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Union minister Khattar chairs review meeting on power sector, urban missions

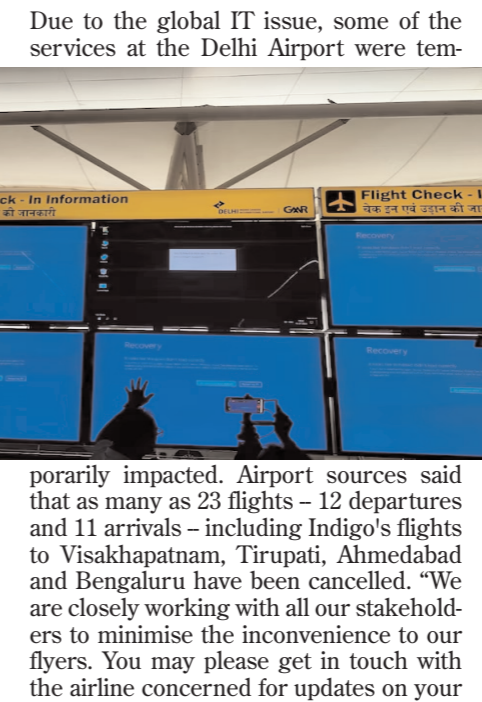
Sanjay Kumar Chandigarh, July 19: Union minister Manohar Lal Khattar, along with Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, here on Friday chaired a review meeting on the power sector and urban missions. Khattar, who holds the portfolios of Housing and Urban Affairs and Power, told reporters that after the portfolio allocation, he reviewed projects of his departments to understand issues of various states and discuss what new projects could be brought in future.

structure and ensure a bright & sustainable future for the people of Himachal Pradesh." Khattar posted on X. Speaking to the media, Sukhu said such meetings helped in discussions and paved the way for resolving issues. Meanwhile, Khattar said discussions were also held on the ongoing projects, including power, smart city, and urban development projects. Khattar, who is MP from Karnal, while referring to urban development projects, said various schemes, including Prime Minister SVANidhi scheme, were also discussed and feedback was taken about the utilisation of grants issued/allocated by the Centre. The two-hour-long meeting was also attended by Himachal Pradesh's Public Works Department Minister Vikramaditya Singh.

Global Microsoft outage hits Indigo, Spicejet, Air India, Akasa operations, airport services

Simmi Kaur Babbar Mumbai, July 19: Airport and airline operations faced significant disruptions on Friday due to global Microsoft outage, with airlines issuing advisories to passengers. IndiGo, SpiceJet, Air India, Air India Express and Akasa saw disruptions in their online check-in and boarding processes across their networks, forcing them to switch to manual mode. "Our systems are currently impacted by a Microsoft outage, which is also affecting other companies. During this time booking, check-in, access to your boarding pass, and some flights may be impacted," IndiGo said in an update on X. "We are all hands-on decks and are working to restore stability and normalcy. Our digital team is also coordinating closely with Microsoft Azure to resolve these issues swiftly," it stated. Budget carrier Akasa said: "Due to infrastructure issues with our service provider, some of our online services, including booking, check-in and manage booking services will be temporarily unavailable. Currently we are following manual check-in and boarding processes at the airports."

Due to the global IT issue, some of the services at the Delhi Airport were temporarily impacted. Airport sources said that as many as 23 flights - 12 departures and 11 arrivals - including Indigo's flights to Visakhapatnam, Tirupati, Ahmedabad and Bengaluru have been cancelled. "We are closely working with all our stakeholders to minimise the inconvenience to our flyers. You may please get in touch with the airline concerned for updates on your flight information. We thank you for your support and understanding," the airport said in a post on social media platform X. NIC network not affected: Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the IT ministry is in touch with Microsoft regarding global outage and that NIC network is not affected. In a post on X, the IT minister said the reason for this outage has been identified and updates have been released to resolve the issue. "MEITY is in touch with Microsoft and its associates regarding the global outage... NIC network is not affected," the minister said. MEITY is in touch with Microsoft and its associates regarding the global outage. The advisory comes amid a massive outage faced by Microsoft users globally, and widespread reports of disruptions in international airlines, banks and media outlets. "It has been reported that Windows hosts related to CrowdStrike agent 'Falcon Sensor' are facing outages and getting crashed due to recent update received in the product."



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Arvind Kejriwal's wife to launch Assembly poll campaign in Haryana today

New Delhi, July 20: The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) will kickstart its Assembly poll campaign in Haryana with announcement of party convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's guarantees for the poll-bound state on Saturday. The Delhi CM's wife Sunita Kejriwal will make the announcement of 'Kejriwal Ki Guarantee' in a townhall meeting in Haryana's Panchkula, said a AAP statement. She will be accompanied by Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, AAP national general secretary (organisation) Sandeep Pathak, and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh, it said. The Delhi CM, who is also the AAP national convener, is currently in judicial custody in an excise policy related case. Sunita Kejriwal actively campaigned for the party candidates in Delhi, Haryana, and Gujarat in the latest Lok Sabha polls. The AAP last Tuesday announced it will contest all 90 Assembly seats in Haryana, the state currently ruled by the BJP. Though the AAP has contested several elections in Haryana, it is yet to taste electoral success. In the May Lok Sabha polls, the party's candidate from Kurukshetra and state president Sushil Gupta lost to BJP candidate Navin Jindal.

Jindal Steel and Power Chairman Naveen Jindal promises probe into sexual harassment allegations against company official New Delhi, July 19: Jindal Steel and Power Chairman Naveen Jindal promised to investigate allegations of molestation against a CEO of his Group company levelled by a fellow passenger onboard a flight from Kolkata to Abu Dhabi, saying his group has zero-tolerance policy in such matters. The industrialist made the remarks in reply to a post by the complainant on X. Jindal said, "...thank you for reaching out and speaking up! It takes a lot of courage to do what you did and I want you to know that we have a zero tolerance policy for such matters." "I have asked the team to immediately investigate the matter and thereafter strictest and necessary action will be taken," he said.



NIA arrests key aide of Canada-based terrorist Lakhbir Landa

New Delhi, July 19: The NIA has arrested a key aide of Canada-based Khalistani terrorist Lakhbir Singh Sandhu, alias Landa, in a major terror network case involving the supply of deadly weapons for extortion from businessmen among others, an official statement said on Friday. Baljeet Singh, alias Rana Bhai, alias Balli, hailing from Barwani district of Madhya Pradesh, was arrested on Thursday, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) said in the statement. Balli was found to be a major weapons supplier to Landa's agents in Punjab, it said. The weapons were used to carry out large-scale terror activities, including extortions from businessmen and others, it said. NIA's investigations in the case had led to the arrest of one Gurpreet Singh Gopi, identified as an associate of Landa and of another Khalistani terrorist Satnam Singh Satta, the NIA said. Investigations in the case, registered by NIA suo moto on July 10, 2023, revealed that Baljeet Singh had also provided weapons to Satta as part of a larger conspiracy of various banned Khalistani terrorist organisations to destabilise India by unleashing violent acts in Punjab and other places. Both Landa and Satta are believed to be operating from Canada to promote terror in India, it said.

Ex-IAS officer fined Rs 1 lakh for filing 'frivolous' plea against J&K LG

Tejinder Kaur Babbar Jammu, July 19: The Central Administrative Tribunal's Jammu Bench has imposed a fine of Rs 1 lakh on a former IAS officer for filing a "mischievous and frivolous" plea against the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir and other senior bureaucrats. The tribunal's judicial member Rajinder Dogra, in the July 16 order, said the application filed by a former IAS officer Kumar Ranchhodhrai Parmar about his service was just to "harass" the Lt Governor Manoj Sinha and other bureaucrats. The tribunal said this was a service-related matter and instead of impleading the Union and the state governments, Parmar has impleaded Sinha and other authorities by their names. "It is quite astonishing to note that the applicant, a senior IAS officer with extensive knowledge of the Constitution and its laws, proceeded to file the application seeking relief against the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor," the tribunal said. The tribunal

Supreme Court dismisses plea of two convicts in Bilkis Bano case against January 8 verdict cancelling remission

Navdeep Singh Sahni New Delhi, July 19: The Supreme Court on Friday refused to entertain a plea of two of the 11 convicts in the Bilkis Bano case challenging the January 8 verdict cancelling their remission. A Bench of Justices Sanjay Khanna and Sanjay Kumar termed the plea as "absolutely misconceived" and said how can it sit in appeal over an order passed by another Bench of the apex court. "What is this plea? How is this plea maintainable? This is absolutely misconceived. How can an Article 32 petition be filed? We can't sit in appeal over an order passed by another bench," the bench said. Advocate Rishi Malhotra appearing for convicts Radheyshaym Bhagwandas Shah and Rajubhai Babulal Soni sought permission to withdraw the plea. The Bench allowed the counsel to withdraw the plea. Shah has also applied for interim bail. In March, both the convicts moved the top court contending that its January 8 verdict cancelling remission of their sentence was "in teeth of" a 2002 constitution bench order and sought

the issue to be referred to a larger bench for "final" adjudication. Shah and Soni, both lodged in Godhra sub-jail after the apex court verdict, said an "anomalous" situation has arisen wherein two different coordinate benches (benches of the same strength) have taken diametrically opposite views on the same issue of premature release as well

as on which policy of the state government would apply to the petitioners for remission. The plea, filed through Malhotra, said while one bench on May 13, 2022, categorically ordered the Gujarat government to consider Shah's application for premature release in terms of the state government's remission policy of July 9, 1992, the bench that pronounced the verdict on January 8, 2024, concluded that it was Maharashtra and not the Gujarat government that was competent to grant remission. "That with greatest respect the judgment rendered on January 8, 2024, is directly in teeth of the constitution bench decision in Rupa Ashok Hurra's case of 2002 and the same needs to be set aside, as if the same is permitted then it would lead to not only judicial impropriety but to uncertainty and chaos as to which precedence (sic) of law has to be applied in future. "In other words, if any party being not satisfied with the Supreme Court judgment on an issue, he would be entitled to file a writ petition challenging the said judgment by taking recourse to the law laid down in Bilkis Bano case," the plea said.



Accused facing trial under UAPA can be granted bail, if trial moves at snail's pace: Supreme Court

Nareish Malhotra New Delhi, July 19: A terror accused facing trial under the stringent provisions of the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), 1967, can be released on bail, if the trial moves at snail's pace, the Supreme Court has ruled. In April 2019, the top court had set aside the bail granted to Kashmiri Zahoora Ahmad Shah Watali by the Delhi High Court in a terror funding case filed against him by the National Investigation Agency (NIA). In Watali's case, it had held that bail in UAPA cases can't be granted if there was a prima facie satisfaction of the court that the material on record proved the allegations and that it's not permissible for courts to engage in a detailed analysis of prosecution case and to weigh the material before it, while considering bail. However, a Bench of Justices JB Pardiwala and Ujjal Bhuyan on Thursday said, "This decision, that is, Zahoora Ahmad Shah Watali has to be read and

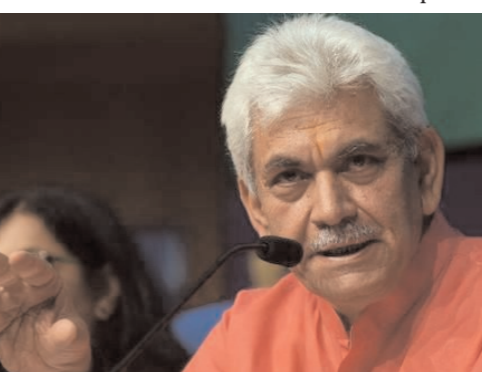
understood in the context in which it was rendered and not as a precedent to deny bail to an accused under trial suffering long incarceration with no end in sight of the criminal trial." The Bench ordered the release of accused Sheikh Javed Iqbal alias Ashfaq Ansari alias Javed Ansari who was arrested by the Uttar Pradesh Police on February 23, 2015 for allegedly engaging in the illegal trade of supplying counterfeit Indian currency notes in Nepal. "We are of the considered view that continued incarceration of the appellant cannot be justified," it said, setting aside the April 3, 2023 Allahabad High Court order that denied him bail. Noting that the appellant was in custody for more than nine years and evidence of only two witnesses had been recorded, the Bench said, "In such cir-

cumstances, a reasonable view can be taken that the trial is likely to take considerable time." The Bench, however, ordered the trial court to impound Iqbal's passport and/or citizenship document(s); told him not to leave the territorial jurisdiction of the trial court; furnish his address to the trial court and appear before the trial court on each and every date of the trial. "In addition to the above, the appellant shall mark his attendance before the police station which the trial court may indicate once in every fortnight till conclusion of the trial. He shall not tamper with the evidence and shall not threaten the witnesses. If there is any violation of the bail conditions as above, it would be open to the prosecution to move the trial court for cancellation of bail," it ordered. For a person accused under the UAPA, getting bail is a difficult proposition for three reasons. First, Section 43D(5) of the UAPA says that notwithstanding anything contained in the CrPC, no person accused of an offence punishable under Chapters IV and VI of the UAPA shall, if in custody, be released on bail or on his own bond, unless the public prosecutor has been given an opportunity of being heard on the bail application.

'India values its strategic autonomy': MEA spokesperson reacts to USA Ambassador's statement

New Delhi, July 19: A week after US Ambassador to India Eric Garcetti commenting on India-US ties said "in times of conflict there is no such thing as 'strategic autonomy'", India on Friday said it values its "strategic autonomy". Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal on being asked about Garcetti's comments, said, "India, like many other countries, values its 'strategic autonomy'. The US Ambassador is entitled to his opinion. Obviously, we have different views." "Our comprehensive global strategic partnership with the US gives us the space to agree to disagree on certain issues, while respecting each other's viewpoints," Jaiswal added. "As comprehensive global strategic partners, India and the US have regular discussions on bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest. It is not our practice to share details of diplomatic conversations," Jaiswal added. Garcetti was speaking at an event in New Delhi on July 11, two days after

allegations have been made by the applicant against them in the application," the order said. The tribunal said no civil proceedings can be instituted against the Lt Governor, until the expiration of two months next after a notice in writing has been delivered to him, stating the nature of the proceedings, the cause of action therefore, the name, description and place of residence of the party by whom such proceedings are to be instituted and remarks in his 'Performance Appraisal Report' for the reporting period - May 4, 2022, to August 6, 2022 - for his performance as principal secretary of the Jal Shakti Department. He also sought his empanelment as an additional secretary with effect from 2019 and as secretary from 2023.



Health experts advocate for ban on chlorinated gloves

BENGALURU. Health experts have advocated a ban on chlorinated gloves, highlighting significant risks due to residual chlorine, including skin irritation and allergic reaction. Chlorinated gloves can also become brittle and tear, increasing infection risk for healthcare providers and patients, experts said.

This comes a day after the Indian Rubber Gloves Manufacturers Association (IRGMA) requested the government to ban the import of chlorinated gloves to mitigate the associated risks. In recent communications to the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, and the Customs (Imports) Department, IRGMA highlighted violations of bio-waste disposal rules and non-compliance by importers of phased-out chlorinated gloves. It advocated for the use of Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) approved gloves only in government hospitals, aligning with the Quality Control Order (QCO).

The association noted that the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) had mandated phasing out chlorinated gloves by March 27, 2019, and the West Bengal State Pollution Control Board has also issued a ban on their use. Despite these regulations, chlorinated gloves continue to be imported and used, posing significant health risks.

Speaking to TNIE, experts said they have personally experienced issues with chlorine residue causing infection risks. While they welcome the switch to safer options, they emphasise the importance of ensuring readily available high-quality alternatives.

Kochi's Vypeen in focus as KSRTC plans to enhance coastal connectivity

More services to come up during peak hours, providing islanders with direct connectivity to destinations like Vyttila hub, Ernakulam boat jetty and Kaloor.

KOCHI. The Kerala State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) will soon commence dedicated services connecting the coastal regions, with a focus on providing direct connectivity to islanders in and around Vypeen region to various centres in Ernakulam.

"We've started planning the services, which will be operated at regular intervals. There will be more services during peak hours. The same will provide islanders with direct connectivity to various destinations in Kochi city like Vyttila hub, Ernakulam boat jetty and Kaloor. Currently, we're taking stock of the buses and the crew that can be spared for the service," a senior KSRTC official said.

Faced with shortage of crew, the corporation has resorted to appointing drivers on temporary basis. "KSRTC has invited applications from candidates who have featured in past PSC rank lists (for the post of drivers), the validity of which have expired, to tide over the crisis," the official added.

Currently, private buses are not permitted to operate direct services

from the Vypeen side to destinations in Kochi city. The buses start/terminate services at the High Court, requiring commuters to board another bus or depend on other modes of transport to reach their destinations in the city. The corporation currently operates only a handful of such direct services, which is grossly inadequate.

"We've received directions from the headquarters to plan and operate a number of dedicated services to cater to demand. This means buses will be operated at an interval of 10 to 15 minutes to Vypeen region during peak hours. If there is enough passenger demand, the services will be extended to various destinations beyond Vypeen region," the official pointed out.

In January 2023, a meeting of stakeholders, including representatives of the KSRTC and private bus operators' associations, was held on the directive of the state government to discuss the entry of private buses from Vypeen island into the city. It was then pointed out that KSRTC buses alone cannot meet the



requirements of islanders. However, a draft notification, dated May 17, 2023, proposed to nationalise the over 30km route from Paravur to Kochi city, passing through Bolgatty, High Court Junction and Jetty bus stand.

"KSRTC doesn't have enough buses at its disposal to meet the requirements. It can't redeploy buses from other routes such as

Ernakulam and Alappuzha from Friday, on the direction of Transport Minister K B Ganesh Kumar. The Alappuzha-Amrita Hospital services will start from Alappuzha KSRTC bus station at 6am and 2pm respectively and proceed via Tumboli, Kattoor, Arthunkal, Andhakaranazhi, Chellanam, Kannamaly, Thoppumpady, Thevara, Kundanoor, Vyttila Junction and Edappally. The return services, from Amrita Hospital, are scheduled to depart at 10 am and 5.50 pm.

