

# NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

## 'Galgotian blunder': Sibal slams Govt on robodog row, accuses it of negligence

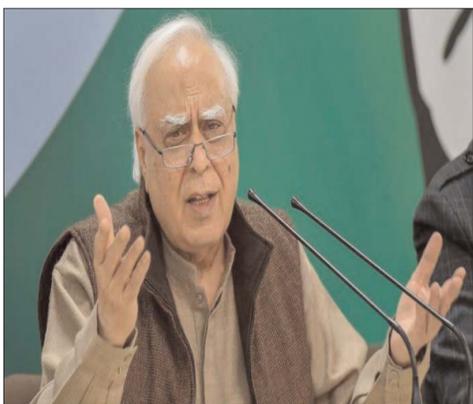
**NEW DELHI, FEB 21:** Former science and technology minister Kapil Sibal on Saturday took a swipe at the government over the Galgotias robodog controversy, saying the incident reflected its negligence and had led to the coinage of a new term — "Galgotian blunder".

The Rajya Sabha member also weighed into how artificial intelligence (AI) will impact the country and questioned the government's actions in preparing the country for it.

"There is an international conference taking place on artificial intelligence. This is a good thing and I welcome it. We have got a new word in dictionary, there is a word in English — 'herculean blunder', and the new word is Galgotian blunder. Galgotian blunder leading to Galgotian blunder," Sibal told a press conference here.

"It is amazing that a robodog was displayed and our IT minister (Ashwini Vaishanaw) also tweeted about it. When it emerged that it was developed by China, he deleted it. Galgotian presentation, Galgotian exaggeration and Galgotian blunder, these terms have been coined. These terms will also be used in Parliament as well," he said, taking a swipe at the government.

It was not nice that this happened under govern-



ment's watch, the Independent MP said.

"They did not even do due diligence to examine the products being displayed in the stalls," he said, slamming the government.

This was the government's negligence, he alleged, adding that it is a very serious matter.

Talking about AI, Sibal said it can benefit the country in sectors such as agriculture, education and healthcare.

"This is a big opportunity for the country. The government has to pay attention to this and I think it will," he said.

Underlining the lack of proper fund allocation for AI, Sibal said that in the 2025 budget, there was an allocation of Rs 2000 crore out of which only 40 per cent was

spent, while this year it is Rs 1000 crore.

"So China and the US are far ahead of us in investments. We can only work in application technology sector of it. We can only provide service, so to say India will take global leadership, is this correct," he asked. The amount we spent on research and development is 0.64 pc of our GDP, Sibal said. India contributes less than 2 per cent of global computing infrastructure than "how are we leaders", Sibal asked. Talking about the consequences of AI, he said it will finish off jobs in the IT-BPO sector.

There would be a need to upskill the youth but the government has not paid any attention to this, Sibal alleged. "These issues should be debated and the government

should talk of these challenges and how to combat them," he said, adding that the government only talks of taking leadership.

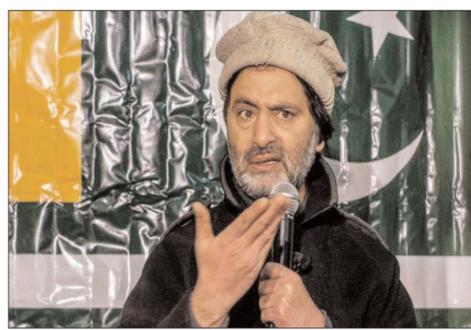
"So that is why I have said, they (BJP) know how to win elections but they don't know how to rule," Sibal said.

Galgotias University representatives showcased a robotic dog named Orion on Tuesday, claiming it was developed by the Centre of Excellence at Galgotias, prompting social media users to highlight that it was a Unitree Go2, manufactured by China's Unitree Robotics and commonly used in research and education worldwide.

The private university made a dogged attempt to brazen it out with bizarre justifications through Wednesday, such as one person's six could be another's nine, but issued an apology later in the evening after the organisers cut power supply to its stall at the event and asked the occupants to leave.

