

DMK moves Madras HC seeking ED probe into Rs 4 cr seizure 'linked' to BJP leaders including TN chief

CHENNAI: The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) has moved the Madras High Court seeking action under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) against BJP leaders.

A writ petition filed by DMK MP and advocate R. Girirajan alleges that BJP leaders N. Nainar Nagendran and Kesava Vinayagam were linked to an electoral offence in which Rs 3.98 crore was seized on 6 April 2024 in Tirunelveli. The cash was recovered from individuals who allegedly claimed it was meant for voter inducement. An FIR was registered and the case was later transferred to the CBCID, which added charges including conspiracy and cheating.

The petition argues that the offences qualify as "scheduled offences" under the PMLA, making it mandatory for the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to register an Enforcement Case Information Report (ECIR) and initiate a money laundering probe. However, Girirajan alleged, the ED failed to act despite sufficient evidence, possibly due to political influence.

The plea seeks a direction to the ED to register an ECIR and conduct a proper investigation, stating that failure to act violates statutory duty

and undermines the rule of law.

"It is an electoral offence of money laundering in this case of Nainar Nagendran. It was not a small amount. Rs 4 crore was seized in which Nainar Nagendran was involved. Usually, ED files an ECIR and arrests people. They target opposition leaders but when such a huge amount is involved in an electoral offence, ED should do its job and take action," said DMK spokesperson Saravanan Annadurai.

Responding to the issue, Narayanan Thirupathy, chief spokesperson, TN BJP, told ThePrint, "The DMK, which controls the police department, is deliberately registering such cases for political ends. If this financial fraud had indeed occurred, the Enforcement Directorate would investigate it. The BJP has no need to engage in such actions for the sake of politics." However, Saravanan Annadurai refuted the allegations and accused the ED of "political and election stunts" to protect the guilty. DMK was not doing anything of that sort, he said.

Earlier, the DMK, through Girirajan, had filed nine separate writ petitions in the Madras High Court seeking directions to the ED to reg-



ister ECIRs against senior leaders of the previous AIADMK regime.

The petitions were moved against former ministers S. P. Velumani, C. Vijayabaskar, K. P. Anbalagan, C. Kamaraj, K. C. Veeramani, M. R. Vijayabaskar, P. Thangamani, former MLA B. Sathyanarayanan, and R. Elango- van, a relative of former CM Edappadi K. Palaniswami.

Citing Directorate of Vigilance and Anti-Corruption FIRs under

the Prevention of Corruption Act for criminal misconduct, illegal gratification, and disproportionate assets, the DMK argued that the ED should probe the cases but failed to act due to alleged political bias linked to AIADMK's alliance with the Centre. AIADMK spokesperson Kovai Sathya dismissed the move as an "election stunt", pointing to corruption cases against DMK ministers like Senthil Balaji and K. N. Nehru.

Amid long queues at fuel stations, Goa gov't says sufficient stock; urges people not to panic

PANAJI: The Goa government on Thursday asserted there is sufficient stock of petrol and diesel in the state even as long queues were seen at several fuel stations.

Due to miscommunication and rumours on social media about short supply of petrol and diesel at retail outlets, there is great panic among people and vehicle owners have started rushing to the stations, the state civil supplies department said in a statement.

"This crowding and long queue situation creates chaos at the station thereby creating law and order situation. The general public are hereby informed there is sufficient stock of petrol and diesel at oil terminals for supply. Consumers need not panic. There is no disruption in supply of petrol and diesel," it added.



The situation is being monitored at every level, the department said, adding the supply of petrol and diesel will be as it was in the past without any disruption.

The Union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas on Thursday said the country has about 60 days of fuel stock cover and that there is

no shortage of petrol, diesel, or LPG.

It dismissed reports of shortages as a "deliberate misinformation campaign" aimed at triggering panic buying, adding that all petrol pumps across the country are adequately stocked and operating normally, with no rationing of petrol or diesel.

Conduct of few cops tarnishing image of entire force, says Union Minister Paatil

SURAT: The conduct of a few personnel has tarnished the image of the entire police department, Union Jal Shakti Minister CR Paatil said on Thursday while asserting that society has high expectations from the force.

Speaking at the inauguration of police housing projects here in the presence of Gujarat Deputy Chief Minister Harsh Sanghavi, the Union minister also said there should be a plan for an 8-hour shift system for the police.

