MARKET DASHBOARD

SENSEX
76905.51
▲ 557.45 (0.73%)

NIFTY
23350.40
▲ 159.75 (0.69%)

Markets Remain Closed

GAINERS & LOSERS

TOP GAINERS / BSE	TOP LOSERS / BSE	TOP GAINERS / NSE	TOP LOSERS / NSE	COMMODITIES
NTPC	Infosys	DB Realty	Amber Enterprises	GOLD (MCDX 10 GRM)
351.30, 2.80%	1,593, -1.43%	151.61, 19.40%	6,891, -4.94%	₹ 90220
Bajaj Finance	Tata Steel	MRPL	TBO Tek	↓ (440.00)
8,916, 2.73%	157.28, -1.11%	135.53, 15.00%	1,207, -4.92%	SILVER (MCDX 1 KG)
Kotak Bank	Titan Company	Alembic Pharma	Jindal Stainless	₹ 103000
2,079, 2.13%	3,163, -0.96%	952.60, 14.10%	625.70, -4.34%	↓ (2100.00)
Nestle India	M&M	Ramkrishna Forg	Crisil	USD ($) / INR(₹)
2,269, 2.13%	2,802, -0.93%	843.90, 13.30%	4,234, -4.15%	86.03
Sun Pharma	Bajaj Finserv	Tejas Networks	SCI	↓ (0.35)
1,785, 1.96%	1,847, -0.25%	799.90, 12.60%	169.26, -4.10%	

Punjab's excise revenue rose to Rs 10,200 crore in past 3 yrs: Harpal Singh Cheema

CHANDIGARH: Punjab Excise and Taxation Minister Harpal Singh Cheema on Saturday said the state's excise revenue rose from Rs 6,254 crore to Rs 10,200 crore in the past three years even as he slammed the previous governments for their alleged failure in boosting the collections.

Cheema said for the first time in Punjab's history, the excise revenue would surpass the five-digit mark, with the target of Rs 10,145 crore for the financial year 2024-25 likely to be exceeded.

He attributed the rise in the state's excise revenue growth to the success of the excise policy implemented since the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) formed the government in Punjab in 2022.

Addressing the media here, Cheema said the success of the tendering process has set the stage for a fourth consecutive year of remarkable growth for the excise department.

He said the department received overwhelming response in its ongoing e-tender process for the allotment



of retail liquor licences for the 2025-26 fiscal year.

He said the department had set a reserve price of Rs 9,017 crore for 207 retail liquor groups. As of March 20, 179 of these groups, accounting for 87 per cent of the total number, have been successfully allotted, fetching a discovered price of Rs 8,681 crore, along with an additional Rs 871 crore, as premium against the reserved price of Rs 7,810 crore. Cheema, who is also the state finance minister, expressed confidence in achieving the ambitious target of Rs 11,020 crore for 2025-26.

He said the tremendous response to the e-tendering process suggests that the department is likely to surpass this target, potentially reaching approximately Rs 11,800 crore, which would represent a 16 per cent increase over the previous year's excise revenue.

He criticised the previous governments led by the SAD-BJP alliance and the Congress for their "failure" to boost excise revenue.

He said during the Congress regime from 2002 to 2007, excise revenue declined 6.9 per cent, falling from Rs 1,462 crore in 2002 to Rs 1,363 crore in 2007.

He alleged that during the decade-long SAD-BJP rule, the term "mafia" became synonymous with governance, and excise revenue dropped from Rs 4,796 crore in 2015-16 to Rs 4,400 crore in 2016-17 due to the policy designed to benefit "cronies". He added that the Congress regime from 2017 to 2022 followed a similar trajectory, with excise revenue stagnating for the first three years of the regime and reaching Rs 6,200 crore by 2021-22.

He also recalled the tragic hooch incident during the previous Congress tenure, which claimed the lives of 128 economically disadvantaged people.