The Alappuzha-Ernakulam (bus station) service will start from Alappuzha at 7.30 am and 1.20 pm respectively. The buses will proceed via Tumboli, Kattoor, Arthunkal, Andhakaranazhi, Chellanam, Kannamaly, Thoppumpady and Thevara.

"With these, the coastal route services connecting the two districts have been increased to four. Currently the Alappuzha-Chellanam-Ernakulam (6.30 am from Alappuzha) and Alappuzha-Chellanam-Fort Kochi (7 am) services are being operated," the official added.

Garbage collection resumes as villagers near landfill stop stir in Bengaluru

The Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited agreed to their demands in writing on Wednesday evening and the local MLA also has been briefed.

BENGALURU. The three-day protest by residents of Mittiganahalli and Kannur against Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) affected door-to-door garbage collection as well as clearing of waste from the city to the landfill. With protesters blocking entry of garbage trucks to the Mittiganahalli waste processing plant, piles of waste accumulated across the city, especially in Mahadevpura, BBMP East and BBMP South Zones.

For years, the villagers have been demanding that the Palike address the leachate issue from the garbage dumped there.

Ashok S, president of Kannur Gram Panchayat, said the panchayat consists of 15 villages that have been severely affected



due to 450 trucks dumping waste in the Mittiganahalli waste processing plant. The Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited agreed to their demands in writing on Wednesday evening and the local MLA

also has been briefed.

"The villagers are at the receiving end of the BBMP apathy. As much as 300 crore litre of leachate has seeped into the villages and the civic body is least bothered about this. The villagers are suffering due to the unbearable stench. As there was rain, the leachate also entered the 1.5-km stormwater drain connecting Kannur to Doddagubbi. Since we have objected to the entry of trucks, the Palike officials have agreed to build a parallel stormwater drain at a cost of Rs 22 crore and also approved Rs 70 crore to set up a 1 MLD leachate treatment plant," said Ashoka. He said about 60 per cent of waste from BBMP is

being sent to Mittiganahalli. "As we called off the protest on Wednesday night, the normal collection will resume."

Meanwhile, residents of Vignana Nagar, Whitefield, HAL, Basavanagar, Vijaynagar and other wards in Mahadevpura as well as in Bengaluru East, South and other areas, said pourakarmikas had not turned up to collect waste since Monday and garbage has piled up on street corners.

"With mounds of garbage lying on the streets for the last few days and the rainfall daily, there could be health issues if not addressed," said Srujan Kadamba, a techie and Whitefield resident. A senior BBMP official said garbage collection will resume normally from Friday as trucks will start ferrying waste to the landfill from Thursday evening. "As there is a huge pile of garbage to be cleared from parts of Bengaluru, the situation will become normal in a day or two," said the official.

Medavakkam police station inaugurated



CHENNAI. Tambaram City Police Commissioner Abin Dinesh Modak inaugurated a new police station at Medavakkam on Thursday. Medavakkam, Kovilambakkam and Nanmangalam panchayats will come under the jurisdiction of this police station.

Until now, these three panchayats were under Pallikaranai police station limits. The station was inaugurated based on a government order following Chief Minister M K Stalin's announcement about opening more police stations in the state, during the Assembly session in June.

Railways sanctions Rs 288 crore for flyover in Sambalpur city

BHUBANESWAR. The Ministry of Railways has sanctioned Rs 288.61 crore for construction of a railway flyover connecting Sambalpur station with the city station.

The project is a part of the energy corridor scheme of Indian Railways for sustainable and efficient infrastructure development. The flyover will facilitate simultaneous train movements from all directions at Sambalpur, easing train traffic and ensuring hassle-free operations, sources said.

Currently, cross-traffic from Jharsuguda, Titilagarh and Angul directions leads to delays and operational inefficiencies at Sambalpur



junction and Sambalpur city stations. The 8.1 km flyover will resolve these issues by enabling simultaneous train movements without surface crossings, thus preventing detentions and enhancing overall train operational capabilities in the region, they said. "It is a significant railway project for the region. Trains will no longer be detained at Sambalpur and Sambalpur city

stations and nearby stations, significantly reducing waiting periods of trains approaching this busy junction," said a railway official.

Earlier, the ministry had sanctioned Rs 191.87 crore for a 7.41 km flyover at Khurda road station and Rs 183.89 crore for another 8.11 km flyover at Titilagarh station to facilitate smoother train operations at both the junctions. Union Minister for Railways Ashwini Vaishnaw has directed the East Coast Railway (ECoR) to ensure completion of these projects at the earliest.

Cops nab four members of Trichy gang, recover stolen valuables

BHUBANESWAR. Bhubaneswar police on Thursday arrested four members of the notorious Trichy gang for their alleged involvement in a series of thefts by smashing car windows in the capital city and neighbouring Cuttack.

So far this month, the gang members reportedly stole valuables worth lakhs by breaking windows of at least nine cars in Bhubaneswar and one in Cuttack. Recently on Monday, the anti-socials broke the window of a car belonging to an OAS officer near Gopabandhu Square here and decamped with a laptop and one mobile phone.

During investigation, police established that an inter-state gang was behind the recent thefts in the twin city. The cops launched a manhunt and nabbed accused B Mohit (48), P Morthy (42), Nanda Kumar (47) and S Dinesh (47), all natives of Tamil Nadu's Tiruchirappalli district, from the



capital city. Four laptops and 25 mobile phones were recovered from them.

Police Commissioner Sanjeeb Panda said, "The gang's members were involved in thefts in various parts of the country."

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Wind up all road works before September: Chennai Corporation

CHENNAI. Setting a deadline for winding up road cuts by government agencies such as CMWSSB, Tangedco and telecom companies, the city corporation officials have warned the agencies that all permissions issued will be revoked if any work is found to be underway in September. The decision comes after many residents complained to the new corporation commissioner, J Kumaragurubaran, about the distress caused by dug-up roads.

The civic body has also informed the police department of their decision and has asked them not to issue traffic diversion permission from September onwards.

A meeting chaired by Deputy Commissioner (Works) V Sivakrishnamurthy every Tuesday, will review the status of ongoing road works. "In Kuberan Nagar extension, the road work by metro water has been going on for two years now and is showing no signs of winding up. We have brought this to the attention of authorities multiple times. The road becomes unmotorable every time it rains," said Vignesh S, a resident. Meanwhile, Chennai-based civic action group Arappor Iyakkam has flagged the relaying of Wall Tax road by the Highways department for which tenders have been floated, stating that the roads were

re-laid only in 2021 and there was no need to relaid the entire stretch again.

As part of monsoon preparedness, inundation-prone zones along 790 km of stormwater drains are being de-silted, and blockages in the confluence of Mambalam Canal to Adyar are being cleared since Wednesday. "We have also asked the Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) to provide us with 10 HP-150 HP pumps wherever necessary. The CMRL is also fixing some drains that got damaged during metro rail work. This has been expedited following a recent review meeting headed by the chief secretary," said a city corporation official.



NEWS BOX

70m stretch of Dwarka expressway damaged 4 months after launch, repaired; NHAI to launch probe

GURGAON. Just four months after its inauguration, a 70m portion of the Dwarka Expressway was damaged on Thursday, raising serious concerns about the quality of construction. The stretch, which falls on the Gurgaon-Delhi carriageway of the expressway near Heritage Max society, developed an uneven surface due to a rise in the top layer of asphalt at some spots and minor cracks at others. Officials from the National Highways Authority of India (NHA) said they will carry out a detailed probe to ascertain the cause of the damage. The damage was speedily repaired by the contractor. A visit to the site by TOI on Thursday revealed that patchwork had been carried out at three spots, while surface distress (minor cracks on the surface) was visible at two other spots.

A senior NHA official acknowledged that the stretch developed an uneven surface. "We have asked the agency to carry out the repair work, but we will also conduct a thorough probe to understand the reasons behind this," the official said.

The 18.7km Gurgaon section of the Rs 9,000-crore expressway was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in March this year, almost 18 years after the Haryana govt conceived the idea of building an additional link between Delhi and Gurgaon. Being built by NHA as a 'model' urban expressway, it is designed to meet the region's traffic requirements for the next 20 years. As a result, the Gurgaon stretch was expected to remain in good condition for many years without requiring major repairs. According to the staff present on the site, an accident that occurred a couple of days ago resulted in diesel spilling on the road surface. This, combined with a leak in the wall of the median which caused rainwater to seep in, might have led to the damage, he said. "We have carried out the repairs. A new layer of bitumen mix has been laid on the damaged patches. Also, we have sealed the bottom of the median with concrete to prevent any water spillage," a worker said.

53 FIRs against parents of underage drivers as police begin crackdown

Noida. Amidst outrage over a 17-year-old boy at the wheel of a Porsche running over two bike riders in Pune, police in the city and Ghaziabad have registered 53 FIRs in four days against parents or guardians of minors caught driving near schools, malls and coaching centres. Ghaziabad police said on Wednesday around 25 teams have been deployed across the city as part of their crackdown on underage driving.

They registered 48 FIRs from July 6 to July 8. On Tuesday, 24 FIRs were registered, mostly in Kavi Nagar, Vijay Nagar, Kotwali and Indrapuram. Monday saw 22 FIRs, and two on Sunday. Noida police registered five FIRs against the vehicles' owners and seized nine vehicles driven by minors. Ghaziabad police commissioner Ajay Kumar Mishra said FIRs have been registered under BNS Section 125 (endangering life or personal safety of others) and Section 199A of the Motor Vehicles Act.

Section 199A of the MV Act says that the guardian of a minor or the owner of the vehicle will be punished if road norms are violated by a minor. This law is punishable with a fine of Rs 25,000, three years in jail, or both. The vehicle's registration can be cancelled for 12 months as well, and the minor cannot get a licence till 25 years of age.

City sees short spell of intense rain, more likely for 5 days

Gurgaon. The city on Thursday witnessed a short spell of intense showers, strong winds blowing at up to 30kmph and cloudy skies, which brought down the maximum temperature to 35.5 degrees Celsius from the previous day's 36.4 degrees. It was a notch above the season's normal. The relative humidity index oscillated between 70% and 78% during the day.

IMD forecasts suggested light-to-moderate showers till July 23. The minimum temperature, however, was recorded at 33 degrees Celsius, which was 29.8 degrees on Wednesday. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), light to moderate rainfall is expected at isolated places for the next five days. Though no alert has been issued for Friday and Saturday, IMD has sounded a yellow alert for Sunday and Monday.

"Isolated to scattered rainfall is likely to continue in Haryana for the next two days, and it will increase in the subsequent days. We are not expecting any major change in the temperature," an IMD official said. On Friday, it will be partly cloudy with possibility of one or two spells of rain or thundershowers. The minimum and maximum temperatures are expected to hover around 32 and 35 degrees Celsius, respectively.

Meanwhile, the city's air quality index remained in the "moderate" category (102), while it was 109 on the previous day. Weekly Horoscope Predictions From July 15 to July 21, 2024: Discover your weekly horoscope predictions covering career, finance, and love aspects for each zodiac sign. Get insights on communication, planning, and relationship advice to enhance productivity and well-being. 80% violations on Mys-Bluru NH are by vehicles from outside state. Karnataka police take action on speeding violations on NH275 connecting Mysuru and Bengaluru. Over 80% of offenders have out-of-state vehicles. FIRs for speeds over 120kmph. Road deaths reduced from 127 to 40 in six months. Manual checks and technology used for

Waste still going to Bandhwari major non-compliance: CPCB

GURGAON. MCG needs to take urgent steps to stop daily waste dumping at the Bandhwari landfill, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has said in a report to National Green Tribunal (NGT). Terming it "major non-compliance", CPCB has also said MCG should augment its waste collection, segregation, transportation and processing capacity. The report also revealed that ambient air quality monitoring tests were conducted at two sites in the landfill, which revealed that PM2.5 and PM10 levels for March and April surpassed the permissible limits set by the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). CPCB observed in its report that the daily waste dumping continues to take place at Bandhwari because of a significant gap between waste generation and processing. "The local authorities concerned need to take immediate steps for enhancing the capacity of solid

waste management facilities, to stop dumping of waste at the Bandhwari dumpsite. This is in accordance with Rule 15 of Solid Waste Management (SWM) Rules," read the report. It was submitted on Tuesday in response to the suo moto cognizance of a major fire at the landfill by NGT in April, which was based on a TOI report. The tribunal impleaded six govt agencies. A hearing was conducted on Thursday, and the next will be held on Sept 5. Around 2,200 tonnes of waste is dumped daily at the landfill. Of this, around 1,200 tonnes of waste comes from Gurgaon, and the remaining 1,000 tonnes from Faridabad. The corporation earlier earmarked 2.5 acres of land behind the landfill, where daily waste is being dumped at present. CPCB has recommended the implementation of various air pollution control measures at the landfill to manage pollutant



levels, including sprinkling water or leachate for dust suppression. It has also suggested the development of a sanitary landfill site and implementation of fire prevention measures to mitigate the risk of fires at the site. "We will ensure that all the guidelines from CPCB and directions from the honourable NGT are followed. For the air quality, we are regularly sprinkling treated water on the waste," MCG commissioner Narhari Singh Banger told TOI. Officials, however, said the major challenge is to divert the daily waste to another site,

since residents oppose garbage dumping in their vicinity. "Besides replacing fixed traffic signals whenever needed, these portable units will aid in managing traffic during VIP movement and special events, and in conducting traffic trials before the installation of permanent signals. The portable nature of these signals allows for quick deployment and flexibility in their use, ensuring that traffic flow remains smooth," DCP (traffic) Virender Vij said on Wednesday. By leveraging solar power and battery operation, these portable signals offer an environmentally friendly and cost-effective approach to traffic management, cops said. The move is expected to significantly enhance the traffic situation in the city and ensure a smoother flow of vehicles. Several cities across India have used portable signals for traffic management in the past, including Delhi and Raipur.

Yogi government praised for the decision of Kanwar pilgrims: Charanjeet Malhotra

New Delhi. Leading social worker and Gaumata Raksha and Corona warrior Charanjeet Malhotra praised the Yogi government and said that preparations are going on in the whole of Uttar Pradesh for the Kanwar Yatra starting from July 22. The UP government is making a huge contribution of religious faith to maintain the sanctity of Kanwar pilgrims



in the month of Sawan. Charanjeet Malhotra further said that the UP government has now ordered all the eateries on the Kanwar Yatra route to display the names of their owners. The decision comes a day after the Uttar Pradesh police in Muzaffarnagar repealed its orders following protests from opposition parties, making it voluntary for eateries to display the names of owners. According to the instructions, every food shop or cart owner will have to write the name of the owner on the board. All the people operating them have been ordered to display the name, QR code and mobile number of the owner at their establishment. Strict action will be taken for not following this and the Kanwar will also be removed from the route. Additionally, liquor and meat shops will remain closed on the Yatra routes and officials have been instructed to prevent stray animals from obstructing the path of

Minor held for murder in Gurgaon's first BNS case, strangled 9-year-old girl

GURGAON. A 16-year-old boy allegedly strangled to death a nine-year-old girl, his neighbour in a housing society, on Monday morning when she walked in on him trying to steal from the flat. He set her body on fire by lighting pieces of camphor and cloth he found lying around after he killed her, apparently to destroy evidence. The boy, who was apprehended under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) - the first case to be registered in the city under the new law that has replaced the Indian Penal Code - had allegedly gone to the neighbour's house to steal jewellery when her mother and brother were visiting his flat. The two families live in adjacent towers of the Sector 107 society, which was built under the affordable housing scheme. He case was registered at Rajendra Park police station. The boy told investigators he entered the neighbour's flat thinking everyone was away and panicked when the girl suddenly walked out of the washroom.

Name Change
I, MANISH S/O JITENDER WASAN residing at HOUSE NO-C-499, VIKAS PURI, DELHI-110018 have changed my name to MANISH WASAN for all future purposes.

Name Change
I, RAJEEV S/O RAMPAL R/O D-37 TYPE-3 (PH), SEC-16B, DWARKA, DELHI-110078 have changed my name to RAJEEV BAMLAL for all future purposes.

Name Change
I, JITENDER KUMAR S/O PURSHOTAM DASS WASAN residing at HOUSE NO-C-499, VIKAS PURI, DELHI-110018 have changed my name to JITENDER WASAN for all future purposes.

Name Change
I, POONAM W/O RAJEEV BAMLAL R/O D-37 TYPE-3 (PH), SEC-16B, DWARKA, DELHI-110078 have changed my name to POONAM BAMLAL for all future purposes.

Name Change
I, SUNITA W/O JITENDER WASAN residing at HOUSE NO-C-499, VIKAS PURI, DELHI-110018 have changed my name to SUNITA WASAN for all future purposes.

Name Change
I, Nidhi Rani W/O Tarun Gill D/O Yogendra Pal Singh Chaudhri R/O 71 a 1 block Chhatrapur extension Delhi 110074 have changed my name to Nidhi Gill for all future purposes.

Name Change
I, JC-706845F Rank-NB SUB Name-SATISH KUMAR MISHRA Presently residing at VILL-DHASKA, PO-KAURI-RAM, TEH-BASGAON, DIST-GORAKHPUR, UTTAR PRADESH-273413 have changed my mother's name from VIDYAVANTI MISHRA to VIDYAVATI MISHRA for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 19/07/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

Name Change
I, hitherto known as AYUSH KUMAR MANOJ KUMAR LAHOTY S/O MANOJ KUMAR LAHOTY R/O L-139, BLOCK-L, SHASTRI NAGAR, NORTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110052 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as AYUSH LAHOTI

Name Change
I, hitherto known as CHANDRA MOHAN K/SO KORUKUTTY KANDENGALATH R/O 29, Third Floor, Sarai Juliana, New Friends Colony, New Delhi-110025, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as RAJEEV MOHAN KANDENGALAM.

Name Change
I, hitherto known as ANITA RANI GARG ALIAS ANITA RANI D/O DEVENDRA KUMAR MANGLIK W/O MANI GARG ALIAS ANITA R/O FLAT NO. 305, SANSKRITI APARTMENTS, PLOT GH-5, SECTOR-10A, GURGAON, HARYANA-122001 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as ANITA GARG.

