

PUBLISHED FROM Delhi, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Chandigarh, Himachal and Jammu

The Sikh Times National Daily

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Former IAS probationer Puja Khedkar moves Delhi HC

ST Correspondent

New Delhi, August 8: Former IAS probationer Puja Khedkar, who has been accused of cheating and wrongly securing OBC and disability quota benefits, on Thursday approached the Delhi High Court seeking anticipatory bail in the criminal case against her.



Subramonium Prasad on Friday. Khedkar allegedly misrepresented information in her application for the UPSC Civil Services Examination, 2022, to get reservation benefits. On August 1, a sessions court here had denied anticipatory bail to her and said there are serious allegations against her which "require a thorough investigation".

Punjab and Haryana High Court upholds Agniveer's discharge

Sanjay Kumar

Chandigarh, August 8: The Punjab and Haryana High Court has upheld decision to invalidate an Agniveer out of service within three months of the training due to a pre-existing medical condition. The Bench of Justice Sudhir Singh and Justice Karamjit Singh also dismissed the Agniveer's claim for compensation under the Agnipath scheme.

being "hypertrophic" in nature might break down during hard training and in hot and humid climate. The Bench asserted the chronological order of the facts would show that the petitioner was put through a proper procedure to assess the disability suffered by him.

Waqf Bill referred to joint parliamentary panel

Simmi Kaur Babbar

New Delhi, August 8: The Waqf (Amendment) Bill was introduced in Lok Sabha on Thursday and referred to a joint parliamentary panel after a heated debate, with the government asserting the proposed law did not intend to interfere with the functioning of mosques and the Opposition calling it targeting of Muslims and an attack on the Constitution.



Constitution," Venugopal said. He said people taught the BJP a lesson - in the Lok Sabha polls - for its divisive politics but it is continuing with the same, keeping in mind

the upcoming Assembly elections in states such as Maharashtra. "It is a direct attack on freedom of religion....Next you will go for Christians, then Jains," he said.

boards when this is not done in other religious bodies?" Yadav asked. "The truth is that the BJP has brought this Bill to appease its hardcore supporters," the Kannauj MP said, adding that it was brought with an eye on the polls.

of judicial independence and separation of powers," he said. "You are enemies of Muslims and this Bill is evidence of that," Owaisi said. Strongly defending the bill and hitting out at the Congress, Rijju said the Wakf Act of 1995 did not serve its purpose and the amendments were necessitated as the Congress could not achieve the reform it should have.

Ladakh councils have decision-making powers

New Delhi, August 8: The democratic representation and decision-making powers of the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Councils (LAHDCs) have been retained following the formation of the Union Territory of Ladakh in 2019, the government informed Parliament on Thursday.

Babita Phogat asks cousin Vinesh to reconsider retirement decision

Navdeep Singh Sahni

New Delhi, August 8: Commonwealth Games gold medallist grappler Babita Phogat on Thursday urged her cousin



Vinesh to reconsider her decision to retire from wrestling following her disqualification from the 50kg category competition ahead of the gold medal bout at the Paris Olympics. Competing in her third Olympics, Vinesh was found to be 100 grams overweight during the weigh-in ahead of her summit clash against USA's Sarah Ann Hildebrandt, following which she was disqualified and became ineligible for a medal.

have the strength to continue anymore. "In 2012, even I was not able to play the Asian Championship because I was overweight by 200 grams. There are several other instances where wrestlers have

country was saddened by Vinesh's call to bid adieu to wrestling and hoped that she would reconsider her decision and train for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

and work hard to win a gold medal in 2028 and fulfil the dream of her mother and my father. Dad (Mahavir Phogat) has also said that once she come home, he will try to convince her to reconsider the decision and get back on the mat," added Babita. During the wrestlers' protest at Jantar Mantar last year, Vinesh had accused Babita, a BJP leader, of weakening the agitation against then Wrestling Federation of India chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh.

Muhammad Yunus takes oath as head of Bangladesh's interim government

Tejinder Kaur Babbar

Dhaka, August 8: Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus on Thursday took oath as the head of an interim government, replacing Sheikh Hasina who abruptly resigned and fled to India leaving the country in turmoil following deadly protests against her government over a controversial quota system in jobs.