Goyal hails startups, says many nations want to adopt India's development model

AHMEDABAD: Several nations want to adopt India's development model, which has given prominence to initiatives such as Startup India that encourage innovation, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal said here on Saturday.

Addressing the valedictory function of Vejalpur Startup Festival 2.0, Goyal also said India aims to take the number of unicorns from the existing 118 to 1,000 and 5,000.

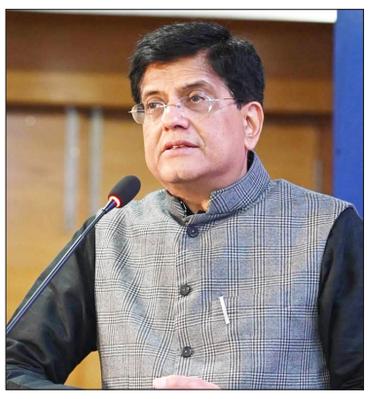
The startup ecosystem created in the country has encouraged job seekers to become job creators, the Union minister asserted.

"Narendra Modi as the then chief minister of Gujarat ensured fast paced development of the state. Gujarat's development then became the country's development. And slowly, several countries, especially developing countries, today want to adopt India's development model," Goyal said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has dedicated to the nation several jewels in this development model, like Swachh Bharat Mission, Make In India, Digital India, Startup India, International Yoga Day, Ayushman Bharat. among others, he added.

"There is hardly any leader in the world who has been conferred the highest civilian awards. Modi has been conferred 21 international awards," Goyal said.

Goyal said startups have worked to help India's economy grow with their new and innovative ideas, new ways of functioning, adding that Gujarat has remained the best performing state in



startups.

There is an appetite in people here for taking risks, he said while appreciating the state.

"The government has given encouragement to startups, investors, founders and mentors to associate with startups. The Centre started a Fund of Funds (FoF) for startups with a fund of Rs 10,000 crore. Another Rs 10,000 crore fund was announced in the last budget, and the first instalment has been provided to the department," he said.

Angel tax has also been removed, and a portal 'Bhaskar' has been launched for startups to connect with investors, Goyal said.

Urging youth to create a model of people-centric development through their startup ideas, Goyal said, "Sometimes you have to face failures. Do not get scared of failure. The mantra of a startup is to rise from failure and become successful."

Air India restarts services to London Heathrow; other airlines also operate flights

NEW DELHI: Air India on Saturday said it has recommenced flights to and from the London Heathrow airport, which had witnessed operational disruptions due to a power outage.

From the national capital, apart from Air India, Virgin Atlantic and British Airways also operated their scheduled flights to London Heathrow (LHR).

Travel plans of thousands of passengers who were scheduled to fly to LHR, including from Indian cities, were disrupted on Friday due to the cancellation of flights, as operations were suspended following the power outage.

"Our operations to and from London Heathrow (LHR) have recommenced after the disruption at the airport yesterday due to a power outage," Air India said in a statement on Saturday.

According to Air India, flight AI111 was on schedule and other flights, to and from London, are expected to operate as per schedule.

"Flight AI161 of 21 March, which was diverted to Frankfurt, is expected to leave Frankfurt at 14:05 pm local time," the statement said.

An official said Air India, British Airways and Virgin Atlantic operated their flights to LHR on Saturday morning, and another Air India flight is scheduled to depart in the afternoon.

Delhi Airport has six daily flights connecting with LHR. British Airways has eight flights per day between India and LHR, including three from Mumbai and two from Delhi. Virgin Atlantic has five daily flights to LHR from Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru.

ACROSS THE GLOBE

Donald Trump says he'll pay out of his pocket overtime for formerly stranded astronauts

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump on Friday said he would pay out of his pockets the overtime for astronauts Barry "Butch" Wilmore and Sunita "Suni" Williams, who returned to Earth this week after spending nine months in space.

The two astronauts, who were supposed to be on an eight-day mission, spent 286 days in space -- 278 days longer than anticipated after their spacecraft malfunctioned.

