

# NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

## Graduates to be architects of Viksit Bharat, their degrees commitment to nation, says VP

**NEW DELHI, FEB 28:**

Describing graduates as architects of the vision of a 'Viksit Bharat', Vice President C P Radhakrishnan on Saturday said universities must drive research and innovation that are not just rooted in Indian realities but are also globally competitive.

Addressing the 102nd convocation of Delhi University (DU) here, the vice president noted the growing enrolment of women in higher education and said that more than 70 per cent of the gold medallists this year were women.

More than 1.2 lakh students were conferred with degrees at the convocation ceremony, where Radhakrishnan was the chief guest. The ceremony was presided over by DU Vice-Chancellor (V-C) Yogesh Singh.

Radhakrishnan said DU started with three colleges, two faculties and eight departments.

"Today, the university has grown to 16 faculties, 86 departments, 90 colleges, 20 halls and hostels, over 30 centres and institutes, 34 libraries and more than 6 lakh students," he said.



He credited the collective efforts of teachers, administrators and students for this achievement.

On the cut-throat competition for admissions to the university, the vice president said V-C Singh informed him that seats are filled without any delay and cut-offs touch 98 per cent.

Though DU is already among India's distinguished institutions, it should aim for higher global rankings, Radhakrishnan said.

"In the next two years, we should move into the top

300, then 200, then 100 and ultimately become the number one university in the world," he said, adding that students worldwide should aspire to come to Delhi.

He said the convocation is both an ending and a beginning.

In a rapidly changing world shaped by artificial intelligence, climate challenges and pressures on democracies, he said, "your degree is not just a certificate but a commitment to humanity and to the nation".

He urged students to treat

learning as a lifelong process, stay away from narcotic drugs and ensure their achievements bring pride to their families, the university and the nation.

He said graduates would be the architects of the vision for a 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047.

Universities must drive research, entrepreneurship and innovation that are not just rooted in Indian realities but are also globally competitive, he added.

Radhakrishnan noted that more than 70 per cent of the gold medallists this year were women and that women graduates outnumbered men. This, he said, is a sign of the country's educational progress.

According to DU, degrees were awarded to 1,20,408 students from undergraduate, postgraduate and FYUP programmes who completed their courses in 2025. Around 750 PhD scholars also received their doctorates.

A total of 132 gold and silver medals and awards were presented at the ceremony, the university said. (Agencies)

## SC must direct govt to ensure arrests only after magistrate sees documentary evidence: Sibal

**NEW DELHI, FEB 28:**

A day after former Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal was discharged in the liquor policy case, Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal on Saturday accused the BJP of "weaponising" the law to target opposition leaders.

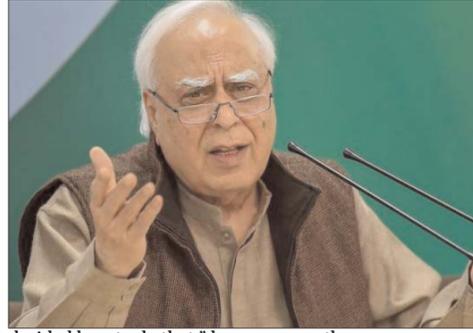
The senior advocate urged the Supreme Court to direct the government to amend laws for ensuring that arrests are made only after a magistrate is shown oral and documentary evidence justifying the action.

Sibal also accused the government of following a colonial mindset of arresting first and gathering evidence later.

His remarks came after a Delhi court discharged Kejriwal, his former deputy Manish Sisodia and 21 others in the politically charged liquor policy case and pulled up the CBI by saying it found no "overarching conspiracy or criminal intent" in the policy.

"We want to ask the government who will bear responsibility for the 126 days that Kejriwal spent in jail and 503 days that Sisodia spent in jail. There should be accountability," Sibal said at a press conference.

"They (BJP) used to say that it is a Rs 100 crore scam. The judge said that this was premeditated. The judgement said it was a pre-conceived plan to make them accused and then the CBI



decided how to do that," he said.

Sibal added that the prime minister keeps talking about the colonial mindset. "This whole law is about the colonial mindset, first to arrest and then gather evidence. This law should be amended." He alleged that probe agencies were following a set pattern by arresting someone and then getting that person to name another individual as accused, whom they want to target.

"They force the person to give a statement in front of the magistrate to accuse others. But they have no evidence and their objective is to help the BJP," he said, slamming the investigative agencies. The probe goes on and on and people continue to be in jail, Sibal said and cited the example of cases against opposition leaders P Chidambaram, Hemant Soren, Bhupendra Hooda,

among others.

"Look at what is happening against Lalu Prasad. There are no facts, this is the colonial mindset. You amended the law but no change was made to such provisions as you had to use them. You have weaponised the law to use it for targeting politicians," he said.