Sharmeen Murshid, chairman of Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board Supradip Chakma, Prof Bidhan Ranjan Roy and former foreign secretary Touhid Hossain are among the advisory council members. Leaders of political parties were present at the ceremony.



ties, judges, representatives of various organizations, chiefs of the three services, inspector general of police, senior military and civil officers, diplomats, freedom fighters, senior journalists and other dig-

nities were present at the ceremony. Roy, Chakma and Bir Pratik Faruk-e-Azam could not take the oath as they were outside Dhaka. The interim government will lead the country for a certain period and oversee the election to transition power to an elected government. Ahead of taking the oath, Yunus promised to deliver a government which assures safety to its citizens and urged them to assist him in rebuilding the protest-torn country, as he described the ouster of Hasina as the country's "second independence".

expressed gratitude to the youth who made the protest movement against Hasina successful and said he would like to stress first to "save the country from violence so that we can move forward on the path that the students have shown us." He urged people from all walks of life to listen to him and said he agreed to take charge of the interim administration responding to the call of the students and youths.

Parties demand immediate Assembly polls in J-K during meeting with Election Commission in Srinagar

Naresh Malhotra

Srinagar, August 8: Immediate Assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir was the dominant demand of all political leaders from the Union Territory who met the visiting Election Commission (EC) team here on Thursday. The team led by Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar arrived here in the morning and met with representatives of registered political parties, including the National Conference (NC), the People's Democratic Party (PDP), the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the Congress and the Jammu and Kashmir Panthers Party (JKPP), at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC). The EC delegation also comprising election commissioners Gyanesh Kumar and S S Sandhu was here on a three-day visit to review the preparedness for Assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir and take feedback from political parties.

the Union Territory (UT). Ladakh councils have decision-making powers: Govt on demand to include UT under 6th Schedule' They also demanded that a level-playing field in the polls should be ensured for restoration of democracy in Jammu and Kashmir. The Supreme Court has directed the central government to conclude the process of conducting the elections by September 30. The polls' schedule is yet to be announced by the EC. The BJP's Jammu and Kashmir unit batted for immediate Assembly elections. Its spokesperson R S Pathania said, "We told the EC that we want elections to be conducted as soon as possible." The party wants the elections to be held within the Supreme Court's deadline, he said. NC Kashmir provincial president Nasir Aslam Wani, who led a five-member party delegation, said the NC demanded immediate Assembly elections. "Our only demand is

that the people of J-K now want to have their own government. We told the EC that you



came here many times and we met you but now there should be some definite decision on it," he told reporters. "We said there has been no government in J-K since 2018 and the assembly elections have not taken place

for the last 10 years," Wani said and added that the NC told the EC that a Lieutenant Governor, his lone advisor and a few bureaucrats cannot run the UT. Political, developmental and security issues can be addressed when the people have their own representatives, he said and added that "they (the EC) have assured us that elections will take place this time". Congress leader G N Monga said democracy should flourish in Jammu and Kashmir. "We call ourselves the mother of democracy but the people of J-K are without elections since last many years. Democracy should flourish here and elections should be held sooner," he told reporters. Monga said the party delegation also discussed the security scenario in J-K with the EC. "We told them that there is a discrimination between parties on providing them security, so, we appealed that every party should

be weighed in the same scale," he added. PDP leader Khurshid Alam, who was part of the party's delegation that met the EC, said people of J-K should have the right to elect their own government. "What justification is there not to hold polls when the government says the situation has improved and is better, when one crore tourists came here, and when the parliamentary polls and (Amarnath) yatra took place without any incident," he asked. He said the need of the hour is to restore democracy in J-K. "The county believes in democracy, so we should have elections immediately," the PDP leader said and added that there was a very positive response from the EC. NC leader Wani said the party also demanded a level-playing field in terms of providing a secure environment for the polls. "We do not have personal differences with the L-G, but he is basically a political appointee and we have apprehensions that his decisions may be biased. So, we requested them (the EC) that the government be sanitised to provide a level-playing field without any bias."

News box

Lawyer arrested for inciting woman for self-immolation bid in Lucknow

Lucknow. A day after a 30-year-old woman suffered severe burn injuries following a self-immolation bid near Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's residence in the Vikramaditya Marg area in Lucknow, claiming torture by her husband and in-laws, police arrested her lawyer on Wednesday for allegedly inciting her for the act. The husband of the woman and his brother have already been arrested.