While speaking with reporters in the Oval Office, Trump, when asked about the calculated overtime, said: "Nobody's ever mentioned this to me. If I have to, I'll pay it out of my own pocket." Trump said this when a Fox News reporter



highlighted Wilmore and Williams each received USD 5 per diem for each day in space, amounting to USD 1,430 in extra pay.

A rescue crew brought Williams and Wilmore back to the Earth this week on a SpaceX Crew Dragon capsule. Trump also thanked Elon Musk, the head of Tesla, SpaceX and the leader of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE).

"Think if we don't have him?" Trump said. "If we don't have Elon. They could be up there a long time. Who is else is going to get them?"

He noted that the "body starts to deteriorate" after a few months orbiting in space.

Six missing foreign Hikers found in Philippines

MANILA: The police said Saturday that all six foreign hikers who went missing while hiking in a central Philippine volcanic mountain were found.

The male hikers, three German nationals aged 67, 60, and 58, a 38-year-old Russian, a 63-year-old British, and a 50-year-old Canadian, left at around 8 a.m. local time on Wednesday to climb the Mount Talinis, located southwest of Valencia, a town in the Negros Oriental province. They were reported missing Thursday after they failed to return to their rental house.

London Heathrow Airport resumes some flights after major fire disrupts operations

LONDON: The first plane landed at London Heathrow on Friday as the airport resumes some flights following its closure caused by a major fire at an electrical substation nearby.

"Following an earlier power outage, Heathrow is now safely able to restart flights," the airport said in a statement.

"To maintain the safety of our passengers and colleagues, Heathrow will be running a reduced operation prioritising repatriation and relocation of aircraft," it said, while suggesting passengers contact their airline for further information.

To help ease congestion following the closure of the airport, restrictions on overnight flights have been temporarily lifted, the Department for Transport said in a post on X.

Heathrow,e of the world's busiest airports, hopes to run a full service on Saturday. The closure is estimated to have disrupted the travel plans of 200,000 people, The Guardian reported.

The airport's chief executive, Thomas Woldbye apologised on Friday to passengers, calling the incident "as big as it gets for our airport". "Tomorrow morning we expect to be back in full operation, so 100 per cent operation as a normal day," Woldbye said.

Meanwhile, unter-terror officers from the Metropolitan Police are leading the investigation into the fire at the nearby electricity substation that has closed the airport.

A Met spokesperson said its Counter Terrorism Command was leading the investigation due to "the location of the substation and the impact this incident has had on critical national infrastructure."

There was "currently no indication of foul play", but the spokesperson added that officers were retaining an "open mind at this time" regarding the cause of the blaze.

Flights had been cancelled, people evacuated from their homes, and local schools shut after two explosions and a fire at an electrical substation in Hayes, west London, on Thursday night. Some planes had been diverted to other airports, including London Gatwick Airport, those in Paris, and Shannon Airport in Ireland.

The airport, which handled a record 83.9 million passengers last year, said its back-up diesel generators had "all operated as expected... but they are not designed to allow us to run a full operation."

Ofgem, Britain's energy regulator, announced it would commission a review "to understand the cause of this incident and what lessons can be learnt."

Families of Gaza hostages demand Israel halt fighting

JERUSALEM: Families of 42 freed hostages and more than 250 relatives of those still held in Gaza issued a letter on Friday demanding an immediate ceasefire and a return to negotiations, accusing officials of sacrificing captives to prolong the conflict.

The letter, signed by freed hostages and families of the 59 remaining captives, called for a comprehensive deal that would secure their release in exchange for ending the fighting and establishing a post-war plan for Gaza. It alleged that military operations had endangered hostages, claiming that 41 had already died as a result of Israel's tactics.

"The Israeli government chooses an endless war over rescuing and returning the hostages, thereby sacrificing them to their deaths. This is a criminal policy -- you have no mandate to sacrifice 59 hostages," the letter stated. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office has repeatedly maintained that military pressure is key to securing hostage returns, a position the families dismissed as "reckless" in the letter.