"Society has high expectations from the police. Police should behave respectfully and politely with citizens. Complaints of impolite behaviour of police have decreased, but they can always try to improve more and create a good image in front of citizens. At times, the conduct of a few personnel has negatively impacted the entire department's reputation," Paatil said.

There have been a few incidents where

attempts have been made to tarnish the image of the police, he added.

"Uniformed soldiers at the border fight external enemies, and citizens deeply respect them. Similarly, police officers also wear uniforms and protect citizens from internal threats. So why do many citizens feel resentment toward the police," he questioned.

Paatil also said there should be a plan for an 8-hour shift system for the police as "personnel should experience some peace in their lives".

Many police personnel feel they have excessive workload with comparatively low compensation, Paatil pointed out.

Addressing the gathering, Sanghavi said houses given to police personnel should not be considered government quarters, but their own homes.

Special care should be taken to maintain cleanliness in and around these homes, the Deputy CM added.

Noida airport to be game changer for UP economy, says govt ahead of March 28 inauguration

LUCKNOW/NOIDA: The Uttar Pradesh government on Thursday said the Noida International Airport at Jewar is set to become a "game changer" for the state's economy with a wide-ranging impact across agriculture, industry, logistics and employment generation.

The airport, scheduled to be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on March 28, will act as a strategic engine in accelerating UP's ambition of becoming a USD 1 trillion economy, the government said in a statement.

It said the project will significantly boost employment, attract investments and enhance global connectivity, while also strengthening the state's presence on the international economic map.

Developed in line with the vision of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the airport is expected to unlock the

state's landlocked economic potential by connecting key sectors such as agriculture; micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs); tourism and industries directly to global markets.

According to the statement, the airport will have an annual capacity of handling around seven crore passengers and nearly 10 lakh tonnes of cargo, which will provide fresh momentum to agriculture, MSMEs and logistics sectors.

It said perishable agricultural produce such as fruits, vegetables, dairy products and flowers will be able to access international markets more efficiently, potentially increasing farmers' income and strengthening the "farm-to-global market" model.

The government added that reduced logistics costs, increased exports and improved connectivity will enhance UP's competitiveness and economic growth.

Once fully operational, the airport could contribute to over one per cent growth in the state's GDP, it said.

The project is also expected to generate substantial employment opportunities, both direct and indirect, across sectors such as aviation, logistics, hospitality, agriculture and supply chains, while also boosting industrial development in regions surrounding the airport. The government said the development of the airport will transform Noida, Greater Noida and the Yamuna Expressway region into major investment and industrial hubs, attracting investments in sectors including electronics, manufacturing, logistics and real estate.

It added that the airport is being developed as a major multi-modal aviation hub, which will help ease pressure on Delhi's IGI Airport and position UP as a key centre for global trade,

tourism and connectivity.

Meanwhile, preparations for the inauguration ceremony have reached the final stages, with the administration on high alert to ensure smooth conduct of the event.

According to an official statement, security arrangements, traffic management, parking, medical facilities and other essential services are being put in place on a war footing. CCTV surveillance and control room monitoring have been strengthened, while arrangements for VVIP movement and public convenience have also been finalised.

Chief Minister Adityanath has been personally reviewing the preparations, with officials directed to ensure seamless execution of the high-profile event, expected to witness the presence of dignitaries, industrialists and the general public.

Woman bludgeoned to death with mini gas cylinder in Gurugram; husband arrested

GURUGRAM: A 22-year-old woman was bludgeoned to death with a mini gas cylinder, allegedly by her husband, following an altercation in their rented accommodation at Chauma village here, police said on Thursday. Police arrested the husband, who allegedly fled the scene on Tuesday after locking the room, on Thursday and booked him for murder at the Baghera police station, they said.

According to police, Gunjan lived with her husband Sunil (22) on rent near the Chauma railway crossing. When her neighbours noticed that the room was locked since Tuesday, they peeped through the window on Wednesday evening, and found Gunjan lying in a pool of blood.

The landlord told police that the woman lived there with her husband, who worked as a labourer, for the past several months.

Man found guilty in 2015 attempt to murder case by Delhi Court

NEW DELHI: A Delhi court has held a man guilty in a decade-old attempt to murder case, concluding that the evidence on record clearly established his involvement. The case was heard by Additional Sessions Judge Vandana Jain, who convicted Surender Jain alias Vicky for attacking Charan Singh in 2015. According to the court, the accused used an iron battery light stand to strike the victim on the head. In its order dated March 19, the court noted that the nature of the attack indicated that the accused was aware such a blow to a vital part of the body could prove fatal. Following the incident on August 18, 2015, the injured man was taken to hospital for treatment.