Giving examples of Lalu Prasad, Ashok Gehlot, Sachin Pilot, Farooq and Omar Abdullah and then Mehbooba Mufti, Sibal claimed that only opposition politicians were being targeted.

"We know very well this is not good for the future of India and democracy. I want to request the PM to tell the people of the country that there is no corruption and people will decide whether that is true or not," Sibal said "Don't weaponise the law for political ends," he added. Sibal said it is his request

to all the judicial officers of this country, high court and Supreme Court judges to not allow prosecutions on the basis of unsubstantiated oral statements, without being corroborated by documentary evidence.

The Supreme Court should direct the government to amend law and ensure that arrests can only take place once the magistrate is shown the oral and documentary evidence, Sibal said.

Coming down heavily on the CBI, special judge Jitendra Singh refused to take cognisance of the agency's chargesheet against the 23 accused people.

It also observed that the federal agency's case did not withstand judicial scrutiny, especially when the CBI sought to construct a narrative of conspiracy on mere conjecture.

The CBI has been probing alleged corruption in the formulation and execution of the erstwhile AAP government's now scrapped excise policy for 2021-22.

As news came in of the clean chit in the case that helped bring the AAP government down last February, Kejriwal broke down and said the corruption case against him was the "biggest political conspiracy" in the history of Independent India. (Agencies)

## About 300 Afghan Taliban personnel, its allied terrorist groups killed: Pak

**ISLAMABAD, FEB 28:**

Pakistan authorities said that about 300 Afghan Taliban personnel and their allied terrorist groups have been killed so far as the operation against them was going on, it emerged on Sunday.

Minister for Information Attaullah Tarar in the late-night update said the security forces killed 297 combatants of the Afghan Taliban regime, and over 450 Afghan operatives were injured.

Providing a summary of the Afghan Taliban regime, the minister said that Pakistan destroyed their 89 posts, and captured 18 others during Operation Ghazab lil-Haq, while around 135 tanks and armoured vehicles were also destroyed.

The minister said around 29 locations across Afghanistan were also effectively targeted by the air force.

Pakistan launched a massive retaliatory attack code-named Operation Ghazab lil-Haq, after the Afghan side simultaneously attacked 53 locations along the more than 2,600 km-long border.

Addressing a press conference on Friday evening, the army spokesperson, Lt Gen Ahmad Sharif Chaudhry, said that the Afghan Taliban should choose between Pakistan and the terrorist organisations.

"I want to make one thing clear: the oppressive Afghan Taliban regime has to make a clear choice. The choice is to choose between Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan, Baloch



Liberation Army, Daesh, Al Qaeda, the terrorists and terrorist organisations and Pakistan," he said.

"They have to make this choice. It has been made clear by the government of Pakistan. It is not something new I am saying... They have to make this choice. Whether they choose terrorists and terrorism or Pakistan. We are clear... Let it be known that our choice is absolutely clear. It will always be Pakistan over everything."

Pakistan has long accused the Afghan Taliban of allowing the TTP and other terrorist groups to use their soil for residence, training and logistics to carry out attacks against Pakistan.

The Afghan side rejects the allegations and asks Pakistan to put its own house in order by holding talks with the militants.

Meanwhile, a senior US official supported Pakistan's right to defend against terrorists.

Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Allison Hooker said that she spoke to Pakistan's foreign secretary to "express condolences for lives lost in the recent conflict between Pakistan and the Taliban".

"We continue to monitor the situation closely and express support for Pakistan's right to defend itself against Taliban attacks," she said on X.

As tension mounted, the Afghan Taliban showed willingness to negotiate with Pakistan.

"Afghanistan... has always preferred to resolve issues based on mutual understanding and respect," the Afghan foreign ministry quoted Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi as telling Qatar's junior Foreign Minister Mohammed bin Abdulaziz Al-Khalifi by telephone.

Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid echoed that sentiment, saying "now also we want to resolve this

matter through dialogue".

Efforts for de-escalation were also going on as regional countries made diplomatic efforts to end the bad blood between the two neighbours.

Iran Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi offered to mediate on X.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran stands ready to provide any assistance necessary to facilitate dialogue and to enhance understanding and cooperation between the two countries," Araghchi said.

Official sources said that Saudi Arabia and Qatar were doing their parts to bring peace. Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan talked to Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar as well as Afghan acting FM Amir Muttaqi.

Turkiye was also in touch with both sides and was making efforts to end the hostilities. (PTI)

## Global energy transition away from fossil fuels not as fast as one hoped: UK think tank director

**NEW DELHI, Feb 28:**

While renewable electricity generation has continued to grow as the world shifts away from fossil fuels, the speed of the transition may not be as fast as one would have hoped, said Ita Kettleborough, director of the Energy Transitions Commission.