Name Change
I, hitherto known as SANJEET S/O SATBIR Permanent Address-Maholi (89), Panipat, Maholi, Haryana-132102 Present Address-808, 8th Floor, Best Sky Tower, Netaji Subhash Palace, Pitampura, Delhi-110034 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SANJEET DESHWAL.

Name Change
I, JC-706845F Rank-NB SUB Name-SATISH KUMAR MISHRA Presently residing at VILL-DHASKA, PO-KAURI-RAM, TEH-BASGAON, DIST-GORAKHPUR, UTTAR PRADESH-273413 have changed my father's name from RAM SHRINGAR MISHRA to RAM SINGAR MISHRA for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 19/07/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

INDIAN RAILWAYS
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (BHARAT SARKAR)
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (RAIL MANTRALAYA)
(RAILWAY BOARD)
No. 2023/Track-III/MC/5 New Delhi, dated: 18.07.2024
CORRIGENDUM-IX
Subject :- E-Tender No. TM-2303 for procurement of Rail Borne Maintenance Vehicle "RBMV" for Indian Railways to be opened on 29.08.2024
The corrigendum to technical specifications of the subject tender has been uploaded on website <http://reps.gov.in> and date of tender opening on 31.07.2024 has been postponed to 29.08.2024. The 2nd Pre-bid meeting will be held on 01.08.2024 at Board's office. All the bidders are advised to send their queries well before the scheduled meeting date.
All other terms and conditions of the subject tender remain unchanged.
(Vijay Singh)
Executive Director/Track (M&MC)
Railway Board
Tel: No. 011-47845531
E-mail: vijay.singh.2017@gov.in
2188/2024
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Name Change
I, Rajni Devi W/O Manish Rana R/O H No-344 A, Water Tank to H M House, Bijnwasan Delhi-110061 Have Changed My Name to Rajni Rana For all Purpose

Name Change
I hitherto known as KULDEEP S/O MANGURAM Permanent Address-Jainpur, Zainpur (17), Jainpur, Sonapat, Haryana-131027 Present Address-808, 8th Floor, Best Sky Tower, Netaji Subhash Palace, Pitampura, Delhi-110034 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as KULDEEP TYAGI.

Name Change
I, LAXMAMMA Mother of No-15701739L, Rank-NK, Name-NARENDER GANGULA R/O H NO-1-102, VPO-APPALPETA, TEH& DISTT-NALGONDA, TELANGANA-508001 have changed my name from LAXMAMMA to GANGULA LAKSHMAMMA for all future purposes vide Affidavit Dated 17/07/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

PUBLIC NOTICE
My client Raj Kumar W/O Gajendra R/O 9/202, Block No. 9, Tilok Puri, Delhi-110091 has debarred her son Shyam Kumar from her all moveable, immovable properties and severed all her relations due to his bad conduct and misbehavior. My client shall not be responsible for any act of him in future. Since he is not loyal for my client and at any dealing would be at their own

Name Change
I, hitherto known as ANITA RANI GARG ALIAS ANITA RANI D/O DEVENDRA KUMAR MANGLIK W/O MANI GARG ALIAS ANITA R/O FLAT NO. 305, SANSKRITI APARTMENTS, PLOT GH-5, SECTOR-10A, GURGAON, HARYANA-122001 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as ANITA GARG.

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Name Change
I, Priyaranjan Ambastha S/o Shree Bhagwan Prasad Verma R/O LP-43/D, First Floor, Maurya Enclave, Pitampura, North West Delhi-110034, have changed the name of my minor son Bhuvanesh Ambastha (DOB-20.02.2010 aged 14 years) and he shall hereafter be known as Bhuvanesh Parashar for all purposes. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in this connection. Priyaranjan Ambastha

PUBLIC NOTICE
MY CLIENTS ANANT SHARMA S/O SH. OMKAR SHARMA, HIS WIFE SMT. ANITA DEVI BOTH R/O D-1422, JJ COLONY, BHALASWA DAIRY, NW, DELHI-110042 HAVE SEVERED ALL THEIR RELATIONS & DISOWNED THEIR SON SURJEET SHARMA & HIS WIFE HEMA FROM ALL MOVABLE/IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES DUE TO THEIR DISOBEDIENCE. MY CLIENTS SHALL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR ACTS IN FUTURE. HARISH CHAUDHARY ADVOCATE CH. NO.831, ROHINI COURT, DELHI

PUBLIC NOTICE
My client Raj Kumar W/O Gajendra R/O 9/202, Block No. 9, Tilok Puri, Delhi-110091 has debarred her son Shyam Kumar from her all moveable, immovable properties and severed all her relations due to his bad conduct and misbehavior. My client shall not be responsible for any act of him in future. Since he is not loyal for my client and at any dealing would be at their own

Name Change
I, JC-340876A, Rank-SUB, Name-ARBIND KUMAR THAKUR S/O RADHAKANTH THAKUR Residing at VILL-PHULWARIA, PO-KUMHRAR, PS-PHENHARA, DISTEAST CHAMPARAN, BIHAR-845430 have changed my son's name from ADITY KUMAR to ADITYA KUMAR for all future purposes and in my service records my son's date of birth wrongly mentioned as 11/04/2004 instead of his correct date of birth as 11/11/2004 vide Affidavit dated 19/07/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

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Woman lured with job offer in Gurgaon, raped in hotel

GURGAON. A 35-year-old woman was allegedly raped in Pataudi after being lured with a job. According to the police, she alleged that she was taken to a hotel on the pretext of a job interview, given a sedative-laced drink and raped.

In her complaint, the woman said about a month ago, she was waiting for transport near Pataudi bus stand

NEWS BOX

Had God on my side: Donald Trump recounts assassination bid in first speech

World Former United States President Donald Trump took centre stage at the Republican National Convention in Milwaukee. While accepting the Republican Party's presidential nomination, he stated, "Tonight, with faith and devotion, I proudly accept your nomination for President of the United States." Recalling the assassination attempt, Donald Trump stated that he survived it by divine intervention. "I had God on my side," he stated. It was Donald Trump's first speech since 20-year-old Thomas Mathew Crooks took a shot at him, wounding one of his ears, during a rally last weekend. "I am not supposed to be here tonight — not supposed to be here," Donald Trump stated, while the crowd roared back. "Yes, you are." As he walks to the podium to deliver his acceptance speech, "God Bless the USA," a live patriotic song performed by Lee Greenwood fills the air, gradually building the intensity. The 78-year-old Republican leader stated that his supporters raised 6.3 million US dollars for the victims of the shooting incident in Pennsylvania. Trump also observed a moment of silence for Corey Comperatore, a 50-year-old firefighter and father of two, who died in the shooting at the Pennsylvania rally. The usually combative president adopted an unusually sombre, almost whispering tone as he cautioned against demonising political opponents. Trump warned against vilifying rivals and criminalising dissent. He then portrayed himself as the victim of politically motivated charges. "If Democrats want to unify our country, they should drop these partisan witch hunts," he said.

"In that spirit of unity, the Democratic Party should immediately stop weaponising the justice system and labelling their political opponent as an enemy of democracy. Especially since that is not true. In fact, I am the one saving democracy for the people of our country," he added.

Drone attack triggers blast near US Embassy in Israel's Tel Aviv, 1 killed

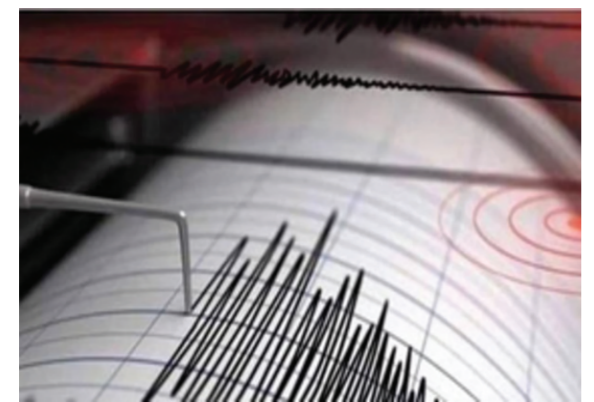
Rome A Milan court has ordered a journalist to pay Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni damages of 5,000 euros (\$5,465) for making fun of her in a social media post, news agency ANSA and other local media reported.

The journalist, Giulia Cortese, was also given a suspended fine of 1,200 euros for a jibe on Twitter, now named X, in Oct. 2021 about Meloni's height, that was defined as "body shaming". In a response to a Reuters story on the verdict, Cortese wrote on X on Thursday: "Italy's government has a serious problem with freedom of expression and journalistic dissent." Meloni had launched legal action against the journalist after the two women clashed on social media three years ago.

Meloni, whose far-right Brothers of Italy party was in opposition at the time, took exception when Cortese published a mocked-up photo of her with a picture of the late fascist leader Benito Mussolini in the background. Cortese responded with further tweets including one that translates as "you don't scare me, Giorgia Meloni. After all, you're only 1.2 metres (4 feet) tall. I can't even see you." Meloni's height is given as between 1.58 m and 1.6m on various media websites. Cortese can appeal against the sentence, and Meloni's lawyer said the prime minister would donate to charity any damages she eventually receives.

Powerful 7.4-magnitude quake strikes north Chile near Argentine border

SANTIAGO. A magnitude 7.4 earthquake struck northern Chile near its border with Argentina late Thursday, the U.S. Geological Survey reported, shaking homes and causing power outages. There were no immediate reports of injuries or major damage. The quake's epicenter was 45 kilometers (28 miles) southeast of San Pedro de Atacama, Chile, a tourist hub on the edge of the northern desert. The tremor had a depth of 117 kilometers (72 miles), according to the USGS, which likely lessened the intensity of the shaking. The deeper an earthquake when it strikes, the less destructive a jolt it will cause at the surface. Chilean President Gabriel Boric said his government was closely examining the area but "so far there are no reports of injuries or major damage."



The quake did not activate a tsunami alarm. Footage spread online of rocks tumbling onto a highway connecting the cities of Calama to Tocopilla, east of the epicenter and local authorities reported road blocks in the area.

The shaking from deeper earthquakes tend to be felt across a wider swath of earth, experts say.

Thursday's quake rumbled across six provinces — Tarapacá, Antofagasta, Atacama, Coquimbo, Arica and Parinacota — Chile's emergency service said. At least a dozen aftershocks have jolted the surface since.

"Despite its remarkable size, and the large number of fallen objects, it is not considered a major intensity earthquake," researchers at the non-governmental Chilean Geoscience Network reported, citing "some minor shocks to infrastructure" but no fallen buildings. "It was not difficult for residents to stand up," it said. Chile is located in the so-called "Ring of Fire" in the Pacific that is uniquely vulnerable to earthquakes. Chileans still have painful memories of a magnitude 8.8 earthquake in 2010 that spawned a tsunami and killed 526 people. The Geoscience Network said that Thursday's quake was the most intense to strike Chile since 2016, when a 7.6-magnitude earthquake struck the south of the country.

Biden's chances of winning 'diminished', Obama told Democrats: Report

US President Joe Biden should seriously reconsider his re-election bid as his chances of winning the November 5 election have "greatly diminished", former US President Barack Obama told Democrats privately. The Washington Post reported.



World Former US President Barack Obama has told Democrats that President Joe Biden's chances of winning the November 5 election have "greatly diminished" and believes that the 81-year-old leader should seriously reconsider his re-election bid. The Washington Post reported, citing multiple people involved in the matter. Obama

spoke to Biden, who served as his vice president from 2009 to 2017, only once since his disastrous presidential debate against former US President Donald Trump last month, according to The Washington Post. Biden's debate performance was marked by frequent slip-ups and appeared to lose his train of thought, sparking concerns among the Democrats over his age and mental fitness to serve another term. Some of them, including US Representative Adam Schiff,

have publicly called on Biden to withdraw from the presidential race in favour of another candidate, though the President has remained adamant, saying he was fit to run again and defeat Trump. Obama has been clear in his conversations with the Democrats that it is up to Biden to decide his candidacy. The Washington Post reported. He has stated that his concern was to protect Biden and his legacy and has decided against pushing the thought that he alone can

influence the President's decision-making process. Earlier, Biden said he would consider quitting the race only if doctors told him that he had been diagnosed with some "medical condition", in his clearest indication to end his campaign following his debate performance on June 27. Meanwhile, Biden on Wednesday tested positive for Covid-19 while on the campaign trail in Las Vegas. He is self-isolating at the Delaware beach house after experiencing mild symptoms, the White House said. It was not clear for how long the illness would keep Biden out from campaigning. The US President has been defiant in the face of the calls to quit the race, telling one interviewer that only the "Lord Almighty" could persuade him to go. Some 40 per cent of Democratic-registered voters said Biden should drop his re-election bid, in a Reuters/Ipsos poll concluded on Tuesday. Some 65 per cent of independent registered voters agreed with them. Some 58 per cent of Democratic-registered voters told the poll they believed Biden is too old to work in government - 70 per cent of independent registered voters agreed.

Joe Biden 'seriously considering' exit from US presidential race: Reports

World Amid a strong push from Democrats at the highest levels to rethink his election bid, US President Joe Biden is weighing whether to step out of the presidential race. A decision on the matter is likely to be made by this weekend, according to reports.

from Covid. The 81-year-old is currently under quarantine at his home in Delaware as he battles a Covid infection. Obama has conveyed to allies that Biden needs to consider the viability of his campaign, according to



The latest turn of events comes as party heavyweights, including former President Barack Obama and former Speaker Nancy Pelosi, express concerns, amplifying the calls for Biden's exit, which began after his poor debate performance against former President Donald Trump, the Republican nominee. Sources who spoke to Reuters said, "His soul searching is actually happening. I know that for a fact," and stressed, "He's thinking about this very seriously". Another source from the Democratic Party noted, "It feels like it's a matter of ... when, not if," while Democratic Senator Chris Coons of Delaware, a close Biden ally, told the media that Biden will be "resting and reflecting" this weekend as he recovers

the Associated Press. But the former president has also made clear that the decision is one Biden needs to make. Nancy Pelosi has also reportedly argued that Biden can't likely defeat Trump. According to the Washington Post, Pelosi thinks that Biden can be convinced soon to exit the race. Several Democratic Senators and Governors openly called for Biden to be removed

from the election bid. A New York Times report, which cited several people close to the president, stated that Biden has begun to accept that he may not be able to win the November 5 election. The Times quoted a source as saying that "reality is setting in," and that it would not be a surprise if Biden made an announcement soon endorsing Vice President Kamala Harris as his replacement. Multiple reports also said that Democratic leaders in the House and Senate—Hakeem Jeffries and Chuck Schumer—have told Biden directly that he will not only lose the White House but also endanger their effort to win back the House. Senator John Hickenlooper noted that Biden is "working towards" what is best for the United States, though he refrained from demanding the President's exit from the race. Joe Biden has always put the country first. He's done what's best for America ... I think he'll keep doing so," Hickenlooper said in a telephone interview late Wednesday. "He's working towards that."

Bangladesh protests: 39 killed, protesters set state broadcaster's building ablaze

World Widespread violence gripped Bangladesh after relentless clashes between student protesters, security officials, and pro-government student activists over a quota system for government jobs. At least 39 people died in the violence, with Thursday becoming the most violent day.

Police and protesters armed with sticks and rocks clashed across the country, including in the capital, Dhaka, as the students tried to shut down transportation across Bangladesh.

Hundreds of people were injured as police fired tear gas and rubber bullets to break up groups of protesters, who torched vehicles, police posts and other establishments.

BANGLADESH TURMOIL: LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Streets looked deserted in Bangladesh's Dhaka on Friday following the violent protests on Thursday. Bangladesh TV news channels are not transmitting on Friday, news agency Reuters reported. Communication services were widely disrupted in Bangladesh on Friday, with authorities cutting some mobile services on Thursday to try to quell the unrest but the disruption spread across the country. According to outage monitor NetBlocks, Bangladesh was plunged into a "near-total" internet shutdown as night fell. Telephone calls from overseas were mostly not getting connected and calls through the internet could not be completed.

On Thursday, the student protesters set fire to the state broadcaster's building a day after the Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, appeared on the network seeking to calm the clashes. Several police posts, vehicles and other establishments were also torched. Multiple Awami League officers were also attacked by the students. Protesters are demanding that the Sheikh Hasina government stop setting aside 30 per cent of government jobs for the families of people who fought in the 1971 war of independence from Pakistan. The agitation, fueled by high unemployment, is the biggest since Prime Minister Hasina was reelected earlier this year. The protests began late last month. However, it escalated on Monday when student activists at Dhaka University clashed with police and counter-protesters backed by the ruling Awami League. The protesters argue that the quota system is framed to benefit the supporters of Sheikh Hasina's Awami League, which led the independence movement. They call it a discriminatory system and want to replace it with a merit-based system. Though the Bangladesh government scrapped these quotas in 2018, a High Court reinstated them later.

The Bangladesh Supreme Court, on August 7, is set to hear the government's appeal against the High Court's order reinstating the quota, which was abolished by the government in 2018.

Riots break out in UK's Leeds, bus set on fire, police car overturned

World A bus was set on fire and a police car was overturned as unrest broke out in a neighbourhood in the UK's Leeds on Thursday in what police described as a "serious disorder incident". Residents in Leeds have been urged to stay at home and a large number of police have been deployed to Harehills. No injuries have been reported so far. The chaos was linked to children being taken into care by government agents in Luxor Street in the Harehills area, The Guardian reported. Eyewitnesses said some people in the community responded by setting fires and "throwing stones". As the unrest gained momentum, the agency workers and the children were taken

"to a safe place", police told the UK's Sky News.



UK Home Secretary Yvette Cooper said she was left "appalled" by the "shocking scenes" of unrest and said she was being regularly updated about the situation. She thanked the West

Yorkshire Police for their response.

