in its statement.

The association also claimed that following a mobilisation on May 16, the Provost had given a "deceptive verbal assurance" to restore facilities

and extend the residency deadline, but later "backtracked" and issued a "punitive extortion order" demanding Rs 450 per day from students who continued to stay in the hostel.

AISA has demanded the immediate resignation of the UHW Provost, restoration of round-the-clock water supply, and an unconditional extension of hostel stay without any financial penalties for students.

"AISA stands unyieldingly with the resisting residents and demands the immediate resignation of the UHW Provost, a concrete written guarantee for the restoration of 24/7 water supply, and an unconditional extension of the hostel stay without any financial penalties!" a statement read.

## They dreamed of sending him abroad, kin remember soft-spoken teen killed with mom

**New Delhi(GNS):** Kushal was the child Vishnu and Sharda had long yearned for. After years of remaining childless, the couple had adopted him as a newborn from Vishnu's younger brother, who already had two children. A soft-spoken boy, Kushal loved drawing, was interested in computers, and his parents dreamed of sending him abroad one day. Only a few days before the murder of the boy and his mother, the family had returned from a vacation to Manali, unaware that it would become their last trip together. Originally from Uttar Pradesh, the family has been living in Delhi for more than three decades and moved into their current house in 2016.



On Thursday morning, this house in a narrow lane of Govindpuri was full of grieving relatives and neighbours. Kushal's birth moth-

er, Manju Sahu, cried inconsolably. Next to her was sister-in-law Gudiya Sahu - both struggling to come to terms with the loss. Javitri Devi, the boy's grandmother, held Manju's hands as she cried, "He was so tiny when I first held him." Relatives described Kushal as a bright and soft-spoken child whom everyone in the neighbourhood loved. "He loved to draw. I often saw him making projects and trying new forms of art," Gudiya said. "He had recently developed a keen

interest in computers. He would often tell my son, 'Bhaiya, please computer chalanai sikha dena.'"

Kushal's family believed that his love for art and technology would one day turn into a career. While Sharda herself had studied up to Class X, relatives recalled that the couple was determined to provide Kushal with every opportunity. "Mamu and mami had so many dreams for him. They wanted to send him abroad for higher studies," said his cousin, Yash Sahu. The couple was saving money for Kushal's education and future, he added.

"If Kushal did not recognise a person, he would always ask his mother and only then open the door," said Gudiya. In what has now become his final interaction, Kushal had called one of his cousins on Wednesday evening, asking him to come over to play games.

# St Stephen's absorbs outgoing principal as Eng prof without vacancy

**New Delhi(GNS):** St Stephen's College has absorbed its outgoing principal, John Varghese - at the centre of an ongoing legal battle with its affiliating institution, Delhi University, over his second-term extension - as a professor in its English department.

Varghese has been directly appointed as professor without facing any selection committee and despite there being no sanctioned vacancy for the post, university and college officials said. As per UGC norms,

appointments to the post of professor cannot be made directly. Teachers are promoted through the ranks of assistant and associate professor over the years, based on eligibility and recommendations of duly constituted selection panels.

Head of the English department Karen Gabriel confirmed that no selection committee was constituted for Varghese's appointment. The college website now lists him as a professor in the department, with his name

removed from the list of former principals.

"I don't know how Varghese could have been appointed as professor of English. He was appointed as principal in 2016 for a five-year fixed-term appointment (renewable only once). Faculty members, on the other hand, are appointed differently. They are not term appointments except in the case of guest faculty. Permanent appointments happen only for the position of assistant professor, ie, at the entry level, and all such

appointments have to be through a UGC specified and University approved selection panel. There is no provision in the rules for appointing a profes-

sor at the college level; one can only become a professor through the process of promotion. The principal's appointment is a fixed term

administrative role which cannot be converted into a faculty appointment," Gabriel told Media.

College officials further pointed out that Varghese's appointment as principal was on a fixed-term basis - five years, extended once in 2021 - and upon completion of his tenure, he was required to return to his parent institution, the English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad. However, he resigned from his post there after joining St Stephen's, leaving no

position to revert to. Varghese served as the professor and HOD of media and communication at EFLU before he joined St Stephen's in March 2016. "In any case, direct absorption into a professorship is not permissible under rules," an official said. Delhi University registrar Vikas Gupta said that there is no sanctioned post of professor at the college at present and said the university will again write to the UGC to seek intervention. "What can we do? They keep doing as

they wish. First they extended the tenure, which we challenged and remains sub-judice. Now there are other things they are doing in blatant violation of set norms.

UGC is the funding body. UGC should look into this and see what should be done if a constituent college is non-compliant with its norms," Gupta told He added that the university was not aware of the development and, if it is found to be in violation of norms, it will take action and write to UGC.