The court placed reliance on eyewitness accounts supported by medical records, stating that together they clearly pointed to the guilt of the accused. It also clarified that any lapses during the investigation did not undermine the strength of the prosecution's case. Medical evidence showed that the victim had suffered a grievous injury to a vital organ caused by a dangerous iron object.

Modernisation of 13 railway stations in Delhi underway under Amrit Bharat Scheme

NEW DELHI: The Modi Government on Thursday informed the Lok Sabha that modernisation work is in progress at 13 major railway stations in Delhi under the Amrit Bharat Scheme, with upgrades focused on passenger amenities and infrastructure.

In a written reply to a query by South Delhi MP Ramvir Singh Bidhuri, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said that work is advancing at multiple stations, including New Delhi, Old Delhi, Anand Vihar, Sarai Rohilla, Delhi Cantt, Hazrat Nizamuddin, Sabzi Mandi, Safdarjung, Tilak Bridge, Adarsh Nagar, Bijwasan and Narela.

At New Delhi Railway Station, work related to passenger drop-off and waiting areas on the Ajmeri Gate side has been completed. On the Paharganj side, construction activities are ongoing, including demolition of certain structures, development of basement levels, and foundation work for an elevated road.

The minister also provided updates on other stations. At Safdarjung, the Signal and Telecom building has been completed

and is operational, while finishing work on the main station building is in progress. At Bijwasan, structural work has been completed and interior finishing, including air concourse development, is underway. Platform shelter work has also started.

At Delhi Cantt, structural work on parts of the station and residential quarters has been completed. At Narela, work has begun on platform shelters, surface improvements, restrooms, parking, and facilities for persons with disabilities. At Sabzi Mandi, a 12-metre-wide foot overbridge is being constructed along with installation of lifts.

At Tilak Bridge, a new station building and related passenger amenities are under development. According to the government, the redevelopment aims to improve passenger convenience through better access, integration with both sides of the city, upgraded waiting areas, drinking water facilities, seating, wider foot overbridges, air concourses, improved platforms, enhanced information systems, and parking facilities.

No scarcity of LPG, petrol-diesel: Maharashtra min

MUMBAI: There is no shortage of cooking gas and other fuels in Maharashtra but rumours and statements of opposition leaders are creating panic, state minister Girish Mahajan said on Thursday, urging people not to panic buy. There was a sudden spurt in demand for fuels in the last five days leading to an "artificial shortage", he said, adding that petrol pump operators have adequate stocks but the surge in demand created a perception of shortage. "There is no scarcity in the state. People are scared of possible shortage, but the Union government has assured of continued supply of cooking gas."

Delhi aims to emerge as global tourism hub, says Education Minister Ashish Sood

NEW DELHI: Minister Ashish Sood on Thursday said the time has come to develop Delhi into a leading tourism destination rather than merely a transit hub, in his address at the 2nd ICC Aviation & Tourism Summit 2026.

The summit, hosted by the Indian Chamber of Commerce, brought together policymakers, aviation leaders, and tourism stakeholders to discuss strategies for strengthening India's position in the global travel ecosystem.

The event also featured the ICC Tourism Excellence Awards, recognising contri-

butions to the sector.

Highlighting the importance of first impressions, Sood noted that a visitor's experience begins at Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA), which he described as a reflection of the city's identity.

He pointed out that the airport was recently ranked the best in India and South Asia for the eighth consecutive time, crediting initiatives like "Delvibe" and seamless travel systems such as DigiYatra.

Referring to the Delhi Budget 2026-27, Sood said the Rs 1.37 lakh crore outlay outlines a roadmap for a "de-



veloped capital" focused on infrastructure, sustainability, and aesthetics.

Capital expenditure has been significantly increased, with major allocations for road redevelopment, trans-

port systems, and green initiatives.

He added that over 750 km of roads will undergo comprehensive upgrades, alongside measures to make the city dust-free.

The minister also highlighted ongoing infrastructure projects, including the near-completion of the Barapullah Phase-3 corridor, aimed at easing congestion and improving connectivity across key parts of the city.

Positioning tourism as a priority sector, Sood spoke about the "Branding Delhi" initiative and efforts to promote cultural and heritage sites.