"I am appalled at the shocking scenes and attacks on police vehicles and public transport in Leeds tonight. Disorder of this nature has no place in our society. My thanks go to West Yorkshire police for their response. I am being kept regularly updated," she tweeted. Councillor Salma Arif, for Gipton and Harehills, posted a video in which she was seen with a police officer and advised people to remain at home. Update: Message from

Councillor Salma Arif and Inspector Nicholls. Councillors are aware of an ongoing incident in Harehills. Please avoid the area if at all possible," she tweeted.

Yemen's Houthi rebels launch air attack on Tel Aviv; one dead, at least 10 injured

TEL AVIV. An explosion rumbled through the streets of central Tel Aviv early Friday morning after an apparent drone strike caused shards of shrapnel to rain down, injuring at least 10 people and leaving one dead, authorities said. Israel's military said that they were reviewing the explosion and increasing air patrols after the incident, which its initial inquiries determined was caused by "an aerial target." It was not immediately clear how the strike evaded Israel's air defenses or how Israel might respond.

Tel Aviv Mayor Ron Huldai called the attack a drone strike on the social media platform X, though the military has not yet specified the nature of the attack. Yemen's Houthis have repeatedly launched drones and missiles toward Israel throughout the nine-month-long war, in sympathy with Hamas. But until Friday, all were intercepted by either Israel or Western allies with forces stationed in the region. The strike hit hours after Israel's military confirmed one of its airstrikes had killed a Hezbollah commander and other militants in southern Lebanon. Israel has so far not made attacks on the Houthis, allowing its allies instead to take the lead as it focuses its efforts on the war in Gaza and ongoing



fighting with Lebanon's Hezbollah militant group. It comes as international mediators continue to hold out hope for a cease-fire agreement, pushing Israel and Hamas toward a phased deal that would halt fighting and free about 120 hostages held by the militant group in Gaza. The prospects a deal could improve as Israeli leaders signal their operation underway

in Rafah is close to finished. However, fears of potential escalation resurfaced on Thursday after Israel's far-right national security minister, Itamar Ben-Gvir, visited Jerusalem's most sensitive holy site on Thursday to pray for the return of Israeli hostages, he said, "without a reckless deal, without surrendering."

Local police in Tel Aviv said that the Friday

blast sounded at around 3:10 a.m., reverberating to nearby cities and physically injuring at least 10 people. Tel Aviv District Commander Peretz Amar said officers could not locate the point of contact, suggesting the explosion occurred in the air. "The force of the explosion caused damage that is not great but is spread over a large area. At the moment we don't know what the object was," Amar said. Israel possesses a multilayered aerial defense system, capable of intercepting threats ranging from long-range ballistic missiles to drones and short-range missiles. These systems have intercepted thousands of projectiles throughout the war. But officials warn they are not 100% effective, and the systems appear to have struggled against small and hard-to-detect attack drones. It was not known which, if any, system was deployed. Like Hamas, Hezbollah and the Houthis are backed by Israel's arch enemy, Iran. Israel for the most part also has avoided a direct confrontation with Iran throughout the war. Iran launched hundreds of drones and missiles at Israel during a single incident in April in response to Israel's alleged assassination of a pair of Iranian generals in Syria at the time.

Mumbai's 100km water tunnel web to be world's largest in 6 years

MUMBAI. July 2024 will go down as the month when Mumbai got its 'underground'. Any day now, a part of the city's Metro Line 3, which is almost entirely underground, will begin operations. Delhi has a 20-year lead, but not many know that Mumbai started building big tunnels and using tunnel boring machines (TBMs) much before the Capital. It's just that Mumbai's tunnels until now were meant for moving water, not people.

Quietly, without media frenzy, the city's water tunnel network crossed the 100km milestone on June 21, with the completion of a 9.7km underwater tunnel from Ghatkopar to Parel via Wadala. Although China, Japan and many other countries use water tunnels in cities, only New York City with a 111km water tunnel network is ahead of Mumbai now.

WHY DIG SO DEEP?

Mumbai's water tunnels run 100-110m below the surface - unlike pipelines that are at a depth of 3-5m - and cost almost Rs 100 crore per km to build. For instance, the 9.7km Ghatkopar-Parel tunnel cost Rs 943 crore. Wouldn't it be cheaper to stick to pipelines then? Maybe, if you could find the space to lay more of them. But additional municipal commissioner Abhijit Bangar said tunnels have several advantages. Bangar, who holds charge of Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation's (BMC) water supply projects department, said, "Because the tunnels are deeper, the chances of contamination and theft are significantly reduced. Currently, Mumbai loses close to 35% of its water due to some of these issues. Tunnels can help reduce this loss marginally."

Centuries-old Tippu Sulthan hotel preserves Fort Kochi's flavours

KOCHI. Before the colonial-era homes, the historical buildings, the hipster cafes and art galleries, antique shops and Instagram-worthy nooks, what first catches the eye in Fort Kochi is Tippu Sulthan. No, not the Mysuru ruler, but the hotel Tippu Sulthan.

Tucked away on the busy Calvathy lane and bang opposite the teeming ferry, the centuries-old hotel welcomes all — tourists and locals alike — in a humble salute. Today, however, the 18th-century establishment has started to show its age. Though the rustic, yet vintage 'thattukada' appearance still has a charm, decades of developmental works in the region have seen it 'sink' into the ground, requiring customers to 'bow' before making themselves present before Tippu. But that's not stopping its patrons, which number hundreds, if not thousands, from stopping here for their usual cuppa or a lip-smacking meal. Others, unfamiliar with the 'Tippu magic', would still storm in on learning that the prices here have remained untouched for years.

"Affordable prices... this is what distinguishes us from other establishments in the area. We serve good food for nominal rates. It has helped Tippu Sulthan remain in business for centuries," says Abdul Rahman, the hotel's current owner. "Hotel Tippu Sulthan has been in business for the past two centuries. Sadly, it does not get the attention it deserves," says Stephen Jacob, a local historian. He also adds that the hotel's ownership has changed hands numerous times. Abdul, its current owner, has been running the outlet



for the past three decades. If you are wondering how the eatery got its name, Salim, an autorickshaw driver and one of its regular patrons, has a plausible theory. "The name was suggested by a muralist who adorned the walls of Fort Kochi with Quranic passage," he says.

The nominal rates are not the only distinguishing factor. This much was clear from our visit to the establishment on one rainy afternoon. There are several dishes served here that are found nowhere else.

"For breakfast, you get beef chaps made from young cattle meat. It's a great side for appam, porotta or maniputtu (the Fort Kochi term for string hoppers)," says Salim. The Fort Kochi resident is also all praise for the chilli beef roast, which he says has a fanbase of its own. "You can't find a restaurant that serves this variety of delicious dishes at such reasonable prices," Salim adds.

The Erachichoru (meat rice) is another dish to relish at Tippu's. This plate of spicy rice and the well-cooked, flavourful meat mixed with a sweet, tangy date pickle offers a symphony of flavours. However, what sees the most patrons at this dimly lit

yet homely place is Tippu's Chicken Biryani. As quick bites to accompany your piping hot chai, the glass shelf here is loaded with Vettucake, Bonda, Pazhampori, Vada and Kozhukatta (sweet coconut dumplings).

"Everything is made fresh at Tippu's. They don't keep a day's food for the next. How can you do that without at least a refrigerator... That is enough assurance for anyone about the food's quality, isn't it?" comments Hussain, Salim's friend.

The place is always packed. "Our regular customers include the locals, autorickshaw drivers, and ferry operators. Also, tourists who like to relish some traditional dishes and soak in some history," says Abdul. Back in the day, staff of The New Indian Express, too, were regular patrons, adds Salim. This was when the daily's office was on the premises of Aspinwall House on Calvathy Road.

In the recent past, Aspinwall House was the venue of the Kochi-Muziris Biennale, an international art festival. "The atmosphere during the time of the Biennale is always amazing. Tourists from in and out of the country visited Fort Kochi then and enjoyed good business. The cancellation of this year's Biennale is certain to hurt several establishments like ours in the area. But thankfully, we have a perennial patronage of the locals," Abdul says.

Abdul wishes that the government does their fair bit to keep centuries-old structures like Hotel Tippu Sulthan intact. "The road in front of the restaurant has been under construction for almost three years.

'Ghatkopar hoarding crash was act of God': Bombay high court

MUMBAI. The Bombay high court has given the state government two weeks time to respond to Bhide Bhide's petition who is the director of an advertising firm and was arrested in connection with the Ghatkopar hoarding collapse that killed 17 people. Bhide is seeking to quash the FIR against him, claiming the collapse was an 'act of God.'

He has also requested interim bail while his plea is pending. The court has scheduled the next hearing for July 26. A division bench of Justices Bharati Dange and Manjusha observed that Bhide's plea raises the issue of illegal arrest, as the mandatory notice under section 41A of the Code of Criminal Procedure was not issued to the accused first.

The bench noted that the police need to clarify this point given several judgments state that illegal detention necessitates immediate release. Bhide, the director of Ego Media Private Limited, had overseen the erection of the giant hoarding in Ghatkopar, which collapsed on May 13, resulting in 17 fatalities and injuring over 70 people.

He is currently in judicial custody and is seeking bail pending the hearing of his plea. He cited a weather bulletin issued by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) on May 12, which he claimed failed to predict the severe dust storms with gusty winds that struck Mumbai on the day of the collapse. "The IMD bulletin failed to predict the severe dust storms with gusty winds that hit Mumbai on the fateful day. On account of the aforesaid, the said hoarding collapsed and not due to improper, faulty construction of the same as wrongly, falsely alleged in the said FIR," Bhide's plea stated. The petition argued that unexpected and unprecedented wind speeds of up to 96 kmph caused the hoarding to collapse, an event for which neither Bhide nor Ego Media Pvt Ltd could be held accountable.

Aqua ryots joyful as works of Nizampatnam park gain pace

GUNTUR: The aqua farmers in Bapatla district are in high spirits as the construction of the high-tech integrated aqua park in Nizampatnam is set to gain pace. To benefit farmers not only in Bapatla but also in other coastal areas, the State government has planned to set up an aqua park on 192 acres with an investment of Rs 186 crore. The Central government has released Rs 84 crore to start the works of the aqua park. Bapatla district Collector J Venkata Murali said that the park will be set up through a central and private partnership, and Rs 82 crore has already been released. The State government issued GO 571 allotting survey numbers to the land reclaimed from the sea, and works will begin as soon as permissions from Chief Commissioner of Land Administration (CCLA) are secured. He visited the land suitable for the aqua park setup and gave necessary instructions to the officials. In the coastal district, the majority of the population in Repalle, Nizampatnam, Bapatla, Karlapalem, Chirala, Vetapalem, Chinaganjam, Nagaram, Bhattiprolu, and other regions depend on aquaculture, which is spread over 21,400 acres. The aqua products of the district are very famous worldwide, with varieties of fish and prawns worth Rs 2,250 crore exported to over 52 countries. Aqua farmers, in order to get

quality seeds of various varieties of fish and prawns, had to travel all the way to Chennai, Pondicherry, Rameshwaram, and Ramanathapuram in Tamil Nadu, bearing high transport costs. Opining that setting up an aqua park would reduce investment costs, T Krishna Prasad, an aqua farmer in Chinaganjam, said that it would prevent the hassle of travelling to other States in search of quality seed. With the processing units, farmers would get good selling prices for their produce, he added. Though the project has been on the cards for the past couple of decades, it was delayed for various reasons. After a long wait, the foundation stone for the construction works was laid in May 2023 by former chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy. The aqua park will be developed as one of its kind in the entire country, producing rare seaweeds and ornamental fish available only in the sea. Food processing units, hatcheries of rare species, and a knowledge centre to educate farmers on the latest technology in use in aquaculture will also be set up. The aqua park will contribute to the growth of the transport, economic, and tourism sectors in the region and provide direct and indirect employment to over 1,000 people. Aqua tourism will get a boost with the setup of sports fish in over 50 acres.

Bitter pill to swallow: HIV patients complain about new batch of drugs

CHENNAI: People living with HIV (PLHIV) from Tamil Nadu have raised complaints about the extremely bitter taste of a new batch of HIV drugs, procured and distributed by the National AIDS Control Organisation.

PLHIV said they have severe concerns over the quality of fixed-dose combination tenofovir/ lamivudine/ dolutegravir (TLD) supplied to the National AIDS Control Programme (NACP).

This combination is crucial for antiretroviral therapy (ART) to suppress viral load, thereby saving lives and preventing HIV transmission. Positive Women Network, a community organisation working for women with HIV, wrote a letter on the same to the Union Health Ministry, which was signed by around 200 people from the state. The organisation stated in the letter that the community urged the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) and Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) to conduct

thorough quality control tests on the tablets, revise tender requirements to mandate CDSCO registration for suppliers of antiretrovirals (ARVs) under the NACP tenders, in addition to state licensing agencies. "We urgently



request CDSCO's intervention to address potential issues with substandard drugs being supplied to NACP. This issue not only affects public health but also jeopardises the lives of millions of PLHIV who rely on these ARVs provided free of cost at the ART centres nationwide," the letter read.

On the bitter taste of drugs, a 22-year-old man told TNIE, "This has been the issue for the past one-and-a-half months. Earlier, the drugs were tasteless." A 13-year-old schoolgirl said she could not tolerate the bitterness in the beginning, but she was forced to take the pill and was now beginning to 'adjust' to it. A 42-year-old woman, who has been taking ART drugs for over 10 years, said she could not bear the newly found bitterness in the drugs. "It tastes like biting into a raw bitter gourd. Children are on the verge of crying when it is time to take the tablets, but they have no choice," she said. Positive Women Network president (Chennai) Kousalya Periasamy said there have been complaints from the PLHIV community regarding the quality of the tablets over the last few months. "Earlier, the patients faced the issue of drug disintegration. Now, it has a strong bitter taste. They never faced such issues with previous supplies," she added.

Telangana HC orders action plan to prevent stray dog attacks

HYDERABAD: Taking suo motu cognisance of the spate of stray dog attacks, the Telangana High Court on Thursday directed the Animal Birth Control (ABC) committee, established by the state government, to develop effective measures to prevent such cases. The court has mandated the committee to consult with various animal welfare organisations in the state and propose actionable solutions to curb these attacks. The division bench, comprising Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and Justice Anil Kumar Jukanti, issued these directives during a hearing on



a suo motu public interest litigation (PIL) based on a newspaper report highlighting the tragic death of a four-year-old boy mauled by stray dogs in Hyderabad. During the hearing, CJ Aradhe said that simply sterilising stray dogs was insufficient in preventing such attacks. He called for a comprehensive strategy involving the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC), the state government, animal welfare organisations, and the ABC committee to address the issue effectively. "We must find a way to stop these tragic incidents," he stated. Additional Advocate General Imran Khan informed the court that the state government, in coordination with the GHMC, was striving to mitigate the stray dog menace, which has become increasingly frequent. He reported there are 3,79,156 stray dogs in the state and acknowledged that while sterilisation can reduce the dogs' aggressiveness, it alone is not a complete solution. The case was adjourned to July 31.

Car driven by teen mows down migrant worker in Avinashi

COIMBATORE: A worker from West Bengal was killed by a speeding car driven by a 17-year-old boy on Avinashi Road near Peelamedu in the wee hours of Wednesday. The vehicle went on to hit the median and catch fire trapping the Class 12 student inside the car. The boy was eventually rescued by construction workers on the spot.

Police registered a case against the boy, his father for allowing him to drive and his grandfather who owned the car. The deceased was identified as Akshay Vera (23) from Jamboni village in Jhargram district of West Bengal. He was engaged in construction work on

the Avinashi Road elevated corridor. The Traffic Investigation Wing (TIW-East) said the boy, who studies at a private school, resides at Sowripalayam.



The boy allegedly took the car when his parents were asleep. At around 12.50 am on Wednesday, while trying to overtake a call taxi on the Avinashi road, the minor lost control of the car and hit the construction worker, who was

regulating traffic near the flyover construction site.

Case against boy, his father and granddad

The car caught fire after hitting the median and was gutted. Fire brigades from the Peelamedu Fire Station put out the fire. The boy, who sustained minor injuries, was sent to a private hospital.

Vera's body was sent to the Government Medical College and ESI hospital near Singanallur for postmortem. Later, the body was handed over to the relatives.

The TIW East police have registered a case against the boy, his father, a businessman, and his grandfather under Sections 281 and 106 (1) of BNS Act and 199 A of the Motor Vehicle Act.

Kerala: Barriers at Aroor, Thuravoor to curb heavy vehicles using the stretch

KOCHI: The Alappuzha district collector has instructed the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to construct height-restriction barriers at Aroor and Thuravoor to curb heavy vehicles from using the Aroor-Thuravoor stretch. The collector highlighted that despite the decision to divert heavy vehicles from Ernakulam and Kollam districts via MC Road, some still use the Aroor-Thuravoor stretch, causing damage to the newly renovated road and significant traffic congestion. The report was submitted to the Kerala High Court in response to a directive to outline steps taken to reduce traffic blocks, following the construction of the Aroor-Thuravoor

elevated highway. The report said, following the HC directive, a meeting was convened under the leadership of Agriculture Minister P Prasad, attended by district collectors of Alappuzha, Kollam and Ernakulam, along with police officers of the three districts. The meeting decided to prohibit long-route heavy vehicles from using the Aroor-Thuravoor construction area. The Aluva Rural SP has been tasked with diverting heavy vehicles moving south from Thrissur via Angamaly to MC Road. Vehicles from the Ernakulam area heading south will be diverted from Kundannoor towards MC Road. Vehicles bypassing the diversion points would be stopped before the

Kumbalam toll plaza and redirected via Kundannoor to MC Road. Heavy vehicles heading towards Ernakulam from Kollam would be diverted from Kottiyam, Chavara, Titanium Junction, and Karunagappally. The Alappuzha district police chief was assigned to divert heavy vehicles from Kayamkulam, Nangyarkulangara, and Ambalappuzha towards Ernakulam. The DPO, Alappuzha, has issued instructions to ensure police personnel are on duty around the clock in Ambalappuzha and Aroor.

The report also said the construction company has been instructed to expedite work by utilising Saturdays, Sundays, and, if necessary, Mondays. The company

was also tasked with promptly removing accumulated mud from the road and constructing footpaths alongside the single-lane traffic. The single-lane traffic road on the eastern side is completed, and footpath construction on both sides has commenced.