According to a press statement issued by the Lucknow Police, Sunil Kumar, the woman's lawyer, was arrested for allegedly inciting her for the act. Police have alleged that Kumar incited the woman with an intention of "maligning the image of police and the government".

An FIR has been lodged against Kumar at the Gautam Palli police station. Deputy Commissioner of Police (Lucknow Central) Raveena Tyagi on Tuesday said Anjali Jatav, the mother of a one-year-old boy from Unnao district, had accused her husband and in-laws of subjecting her to physical as well as mental harassment.

The woman attempted to immolate herself by pouring a flammable liquid on her body near Vikramaditya Marg within the Gautam Palli police station limits. Police personnel extinguished the flames and got her admitted to the Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee (Civil) Hospital, where doctors confirmed that she had suffered 90-per cent burns.

Unnao district authorities said in a statement on Tuesday that instructions were issued to initiate action in the case, leading to the arrest of Jatav's husband and his brother on charges of harassment.

For less than 40% disability, govt plans white UDID card

PUNE. The ministry of social justice and empowerment has, as part of draft amendments to the Rules of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act, 2016, proposed issuing white unique disability ID (UDID) cards to those with less than 40% disability.

This comes in the wake of probationary IAS officer Puja Khedkar getting three disability certificates from two hospitals in Ahmednagar and Pune districts after changing her name and surname and with different residential addresses.

On July 29, the ministry published these draft changes, introducing a new colour-coded system for UDID cards. White cards would be issued to those with disability levels below 40%, yellow cards for 40-80% disability, and blue cards for more than 80% disability.

'Entire system faces revamp after Khedkar case'

The draft amendments have also proposed extending the timeframe for issuing disability certificates and UDID cards to three months instead of one month. This extended timeline aims to allow medical authorities more time for a thorough assessment.

Ministry officials told TOI on Tuesday that they are plugging loopholes in the system. "The draft rules and a standard operating procedure have been in place and can be seen on our website. After the Khedkar case, we are taking caution and the entire system is being revamped. The Centre has sought suggestions on the draft rules before the end of this month, after which they will be implemented," an official said.

BJP has created quota row: Patole

Mumbai. MPCC president Nana Patole on Tuesday blamed the BJP, particularly Devendra Fadnavis, for the row over reservations, and said it was high time PM Narendra Modi stepped in to resolve the dispute. "BJP has created the problem of reservation. In 2014, it was Fadnavis who had assured to provide quota to Marathas, Dhanagars, and tribals. Surprisingly, in the last 10 years, BJP and Modi have failed to resolve the dispute," said Patole. — Prafulla Marpakwar

Maharashtra deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis downplays BJP chief post buzz, says it's just media hype. Devendra Fadnavis dismissed media reports suggesting he was being considered for the BJP president's role, terming them as mere media speculation. Amid this, he mentioned that a government resolution on electricity bill waivers for farmers had been issued and would continue for five years. This came amid prior allegations involving Shiv Sena (UBT) leaders. Quota row: Supreme Court bats for the deprived among unequals. The Supreme Court ruled that children of Scheduled Caste (SC) parents who have reached high social positions cannot claim reservations like those studying in rural schools. Justice Gavai urged states to exclude the 'creamy layer' among SCs and STs from reservation benefits. The decision aims to ensure genuine equality in accessing affirmative action. Param Bir targeted me at Fadnavis' behest, says Anil Deshmukh; BJP denies. Anil Deshmukh, former Maharashtra home minister, claimed that Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis shielded ex-Mumbai police chief Param Bir Singh from arrest by urging him to make accusations against Deshmukh to destabilize the MVA government.

Wayanad landslides: Crowdfunding feast in Tamil Nadu to raise funds for victims

A crowdfunding feast was held in Tamil Nadu's Dindigul to raise funds for the victims of Wayanad landslides, which have claimed over 400 lives so far. People donated money either by keeping it in a cash box or under a banana leaf after having their food.

Dindigul. Thousands of people participated in a 'moi virundhu' ceremony (crowdfunding feast) in Tamil Nadu's Dindigul to donate funds for the rehabilitation of victims affected due to massive landslides in Wayanad in Kerala.

'Moi virundhu' is a traditional event done by inviting people to participate in a feast and people are free to contribute any amount of money for any purpose. People donated money either by keeping it in a cash box or under a banana leaf after having their food.

