

## IN BRIEF

**Four killed 10 injured due overturn of sugarcane truck**

Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, Mar 10 (UNI) : Four sugarcane cutter labourers were killed on the spot and 10 others were injured when a sugarcane loaded truck overturned near Khadi Chandan Nullah on Kannad-Pishor road in Kannad Taluka of district on late last night.

Sources said 14 labourers were travelling in the truck. After the incident nearby villagers rushed to the spot and rescued 10 of them but unfortunately four of them labours died on the spot. All the injured have been admitted to the hospital. Police identified the deceased as Mithun Chavan (26), Kisan Rathod (30), Manoj Chavan (23) and Krishna Rathod (30) all from Satkund hamlets of Kannad taluka, they said. Police are investigating how exactly the accident took place.

**No mention of increasing 'Majhi Ladki Bahin' yojana benefit to women in Maha Budget**

Mumbai, Mar 10 (UNI) : In a surprising development, Deputy Chief and Finance Minister Ajit Pawar made no mention of increasing stipend under 'Majhi Ladki Bahin' yojana to Rs 2,100 from Rs 1,500 in the state Budget for the fiscal year 2025-26 that was presented in the Maharashtra Assembly on Monday, dashing hopes of lakhs of women beneficiaries.

Minister Pawar did not give any information about increasing amount to Rs 2,100 for women beneficiaries under the Ladki Bahin Yojana as promised by the Mahayuti leaders during state assembly electioneering.

The government has made a provision of Rs 36,000 crore for the Ladki Bahin Yojana this year, as compared to a provision of Rs 33,000 crore made last year.

As a result, the women beneficiaries will not receive Rs 2,100 per month under the Ladki Bahin scheme.

Under the Majhi Ladki Bahin scheme, about 2.53 crore women are being provided financial benefits. The government has so far spent Rs 33,232 crore for this and has proposed a total outlay of Rs 36,000 crore for the year 2025-26.

# Pawar tables budget with Rs 1,36,235 cr fiscal deficit

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Mar 10 : Deputy Chief and Finance Minister Ajit Pawar on Monday tabled a Rs 1,36,235 crore fiscal deficit budget for the financial year 2025-26 in the Maharashtra Assembly, saying that the government has been successful in keeping the fiscal deficit below three percent of the gross state income under the Fiscal Responsibility and Financial Management Act.

The minister said that the fiscal deficit for the financial year 2025-26 was Rs 1,36,235 crore, while the state's revenue deficit has also consistently remained below one percent of the gross state income.

The salient features of the state Budget for the fiscal year 2025-26 are as follows.

He said that efforts are being made to achieve the goal of increasing the state's growth rate by boosting the growth cycle through economic reforms and increased capital expenditure.

The goal is to take the economy of the Mumbai Metropolitan Region from 140 billion to 300 billion dollars by 2030 and to 1.5 trillion dollars by 2047.

Various infrastructure projects undertaken in the MMR such as Vadhan Port, Navi Mumbai International Airport, Bullet Train, Multimodal Corridor, Subway, Metro projects have made this region a growth area. It will be the centre.

To achieve the concept of Developed India-Developed Maharashtra, a new industrial policy of



Maharashtra is being formulated to attract investment through "Make in Maharashtra". An investment of Rs 40 lakh crore and creation of 50 lakh jobs are expected in next five years. In the backdrop of the disappointing 3.3 percent growth rate of the agriculture sector last year, the state government provided financial assistance to farmers through various schemes and programmes, and the growth rate of the agriculture sector improved to 8.7 percent in the year 2024-25.

To continuously increase this growth rate, infrastructure facilities such as increasing farmers' income, value addition in agricultural production, irrigation facilities, solar energy, etc., will be provided. The central assistance, international financial innovative initiatives like assistance from institutions, monetization of public assets, streamlining of schemes and infrastructure investment trusts will be taken up. The minister said that adequate budgetary

provision has been made for all the communication sectors of the state including highways, ports, airports, waterways, bus transport, railways and metro.

Maximum financial support is being given to quality rural roads as well as state highways and district roads.

The state's new housing policy will be announced soon to achieve the goal of housing for all in next five years. A fund of Rs 15,000 crore will be made available for rural housing schemes and Rs 8,100 crore for urban housing schemes.

Adequate provisions have been made for the newly announced schemes.

The state's annual plan has been increased by Rs 62,560 crore, or about 33 percent, and the provision for the Scheduled Caste Component Scheme has been increased by 42 percent and the provision for the Tribal Component Scheme by 40 percent.