## Change Of Name

I HAVE CHANGED MY NAME FROM THAKARDA AMRUTJI BALDEVJI TO THAKOR AMRUTJI BALDEVJI R/O. 240/D/58, NEW RAILWAY COLONY, JAWAHAR CHOWK, SABARMATI, AHMEDABAD-380005

# Delhi Sees First Heat Stroke Case Of Season, 24-Year-Old Student Critical

**New Delhi(GNS):** Delhi recorded two confirmed heat stroke cases on Thursday, including a 24-year-old student who collapsed while travelling by train and a middle-aged man who was found unconscious on the streets. Doctors at ABVIMS and Dr RML Hospital said that the first patient arrived around 1.45 am and the second around 10.45 am. Both required emergency cooling and intensive care intervention. The student, who hails from West Bengal, was brought to the hospital by attendants after developing a body temperature above 105°F while travelling to Delhi by train. He had hyperpyrexia - an extremely high temperature - altered mental status and urinary incontinence. Doctors



said he had no known pre-existing illness and most other possible causes were ruled out before heat stroke was diagnosed. This is the first heat stroke case recorded this season.

Initially suspected to be a stroke-like neurological event, the patient underwent an NCCT head scan that came back normal. After detailed evaluation and exclusion of other causes of high-grade

temperature, doctors made a provisional diagnosis of heat stroke. The emergency medicine team said his Glasgow Coma Scale (GCS) score was E1V1M1, indicating severe neurological impairment, following which he was immediately intubated for airway protection. He was shifted to the hospital's dedicated heat stroke unit, where doctors initiated aggressive cooling measures, including cold-water immersion, cold saline infusion, ice sponging and active cooling of the axilla and groin regions.

Doctors said that his body temperature dropped from 105°F to 102°F after treatment. Initial tests also found no evidence of poisoning, alcohol or drug intake, helping doctors narrow the diagnosis toward

heat stroke. He remains critical and is being managed under the department of medicine.

The second patient, a man aged around 50 years, was brought unconscious to the emergency department by a police team. He had altered mental status and an axillary temperature of 104°F. Since no attendants were present, doctors could not immediately obtain his medical history. On examination, the patient had a GCS score of E1V1M2, indicating severe neurological compromise. Dr (Prof) Amlendu Yadav, in-charge of the heat stroke unit at ABVIMS and Dr RML Hospital, said that the patient was immediately intubated and placed on ventilator support because of his critical condition.

## Forest dept to probe 'illegal' felling of trees in Shalimar Bagh

**New Delhi(GNS):** The forest department has asked Public Works Department (PWD) officials to put on hold its work in Shalimar Bagh.

Earlier, a complaint was submitted with the forest department, alleging illegal and arbitrary cutting of trees for expansion of a drain. It alleged that PWD was misusing Section 8 of the Delhi Preservation of Trees Act (DPTA), 1994. The complainant claimed that 20-30 trees were already cut in the stretch from AE Block to AD block without valid permission from the tree officer. A senior PWD official, however, said that the work was happening as per the SOP.

An inquiry will be initiated soon, said a forest official.

Though permission from a tree officer is compulsory to fell a tree, Section 8 of the DPTA provides a critical exception for emergencies where a tree poses an immediate danger to life, property or traffic. However, the tree officer has to be informed within 24 hours of felling such a tree.

Advocate Amber Shehbaz Ansari,



who filed the complaint with the forest department and Delhi Police, said, "I found that several mature and healthy trees were being felled by PWD for placing pre-cast water drainage system at Bhagwan Mahavir Marg. An official showed a letter citing Section 8 under which they are authorised to cut/fell/remove. However, around 20-30 trees were cut in violation of DPTA without taking mandatory permissions." He claimed that PWD was planning to fell more trees in the area.

## Woman found dead in east Delhi home

**New Delhi(GNS):** A 38-year-old woman who had got married last year died under suspicious circumstances at her house in east Delhi's West Vinod Nagar area on Thursday morning, police said.

The deceased was identified as Geeta Thakur. She married Rakesh Kumar on Oct 1 last year. Police said a PCR call regarding the alleged suicide of a woman was received at Mandawali police station around 9.50am on May 21. During inspection of the scene, the crime team examined the body and found ligature marks on the woman's neck. A suspected ligature material, believed to be a dupatta, was recovered from the spot. The dupatta has been seized and will be sent to FSL, a senior police officer said. The body was later shifted to a mortuary for post-mortem examination to ascertain the exact cause of death. Police said statements of family members and others are being recorded.

## Thin line between criticism and defamation, HC tells Raghav Chadha

**New Delhi(GNS):** There is a "thin line" between political criticism and defamation, Delhi High Court reminded MP Raghav Chadha, questioning whether a public figure could be overly "sensitive" to social media posts that appeared to criticise a political decision - his alleged switch from AAP to BJP.