More than 240 people were taken hostage during Hamas' October 7 attack, which killed 1,200 in Israel. The ensuing 17-month conflict has left over 48,000 dead in Gaza.

Israel resumed strikes in Gaza on Tuesday after a ceasefire with Hamas that began on Jan. 19 unraveled. Israeli forces subsequently launched ground operations across southern, northern, and central Gaza.

Gaza's Civil Defence said at least 11 people were killed in Friday's airstrikes, with the overall death toll from the renewed strikes potentially exceeding 600, in addition to more than 1,000 wounded.

Strike erupts in Balochistan after violent clash between police, BYC protesters; leader Mahrang arrested

KARACHI: A shutter-down and wheel jam strike was observed in many parts of Pakistan's restive Balochistan province on Saturday after violence broke out between police and the Baloch Yakjehti Committee's (BYC) a day earlier.

Many parts of the province including the capital city Quetta remained closed on the call of the BYC's leader Mahrang Baloch, who was arrested on Saturday from a sit-in with some other workers and activists.

The strike call came after the BYC claimed a police crackdown on a peaceful sit-in near Balochistan University on Sariab Road in Quetta on Friday, which was held as a protest against alleged enforced disappearances in the province.

The government denied the claim, stating that protesters resorted to violence.

Mahrang claimed in a statement on social media on Friday night that three BYC activists were killed and 13 others including women injured due to the alleged police brutality.

In her statement on X, Mahrang said they were shutting down the entire province against the state violence.

In a counter statement, spokesperson for the government Shahid Rind said the



protesters had resorted to violence and injured 10 police personnel including a woman constable.

Videos released by BYC on social media showed police using tear gas and a water cannon and also firing blank shots to disperse the BYC protesters who had staged the sit-in.

Early Saturday morning, Mahrang and other activists gathered for a sit-in on the Sariab Road with the bodies of alleged casualties from the previous day. The BYC later claimed that arrests were made and the bodies were seized from this location.

Mobile services have been suspended in Quetta since Friday night and data services are also down.

In the Malikabad area of Turbat, unidentified men on motorcycles fired gunshots at the protesters, who were monitoring the strike, injuring two children. They were rushed to the hospital for medical treatment.

Balochistan has been facing a level of insurgency and violence for the last several years.

On Saturday, four ethnic workers were killed in an attack by unknown killers in the province's Kalat district.

The labourers hailing from the Sadiqabad area of Punjab province were targeted in Mangochar city.

Kalat deputy commissioner (DC) Jamil Baloch confirmed the attack in a statement by saying that "unknown assailants opened fire and killed four labourers", adding that the incident took place at around 2:30 pm.

Security forces reached the place of attack and launched a manhunt but no arrest had been made.

No group claimed responsibility for the attack but in the past, ethnic Baloch terrorist groups carried out such targeted attacks against the people of Punjab.

Tunisian new PM leads 1st ministerial meeting

TUNIS: Tunisia's newly appointed Prime Minister Sarra Zaafrani Zenzri chaired her first cabinet meeting on Friday, pledging to prioritise economic reforms, improve living standards, and fast-track strategic projects to address the country's mounting challenges.

In a statement issued by the state-run Tunis Afrique Presse (TAP), Zaafrani, 62, thanked President Kais Saied for his trust and acknowledged the "weight of national responsibility" as she outlined her agenda.

She said the government must "deliver tangible results" to meet public expectations and safeguard sovereignty.

Zaafrani, Tunisia's second woman prime minister, is the country's third prime minister within less than two years. She called for the economy's "structural transformation" through accelerated public projects and legislation to remove bureaucratic hurdles.

The prime minister also emphasised support for vulnerable groups and cohesion within her government team, stressing that unity was critical to tackling Tunisia's protracted economic crisis.

Zaafrani, the former minister of public works, was appointed prime minister on Friday after Saied dismissed Kamel Madouri from the position Thursday night.