A high-level committee has been formed to evaluate

the schemes currently being implemented in the state, to streamline them, and to study the sources of resources and suggest measures to increase them. Taking into account the recommendations of this committee, measures will be taken to implement the schemes more effectively.

The Direct Beneficiary Transfer (DBT) method is being implemented to make implementation of all individual beneficiary schemes fast, efficient and transparent. From April one, 2025, the benefits of such individual beneficiary schemes will be given only through DBT, he informed.

Support is being provided through the budget to preserve the cultural heritage of the state. Substantial provisions have been made in the budget for various projects to develop various monuments, pilgrimage sites, and tourist destinations. Various projects are being undertaken to promote boating in the state.

Policies and budgetary provisions have been made to develop infrastructure in the sports sector and support athletes.

Pawar promised to bring more transparency in the National Food Security Scheme and the Public Distribution System through Smart PDS and Block Chain Technology.

Various festivals and programmes will be organised to highlight Maharashtra's leadership in the cooperative sector in the backdrop of the International Year of Cooperatives.

has been formed to evaluate

## Rahul Gandhi calls for discussion on voters' list

New Delhi, Mar 10 (UNI) : Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, on Monday raised the issue of the voters' list in the Lok Sabha and called for a discussion on the matter.

Calling it a serious issue, Rahul Gandhi, during the Zero Hour, said that questions are being raised on the issue of

voters' list. "You (Speaker) said it right, that the government does not prepare the voters' list. But questions are being raised across the country on voters' lists," Gandhi said.

He said that these issues are being raised in "all Opposition states" and in "Maharashtra doubts are being raised in black

and white." The entire Opposition is united on this issue and wants a detailed discussion on the voters' list, Gandhi said.

It may be mentioned that following the defeat of INDI Alliance in the Maharashtra assembly elections last year, Rahul Gandhi had been voicing concerns, alleging a significant surge in new

voters, especially between the 2024 Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha elections in the state.

Earlier in the day, the proceedings of the Lower House were adjourned till 12 noon after DMK members protested over the issue of implementation of the New Education Policy in Tamil Nadu.

## Opposition terms Budget 'a hollow one that betrays common man'

Mumbai, March 10 (IANS) : The opposition parties in Maharashtra have claimed that the annual budget presented by the deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar is hollow as it has betrayed the common man including farmers and women devoid of any direction, goal of policy.

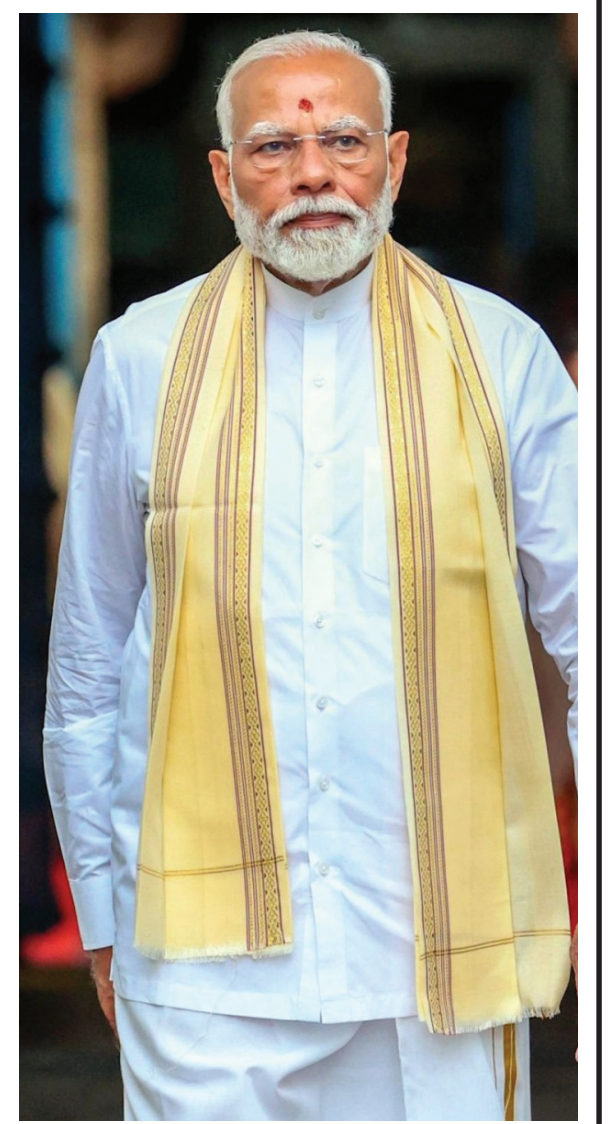
The Opposition slammed the state government for not increasing the monthly financial aid to Rs 2,100 from Rs 1,500 to women beneficiaries under the Ladki Bahin Yojana and also not declaring the farm loan waiver as promised in the poll manifesto.