Proclaimed offender arrested after 3 years in 2022 Alipur murder case

NEW DELHI: Delhi Police have arrested a 29-year-old proclaimed offender who had been evading arrest for over three years in connection with a 2022 murder case, an officer said on Thursday. The accused has been identified as Anil Rajput, also known as Lambu, and was apprehended from Sheela Colony in Gurugram, Haryana, following a targeted operation based on intel. He had been declared a proclaimed offender in May 2023 by a Rohini court in connection with an FIR that was registered under Sections 302, 174A, and 34 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

"A tip-off was received on March 24, after which police tracked Anil's movements near a farmhouse in Gurugram," said Harsh In-

dora, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime Branch). A team led by Inspector Satish Malik, under the supervision of ACP Rajpal Dabas, carried out technical surveillance and field intelligence gathering before conducting a raid, which resulted in Anil's arrest.

While the sustained interrogation with Anil, he confessed to his involvement in the murder of Nazir on the intervening night of September 23-24, 2022.

"Anil, along with associates Ranjit, Dinesh, and Ramu, was under the influence of alcohol before assaulting Nazir, after which he succumbed to the injuries sustained," the officer said, adding that, subsequently, they disposed of his body at Nale Wala Road in Alipur using a tempo.

'Give us poison': Trans community erupts after Parliament passes bill redefining who's trans who isn't

NEW DELHI: The atmosphere at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi on Thursday was one of grief and fury in equal measure. Hundreds of members of the transgender community—kinnars, hijras, as well as rights activists—had gathered to protest the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Bill, 2026, which was passed by both Houses of Parliament allegedly without a single formal consultation with the people it claims to protect.

The protesters held placards, raised slogans, and spoke in voices that cracked with exhaustion and fear. Several people ThePrint spoke to described the proposed law not as protection, but an extinction notice.

The bill's most consequential proposed change removes the right to self-perceived gender identity that the 2019 Act had

guaranteed, replacing it with a certification process requiring recommendation from a medical board headed by a Chief Medical Officer, before a District Magistrate issues an identity certificate.

Kumkum, 60, a kinnar who has spent decades living and working on Delhi's streets, had a simple demand. "We were living how we were before. Let us continue to live that way."

She described a community that already feels consigned to the margins of survival, and fears the new law would embolden those who wish to push them further. "If this passes, the police, who at least hesitate to touch us now—nobody will stop the goons who approach us. Society will not let us live. Where will we go?"

Mona said she was forced to leave her home at 15. She spoke with quiet devastation. "My par-

ents threw me out. Society did not accept me. I stood on my own feet, lived as trans, earned my own living."

Like many kinnars at the protest, Mona survives through sex work and begging—not by choice, she said, but because those are the few avenues a community abandoned by family and State is left with. "I do sex work, I beg, I fill my stomach. I don't bother anyone, I don't snatch from anyone. Our community has values. We know we have to live in this society."

Fiza, 49, also a kinnar and a beggar, was incandescent on the medical board provision—one of the most contested elements of the new amendment. "The biggest problem is the medical board. Our ecosystem is not sensitive enough. These people will look at us naked and decide what we are? That is the greatest sin. You call yourself

intelligent while committing this stupidity."

"The government might as well give us poison to drink. This is not our fault—God made us this way. You did not make us. So what right do you have to strip us and examine our bodies to decide who we are?" she said.

The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Bill, 2026 was added to Parliament's agenda through a supplementary business list, and it was introduced in Lok Sabha on 13 March.

The Bill also restricts recognition to individuals with specific biological or physiological characteristics, intersex variations, or socio-cultural identities such as kinnar, hijra, aravani and jogta—effectively writing trans men, non-binary persons, and gender-queer individuals out of the law entirely.

The Lok Sabha passed the Bill on Tuesday by a voice vote amid a walkout by the Opposition. The Rajya Sabha followed on Wednesday, also by a voice vote, rejecting a DMK motion to refer the Bill to a Select Committee.

In both Houses, the government's refusal to allow any committee scrutiny drew sharp criticism. Opposition MPs across parties—Congress, CPI(M), TMC, and others—argued the Bill dismantled self-identification rights protected by the Supreme Court's 2014 NALSA judgment, violated the right to privacy upheld in the Puttaswamy ruling, and would deepen the marginalisation it claimed to address.

The government, for its part, leaned heavily on cultural references in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata in its defence of the Bill.