IT Secretary S Krishnan said the government did not want any exhibitor to showcase items that were not its own. "We do not want such exhibits to continue," he said, after the organisers asked Galgotias to vacate the stall. In its apology, Galgotias University said the person "managing the pavilion was ill-informed". (PTI)

## Another Witness Identifies Malik, Pahloo In 1990 IAF Attack Case



**JAMMU, FEB 21:** Another eyewitness on Saturday identified Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) chief Yasin Malik and Mohd Rafiq Pahloo alias "Nanaji" as one of the shooters involved in the January 25, 1990, attack on a group of Indian Air Force (IAF) personnel in Srinagar, officials said.

The key prosecution witness identified the two accused during a hearing at the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (TADA) court in Jammu, they said.

Earlier on January 31, another eyewitness had identified Malik's close confidant

Shoukat Bakshi as one of the shooters. In January 2024, Malik was identified as the main shooter by former IAF corporal Rajwar Umeshwar Singh, who survived the ter-

ror attack in which four IAF personnel were killed. Besides the four personnel — including squadron leader Ravi Khanna — who were killed, 40 people were in-

jured in the incident which took place in Rawalpura on the outskirts of Srinagar on January 25, 1990.

The IAF personnel were waiting for their pickup to old Srinagar airfield for duty when they came under fire from terrorists.

A chargesheet was filed on August 31, 1990 against Malik and five others before the designated TADA court here.

The others accused in the killing of the IAF personnel are JKLF operatives Ali Mohammed Mir, Manzoor Ahmed Sofi alias Mustafa, Javed Ahmed Mir alias 'Nalka', Javed Ahmed Zargar and Nanaji. (Agencies)

## Nadda launches India-made tetanus and adult diphtheria vaccine

**NEW DELHI, FEB 21:** Union Health Minister J P Nadda on Saturday launched the indigenously manufactured tetanus and adult diphtheria (Td) vaccine at the Central Research Institute in Himachal Pradesh's Kasauli.

With the formal launch of the Td vaccine, the vaccine has now been introduced for supply under the Universal Immunization Programme (UIP).

The Central Research Institute will supply 55 lakh doses to the UIP by April, with production expected to scale up progressively in subsequent years to further strengthen the central government's Universal Immunization Programme, Nadda said.

Addressing the gathering, Nadda congratulated the scientists, technical experts and staff of the Central Research Institute Kasauli, describing the launch Td vaccine as a momentous and historic occasion.

He stated that the launch marks a significant step towards safeguarding national health security and strengthening India's public health infrastructure.

The minister underlined

that the government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has set clear targets for achieving self-reliance in the health and pharmaceutical sectors.

Nadda noted that the launch of the indigenously manufactured Td vaccine represents a concrete step towards the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat in health and medicine.

Highlighting nation's global standing, the minister also stated that India is widely recognised as the "pharmacy of the world" and is among the leading vaccine manufacturers globally.

He further noted that India has achieved Maturity Level 3 in the World Health Organization's global benchmarking of regulatory systems, reflecting the robustness of its vaccine regulatory framework.

Institutions such as CRI, Nadda observed, have played a significant role in achieving these standards.

The Union minister recalled that historically, vaccine and drug development timelines were long, tetanus vaccine development took decades globally, tuberculosis medicines took nearly 30 years to evolve, and the

Japanese Encephalitis vaccine took almost a century of scientific effort.

On the other hand, during the COVID-19 pandemic, India developed two indigenous vaccines within nine months and administered over 220 crore doses, including booster doses.

Nadda also highlighted that COVID-19 vaccination certificates were delivered digitally, demonstrating India's digital transformation in public health delivery. Referring to India's global solidarity efforts, he stated that under the Vaccine Maitri initiative, India supplied vaccines to nearly 100 countries, of which 48 countries received vaccines free of cost.

The minister noted that the contributions of public sector institutions such as CRI strengthened India's capacity to serve both domestic and global needs.

Nadda emphasised that CRI is the first government institute to manufacture vaccines under Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) standards, reflecting the modernisation and revitalisation of public sector vaccine manufacturing units.

He described the Universal Immunization Pro-

gramme as the world's largest immunisation programme. The UIP currently provides 11 vaccines protecting against 12 vaccine-preventable diseases, in which CRI has made substantial contributions.

Nadda noted that every year approximately 2-2.5 crore children are born and a similar number of women become pregnant.

From the time of pregnancy registration, beneficiaries are tracked through digital platforms such as U-WIN.

The government ensures that expectant mothers receive five antenatal check-ups, including at least one by a specialist. The immunisation and tracking process continues until the child attains 16 years of age, covering 27 doses under the programme.