Former Chief Minister and Shiv Sena-UBT chief Uddhav Thackeray claimed the Budget was bogus as it has failed to fulfil the welfare promises made during assembly election. Thackeray expressed serious displeasure over the state government's plan to provide guarantees to sugar mills saying that the government has not cleared the pending dues of Rs 16,000 crore to BrihanMumbai Municipal Corporation. The Congress legislature party

leader Vijay Wadetiwar claimed that the government seems to be reeling under huge financial stress as it was visible after the finance minister did not increase the financial aid to women beneficiaries and not announce the farm loan waiver. He accused the state government of presenting budget to safeguard the interest of the contractors as the government has neglected the Dalits, tribals and downtrodden in the budget.

NCP-SP legislator and former finance minister Jayant Patil said: "The government presented the SEVEN HEAVEN (Dream Castle Builder) budget while ridiculing the common people. "Maharashtra's revenue deficit has increased from an estimated Rs 20,000 crore to Rs 45,892 crore.

Last year, the deficit of Rs 20,000 crore was revised to Rs 26,536 crore. This means the total deficit will go up to Rs 60,000 crore. The fiscal deficit has also gone up from Rs 1,10,000 crore to Rs 1,36,000 crore today. This figure will also not go up to Rs 1.5 lakh crore," he said.



## New Zealand PM to discuss boosting trade, security ties ....

New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon has said that trade will play a central role in his discussions with Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his upcoming India trip, including talks on securing a free trade deal. PM Luxon had promised ahead of the 2023 election that he would secure a free-trade deal with India in his first term. He will be arriving in India on March 16 with one of the largest ever prime ministerial delegations in a concerted effort designed to boost trade and security ties with India.

(See on page 2)

## CDS stresses need for holistic counter-UAS system



Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Gen Anil Chauhan on Monday emphasised on the need for developing holistic counter-Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) System for the Armed Forces.

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## Budget Session: Gulmarg fashion show private event ...



Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday stated that the controversial fashion show at the famous skiing resort of Gulmarg was organized by a private party at a private hotel, with no involvement of the government at any stage.

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## Rohit Sharma uncertain about ...



India captain Rohit Sharma has left the door open regarding his playing future but remained non-committal on featuring in the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2027. Fresh off leading India to victory in the ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025, Rohit dismissed speculation about his retirement but admitted that the next World Cup is still too far to predict.

(See on page 7)

## Govt raises motor vehicles tax

Mumbai March 10 (UNI) : The government has announced plans to increase the motor vehicle tax rate by 1 per cent, courtesy which the state is expected to generate an additional revenue of around Rs 150 crores in 2025-26

Motor vehicles tax is currently levied at the rate of 7 per cent to 9 per cent on individual-owned non-transport four-wheeler CNG and LPG vehicles depending on the vehicle type and price.

The proposed increase is expected to generate an additional revenue of around Rs 150 crores for the state in 2025-26

It is also proposed in the budget to increase the stamp duty under Section 4 of the Maharashtra Stamp Act from Rs 100 to Rs 500 on supplementary documents, if more than one document is used to complete the same transaction.









## Home &amp; Garden

## 10 cool ways to go Green



And no, you do not need to go on a planting drive or install a compactor in your home to go eco-friendly. Here's listing 10 ways you can do your bit for the environment. Apart from them being hassle-free and cool, you can start doing them right from your home. So, chop chop.

**1. CARPOOL:**

You must have noticed the unimaginable jump in the number of personal vehicles in the city in the last five years? Well, according to a Barclays report - Megatrends: Accelerating urbanization in India -the country's transportation infrastructure is unable to keep up with its rapid urbanization rates.

Result: 8 hours and 15 km-long traffic jam on Delhi-Gurgaon expressway on May 22, this year. Even if you weren't stuck in the jam, you must be tasting this bitter pill every day on your way to work. Solution? Carpool.

**WHY IS IT COOL?**

Because, you get a break from driving every day and you get to drive on roads that do not feel like Gariahat during Chaitra sale!

**2. RECYCLE AND GET CRAFTY:**

If you have an artiste inside you who hasn't had an outlet yet, this is your chance. Recycle

your alcohol, sauce, jelly and soft drink bottles. Paint on them to turn these into centrepieces or vases. You can even use them as unusual planters for your plants. Youtube papermache and start using up the unending piles of newspapers you have hoarded in between. Instead of throwing away takeaway containers and pizza boxes, use them to store your trinkets and accessories like hair bands or tie-pins. Use your old CDs as coasters. Yes, there's no end to the stuff you can DIY while recycling. **WHY IS IT COOL?**

Because doing it yourself is the latest thing, but mostly because it has got an acronym.