Planned Diversions

Heavy vehicles moving south from Thrissur will be diverted from Angamaly towards MC Road. Vehicles from the Ernakulam area moving towards Alappuzha side will be diverted from Kundannoor towards MC Road. Vehicles bypassing diversion points will be stopped before the Kumbalam toll plaza and redirected via Kundannoor.

Budget must aim for inclusive development

THE first Budget of the new government is being prepared in the backdrop of continuing tensions in the geopolitical arena. The Russia-Ukraine war and the Israel-Hamas conflict show no signs of abating. The domestic economy may be growing in a sustained manner at around 8 per cent, but the outlook may alter, depending on the stability of the external environment. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman must be hoping that global oil prices would remain subdued and that Western economies emerge from recessionary trends that have affected export growth. Keeping international ocean lanes free from strife will also be critical to avoiding an undue rise in costs of inbound or outbound trade. Clearly, the external headwinds have the potential of playing spoilsport with the India growth story. It is, therefore, essential that the Budget keep the focus on strengthening key sectors like infrastructure and services while supporting agriculture and the rural economy in equal measure. On the infrastructure front, policymakers would do well to maintain the steep rise in capital expenditure recorded over the past few years. The 2024-25 Interim Budget scaled down the earlier 30 per cent rise in capex to about 16.9 per cent, but a higher increase is warranted, given the vast infrastructure gap in the country. Though this may not create a huge number of skilled jobs immediately, it will undoubtedly have a long-term impact on employment creation. The fact that the Reserve Bank of India has transferred Rs 2.11 lakh crore to the Central Government exchequer gives it considerable cushion to continue in this direction during the current fiscal as well. The Budget will also need to move towards creating an easier climate for private investment, which has been lagging behind the public sector. While policies already in place — such as the production-linked incentive schemes — will give a boost to manufacturing, procedures need to be further streamlined. The regulatory environment has certainly come a long way since the 1991 economic reforms. But comparisons with the past are no longer relevant. Comparisons now need to be made with other emerging economies. Countries like Vietnam and Indonesia are offering simpler and easier investment regimes, an attraction for multinationals to set up base there. India, in contrast, is not looking so appealing.

Domestic investors have to contend with higher capital and logistics costs. Yet, the main hurdle for both domestic and foreign investors remains the plethora of clearances needed to set up new projects. These issues are now largely at the level of the states or even local municipalities. Bringing the ease of doing business down to this level needs to be part of next-generation reforms.

An indication that this is already being considered lies in the economic statement issued with the 2024-25 Interim Budget in February. It referred to improving governance at the block, district and village levels. A one-time loan to states, amounting to Rs 75,000 crore, was also offered for growth and development-oriented reforms. The focus areas were identified as health, education, skilling and land acquisition.

The only snag in this plan is that not all states will cooperate despite the availability of loans to carry out reforms. BJP-ruled states are bound to comply with directives from the Centre, but the same response may not be forthcoming from other states. The aim of kickstarting next-generation reforms may, thus, be only partially successful. At the same time, some states, especially in the southern region, already seem to have streamlined regulatory processes. The result is that investors are making a beeline for them. For instance, tech giants like Apple and Microsoft are locating new projects primarily in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. Policies adopted by these states need to be studied and replicated in others. In this context, budgetary provisions need to be made for the critical segment of education and skilling. While job creation is bound to be high on the government agenda, the fact is that many sectors are facing a shortage of skilled personnel. There is also a mismatch between the type of education and the specific skills needed by the industry. Long-term policy prescriptions should be formulated to resolve this issue but, in the short run, the upcoming Budget can provide adequate allocations for skilling institutes.

In addition, education needs to be given greater attention.

India needs a strategic approach to hybrid warfare

Leveraging its inherent strengths, India can put adversaries at a disadvantage and fortify its strategic stance against hybrid threats.

IN the evolving landscape of modern warfare, India must adapt to the concept of hybrid warfare to strengthen its defence and deterrence strategies. Hybrid warfare, characterised by a blend of conventional weapons, irregular tactics, cyberattacks and other unconventional methods, requires a nuanced and resilient approach to effectively counter the multifaceted threats from its adversaries. According to NATO, hybrid threats combine military and non-military as well as covert and overt means, including disinformation, economic pressure, deployment of irregular armed groups and the use of regular forces. "Hybrid methods are used to blur the lines between war and peace, and attempt to sow doubt in the minds of target populations. They aim to destabilise and undermine societies... the speed, scale and intensity of hybrid threats have increased in recent years," observes the US-led alliance. The cornerstone of India's strategy should be resilience. Leveraging its inherent strengths, India can put adversaries at a disadvantage and fortify its strategic stance against hybrid threats. Eschewing the traditionally rigid distinctions between conventional and irregular warfare, India's approach should recognise the continuum of conflict, integrating various methods and modes of warfare.

India's western border with Pakistan is a significant area of concern. Pakistan has been accused of engaging in hybrid warfare tactics, including sabotage, terrorism and cyberattacks, particularly in regions like Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab. Recent incidents underscore the gravity of the threat. In a deadly encounter in Doda, four Army soldiers, including a Captain, were killed earlier this week, bringing the total number of personnel killed in the region to 48 over the past 32 months. The joint operation by the Army and the Jammu and Kashmir Police highlights the persistent danger of cross-border terrorism. The Army has claimed that a number of measures have been instituted to enhance synergy between various agencies, such as joint training with the J&K Police and Central Armed

Police Forces and "a robust intelligence-sharing mechanism between the Army, the police and other intelligence agencies". The rise of narco-terrorism and the use of drones for cross-border insurgency reflects the evolving nature of this hybrid conflict. Pakistan's support for proxy forces, terrorist organisations and drug cartels poses a severe threat to India's security. The blending of advanced military capabilities with irregular tactics has been a persistent issue, necessitating preparedness to



deflect these 'wars in the shadows' while enhancing collective defence capabilities. On the northern front, India's relations with China present a different set of challenges. China's strategy includes psychological, political and legal tactics — collectively known as the 'three warfares' — to achieve its geopolitical goals. The Chinese investment in the United Front Work Department to influence the Chinese diaspora and foreign communities, along with the use of front organisations, exemplifies its hybrid warfare strategy. Beijing's increasing use of commercial security operations to protect its interests abroad, coupled with its blurred tactics and quasi-military forces in the maritime domain, underscores its innovative approach to hybrid conflicts. The likelihood of indirect and proxy Chinese intervention is a growing concern, particularly as

China expands its influence across Asia and beyond. The insurgency landscape within India also demands attention. The spate of terror attacks in the Jammu region and the continued unrest in Manipur highlight the internal challenges. Additionally, the Naxal insurgency in central India remains a significant threat, with numerous attacks on security forces and civilians. In response to the rising terror incidents, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has reviewed the security situation, discussing counter-terrorism efforts with top officials. The situation in Punjab is also concerning, with increased activities of narco-terrorism and drone infiltrations from Pakistan necessitating a robust response.

To effectively counter these hybrid threats, India must integrate hybrid warfare into its defence strategies. This involves overcoming natural disadvantages and leveraging India's strengths, interests and values. India's strategic approach should emphasise resilience, with border guarding forces and Army personnel equipped to handle advanced technologies and hybrid threats. The ongoing conflicts in Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur and other regions underscore the need for a robust and adaptive defence strategy. India must be prepared to counter both direct and indirect threats from Pakistan and China, utilising a comprehensive approach that includes conventional military capabilities, irregular tactics and cyber defence.

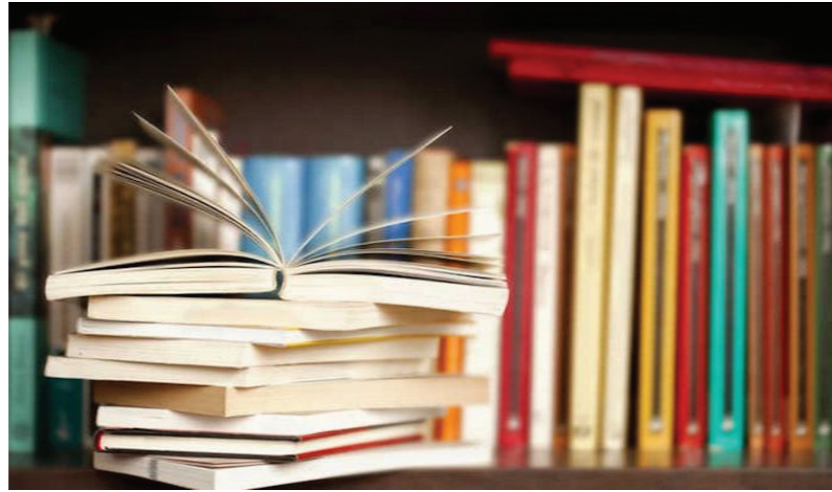
As India navigates the complex landscape of hybrid warfare, it is crucial to adopt a flexible strategy. By integrating hybrid warfare into its defence framework, leveraging its strengths, and preparing for the diverse threats from Pakistan, China and internal insurgencies, India can enhance its security and maintain stability in the region. This strategic shift, while challenging, is essential for safeguarding India's national interests and ensuring its sovereignty in an increasingly hybrid conflict environment.

Educational deadlock

Punjab, Centre must resolve differences

THE Punjab education sector has been caught in the crosshairs of the ongoing political feud between the Bhagwant Mann-led AAP government in Punjab and the BJP-led regime at the Centre. The recent setbacks in both higher and school education systems underscore the urgent need for a resolution to safeguard the future of students and the welfare of teachers and other staff. A significant blow was dealt recently when the President of India returned the Punjab Universities Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2023. This Bill, passed during a special Assembly session in June last year, sought to replace the Governor with the Chief Minister as the Chancellor of state-run universities. The President's refusal to clear the Bill has left the administrative structure of Punjab's higher education in limbo.

Compounding this issue is the Centre withholding Punjab's share of over Rs 500 crore under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. This crucial funding, meant for



upgrading the public school infrastructure, has been halted because of the state's withdrawal from the PM Schools for Rising India (PM SHRI) scheme. Punjab says

that it has done so as it already has its own comparable schemes, like 'Schools of Eminence', 'Schools of Brilliance' and 'Schools of Happiness', which would be linked with the National Education Policy. The impasse has stalled vital upgrade of school infrastructure, impacting the quality of education. The Centre must ensure a fair distribution of funds. The state and Central governments need to resolve these disputes on priority. It is imperative that educational institutions receive the necessary support and resources to operate effectively, fostering a stable and conducive learning environment. The ongoing political tussle threatens to undermine the state's long-term developmental goals, underscoring the need for a more collaborative and less adversarial approach to governance.

Address ethical concerns to optimise AI use

India's unique demographic and socioeconomic context provides a fertile ground for AI applications.

INDIA is at a pivotal juncture in its technological evolution, with artificial intelligence (AI) rapidly advancing in sectors like healthcare, agriculture, education and finance. Government initiatives such as the National Strategy for AI (NSAI) and NITI Aayog's efforts highlight India's ambition to be a global AI leader. The 'AI For All' initiative aims to democratise AI, ensuring inclusive growth and accessibility for all citizens. Collaborative efforts between government bodies and private sector companies are fostering a robust environment for AI innovation and application. A robust policy framework is crucial for sustainable AI development. The Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019, emphasises safeguarding citizens' data, addressing surveillance, data misuse and ethical AI use. Given AI systems' handling of vast personal data, stringent data protection laws are central to ensuring secure data handling and prevent breaches. Ethical AI development must align with guidelines promoting fairness, transparency, accountability and bias avoidance. Regulatory sandboxes can facilitate supervised testing of AI solutions by startups and researchers, encouraging innovation while upholding ethical standards. Addressing algorithmic bias is essential to ensuring fairness and inclusivity in AI applications. Frameworks for ethical AI use that promote fairness, accountability and transparency can build public trust. It involves educating people about AI's benefits and potential risks.

India faces challenges pertaining to technological infrastructure, data availability and a skilled workforce. These challenges present opportunities for upskilling and education initiatives to build AI expertise. Investment in AI infrastructure, like data centres, cloud computing and high-speed Internet, is crucial. Encouraging AI research through grants,

scholarships and collaborations between academia and industry can drive innovation. Building public trust in AI involves transparent communication about its benefits and risks and addressing fears of job displacement due to AI automation. Global collaborations, learning from the EU's AI strategy and OECD AI Principles enhance India's AI policies. Leveraging AI boosts India's global tech competitiveness. A balanced regulatory approach fosters innovation aligned with public interest and ethics. Incentives for AI research, development and startup investments nurture a vibrant innovation ecosystem, supporting AI-driven startups and SMEs (small and medium enterprises).

AI can tackle major societal challenges. In healthcare, it enables early diagnosis, personalised treatment and efficient delivery, improving outcomes. In education, AI-driven tools offer personalised learning and adaptive technologies, revolutionising the landscape. For environmental sustainability, AI helps monitor resources, predict natural disasters and mitigate the impacts of climate change, optimising energy, agriculture and waste management for more sustainable practices.

In agriculture, AI-driven precision farming boosts productivity, optimises resources and supports farmers with predictive analytics. In healthcare, AI improves diagnostics and treatment recommendations. Public-private partnerships with tech giants like Google, Microsoft and IBM foster AI research, training and capacity-building, keeping India at the forefront of AI innovation.

India is actively advancing AI through initiatives like the NSAI by NITI Aayog, promoting AI research, development and deployment in healthcare,



agriculture, education, smart cities and infrastructure. The 'AI For All' initiative aims to democratise AI, enhancing literacy and capacity-building. Practical applications, such as the Aarogya Setu for Covid-19 contact tracing and health updates, highlight AI's real-world impact.

A balanced AI policy involves creating a regulatory environment that fosters innovation while protecting the public interest. Developing and enforcing ethical standards for AI development and deployment are crucial. Ensuring AI systems are designed with fairness, accountability and transparency is essential to building public trust. Comprehensive data protection laws are critical to safeguarding personal information and promoting best practices for data security and privacy, preventing data breaches and misuse and ensuring responsible AI use. Inclusive and participatory policy-making is essential

for effective AI policies. India's AI landscape is grounded in substantial data and real-world examples, highlighting its transformative potential. For instance, AI-driven initiatives like the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission aim to integrate digital health infrastructure with AI capabilities to improve patient outcomes and streamline healthcare services. Accenture predicts that AI could add \$957 billion to India's economy by 2035, underscoring the economic imperative of robust AI integration. India's unique demographic and socioeconomic context provides a fertile ground for AI applications.

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research collaborates with IBM to use AI for crop yield prediction, pest control and weather forecasting, significantly aiding farmers in the decision-making process. AI-driven precision farming techniques, as per the Ministry of Agriculture, can increase crop yields by up to 30 per cent, showcasing the tangible benefits of AI adoption in this sector.

In the field of education, AI-powered platforms like Vedantu have revolutionised learning by providing personalised education experiences. These platforms leverage AI algorithms to tailor educational content to individual learning styles and paces, improving student engagement and performance. The market size of Indian online education, driven by AI advancements, crossed \$5 billion in 2023, highlighting rapid sector expansion.

Tips to attract 'good'

Energy

for your home



In the science of Feng Shui, it is said that chi is influenced by everything concrete in our lives. Our possessions and where they are located can all affect chi energy. Even the layout of our homes and offices affects Chi energy. By adding and taking away objects, changing the positioning of furniture, plants, wall art and more, we can increase our good luck.

Feng Shui has two parts, the visible and the invisible. The visible factors are walls, doors, streets. The invisible factor is chi. This life force energy and predecessor influences are energies of people who previously lived in your house, ghosts, energies in the land. Every person, place and thing is alive with the universal energy

adapting it in the design of homes calls for precision combined with tasteful aesthetics. When we look at a building the first impression we derive determines the kind of energy existing within it and you get a feel about the lifestyle of the occupants too. Comfort and convenience are key factors when planning a home or even a room placement, storage, furniture arrangements and layout.

If you live in a house with bad history, or you've had many negative experiences in the house, you need to cleanse the space with saline water, incense sticks and lights. If you have two or more doors in direct alignment, especially if it is the front door and back door, suspend wind chime or crystal or a moving object to slow down the chi flow.

An attractive, well-kept door will attract good chi, whereas a run-down door will cause bad chi to enter your home.

Clear pathways and keep hallways, driveways,



In Feng Shui, the exterior surroundings are the most important aspects affecting the chi flowing into your home. Hence, looking at the exterior, environment and the interior of a home will help in ascertaining the flaws and the positive trends

the building inherits. Creating balance and harmony through proper arrangement of the interior layout and inviting exterior will ensure that the Feng Shui of the space is beneficial to the occupants in turn giving rise to

prosperity and happiness. It's a fact that home is where we spend most of our time with the family and all those who are dear and close in our lives. Hence, focusing on the quality of energy, keeping the flow clean and smooth is essential.

called 'Chi'. Everything is connected by this vital energy that is always changing. When we integrate the Feng Shui principles into our lives, we see and interact with the world in a new powerful way. Understanding the science of Feng Shui and

open and clear free for energy to flow. De clutter attics, lofts, garage and basement and keep them clean. Pay particular attention to clogged drains and leaky pipes. As conduits for energy, they should be kept clear at all times.

Clean home, better health



Here are seven reasons why keeping your home spic and span is good for your overall wellbeing:

1. Looks better and fresh. Isn't it obvious that any place which is clean, tidy and organised makes you feel better?
2. It makes you more productive. Studies say that people who live and work in clean surroundings tend to be more focused and productive at work.
3. Keeps allergies at bay. Regular cleaning helps keep dust and allergies at bay.
4. Good for your mental well being. Cleaning your home with other tasks can help prevent depression.
5. Reduce the risk of injury. From messed up electrical wires to dirty laundry, a cluttered home includes lots of things for you to trip over and fall.
6. Gets your creative juices flowing. When everything is sorted at your place, your mind is free to focus on rediscovering your hidden creative side.
7. It is exercise. Cleaning helps you burn calories. Even a little amount of cleaning and dusting can up your fitness.