Chadha had filed a suit seeking action against what he described as malicious and fabricated social media posts, claiming they were gravely prejudicial to his reputation and personality rights.

"It is a comment by an individual criticising a political decision... As a political leader, can you be sensitive," asked Justice Subramonium Prasad during the hearing as Chadha's counsel pressed for interim relief.

"Right from Independence,



we have grown up seeing RK Laxman's cartoons... In various ways, criticism has been made on decisions taken politically, economically... Now social media has gone to greater extent. But still, at the end of the day, it's still within the realm of a comment by a person," the judge pointed out to senior advocate Rajiv Nayar, appearing for Chadha. Nayar contended there were posts with profane content, including where the politician

is shown as having "sold himself away for money" and sought an interim order, but the court declined.

Reserving its verdict on the aspect of interim relief to take down such alleged offending content, HC acknowledged that while an individual has the right to live with dignity, the right to free speech under the Constitution also cannot be taken away.

Chadha's counsel maintained that posts implying he "traded for money" cannot be termed as "fair criticism", urging HC to intervene, and further argued that the offending posts "can't stay even for a day. Justice Prasad responded that prima facie they only appeared to be criticism. "According to me, prima facie, these are all only criticism of a political decision," he orally said.

## Najafgarh death: Dowry case registered, husband arrested

**New Delhi(GNS):** Days after a 39-year-old newlywed woman was found hanging inside her house in southwest Delhi's Najafgarh area, a case of dowry death has been registered and her husband arrested, police said on Thursday.

Based on the statements given by the woman's family members during inquiry, an FIR under BNS sections 80 (dowry death) and 85 (husband or relative of husband of a woman subjecting her to cruelty) was registered on May 19 at Baba Haridas Nagar police station.

The incident came to light on May 12 when a PCR call was received at the police station regarding the death of a woman in Jai Vihar Phase 2, Najafgarh. Another PCR call, recorded earlier, had been received regarding the alleged suicide of a woman at the same location.

Following the calls, a police team reached the spot and began investigation. "It was found that the woman, Deepa, had allegedly died by suicide by hanging herself from a ceiling fan using a chunni. The initial PCR call had been made by a neighbour," a senior police officer said. No suicide note was found at the spot during the inspection, police said.

Deepa worked at a beauty parlour in Janakpuri while her husband Saket was employed at a laboratory in Gurgaon. Saket told police the couple had known each other for nearly 10 years before getting married about two months ago, on March 12.

As the death occurred within seven years of marriage, the matter was referred to the concerned sub-divisional magistrate in accordance with legal procedure.

## CCI's decade-long probe exposes gaping holes in Delhi's private healthcare

**New Delhi(GNS):** A patient entering a private super-speciality hospital may still have the freedom to choose where to seek treatment. But once admitted, that choice 'almost always' disappears.

In a sweeping order passed after a nearly decade-long investigation into Delhi's top private hospitals, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) has acknowledged that admitted patients effectively get 'locked in' to hospital-run pharmacies, diagnostics and consumables systems because of hospital protocols, convenience and perceived medical risks. The findings emerged in a case relating to Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, one among 12 private super-speciality hospitals investigated by the competition watchdog over allegations of charging excessive prices for medicines, diagnostic tests, implants and consumables sold to in-patients. The case itself originated from allegations against Max Super Speciality Hospital, where the complainant had alleged that disposable syringes sold through the hospital's in-house pharmacy carried higher MRPs than identical products available in the open market. While the CCI eventually found no evidence of collusion between the hospital and syringe manufacturer Becton Dickinson, the investigation triggered a much wider scrutiny into how private hospitals price medicines, consumables and diagnostics for admitted patients.



Interestingly, the Director-General's (DG) supplementary investigation also noted that among the 12 hospitals examined, St Stephen's Hospital stood out as an exception. Unlike most hospitals investigated, St Stephen's was found to allow patients to procure medicines, consumables and diagnostic services from outside the hospital ecosystem. The commission cited this distinction while examining whether private hospitals effectively operate as "self-contained" markets for in-patients. At the heart of the order lies a contradiction that could shape the future debate on private healthcare regulation in India.

While the CCI recognised that admitted patients are nudged toward using in-house pharmacies and laboratories and "almost always" end up depending on them, it stopped short of conclusively calling the conduct anti-competitive abuse, reasoning that patients technically retain the freedom to choose another hospital before admission.

The order paints a detailed picture of how healthcare markets operate differently from conventional markets. "Due to ease of convenience as well as the hospi-

tal's 'protocol' and declaration to the patients regarding potential risks associated, in-patients, almost always, resort to usage of the hospital's in-house pharmacy and laboratories," the commission observed.

The CCI noted that this creates a 'locked-in effect' upon admitted patients, effectively ensuring that hospitals supply 'almost the entire' medicines, consumables and tests required during treatment.