**3. UNPLUG:**

No, we aren't talking metaphorically not about suddenly. It's walking up to your boss and going bam, "I need a break" one day. No, we mean literally. Stop leaving your mobile

chargers hanging from the plug point even when not in use or even when not in use or putting your computers and televisions on sleep-mode at night. Simply unplug. Because you might think that the appliances are not plugged into the chargers to consume electricity, but simply leaving them plugged keeps the electricity running through them.

**WHY IS IT COOL?**

Because wires are a nuisance. They are messy and knotty. Who wants them hanging around even when there's no need?

**4. DONATE TO FOOD BANKS:**

Mummy was right. The recent pictures of hungry kids from quake-hit Nepal reinforced that belief in us all over again. So what to do with the excess food products that we simply can't stop buying from the

supermarkets all the while knowing they are of no use? Donate them to food banks. Never heard of these banks? Well, they are organizations that collect leftover food from big restaurants to distribute amongst the underprivileged. Look for one in your vicinity and get in touch.

**WHY IS IT COOL?**

You will be starting a trend that most of your cool friends are still unaware of.

**5. GO FOR JUTE AND THE KHADI:**

From inter national runways to Esplanade pavement, natural fabric is the haute trend this season.

These natural fabrics are massively helping designers to merchants, consumers to weavers.

And, we aren't only talking about clothes. Everything from bags to lampshades, curtains to doormats come in these natural fabrics.

**WHY IS IT COOL?**

Because even Stella McCartney has pledged her commitment to sustainable green fashion.

**6. MOVE IN:** Think about it. It saves the entire daily utilities of another home. Save on the rent, electricity, cooking gas, water... should we go on? For the commitment phobic people out there, this is one leap of faith you can take. one leap of faith you can take.

**WHY IS IT COOL?**

Do we have to spell it out, dumbos? Wink, wink.

**7. INVEST IN A KHUS KHUS MAT INSTEAD OF RENTING A COOLER:**

Renting coolers during summers is a common thing for students staying in hostels or PGs. But a khus khus mat is so much cheaper! Just invest in one and douse it in water regularly after hanging it from the window.

**WHY IS IT COOL?**

Apart from the fact that it makes the living area much cooler, it also lends the room a retro look. If you can pair that up with a khus khus floor mat too, well you are almost on your way to being an interior designer. Ok, not that.

**8. GO DIGITAL:**

If you haven't already, it's high time you shift your banking and billing to the online and phone-banking portals. Seriously, when you have the option of sitting in the comfort of your home and pay your phone and electricity bills through the internet, why would you want to go out (or make someone else go out on your behalf) in this heat? It saves energy, fuel, trees and mostly time.

**It's World Environment Day today. And even if you are someone who is principally against celebrating special days, this is one of those commemorations that can do with your help.**

**WHY IS IT COOL?**

Because, c'mon, it's the digital age and you cannot afford to be left behind. Do you seriously want people to stare at you when you tell them that you have to leave early because you need to pay the phone bill? Who does that anymore!

**9. PEE IN YOUR GARDEN:**

Stop laughing. Stop smirking. Stop hawking! It's an easy and natural way of going green. The average flush drains at least three litres of water everytime you flush after peeing. That's a lot of water if you consider the fact that India is facing a drought. Plus, urine is a natural fertilizer, containing nitrogen, phosphorous, potassium and urea. So, apart from saving water, you are also helping grow save plants! Statutory Warning: Since it's still not a well-regarded practice in this country, we suggest you do not do it in public. It might be construed as a public nuisance. a public nuisance.

**WHY IS IT COOL?**

Did you not read the header? Because, it will save the planet!

**10. KEEP A COFFEE MUG IN YOUR LOCKER:**

Stop using paper or polystyrene cups that your workplace provides. Instead, invest in a coffee mug. It is always cooler to sip coffee from a mug that boasts of a quirky message, preferably one that defines you.

**WHY IS IT COOL?**

Because this is the best excuse to get your significant other to buy you that cup you had been lusting after.

## Tips to make your home Monsoon ready

**Holed up indoors on a rainy day? Make sure you've done your bit to brighten your house in the dull monsoon season.**

Navin Mistry, head of retail exports and lifestyle category, eBay India, lists out five easy tips to add some life to the atmosphere at home:

- Small, simple yet elegant changes in the decor can make your home monsoon ready. Bright and cheerful colours like coral and yellow are perfect for the melancholy the weather leaves you with.