How to take care of Wooden flooring

- Use carpets and door mats or rugs wherever required to keep the wooden flooring clean.
- Easy to clean, hygienic and dust free, wooden floorboards also offer high impact resistance and better acoustics.

Floors help to anchor the look of a home. Of the multitude of options available to homeowners, wooden floor's offer timeless elegance like no other. The richness of grain and the healthy sheen of a wooden floor are not the only attributes that appeal to most people; the strength, durability, resilience and the exclusivity it offers are equally tempting. A wooden floor can make a room look bigger and lighter and adds value to your house. They also blend well with any kind of decor. The timeless beauty of wood helps in recapturing minds of the people. Easy to clean, hygienic and dust free, wooden floorboards also offer high impact resistance and better acoustics. Timber flooring does not trap dust, pollen and other allergens. With all the joy's and excitement of the festive season, the last thing you would be worried about is

the potential damage to your wooden floors, that would be endured with the increase of activity and people scampering on it. Festive season would mean increase of traffic in your home, which would lead your wooden flooring to more scratches, abrasions and possibility of wear and tear.

To ensure that your wooden flooring doesn't have to bear the brunt of the festive season here are some of tips to maintain and protect your hardwood flooring during the festive season to make it look fantastic:

- Vacuum the floor to remove dirt and debris. Don't wear slippers when you clean the wooden flooring, as the dirt underneath your slipper may leave permanent scratches on your floor.
- Use carpets and door mats or rugs wherever required to keep the wooden flooring clean
- Use rugs or mats which are specialized for hardwood floors. Normal rugs and mats can
- Never use water to clean wooden flooring. Water spoils the wood and damages it.
- Sticky stains can be removed with a wet sponge or a damp towel or cloth piece. It is best
- Never use oily soap solution or ammonia cleaners to clean the hardwood floor.
- For wiping out the spills from the floor, use a damp cloth.



Global IT outage hits flight ops in India, airlines urge fliers to reach early

A disruption in Microsoft's cloud services hit booking and check-in services of several airlines, including IndiGo, Akasa Airlines and SpiceJet.

New Delhi: A major disruption in Microsoft's cloud services led to widespread flight delays in India on Friday, with Delhi, Bengaluru, Kolkata, Pune and Mumbai airports facing the maximum brunt. Not only airlines, businesses, including banks, telecom companies, TV and radio broadcasters were affected after blue screen of death error screens were seen on Windows workstations across the globe. The outage hit booking and check-in services of several airlines, including Air India, IndiGo, Akasa Airlines and SpiceJet. Several airlines resorted to manual check-in and boarding processes at the airports and requested passengers to reach the airport early. While Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport reported an average delay of 51 minutes, Delhi's IGI Airport saw its services being delayed by nearly 40 minutes. Air India said its systems were "impacted temporarily"



due to the Microsoft outage resulting in delays. Budget airline SpiceJet said it was facing a technical issue in providing updates on flights. "Our team is actively working to resolve this issue," the airline posted on X. Akasa Airlines said some of its online services would be temporarily unavailable at the Mumbai and Delhi airports. "Due to infrastructure issues with our service

provider, some of our online services, including booking, check-in and manage booking services will be temporarily unavailable," it said. IndiGo also warned passengers of experiencing slower check-ins and longer queues. "Our systems across the network are impacted by an ongoing issue with Microsoft Azure, which has resulted in increased wait times at our contact centres and airports," IndiGo tweeted. Sources said the Ministry of Civil Aviation has instructed airlines to inform passengers via SMS about check-in delays or cancellation of flights. The DGCA, however, said no decision on grounding of flights have been taken.

The airport authorities are working on an on-ground management plan due to the influx of passengers.

LONG QUEUES, ANGRY PASSENGERS AT AIRPORTS

The incident left several passengers in the

lurch, with some complaining that they were not able to check in their luggage for the past one hour. "Indigo servers are down. For the past hour, no one has been able to check in baggage or get boarding passes at Bangalore terminal 1," one passenger posted on X.

A stranded passenger at Goa airport said he received a boarding pass after standing in queue for two hours. "My flight was from Goa to Delhi and there was a delay due to server issues. They gave us a boarding pass, made by hand, with our names spelled wrong," he told PTI. Several passengers took to social media to post images of handwritten boarding passes.

Microsoft reported ongoing problems with the Azure cloud and Microsoft 365 services. The outage also impacted flights around the world, especially the United States. Frontier Airlines grounded flights for over two hours due to issues with Microsoft's services. It resumed operations later. US' Allegiant Air also faced disruptions as the airline reported issues with bookings.

After UP, Haridwar Police orders eatery owners to display names for Kanwar Yatra

New Delhi: Hours after the Uttar Pradesh government on Friday ordered all eateries along the Kanwar Yatra route to display the names of their owners, the Haridwar Police too has passed a similar order. In an order, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Haridwar said it was mandatory for all shopkeepers to put their names outside their shops during the Kanwar Yatra. "All hotel and dhaba owners are ordered to display their name, QR code, and mobile numbers outside their outlets. Action would be taken against violators, and their outlets



would be removed," the order by SSP, Pramod Singh Dopal, read.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday ordered all eateries along the Kanwar Yatra route to display the names of their owners. The decision comes a day after the Uttar Pradesh Police in Muzaffarnagar revoked its orders, making it "voluntary" for eateries to display the owners' names, following backlash from the Opposition parties. As per the directive, every food shop or cart owner will have to put the owner's name on the board. The Chief Minister stated that the decision had been taken to preserve the sanctity of Kanwar pilgrims.

Government Lists 6 New Bills For Upcoming Parliament Session. Details Here

New Delhi: The Centre has listed six new bills for introduction, including the one which seeks to replace the 90-year-old Aircraft Act, to provide enabling provisions for ease of doing business in the aviation sector, in the upcoming Parliament session beginning Monday. Besides the Finance Bill, the government has also listed 'The Disaster



Management (Amendment) Bill' for introduction, consideration and passing. The proposed legislation aims to bring more clarity and convergence in the roles of different organisations working in the field of disaster management, a Lok Sabha bulletin issued Thursday said.

The Bhartiya Vayuvan Vidheyak, 2024 seeks to replace the Aircraft Act of 1934 to provide enabling provisions for ease of doing business in the civil aviation sector. The session beginning July 22 will conclude on August 12. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is scheduled to present the Union Budget on Tuesday, July 23. Other bills listed for introduction and passage during the session are the Boilers Bill to replace the pre-Independence era law, the Coffee (Promotion and Development) Bill and the Rubber (Promotion and Development) Bill. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla has also constituted the Business Advisory Committee (BAC), which decides the parliamentary agenda. The committee chaired by the Speaker has Sudip Bandyopadhyay (TMC), P P Chaudhary (BJP), Lavu Sri Krishna Devarayalu (TDP), Nishikant Dubey (BJP), Gaurav Gogoi (Congress), Sanjay Jaiswal (BJP), Dileshwar Kamait (JD-U), Bhartruhari Mahtab (BJP), Dayanidhi Maran (DMK), Bajjant Panda (BJP), Arvind Sawant (Shiv Sena-UBT), Kodikunni Suresh (Congress), Anurag Thakur (BJP) and Lalji Verma (SP) as members.

Tantrik in Odisha pierces woman's head with 18 needles for treatment, arrested

New Delhi: A tantrik in Odisha's Balangir district was arrested on charges of piercing multiple needles into the head of a 19-year-old woman, on the pretext of treating her for a medical condition. The woman was admitted to a hospital after the incident came to light. According to the details, the woman, along with her parents, had approached the tantrik to get herself cured.

The woman had been suffering from a health condition for the past four years. Despite seeking medical treatment, her

condition could not be improved, prompting her family to seek help from a tantrik. During one of the sessions,



the accused tantrik, identified as Santosh Rana, took the woman inside a room. He brought her out after an hour.

Later, the woman's parents detected needles inside her head after noticing her continued discomfort. The woman's father said he removed eight needles inside the head of her daughter.

She was then taken to a hospital, where a CT scan was performed, which revealed the woman had 10 more needles pierced in her head. The woman's father said she had fallen unconscious during the tantrik's session and hence did not know about the piercings. A complaint in this regard was received by the police, after which the tantrik was arrested. More

investigations into the case were underway.

"Fashion Parade Going On?" Chief Justice Pulls Up Lawyer Without Neckband

New Delhi: Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud today gave a dressing down to a lawyer for turning up in the courtroom without his band. Neckbands are a part of lawyers' attire, along with their black coats. The advocate raised a matter related to a demolition case and said it was "urgent". The Chief Justice of India, however, was unimpressed by his attire. "Send an email. But where is your band? Is this some fashion parade going on?" he asked, Bar and Bench reported. When the advocate said he was "in a rush", the Chief Justice replied sternly. "Sorry, cannot hear if you are not in proper attire." The Bar Council of India rules lay down the dress code for advocates appearing in court. "Advocates appearing in the Supreme Court, High Courts, Subordinate Courts, Tribunals or Authorities shall

wear the following as part of their dress, which shall be sober and dignified"

1. ADVOCATES: A black buttoned up coat, chapkan, achkan, black sherwani



and white bands with Advocates' Gowns. (b) A black open breast coat, white shirt, white collar, stiff or soft, and white bands with Advocates' Gowns. In either case wear long

trousers (white, black striped or grey) Dhoti excluding jeans. Provided further that in courts other than the Supreme Court, High Courts, District Courts, Sessions Courts or City Civil Courts, a black tie may be worn instead of bands," it says.

The rules also lay down a dress code for women advocates: (a) Black full sleeve jacket or blouse, white collar stiff or soft, with white bands and Advocates' Gowns. White blouse, with or without collar, with white bands and with a black open breast coat. Or (b) sarees or long skirts (white or black or any mellow or subdued colour without any print or design) or flare (white, black or black striped or grey) or Punjabi dress Churidar Kurta or Salwar-Kurta with or without dupatta (white or black) or traditional dress with black coat and bands.

Massive Microsoft outage hits flights, banks, stock exchanges, broadcasters

New Delhi: A massive Microsoft outage unleashed havoc on computer systems across the world, grounding flights and crippling banks, stock exchanges, payment systems and emergency services. Microsoft, in a tweet, said that "Multiple services are continuing to see improvements in availability as our mitigation actions progress". The outage is possibly due to the failure of CrowdStrike Falcon, a cybersecurity platform that provides security solutions for Microsoft Windows. The disruptions continued hours after Microsoft said it was fixing the issue. In India, the outage caused widespread disruptions in flight operations, payment systems, and trading, among other services. Flight delays were reported across airports, leading to long queues. The outage affected booking and check-in services for several airlines, including IndiGo, Akasa Airlines, and SpiceJet. The central government, taking cognisance of



the cyber outage, stated that it is in discussions with Microsoft to resolve the issue. The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology is likely to issue an advisory on the outage.

MAJOR AIRLINE DISRUPTIONS

KLM Royal Dutch Airlines announced that the outage made it "impossible" to handle flights. "KLM has also been affected by the global computer outage, making it impossible to handle flights. ...We are working hard to resolve the problem. For

now, we are forced to suspend most of the operation," the airline said. Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport, one of Europe's busiest hubs, was affected by the global outage. "The outage has an impact on flights flying from and to Schiphol," a spokesperson said. rlin Airport halted all flights due to a technical fault. The airport operator said in a post on social media that check-ins were delayed due to the error. In the US, several major airlines, including American Airlines, Delta, and United, reportedly grounded all flights.

Authorities in Spain reported a "computer incident" at all its airports, while Ryanair, Europe's largest airline by passenger numbers, warned passengers of potential disruptions that would affect "all airlines operating across the Network". Flyers at Edinburgh Airport in Britain were unable to use automated boarding pass scanners, and monitors at security displayed a message saying "server offline." Turkish Airlines was also experiencing problems

with ticketing, check-in, and reservation processes due to a global technical issue in information systems.

STOCK EXCHANGES HIT

Operations of stock exchanges in various countries were disrupted by the outage. Services at the London Stock Exchange were affected. Several brokerage firms also faced technical outages, including Nuvama, Edelweiss, and Motilal Oswal. Traders reported disruptions in their operations in India.

NEWS BROADCASTERS DOWN

The outage also hit news services across the globe. Britain's Sky News, one of the country's major television news channels, said they were unable to broadcast. "Sky News have not been able to broadcast live TV this morning, currently telling viewers that we apologise for the interruption," the broadcaster's executive chairman David Rhodes said on X. News agency Associated Press also faced service disruption in news delivery.

Dibrugarh Express derailment: Special train leaves for Assam, toll rises to 4

New Delhi: Rescue operations at the site near Uttar Pradesh's Gonda where eight coaches of the Chandigarh-Dibrugarh Express train derailed have been completed, and a special train left for Assam with 600 passengers. At least four passengers were killed and over 30 were injured after the train derailed between Motiganj and Jhila railway stations on Thursday. Soon after the derailment of the train, ambulances and medical teams were rushed to the spot even as bad weather hindered the rescue operations for a while.

The driver claimed he heard the "sound of a blast" before the derailment, news agency PTI reported while citing an official. The deceased has been identified as Saroj Kumar Singh (31), a resident of Araria in Bihar, Rahul (38) from Chandigarh, while the two are unidentified people.

Top points on Chandigarh-Dibrugarh Express derailment

A special train with 600 passengers of the Chandigarh-Dibrugarh Express, which derailed on Thursday, has left for Assam, an official told news agency PTI. The train departed from Mankapur, Uttar Pradesh.

The Centre has announced an ex-gratia of Rs 10 lakh for the family of the deceased, Rs 2.5 lakh for those who suffered grievous injuries, and Rs 50,000 for those with minor injuries. In the aftermath of the derailment, the Railways Ministry has initiated a high-level probe into the incident. Chief Public Relations Officer, North Eastern Railway, Pankaj Singh, stated that the probe would verify the driver's claims that a minor explosion occurred before the derailment. A commissioner of railway safety has also been ordered to look into the matter.

Following the derailment, the Congress on Thursday called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw to take responsibility for the "significant lapses". It also urged the rapid installation of the Kavach anti-collision system on all railway routes.

After the incident, passengers came out of the emergency windows and doors of the sleeper coaches. In the AC coaches, passengers broke the window panes and pulled out those injured or stuck. The passengers had to wade through knee-deep water in the fields on either side of the track to reach the nearby approach road.

5 Must dos while Shifting home

Anyone who has shifted homes will be able to tell you it is no easy task. The entire business is emotionally and physically taxing.

From hiring the best movers to telling goodbyes to friends, every step should be closely planned. Here are five simple steps which will help you move to your new home comfortably.

The A to Z list:

Take time and prepare a checklist. Write down everything which needs to be done, from paying your newspaper boy to the list of people you need to say goodbye. It is easy to let something important slip away while you are having so much in your mind. A list will give you the confidence that you will not miss out on anything.

Plan your move in advance:

The more time you have the easier the shift is. A gradual change is better than a last-minute huff-puff. It not only gives you enough buffer time in case everything does not go according to plan but also helps you and your family to emotionally adjust to the fact that you are moving to a new home.

Talk to your children:

Dealing with kids while shifting is one helluva task. Most of them will find leaving their friends and surrounding traumatic. Sit with them and tell them what will change and what will remain the same. Ask them to collect phone numbers and mail ids of their friends so that they can stay in touch. Talk to them about their new school and type of people they will come across. Involve them while packing up their bags and goodies so that they feel responsible and not left out.

Pack with care:

Today packing is well taken care by professional movers. But that does not mean you should not be involved. Who would like to see their favourite vase broken during the moving process. Make sure everything is properly bundled and fragile items are well packed before loading. Consider taking your favourite items along with you in the car.

Be positive:

Yes, shifting residence will sap your energy. Do not let the grief of leaving your home and anxieties

about the new surroundings overwhelm you. Learn to take one day at a time. Focus on the shift and hope for a good home and happiness. The positive energy will help you move forward without trouble.



Best kept silver cleaning secrets

Experts from Episode Silver give you some damage control tips to maintain your silverware this monsoon...

Tarnish

Silver tarnishes when in contact with atmospheric sulphur. Therefore use your silver regularly as usage breaks the sulphur sulphide film that causes tarnish.

For food products, be sure to wipe dry after washing. Use of soft cloth.

For decorative products, wipe daily during the daily house dusting process. This delays tarnishing.

Cleaning Silver

Heavily tarnished pieces can be cleaned with :- Foam, Sprays or liquid paste silver polishes.

Both Indian and imported polishes are

It is easy to fall in love with sparkling silverware, well-polished and winking in delight at its own splendour. But maintaining the pristine glow is a herculean task, especially in Mumbai where humidity levels are usually high.

easily available in the market. Use a soft chamois cloth. Silver dips are also very effective. Use a weak solution of washing soda and water to clean heavily stained Tea or Coffee pots. Pierced work should not be cleaned with a cloth as it may get stuck on the edges. Use a soft brush. Silver can be washed in dishwashers, but avoid contact with stainless steel as a reaction can occur.



6 Simple tips to host a potluck party



The one thing that makes potluck parties a fun event is that it gives everyone an opportunity to involve in hosting the party. However, it requires some planning for sure.

We give you 6 simple tips to hosting a successful potluck party

Make a guest list

To begin with, slot a day and time as per the convenience of everyone. A potluck party should have atleast 6 to 7 people or couples for it to be fun and memorable. The more the

better.

Let each one pick a dish

Once you figure out the guest list, you can ask each member what they would like to prepare instead of you deciding the dish for everyone. Every individual has a speciality dish that he/she can cook well. Coordination is a must to ensure there are a perfect number of appetizers, main course and desserts.

Do not miss out on the essentials

If you are of the view that a potluck party host just needs to provide the venue, you are wrong. The basic items such as plates and utensils, tissue papers, water and other drinks is solely your responsibility. So ensure that everything is well stocked.

Pay attention to the food

Apart from the essentials, you also have to take care of the food and the temperature at which it is

served. If a dish needs to be warmed in the oven before serving or if some dessert has to be refrigerated, do it.