The minister informed that the annual immunisation cohort comprises nearly 5 crore beneficiaries, including around 2.5 crore pregnant women and 2.5 crore children.

Due to systematic tracking and sustained immunization efforts, vaccine coverage in the country has reached nearly 99 per cent.

## Maharashtra minister withdraws defamation case against Raut after latter expresses regret in court

**MUMBAI, Feb 21:** Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut on Saturday said Maharashtra Minister Dada Bhuse withdrew a defamation case filed against him after he expressed regret before a court in Nashik, stating that his allegation of corruption was based on "incorrect information".

The two leaders appeared before the court in Malegaon together in the morning.

Speaking to reporters after the proceedings, Bhuse, a leader of the ruling Shiv Sena, said that they both made it clear in court that they wished to end the dispute.

Bhuse's defamation complaint stemmed from an article published in Shiv Sena (UBT)'s mouthpiece 'Saamana' in 2023, in which Raut accused him of indulging in corruption to the tune of Rs 178 crore at Girna Co-operative Sugar Factory in Malegaon.

Speaking to reporters, Raut said, "I informed the



court that based on National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) hearings, I had made some statements. It was then made by Advay Hiray, and I had supported him as a party colleague. Now Hiray himself joined the BJP, so he should take the case forward."

The Rajya Sabha MP said he also informed the court that due to his health conditions, he is unable to travel here frequently for the case.

A few months ago, the Sena UBT leader had taken

almost a month off from his daily presser and social appearances. Party sources had later maintained that he was undergoing treatment for some serious ailment, and had withdrawn from public life and needed to take rest.

"I also informed the court that there was no direct involvement from my side in the court. The case was already going on, and the person who filed the petition has now joined the ruling party. Let them run the case," Raut said.

He said he had received incorrect information and had levelled allegations against Bhuse on that basis. Raut said he expressed regret in the court and apologised to farmers and citizens of Malegaon for any confusion caused.

"Dada Bhuse and I share good relations. This is Maharashtra's culture. I made statements based on the wrong information," he said.

School Education Minister Bhuse said that Raut had accused him of being involved in a Rs 178-crore scam, but he later realised that the allegation was false and based on information provided by Hiray. "Raut has apologised to the farmers and citizens of Malegaon. Considering the confusion among the farmers and residents and their well-being, the claim has been withdrawn. He expressed regret, and the matter has ended," Bhuse, who represents the Malegaon Outer assembly constituency, said. (PTI)

On the issue of law and order, Saini said nobody felt safe in the state. "When the BJP forms government in Punjab in 2027, the gangster culture will be wiped out," he said.

## Punjab Govt just 'squandering' money on newspaper ads, no action on drug menace: Haryana CM

**CHANDIGARH, Feb 21:** Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Saturday slammed the AAP government in Punjab over the issue of drug menace, alleging that it was "squandering" money on newspaper advertisements for its anti-drug campaign but taking no concrete action.

Taking on the Bhagwant Mann government on gang activities in the state, Saini said nobody "feels safe in Punjab now".

On the issue of law and order, Saini said nobody felt safe in the state. "When the BJP forms government in Punjab in 2027, the gangster culture will be wiped out," he said.

"I have seen that in Punjab that only money was being spent on advertisements in newspapers with claims that we will end drugs and run

campaigns against drugs," Saini said dismissing claims by the AAP government that it is ending the drug problem.

"The amount of drugs increasing in Punjab is dangerous for our youth," he said.

Lauding the BJP-led central government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Saini said the country has scaled new heights and is growing at a rapid pace. He spoke about road connectivity, rail network and other infrastructure developments carried out in the last 11 years.

Saini also accused the AAP government of trying to prevent his programme in Punjab.

"I have programmes at different places in Punjab. But the government here in order to hide its failures is trying to stop them (my pro-

grammes)," he claimed.

The Haryana CM has been frequently visiting Punjab and highlighting his government's work to the people of the neighbouring state. The Punjab assembly polls are due in early 2027.

Saini further said the BJP government in Haryana has given 2 lakh government jobs in last 10 years without 'kharchi' and 'parchi' (corruption and favouritism).

Saini said in the one year of his government in Haryana, 37,000 jobs have been given to youths in a transparent manner.