- Rainy season calls for light fabrics and therefore fabrics with synthetic blends are always a good idea. - One can avoid the damp moist smell with scented candles. They are in various fragrances, so choose what suits you.

- Many of us enjoy sitting by the window and reading on a rainy day, adding wind-chimes near the window can be a good idea then. The light tingling and chiming with soft breeze will add a mystical touch to your day.

- Using vibrant coloured Chinaware can also be a good idea. Adding a few colours to the containers and dishes works fine. One can also hand paint on containers as not only does it brighten the table, but also keeps one busy during the heavy rains.



## Seed bombing is the new way to reclaim green spaces

The non-violent way to reclaim the green spaces in your city with plants of your choice is fast gaining ground

Want to reclaim the city space, beautify your area and be an architect of your own surroundings? Then you're welcome to be a seed bomber - a technique that has people throwing live seeds, packed in a specially made, compressed bundle of soil. These little bombs germinate and catch soil easily during the monsoons so you don't have to spend a lot of time gardening and make your ambitious patch of green in places that are hard to reach.

**Bombing the city green**

In Mumbai seed bombing is fast gaining traction with plant lovers and gardening enthusiasts coming together to organise workshops during monsoon where they meet and share the various techniques to make these seed bombs.

Aditi Punj, who organises these workshops at her flyover farm in Mohammed Ali Road, says that while usual gardening enthusiasts show interest, it is the kids who take to the activity in a big way. "The concept is guerrilla gardening and it is a fun way for people to be involved in making the city green. It's easy to do, and a great and tactile way for the kids to be involved."

**Taking to the highways**

Another seed bombing enthusiast, Shaan Lalwani who owns a nursery in the suburbs organised a similar seed bombing run along the Mumbai Pune Expressway where him along with a bunch of other enthusiasts, "I had recently read in papers that around 3 to 5 lakh trees were destroyed while making the express way. The



landslides that occur during monsoons are because of this indiscriminate chopping of trees." To tackle this problem and find a remedy for the long run, Lalwani along with other enthusiasts took off in two cars with 500 bombs each and pelted the sides along the highway with these colourful bombs with sling shots. "We used seeds of plants as well as trees. The bombs were made of seeds including Neem, Peepal, Gulmohar, Badam, Umber and Bhindi. We used these as they are strong species, native to the area and ideal to be grown along the highway." DIY Making a seed bomb is a rather easy process, which involves very little

in terms of materials. It is cheap. You can then go on to graduate to making the complex, fancier seed bombs.

**Classic Clay Seed Ball**

Invented by Japanese Masanobu Fukuoka, this is the most common one to make.

**Ingredients**

- Seed of your choice, or a mix (Important to use native plant seeds)  
- Compost, made up of dried leaves  
- Water

**Method**

- Mix 5 parts of clay with 1 part of compost and 1 part of seeds  
- Mix a few drops of water and knead into a mix.

- Separate the clay and make tiny, clay balls. Each ball can have more than a few seeds.

**Places where one can bombard with seed grenades**

- 1) Plots of soft land
- 2) Dividers between roads
- 3) Building gardens
- 4) Soft paths along highways

**Important**

Always use seeds of native plants, as species that are not native to the environment can hurt the ecosystem of the place

## Give your home a monsoon makeover

**Monsoon is a great time to give your abode a practical yet vibrant makeover. Lend a refreshing change to your home decor with vibrant colors, quirky printed fabrics and accessories to add a touch of liveliness.**

Experts at upholstery providers D'Decor provide some useful tips and trends to re-invent your home decor this monsoon.

- With plenty of black and grey outside, it is a definite no-no for the interiors. Whites and creams can also be avoided as they get difficult to maintain, especially if you have kids in the house.

- Monsoon calls for warm and bright colors such as ochre, coral, shades of red or neon pastels.

- Opt for slip covers in light weight, easy-care home wash fabrics like satin and poly cotton blends. Not only do they feel cozy and comfortable, but also keep away mildew and mites.

- With overcast skies, one would need whatever light that can enter the home to enhance the bright colors and reflective surfaces. Use light cotton or sheer curtains or blinds which do not have lining, to allow sufficient light to enter the room, yet providing the privacy needed.

- Indoor plants should be placed outdoor since they retain moisture and add staleness to the air. Woolens, blankets and quilts can be stored in plastics.

- Small colorful cotton rugs and mats are a surely recommended as add-ons, so that one can clean their feet before jumping on the bed. Keep the bed clean as well as dry, such that you do not need to change the linen frequently.

- Cover the beds during the day with bedcovers made from blended fabrics and sit back and enjoy the pleasant weather.