Opt for use-and-throw wares

If there are too many guests coming over, choose dishes or plates made of thermocol, paper or plastic. This way you would not need to wash all the utensils once the party is over and in turn save up all your time and energy. Moreover, keep a huge bin near the kitchen so that the guests can dispose the plates in

the bin after use.

Appreciate and thank everyone After the successful potluck party, do not forget to thank each and every guest individually for attending the party and also for taking all the necessary effort in making it a memorable one.



AB Group to enter jewellery business next week

NEW DELHI. Billionaire Kumar Mangalam Birla-led Aditya Birla Group is all set to enter the branded jewellery market with the launch of Novel Jewels on July 26, almost a year after it first announced its intention to foray into this consumer-facing business. This would be Birla's second big debut into a new vertical after it entered the paint business with Birla Opus earlier in March. Birla will now be competing in a market that has a strong presence of other conglomerates such as Tata Group-owned Tanishq and Reliance Jewels. The other big players in the organized market are Kalyan Jewellers, Malabar Gold, Joyalukkas Jewellers and Senco Gold. In June 2023, the Group had announced its entry into the branded jewellery retail business. Backed by an investment of Rs. 5,000 crores, this new venture is called 'Novel Jewels'. Novel has aims to build large exclusive jewellery stores featuring in-house jewellery brands across India. In the paint business, Birla had committed an investment of Rs 10,000 at the time of launch. Currently, the jewellery industry stands as one of the largest in India, contributing 7% to the nation's GDP. Aditya Birla Group had earlier said that with India's jewellery industry projected to reach \$100 billion by 2027, this presents an opportunity for them to be 'big in the life' of consumers and transform the way India purchases its fashionable jewellery. For decades, India's jewellery landscape has been dominated by the unorganised sector, primarily consisting of local standalone jewellery stores. However, this trend is undergoing a radical shift in favour of national branded jewellery chains. From constituting a mere 5% of the jewellery market in 2005, branded players now make up an impressive 35% of the market.

Government to establish PMU to oversee BSNL's 4G rollout

NEW DELHI. Telecom minister Jyotiraditya Scindia announced on Thursday that the government is establishing a project monitoring unit (PMU) to oversee 4G rollout of state-owned Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL).

Speaking on the sidelines of the India Mobile Congress and WISA, the minister assured that he would monitor the progress on a daily basis. "I'm not going to give you the targets today; it's all in my head. Today, all I can commit to you is that, along with Tejas, BSNL, and C-Dot, and with all our players together, we are forming a Project Management Unit (PMU).

This PMU will not set monthly targets or weekly targets. I have mandated them to set daily targets, and those



daily targets will be monitored by myself and the secretary. So, I will commit to you that, at the earliest, and when I have that project chart ready, I'll be more than happy to share it with you," he said.

In 2023, BSNL cleared a contract of Rs 24,500 crore to a consortium led by TCS, including C-DOT and Tejas Networks, to provide 4G equipment for 100,000 new telecom towers. The company has activated 3,500 4G base transceiver stations (BTS) and will soon launch commercial 4G services.

Big blow to crypto industry as WazirX falls victim to \$235 million hack

BENGALURU. WazirX, which is the country's largest cryptocurrency exchange by volume, on Thursday paused INR and crypto withdrawals temporarily as it suffered a security breach. According to Web3 security firm Cyvers, \$234.9 million of funds have been moved to a new address. WazirX said it is aware that one of its multi-sig wallets has experienced a security breach. "Our team is actively investigating the incident," the crypto exchange said. Crypto storage provider Liminal Custody in a statement said its preliminary investigations show that one of the self-custody multi-sig smart contract wallets created outside of the Liminal ecosystem has been compromised.

"We can confirm that Liminal's platform is not breached and Liminal's infrastructure, wallets and assets continue to remain safe. It is also pertinent to note that all WazirX wallets created on the Liminal platform continue to remain secure and protected. Meanwhile, all the malicious transactions to the attacker's addresses have occurred from outside of the Liminal platform," the storage provider said. Users have now questioned the safety of their funds on the exchange. This hack is a big blow to the country's crypto industry, which started showing signs of recovery only in recent times. "Even though WazirX is our competitor in the Indian market, I am sad to know about the incident. It's not good news for the Indian web3 ecosystem," said Neeraj Khandelwal, co-founder, CoinDCX. Krishnendu Chatterjee, co-founder and CEO of A2Z Crypto, said, the Indian government should urgently look into regulating crypto, by separating the role of exchanges/VDA's from custodians. "If most of the funds were kept under custody (with proper insurance), this kind of scenario might be averted as insurance providers will have covered for any hacks. Only with proper regulation, can investor protection be guaranteed," he said. Edul Patel, CEO of Mudrex, pointed out this incident underscores the importance of continuous monitoring and robust compliance frameworks to protect investors and ensure the integrity of the crypto ecosystem.

As of June 10, 2024, at 6:30 PM, WazirX's total holdings stood at Rs 4,203.88 crore, which is a 79% surge compared to January 2023. WazirX, which has over 16 million users, released Proof of Reserves for June 2024 recently and said it is facilitating transactions across over 350 cryptocurrencies and 700 market pairs.

Economists ask FM to review inflation targeting

The Economists believe that the government must re-examine and, if necessary, relax the inflation targeting approach to maintain interest rates at moderate levels.

NEW DELHI. Ahead of the Union Budget 2024 announcement, it is learnt that economists have suggested finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman to revisit the inflation targeting by the Reserve Bank of India. The Economists believe that the government must re-examine and, if necessary, relax the inflation targeting approach to maintain interest rates at moderate levels.

According to experts, the 4% (+/-) inflation target mandated to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is difficult to achieve and it also keeps interest rates higher.



"There might be some announcement on inflation targeting on July 23. A group of economists have suggested Sitharaman to revisit inflation targeting. There seems to be unanimity among those economists," one of the sources told TNIE.

As per experts, increasing the inflation target from 4% to 6% can benefit common people by lowering borrowing costs and boosting spending. For investors, it may lead to asset value growth and profit opportunities.

"The central government assigns the

inflation target that the RBI has to pursue. The inflation targeting regime, having been in operation for nearly a decade, probably needs a re-evaluation, especially after continued high interest rates due to inflation above 4%," said Charan Singh, founder and CEO of EGROW Foundation.

"The last 30-year average shows the inflation generally hovers between 5.5% and 6.5%. India has a potential to grow 10% but persistent high rates could be detrimental to growth and employment

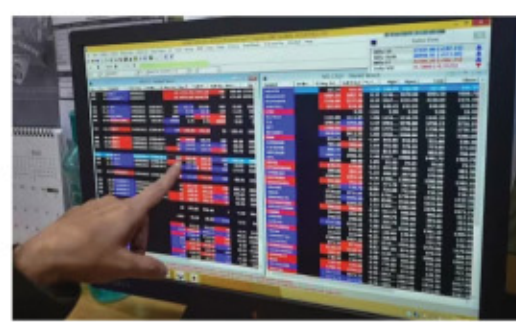
generation. Hence, the need to re-assess the efficacy of the existing target of 4+/-2%," Singh argued. As per former Chief Statistician of India, TCA Anant, it is a valid consideration for the government to reassess the legislative mandate established in 2016 regarding inflation targeting and contemplate adjusting target to encompass both Wholesale Price Index (WPI) and Consumer Price Index (CPI). Dr Ashwani Mahajan, an economics professor and national co-convenor of Swadeshi Jagran Manch, says there has been a major disparity in recent years between the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and WPI, with CPI consistently higher than WPI. "Despite WPI remaining in the negative zone in the last financial year while CPI stayed elevated, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) adhered to CPI-focused inflation targeting as per its mandate. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has maintained the repo rate at 6.5% since January 2023, even with WPI showing lower or negative figures," he argues. Meanwhile, Madan Sabnavis, Chief Economist at Bank of Baroda said, based on average inflation in the past, 5% looks a fair number.

Yes Bank, Suzlon, IRCTC, Tata Power, ITC: Check performance of these retail favourites

UPDATED Retail favourite stocks such as Yes Bank Ltd, Tata Power Ltd, Suzlon Energy Ltd, Vodafone Idea Ltd, Jio Financial Services Ltd (JFS), and ITC Ltd have delivered mixed returns in July ahead of the Union Budget 2024.

Among the 20 BSE500 stocks with the highest number of individual investors (up to Rs 2 lakh), half outperformed the Sensex's 2.7% rise this month, while the other half underperformed, with seven stocks delivering negative returns, reported Business Today.

Yes Bank, with the highest number of retail investors as of June 30 (62.11 lakh), delivered an 8.69% return in July. With 46.46 lakh retail investors as of March 31, Tata Steel saw its shares fall by 4.39% this month. Vodafone Idea Ltd, which had 46.41 lakh investors as of June 30, fell by 9%



despite recent tariff hikes by telecom operators, including VIL.

Tata Motors, with 45.30 lakh retail investors, rose by 3.6% this month, beating the Sensex's return. Indian Railway Finance Corporation Ltd (IRCTC) climbed 18% in July.

According to Fisdrom Research, the Budget may include announcements aimed at expanding and modernising railway infrastructure, such as new lines, station redevelopment, and the

introduction of modern trains, potentially benefiting IRCTC. Tata Power, a retail favourite, fell by 2.4%, while Suzlon Energy climbed 4.7%. JFS declined by 6% in July. JM Financial anticipates that the Budget may include enhanced incentives for renewable energy, given the 500 GW target by 2030, which could benefit Tata Power and Suzlon Energy. JFS's decline was attributed to a 5.81% year-on-year dip in its consolidated profit for the June quarter, at Rs 312.63 crore. ITC delivered a solid 10% return amid expectations that there would be no changes to cigarette/tobacco-related taxes in the Budget. Prabhudas Lilladher (PL) increased its weight behind ITC by 50 basis points, anticipating a benign cigarette taxation environment, revival in FMCG and paperboard profitability from the second half of FY25, and value unlocking from the hotel demerger.

Major banks like SBI, Axis Bank conduct UPI credit line trial: NPCI Chairman

A UPI credit line is essentially a pre-approved loan available to customers who have a bank account linked to their UPI account.

NEW DELHI. Some of the banks, including ICICI Bank, Axis Bank, State Bank of India (SBI), and Punjab National Bank, have already begun utilizing the UPI credit line product on a pilot basis, Ajay Kumar Chaudhary, Chairman of the National Payments Corporation of India said Thursday on the sidelines of an event organised by trade body ASSOCHAM. Many more banks are also in the process of implementing this, as per Chaudhary. "UPI credit line is currently primarily being offered by banks to individuals. There

is significant excitement surrounding the UPI credit line, with notable growth in this area. NPCI is actively working to raise awareness



about this," Chaudhary stated. A UPI credit line is essentially a pre-approved loan available to customers who have a bank account linked to their UPI account. This credit facility may offer various products from different banks participating in the UPI platform. It is more or less like a credit card payment, under which, a

user can make the repayment of a loan with interest at a later date. To get this facility, the users of UPI will have to apply to the banks. There are many

benefits of borrowing through UPI credit lines, as it is more flexible and there is no need to carry a physical card. In addition to this, there is also no requirement for POS or swipe machines to facilitate credit transactions. Regarding the increasing financial frauds, Chaudhary highlighted that significant efforts are underway to combat and prevent such fraudulent activities. "Multiple work is being done by RBI as well as other regulators on fraud detection side. NPCI is also working on payment side to leverage AI/ML to facilitate understanding of pattern and help banks in identification of frauds," he stated.

Infosys plans to hire 15,000-20,000 freshers in FY25

NEW DELHI. Infosys chief financial officer (CFO), Jayesh Sanghrajka, during the press briefing for the announcement of Q1 results, said that the IT firm is looking to hire 15,000-20,000 freshers for FY25. "We are looking to hire 15,000-20,000 freshers this year depending on how we see the growth," said Sanghrajka.

He said that the IT giant has moved to an agile hiring base in the last few quarters. "We hire freshers from on and off the campus. This quarter we had a 2000 persons net decline, which was lower than the previous quarters. Our utilisation is already at 85 percent, so we have little headroom now left. As we start seeing growth we will look at hiring," said the Infosys CFO. The announcement from Infosys to hire freshers offers hope to recent and soon-to-be college graduates after a year of declining IT job opportunities. Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) plans to hire approximately 40,000 new graduates in FY25, having already onboarded about 11,000 trainees in Q1.

In Q1, Infosys saw a reduction in its workforce by 1,908, marking the sixth straight quarter of headcount decline. In contrast, TCS added a net total of 5,452 employees. However, the total headcount for TCS fell by 1,759 compared to the March period. HCLTech also experienced a sequential decline, with a reduction of 8,080 employees in Q1 FY25. LTIMindtree stood out



as an exception, adding about 284 employees sequentially in Q1. Shares of Infosys surged by 5% to a new all-time high of Rs 1,843 on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) after its Q1 results beat market expectations. Several brokerages have adjusted their target prices for the stock upward. The Bengaluru-based IT giant reported a consolidated Profit After Tax (PAT) of Rs 6,368 crore for the quarter ending June 30, 2024, reflecting a 7% year-on-year increase. It also increased its revenue guidance for FY25.

Paytm Q1 results: Net loss widens to Rs 839 crore, revenue falls 36%

Paytm Q1 results: The company's net loss widened to Rs 839 crore and its revenue fell 36% year-on-year to Rs 1,502 crore.

New Delhi. Financial services firm One 97 Communications, which operates payments and financial services distribution company Paytm, reported a significant increase in its consolidated loss for the June quarter, rising to Rs 839.9 crore compared to Rs 357 crore in the same quarter of the previous financial year. Paytm's Q1 revenue also saw a decline, falling to Rs 1,502 crore, down 36% year-on-year from Rs 2,342 crore in Q1 FY24. The company said that the recent disruptions it faced was behind its



weak performance in the first quarter of FY25. The company assured that revenue and profitability will improve, with growth in merchant payment operating metrics including GMV, accelerated merchant reactivation and growing merchant base, along with continued focus on cost optimisation. Paytm announced its intention to focus on market leadership through merchant payment innovations, including the

introduction of new devices and the aggregation of various merchant discount rate (MDR)-bearing payment instruments. The company also plans to allocate additional resources to its insurance and mutual fund distribution segments, which present significant monetization opportunities. Paytm spokesperson said, "We are seeing a rebound in our merchant operating metrics and stability in our consumer

base, demonstrating our path to recovery. This also indicates the continued confidence of our merchant partners and consumers on our platform, and we are grateful for the trust of our stakeholders."

"With Q1 illustrating the full impact of recent disruptions, we are confident in our trajectory towards sustained growth going forward," the spokesperson added.

In a regulatory filing, Paytm said, "In Q1 FY 2025, the company reported a revenue of Rs 1,502 crore and EBITDA before ESOP of Rs (545) crore, which is in line with guidance provided. We expect revenue and profitability to improve going forward." The company also shared details about its aim to save Rs 400-500 crore annually on employee costs. "As part of our goal to save Rs 400-500 crore annually on employee costs, we have achieved a 9% reduction QoQ. However, excluding employee costs, our indirect costs have increased due to certain one-time expenses (details in the following sections). We expect these costs to reduce in the coming quarters. We remain committed to be disciplined around our overall cost structure," the company said.

NEWS BOX

Nordea Open: How 'aggressive' Rafael Nadal scripted incredible comeback vs Norrie

New Delhi Rafael Nadal said that he needed to be 'aggressive' at certain stages in the Nordea Open 2024 quarterfinal match against Cameron Norrie. On Thursday, Nadal, who is playing in Bastad as a wildcard, defeated his fifth seeded opponent 6-4, 6-4 and made his way through to the semi-final of the clay-court tournament where he will lock horns with Argentina's Mariano Navone.

Nadal had it easy in the first set against Norrie, but found the going tough in the second. Going 1-4 down in the second, it seemed that the match would go into the deciding set. However, Nadal roared back and won five games in a row to seal the fate of the match in straight sets. The 37-year-old made his return to competitive tennis since last playing in the opening round of the French Open back in May. "Great feelings. It's been a while without playing on tour since Roland Garros.



To have the chance to compete well against a great player like Cameron... these are great feelings. I played good tennis for moments. For moments I needed to play more aggressive. That's part of the journey today," Nadal said after the match.

Rafael Nadal looking for improvements

With his win over Norrie, Nadal also qualified for the semis of a clay-court event for the first time since the French Open back in 2022. "I haven't been competing very often. Matches and victories like today help to be in rhythm the whole match and put the pressure on the opponent during the whole match. That's something I need to improve today. Because I haven't played enough," Nadal added. Nadal is currently gearing up to play in the Paris Olympics 2024, to be held from July 26. He has also been named in the entry list for the US Open later this year.

India always enjoy playing vs Pakistan: Harmanpreet Kaur before epic Asia Cup clash

New Delhi. Harmanpreet Kaur said that she was looking forward to India facing Pakistan in the upcoming Women's Asia Cup clash on Friday, July 19. Day 1 of the tournament will witness the marquee clash unfold at the Rangiri Dambulla International Stadium in Dambulla. India have a healthy 11-3 head-to-head record against Pakistan in WT20Is with their most recent win coming in the 2023 T20 World Cup at the Newlands in Cape Town. Harmanpreet said that while it's important to focus on playing against Pakistan, the Women in Blue need to strategise for the other matches as well. Apart from Pakistan, India also have Nepal and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in their group. "We always enjoy playing against Pakistan but each and every team is important. Whenever we go and play, we always want to play good cricket, and we will follow the same method," Harmanpreet said in the pre-match press conference.

'Each and every game is important'

The Indian skipper said that the Asia Cup is the right platform for Team India to prepare for the T20 World Cup to be held later this year in Bangladesh. "This tournament is very important for all of us because we give equal respect to this tournament and want to improve at the Asian as well as at the world level. So our focus will remain the same as we prepare for the T20 World Cup or any other World Cup. Each and every game is important for us and we will try to give our best," Harmanpreet said.