Haryana has carved out its identity in the sports field, with many of its sports persons winning medals in the Olympics, Asian Games and other international sports events as he asserted that the state government has been promoting sports in a big

way. On the drug menace in Punjab, Saini alleged that narcotics supply has increased in the state and no work has been done to stop it.

Asking the youth to stay away from drugs, he added that nobody has the right to ruin their future.

Saini, however, said his government in Haryana was taking strict action against hardcore criminals involved in drugs, claiming that their properties were being demolished.

The Haryana CM said it is only the BJP which can take Punjab on the path of prosperity and progress.

Targeting the Congress and the AAP in Punjab, Saini said these parties were allegedly involved in "promoting corruption and spreading drugs."

## Rahul Gandhi Names Sapkal New Guarantor In RSS Defamation Case; Faces BJP's Black-Flag Protest

**THANE/MUMBAI, FEB 21:** Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday appeared before the Bhiwandi magistrate's court to furnish a fresh surety in a 2014 defamation case filed by an RSS activist, naming the party's Maharashtra chief Harshwardhan Sapkal as his new guarantor.

Gandhi, on his way to the court in Maharashtra's Thane district, faced a black-flag protest by BJP workers, who shouted slogans, accusing the Opposition Congress of maligning India's image through the Youth Congress's protest at the AI Impact Summit in Delhi.

He arrived in court with Sapkal and other senior party leaders.

The court had asked the Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition to appear before it in person to furnish a new surety in the case following the death of his previous guarantor, former Union

Minister Shivraj Patil Chakurkar, on December 12 last year.

Patil had stood as a guarantor for Gandhi in 2016 when the court granted him bail when he appeared before it.

The legal proceedings, which involved Gandhi signing a fresh bail bond, were completed within half an hour.

With his advocates Narayan Iyer and Kushal Mor, Gandhi presented Sapkal as his new surety.

The court verified the Maharashtra Congress leader's details as he signed the surety bond to complete the process.

"We have full faith in the Indian judiciary and are confident that justice will be served. While Gandhi has been granted permanent exemption from personal appearance in future hearings, we will present our defence witnesses at the appropriate

time," Iyer said.

He said that the cross-examination of the investigating officer (IO) would resume now that the bail formalities are complete, clarifying that there was no examination of Gandhi scheduled for the day.

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) activist Rajesh Kunte filed a complaint in the court alleging that the Congress leader, while speaking at a rally at Sonale village during the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, stated that the Sangh was behind the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi.

Meanwhile, BJP workers alleged that Gandhi consistently opposes the initiatives of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and accused him of tarnishing the country's image.

"Rahul Gandhi opposes whatever the Prime Minister does, even on issues concerning the nation. The

Youth Congress workers raised slogans at the AI Summit, maligning India's image. That is why we protested against him," a BJP supporter said.

The police had made elaborate security arrangements for Gandhi's visit to prevent any confrontation between workers of the ruling and Opposition parties.

Criticising the BJP's agitation, Congress leader Sachin Sawant said it was "an attempt to divert attention from key national issues".

He accused the ruling party of resorting to theatrics as it had no answers for the public.

Sawant questioned the reasons behind what he termed the BJP government's "surrender" before US President Donald Trump and sought clarity on matters related to financier Jeffrey Epstein, saying the party owed an explanation to the people.

**NEW DELHI, FEB 21:** Security was tightened across key religious and heritage sites in Delhi on Saturday, including areas around the Red Fort and parts of Chandni Chowk, following intelligence inputs suggesting a possible terror threat, an official said.

Sources said specific inputs suggested that a temple in the Chandni Chowk area could be among the potential targets. While the intelligence inputs are being verified and assessed, security has been stepped up in and around sensitive religious places and crowded public areas, they added.

Intelligence agencies indicated that LeT could be attempting to carry out an Improvised Explosive Device (IED)-based attack. The alleged plan is reportedly linked to attempts by the terror group to avenge the February 6 blast at a mosque in Islamabad, Pakistan, sources

said.

Central agencies and Delhi Police units are maintaining close coordination, and surveillance has been intensified through CCTV monitoring, vehicle checks and deployment of additional personnel at vulnerable points. Bomb disposal squads, dog squads and quick reaction teams have also been placed on standby at strategic locations, they added. The alert comes in the backdrop of the deadly car explosion near the historic Red Fort on November 10, 2025, which killed at least 13 people and injured more than 20 others.