He noted that this is notwithstanding the "remarkable cost declines" in the generation of clean energies. The Energy Transitions Commission is a United Kingdom-based think tank, which focuses on economic growth and climate mitigation. It is currently working in India to expand clean electricity in the agriculture sector, in collaboration with The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI).

Kettleborough said, "There have been remarkable cost declines in the generation of clean energies, especially in solar and wind. For example, in the case of solar, there have been 99 per cent reductions in cost over the last 30 years. But the use of fossil fuels has not come down as fast as we perhaps hoped it might."

A 2025 analysis by the Energy Institute (EI), the global professional body for the energy sector, revealed that



while wind and solar energy alone expanded by an impressive 16 per cent in 2024, total fossil fuel use grew by more than 1 per cent, highlighting the slow progress of the energy transition.

The continued use of fossil fuels is resulting in record-breaking emissions every year. For instance, global carbon emissions from fossil fuels were projected to increase by 1.1 per cent in 2025 — reaching a record high, according to a study by the Global Carbon Project.

"While we now have clean energy technologies, to really meet the challenge of climate change, we needed them 20 years ago, maybe even before

that. We are still struggling to move at the pace [in deploying these technologies] we need to achieve. I am confident we will get to that pace by the end of the century, but we need to get there a lot faster than that," Kettleborough said.

The world needs to quickly expand renewable energy generation, as its carbon budget to limit global warming to the 1.5-degree Celsius threshold is "virtually exhausted", with only about 170 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO2) left, equivalent to approximately four years of emissions at current levels, according to the Global Carbon Project study.

The concentration of CO2 in the atmosphere was set to reach 425.7 ppm in 2025, 52 per cent above pre-industrial levels, the study added.

Once the 1.5-degree Celsius threshold is breached for a long period of time, the impacts of climate change, such as sea level rise, intense floods and droughts, and wildfires will significantly increase and accelerate.

The world is already witnessing these consequences, to some extent. For instance, the last three years are the hottest years on record, sea surface temperatures have been abnormally high, and extreme weather events have become more intense. (PTI)

## Indian Embassy in Iran advises nationals to 'stay indoors' after joint US-Israel strikes

**TEHRAN, FEB 28:**

The Indian Embassy in Iran on Saturday issued an advisory for its citizens, urging them to exercise "utmost caution" and "remain indoors as far as possible" amid the ongoing regional tensions.

"In view of the developing situation, all Indian nationals in Iran are advised to exercise utmost caution, avoid unnecessary movements and remain indoors as far as possible," the embassy said in a post on X.

It further said that all the Indian nationals may also consider to monitor news, maintain social awareness



and await any further guidance from the Embassy of India.

The advisory came after Israel launched a pre-emptive military strike against Iran on Saturday.

US President Donald Trump on Saturday called on the Iranian people to take

over the government. He also said that US has begun "major combat operations in Iran" after Israel launched strikes.

Trump called the attacks on Iran "a noble mission," saying they were necessary because of Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons and missile

systems that could reach the US. Also, the Indian Embassy in Qatar issued advisory for its citizens.

"In view of the current regional situation, all Indian nationals in Qatar are advised to take due care, follow news and advisories as and when issued by the Embassy and local authorities," the mission posted on X.

"Our Embassy is continuing to function as usual. Embassy's 24A-7 helpline number is 00974-55647502 and email for addressing any query is cons.doha@mea.gov.in," it said. (PTI)

## AI Summit Protest: Delhi Court Grants Bail To IYC President Chib

**NEW DELHI, FEB 28:**

A Delhi court has granted bail to Indian Youth Congress (IYC) president Uday Bhanu Chib, who was arrested in connection with a protest at the India AI Impact Summit.

Chib was produced before the duty magistrate around 1 am on Saturday as his four-day police custody, granted by the court on February 24, came to an end.

Duty Magistrate Vanshika Mehta was hearing an application by the Delhi Police seeking a seven-day extension of his custody. However, she dismissed the plea and granted him bail.

Speaking to the media, Chib's counsel informed



that bail was granted by the magistrate against the surety bond of Rs 50,000, and the court has also directed his client to surrender his passport and electronic gadgets.

"The duty magistrate was pleased enough to grant bail to Uday Bhanu Chib and has explained in the bail order that the police crime branch

has not been able to explain the reasons for seeking extension of PC remand to Uday Bhanu Chib," the IYC president's counsel said.

On February 24, the court allowed four days of custody to the police to question Chib over his role in the AI Summit protest held at Bharat Mandapam here, during which IYC members took

their shirts off to reveal anti-Modi and anti-Centre slogans on T-shirts beneath.

The summit began on February 16 and saw packed halls and long queues throughout, as tech moguls, industry leaders, policymakers, and founders thronged the venue.

The accused wore T-shirts bearing images of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump, with slogans against the government and the India-US trade deal.

The protesters also allegedly engaged in a protracted scuffle with security personnel and police staff deployed at the venue. (Agencies)