Harshit Rana credits Gautam Gambhir after ODI call-up: He changed my mindset

New Delhi Fast bowler Harshit Rana credited Gautam Gambhir after earning his maiden ODI call-up for the tour of Sri Lanka. The speedster was a part of the Indian squad for the first two T20Is against Zimbabwe earlier this month, but did not get a chance to play. He was named in the ODI squad along with Arshdeep Singh, Khaleel Ahmed and Mohammed Siraj. Rana expressed gratitude to his father, personal coach and Gambhir for shaping his career. It was under Gambhir's mentorship that Rana performed exceptionally for KKR in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024. Rana picked up 19 wickets from 13 games and helped the Knight Riders lift the trophy for the third time after 2012 and 2014. Rana thanked Gambhir for never losing faith in him and backing him to win matches.

"Tu match jeetake aayega"

"If I have to name three people whom I am indebted to in this beautiful journey of mine, then it is my father, for his efforts, my personal coach Amit Bhandari sir (former India and Delhi pacer) and above everyone else, Gaudi bhaiyya (Gautam Gambhir)," Rana told PTI. "If my outlook towards the game has changed, a lot of it has got to do with Gaudi bhaiyya's presence in the KKR dressing room and how he changed my mindset. At the elite level, you require skills but more than skills you require the heart to handle the pressure. Gaudi bhaiyya would always tell me 'Mere ko tere pe trust hai. Tu match jeetake aayega'. (I trust you, you can win the match)," he added. Rana has played only 14 List A matches where he has taken 22 wickets at an economy rate of 5.54 with a couple of 4-wicket hauls to his name.

Tennis ball cricket, IPL: Axar Patel reveals reason behind success in T20 WC

Axar Patel talks about his success in the T20I format

Axar Patel credits IPL and tennis ball cricket for his development

Axar Patel is being seen as the next big all-rounder after Jadeja



New Delhi All-rounder Axar Patel was one of the brightest sparks for India in the T20I World Cup 2024. Axar contributed in all three departments of the game in the tournament and was India's saviour every time the team got into trouble. With the bat, Axar dug India out in the final of the tournament. With the ball, Axar derailed defending champions England in the semi-final and in the field, Axar's catch against Mitchell Marsh in Super 8s vs Australia changed the complexion of the game. With Ravindra Jadeja calling time in the T20I format, Axar is being looked at as the long-time replacement for the all-rounder. After his successful T20 World Cup campaign, Axar, in an interview, revealed how playing

tennis ball cricket and the Indian Premier League helped him handle pressure in the ICC tournament.

'Worked on expanding my hitting area'

Speaking to Cricbuzz, Axar revealed that his background in tennis ball cricket prepared him to hit shots against every kind of ball. The batter said that while he learned better technique with the seasoned ball, it was tennis ball cricket that shaped his mentality with the bat. "Playing tennis ball cricket had

an impact on my hitting ability because, in that format, you can hit almost every ball for a six or a four, especially in short 10-12 over games. It also influenced my shot selection. Initially, I would predominantly hit the ball to the leg side. However, when I transitioned to season ball cricket, I realised the importance of playing with the swing and not just slogging every ball. I worked on expanding my hitting areas, focusing on playing straight and avoiding cross-batted

shots," Axar said. "Tennis ball cricket also taught me how to handle pressure. Growing up, I often found myself in pressure situations, which made me more stable and stronger mentally. I learned to stay calm and think positively, which has been invaluable in my career," he further added.

'I was nervous against Pakistan'

Axar was sent up the order against Pakistan in the terrible New York pitch in the group stages of the game. While Axar did not play a deep innings in that game, the batter said that the sudden change prepared him for facing anything in the tournament. "Against Pakistan I was sent up the order. Before the match, I was told that I may have to bat early if there are early wickets. At that time I was nervous. In the nets, I did not practise with the new ball and suddenly I was having to play in PowerPlay. My IPL experience came in handy and it made me feel positive. For Delhi Capitals, I batted a few times in the PowerPlay overs and played a few crucial knocks too," Axar said. "That helped me understand what to do in those situations. I had to be positive and not worry about who would be bowling to me. I was not trying to overthink. And I knew that I had the game to play according to the situation. I just wanted to stay in the present."

Paris Olympics: Swimmer Srihari Nataraj eyes semi-final spot after lucky break

New Delhi. Swimmer Srihari Nataraj has set his goals clear for the Paris Olympics 2024. The 23-year-old said that he has a great chance of advancing to the semi-final if he manages to go past his personal best timing of 53.77 seconds in 100m backstroke that he achieved back in 2021. Nataraj failed to attain direct qualification for the quadrennial event, starting July 26. He got through via the Universality Quota, where countries recommend their two highest-ranked swimmers for the Olympics.



"I just have a goal towards trying to get a personal best. And I think if I make a personal best, it puts me in a good spot to be in the semifinals," Nataraj told PTI. Nataraj has been in impressive form after he won 10 medals in the National Games in 2023. Since

performing as a 16-year-old since 2017, the Indian swimmer has taken rapid strides in his career. "I just needed time off to rest because my 2023 season was crazy and so hectic with so many races. I think if I didn't take any time off, my body would have broken down by now. And it could have led

to an injury or I would have lost the drive to train. My body was under so much stress. I kind of just needed a few weeks off just to let my body rest," Nataraj said.

Annoying and disappointing'

Nataraj, however, was not happy, after he could not directly qualify for the Olympics. Nevertheless, he has focused on training hard and kept his fingers crossed.

"It was annoying and disappointing that I didn't get the qualifying time because I had been training really well. But I'm not really bothered about what happened," Nataraj added. Nataraj did not have the best of outings when he took part in the Tokyo Olympics, where he finished 27th. Along with Nataraj, the other Indian swimmer in Paris is Dhinidhi Desinghu, who will take part in the women's 200m freestyle.

Manchester United sign teenage French defender Leny Yoro on five-year contract

New Delhi. Manchester United have signed 18-year-old French defender Leny Yoro from Lille on a five-year contract, the Premier League club announced on Thursday, as they bid to shore up their defence. Sources say United agreed a 62 million euro (\$67.56 million) fee for Yoro, who has played 60 games for Lille. The centre-back, who made 41 appearances last term, was named in the Ligue 1 team of the season after helping Lille finish fourth and secure a Champions League qualifying spot. Yoro has been chased by several top European clubs, with Real Madrid one of the teams linked to the player. He will be a welcome addition to a back line that has been riddled with injuries and has seen Raphael Varane depart.



"Leny is one of the most exciting young defenders in world football; he possesses every attribute needed to develop into a top-class centre-back," United sporting

director Dan Ashworth said in a statement.

"Having had such an excellent start to his career, we are excited to support him in reaching his immense potential here at Manchester United. Perfect place to reach my potential: Leny Yoro. The teenager is the Old Trafford club's second major acquisition after the Netherlands striker Joshua Zirkzee joined for 42.5 million euros on Sunday.

"Signing for a club with the stature and ambition of Manchester United so early in

18-year-old French defender Leny Yoro has joined French defender Leny Yoro on a 5-year contract at a reported deal of 62 million euro.

my career is an incredible honour," Yoro said in a statement.

"Since my first conversations with the club, they set out a clear plan for how I can develop in Manchester as part of this exciting project, and showed a lot of care for me and my family.

"I know about the history of young players at Manchester United and feel it can be the perfect place to reach my potential and achieve my ambitions, together with my new teammates," he added.

Yoro was named in Thierry Henry's provisional France squad for the Paris Olympics, but was left out of the final selection.

Manchester United sell Mason Greenwood to Olympique Marseille

New Delhi. Mason Greenwood has finally completed his permanent transfer from Premier League giants Manchester United to French Ligue 1 club Olympique Marseille for a hefty reported fee of 31.6 million euros. Greenwood, who had just completed his loan spell at La Liga side Getafe from United, will now make an attempt to revive his professional career in France, after falling out of sorts with United. The 22-year-old has penned down a five-year deal with Roberto De Zerbi's Marseille.

Greenwood's once promising career took a complete downturn after he faced alleged rape and domestic violence charges by his girlfriend Harriet Robson back in January 2022. Following the allegations and charges, United suspended Greenwood until they carried out a thorough investigation, and he was later loaned out to Getafe. United have finally decided to part ways with the forward, but not without putting a reportedly heavy sell-on clause on his contract with Marseille. With the departure of Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang coach



Roberto De Zerbi will be hugely depending on Greenwood once globally recognised attacking prowess to show up again for the French side. However, Greenwood's signing has received a mixed response from the fanbase and even other important figures in France. Really excited for this new chapter. Allez l'OM! @olympiquedemarseille Greenwood said in his Instagram post.

It will be interesting to see whether Greenwood can regain his dream form at his new club, and whether the Olympique Marseille fans approve of their new player.

Australian hockey player Matt Dawson amputates part of finger for Paris Olympics

Paris Olympics 2024: Australian hockey player Matt Dawson amputated a part of his finger to take part in the quadrennial event, starting July 26.

New Delhi Australian field hockey player Matt Dawson has demonstrated an unparalleled level of commitment to ensure his participation in the upcoming Paris Olympics 2024. The 30-year-old, who already boasts a silver medal from the Tokyo Games, recently faced a daunting decision following a severe injury. Dawson fractured the ring finger on his right hand, casting uncertainty over his ability to compete in Paris. Faced with this predicament, he was presented with two options by his medical

team. He could either allow the finger to heal naturally, a process that posed the risk of not recovering fully in time for the Games, or take the drastic measure of amputating part of the finger to guarantee his readiness. Opting for certainty, Dawson chose the latter. "I didn't have much time to make the decision. I made the decision then I called my wife, and she said, 'I don't want you to make a rash decision,'" he told Australian broadcaster Seven Network. "But I guess I had all the information I needed to make a decision for not only playing in Paris, but for life after and giving myself the best health." In a recent broadcast, the Seven Network aired compelling footage that showcased Australian hockey player Dawson donning a protective black guard over his injured finger. This visual testimony of grit has struck a chord with fans and teammates



alike. "Matt is really committed to playing in Paris. The Australian men's coach was effusive in his praise for Dawson, recognizing his courage and commitment to the game. However, the coach candidly admitted a level of uncertainty about whether he would personally be able to

demonstrate the same valor under similar circumstances. "The best way of recovering from it was to just chop the end of the finger off. So that's what he decided to do. It's not something a coach can decide for a player," coach Colin Batch said. "Full marks to Matt. Obviously he's really committed to playing in Paris. I'm not sure I would have done it, but he's done it, so great." As the Paris 2024 Olympics draw near, the Australian men's field hockey team is gearing up to aim higher and achieve their long-awaited gold medal. Fresh off their impressive performance at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics, where they clinched a silver medal after a hard-fought final against Belgium, they are setting their sights on going one better this time.



Shraddha Kapoor

Breaks Silence On Marrying Rumoured Boyfriend Rahul Mody: 'Jab Dulhan Banna Hoga...'

After from being a stellar actress, Shraddha Kapoor is also one of those actresses, who has a great sense of humour. While she continues to make great progress in various spheres, her personal life often piques interest. Having said, she recently opened up on her marriage plans, amid dating Rahul Mody. During the trailer launch event of Stree 2, Shraddha who was a complete vision to behold in a gorgeous red and golden saree, was candidly asked, when is she ready to become a dulhan. The actress then gave a witty response, "Woh Stree hai, usse jab dulhan banna hai woh banegi (She is Stree; she will become a bride whenever she feels like)."

Back in June, Shraddha made her relationship Instagram official with writer Rahul Mody. Shraddha sparked dating rumours with Rahul a few months ago. They have been spotted together on several occasions, including at a wedding this summer.

A source told Hindustan Times earlier this year that Shraddha and Rahul might be making their relationship official anytime soon. "They are not afraid to be photographed with each other, but that doesn't mean they will make their relationship official anytime soon. They are both private people, and want to keep their relationship out of the limelight. They are not afraid to be photographed with each other, but that doesn't mean they will make their relationship official anytime soon. They are both private people, and want to keep their relationship out of the limelight," the source revealed. Meanwhile, Shraddha Kapoor is now gearing up for the release of Stree 2. The actress would be seen sharing screen space with Rajkumar Rao and Pankaj Tripathi. The film is all set to hit the theatres on August 15.



Sanjeeda Shaikh

Does Gajagamini Walk In A Backless Dress, Hot Video Goes Viral

Sanjeeda Shaikh has been a popular name in the Indian television industry for long. Recently, she once again proved her mantle as an actor with her stellar performance as Waheeda in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's debut OTT series, Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar. The actress who also likes to keep her fans updated on social media has set the internet on fire with her latest video. On Thursday, Sanjeeda Shaikh took to her Instagram handle and dropped a clip, in which she can be seen sporting a shimmering blue backless dress, as she walks elegantly down the streets. Towards the end of the video, the Heeramandi actress even turns around to acknowledge the camera with a wink.

Sanjeeda's character in Heeramandi is one of the most complex, having been deceived by both her family and fate. Since the series started streaming on Netflix, the audience could not help but praise the actress's nuanced performance. In a recent podcast, Sanjeeda revealed that she had not auditioned for the role of Waheeda. In conversation with Filmgyan, Sanjeeda Shaikh said that she was aware that Sanjay Leela Bhansali was making a show called Heeramandi, and she had a meeting with him. She stated, "It was a brief meeting of 10 minutes, and sir mujhse 10-15 saal pehle mil chuke the, I thought he would not remember about the meeting, but he did, and he was like, You are looking better, looking fresher, and looking happier. And then he asked me not to tell anyone about this meeting." The actress stated that she went home hoping that she would get the role. Sanjeeda recalled, "There was no audition... Sir did not audition, he just called for a look test after 3-4 months of the meeting." She added that when she went for the look test the team started doing prosthetics because the character had a scar on her face, which made her feel like, "wow this is getting intense." She further tried different outfits, and Sanjay Leela Bhansali was taking the look test himself. He asked her to do various elements for her character. The actress stated, "I was doing everything, and suddenly he said, Ye hai meri Waheeda." Heeramandi is set in the 1940s against the backdrop of the struggle for independence. It looks at the cultural reality of a major district in pre-partition India through the eyes of courtesans and nawabs. The series stars Manisha Koirala, Sonakshi Sinha, Aditi Rao Hydari, Richa Chadha, Sanjeeda Sheikh, and Sharmin Segal. The star cast also included Fardeen Khan, Taha Shah, Shekhar Suman, and Adhyayan Suman. The series premiered on Netflix on May 1.



Heeramandi Star Taha Shah Badussha On Meeting Tom Cruise: 'It Was Incredible'



Actor Taha Shah Badussha was recently in the UK to attend the London Indian Film Festival. His excitement soared when he had the chance to meet Hollywood legend Tom Cruise. Taha shared photos of the memorable encounter on his Instagram, captioning them, "Pinch me! Just met my lifelong idol. The one and only Tom Cruise!" In an interview with Hindustan Times, Taha Shah Badussha recounted his surreal experience meeting Cruise at the festival. He described how he patiently waited until the film ended to approach Cruise who was seated at the other end of the row. Overwhelmed by the experience, he expressed, "It was so incredible how everything just worked out. I was completely in awe. And I wasn't believing that I was so blessed to be meeting 'the' Tom Cruise." During their conversation, the actor shared that they discussed movies and Tom Cruise's current projects for which he was present in London. He further highlighted that he conveyed his admiration to Cruise, acknowledging him as an inspiration.

Speaking more about Cruise, Badussha praised his illustrious career in the entertainment industry. "His career is nothing short of remarkable. He has always led the way and has been a torchbearer in the world of cinema," Badussha told the news portal. Reflecting on Cruise's films like The Rainman, Magnolia, Jerry McGuire, Top Gun and Mission Impossible, he acknowledged how they have profoundly influenced his "perspective on filmmaking and the craft of acting." "I have definitely taken inspiration from him on how to build my filmography. I would love to be as versatile and experimental yet commercial as him," he added.

Badussha also expressed his gratitude for the overwhelming appreciation he received for his portrayal as Tajdar in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's series Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar. "London has truly showered its love on me. The change is very apparent. People all over the city recognised me. It's such a blessing," he shared.

Exes Janhvi Kapoor, Ishaan Khatter Reunite 6 Years After Debut Film Dhadak, Deets Inside



Janhvi Kapoor and Ishaan Khatter who made their big Bollywood debut back in 2018, are all set to team up for the second time. Almost 6 years later, Janhvi and Ishaan are reuniting for Karan Johar's next film. Helmed by National Award-winning filmmaker Neeraj Ghaywan, the film is all set to go on floors in October 2024.

According to a report in Peepingmoon.com, the upcoming Janhvi Kapoor and Ishaan Khatter film will also star television actor Vishal Jethwa, renowned for his antagonist role in Rani Mukherji's Mardaani 2. The source close to the production house added, "It's a well-written, ensemble-cast drama that Neeraj Ghaywan has been working on for the past two years. Both Janhvi and Ishaan have enormous admiration for the director's work and quickly came aboard the film as it offers them roles that are a complete departure from what they played in Dhadak. They had been itching to collaborate once more since their first movie and are thrilled to have found the perfect reunion recipe in Neeraj's film." Neeraj is directing a new movie starring Janhvi and Ishaan, his first feature film in nine years since his critically acclaimed debut, Masaan. Since then, he has worked on various projects for streaming platforms, including Sacred Games Season 2 and Ajeeb Daastaans. This new film marks his collaboration with Karan Johar, after a previous attempt to work together on a biopic with Alia Bhatt didn't work out. This movie is Janhvi's sixth project with Dharma Productions, following films like Dhadak and Gunjan Saxena. For Ishaan, it's only his second film with the banner. Vishal Jethwa, who previously worked with Yash Raj Films on Mardaani 2 and Tiger 3, is now collaborating with Dharma Productions for the first time. Janhvi Kapoor is now awaiting the release of her highly anticipated gripping thriller Ulajh, scheduled to release in theatres on August 2. Ishaan Khatter on the other hand has two Netflix shows lined up ahead - an international series, The Perfect Couple with Nicole Kidman and Dakota Fanning; and a romantic drama series, titled Royals, with Bhumi Pednekar.