During the investigation, the Director General (DG) compared rates charged by hospitals with those of standalone diagnostic centres such as Dr Lal Path Labs, Goyal MRI and House of Diagnostics. The findings showed striking disparities in several cases. According to tables reproduced in the order, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital charged up to 243 per cent more for certain tests such as reticulocyte count in 2018 when compared to average standalone lab rates. A BACT/alert aerobic culture test was found to be as much as 238 per cent higher, while several ultrasound and X-ray procedures were priced between 50 per cent and 200 per cent above comparison labs. For instance, a knee X-ray procedure cost Rs 1,010 at the hospital in 2018, compared to Rs 330 at the reference diagnostic lab cited in the investigation. Similarly, ultrasound tests for upper abdomen and KUB were found to be 78 per cent more expensive than comparable standalone diagnostic centres in 2018.

Yet, despite documenting repeated pricing disparities, the commission refrained from conclusively holding the hospital guilty of "excessive pricing".

The regulator reasoned that hospitals and standalone diagnostic labs cannot be compared in a simplistic manner because hospital laboratory's function round-the-clock, maintain faster turnaround times and operate with significantly higher infrastructure and staffing requirements.

The order repeatedly underlines the absence of a robust regulatory framework governing pricing within private hospitals.

The commission noted that government agencies, including the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) and CDSCO, do not regulate prices for most diagnostic tests and several hospital services. It also referred to a recent Supreme Court judgment delivered in March this year, which observed that the issue of regulating pricing practices in private hospitals ultimately falls within the policy domain of the government and legislature.

In one of the most significant observations of the order, the CCI acknowledged that healthcare cannot be viewed like a standard consumer market because patients entering hospitals are not merely purchasing goods, but seeking treatment during moments of physical and emotional vulnerability.

## Two minors stabbed to death over old rivalry

**New Delhi(GNS):** Two minors were allegedly stabbed to death while another sustained injuries following a violent clash between two groups over a past rivalry in northwest Delhi's Rohini area on Wednesday, the police said.

The incident took place in Sector 20, Rohini, where three juveniles from the Sultanpuri area had apparently arrived to trace another boy whom they suspected of sheltering persons involved in the murder of one of their associates earlier this year, they said.

The police said the trio, allegedly armed with weapons, could not locate the boy and later got into an altercation with members of a local family in the area.

During the dispute, the youths allegedly assaulted a woman and her son, causing injuries to both, police sources said.

As the three boys allegedly tried to flee, they were chased by the injured



woman's son and few others from the locality. During the chase, a knife reportedly slipped from the hand of one of the fleeing boys.

The police said a 14-year-old boy from the rival group allegedly picked up the knife and attacked two of the minors, stabbing one in the neck and the other in the abdomen and chest.

Both victims collapsed on the road with severe injuries. Police personnel rushed them to a nearby hospital after receiving information about the incident, where doctors declared them dead on arrival, officials said.

The third boy injured in the clash is undergoing treatment, the police said.

Senior police officers, along with a forensic team, inspected the crime scene and collected evidence, including the knife allegedly used in the killings. A minor has been apprehended in this connection, the police said.

Investigators said cross-cases had been registered based on complaints from both sides, including charges related to murder and attempt to murder. CCTV footage from the area is also being examined to establish the sequence of events.

The police suspect the violence was a fallout of continuing rivalry between the two groups linked to an earlier murder case.

## Delhi reopens new ration card applications after 13 years

**New Delhi(GNS):** In a major overhaul of Delhi's public distribution system, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Thursday announced the resumption of new ration card issuance in the Capital after nearly 13 years, with the government launching a fully digital, technology-driven process aimed at benefiting nearly eight lakh eligible families. Addressing a press conference at the Delhi Secretariat, Gupta said online applications for new ration cards and inclusion of family members have been opened from May 15 through the Delhi Government's e-District portal. She said the move was inspired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Antyodaya vision to ensure welfare benefits reach the poorest and most deserving households.

The announcement comes after the Delhi Government carried out a large-scale audit of the ration distribution system and identified over 7.71 lakh "bogus and ineligible" beneficiaries. According to the government, more than 6.46 lakh beneficiaries were found to be above

the prescribed income limit, while thousands of others either had duplicate entries, had not availed ration for over a year, or were deceased persons whose names still existed in official records.

With the removal of these names, nearly 7.72 lakh vacancies have opened up in the system, paving the way for fresh beneficiaries. The government said over 3.72 lakh applications for new ration cards and nearly one lakh applications for inclusion of family members are currently pending and will now be processed under revised eligibility norms.

The Chief Minister said the government has introduced sweeping technology-driven reforms to make the system transparent and corruption-free. Biometric authentication has been made mandatory for ration distribution, while traditional weighing machines at fair-price shops are being replaced with electronic weighing systems to curb complaints of underweighing and leakages.