One of the participants, Rasathi, said 'Moi Virundhu' was conducted by villagers to help a family in financial distress.

"The event is held in such a way that nobody would be compelled to contribute and one can anonymously provide whatever they can. For this purpose, the food is served on a banana leaf and the contribution will be left underneath it," Rasathi said.

Another participant, Nazriya, said he and his seven-year-old son saved Rs 700, which they

had contributed to the cause. Mujib, who runs an eatery and had organised the event, said he was overwhelmed by the healthy participation of people.

"We could have collected the money and provided it to the Chief Minister. But, we realised many people wished to participate but could contribute very little money considering their situation. So we decided to go the traditional way as we wanted to include them as well and the response was overwhelming," Mujib said.

A hundi (cash box) was installed for people who could even contribute Rs 5 or Rs 10. A cheque of Rs 10,000 was found under the banana leaf after the crowdfunding feast.



On July 30, torrential rainfall triggered landslides in Mundakkai and Chooralmala areas of Wayanad, flattening houses and trapping people under the debris. So far, 417 people have died in the disaster.

Rescue operations were underway with hundreds of personnel searching for collapsed and damaged houses in a bid to find survivors. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to visit Wayanad on Saturday (August 10). PM Modi's upcoming visit to Wayanad came after several Opposition MPs, including Congress leader and Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, urged the Centre to declare the Wayanad landslides' a "national disaster".

Declaring Wayanad landslides a national disaster will ensure the release of additional funds for relief and rehabilitation, among others.

Gujarat: Babus who got jobs under disability quota to take fresh medical exam

GANDHINAGAR. At least four IAS officers of Gujarat will have to get their disability certificates re-checked after Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) directed all officers of the All India Services (AIS) who provided disability certificates for jobs, to get a medical re-examination done, sources here said. UPSC initiated this exercise in the wake of the controversy triggered by Maharashtra cadre IAS officer Puja Khedkar, who was sacked after being charged with providing fake disability certificates and other irregularities.

"All IAS, IPS and IFS officers in the state who have submitted disability certificates will be required to get a re-examination done at the Civil Hospital in Ahmedabad. They will be required to send reports of



the re-examination of their 'disability' to UPSC," top govt sources said.

Following the Khedkar incident, four IAS officers in Gujarat had come under the scanner after the state govt's general administration department (GAD) found that their disability certificates needed closer scrutiny. had reported this in its

edition dated July 20.

Sources said there is no immediate information on how many more officers posted in the state have got into the services by providing disability certificates.

One of the four IAS officers whose disability certificates are being checked is a senior officer and three others are junior-level officers, sources said. While the senior officer had cited 'visual impairment' as a disability, the three junior officers had cited 'locomotive disability' reasons in their disability certificates.

Following the Khedkar episode, clamour is growing in the state bureaucracy on the need for GAD to monitor disability and caste certificates of all state govt employees.

Congress leaders continue to contribute to CMDRF in Kerala

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. Close on the heels of UDF MLAs donating their one month's salary to the Chief Minister's Distress Relief Fund (CMDRF), Opposition Leader V D Satheesan has contributed Rs 1 lakh. Congress state president K Sudhakaran, who had courted controversy over his comments on the CMDRF, is exploring the possibility of allocating money from his MPLADS fund.

A decision has to come from the part of the Congress which Sudhakaran is awaiting. CWC leader A K Antony has also urged everyone to contribute to the CMDRF.

Following the twin landslides in Wayanad on July 29, the Congress leadership had been facing a major controversy on donating funds to the CMDRF. CWC leader Ramesh Chennithala was the first senior leader to contribute his one

month's MLA salary of ₹50,000 to the CMDRF. He also urged everyone to contribute to the CMDRF so as to rebuild Wayanad. Sudhakaran had blamed Chennithala for his action which saw Satheesan endorsing him.

The Congress state president had urged leaders to donate funds to the Congress party so that it directly reaches the survivors of Wayanad landslides. Sudhakaran, who does not see eye to eye with Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, has always been putting up a resistance against him and the CPM.

So, it was not at all surprising when he came up against Pinarayi in a Facebook post on Tuesday saying whatever funds reaching the CMDRF should be clear and transparent.

On Wednesday, a top Congress leader told TNIE that Sudhakaran was awaiting a

political decision to come from the AICC. "A master plan on Rahul Gandhi's promise of providing 100 homes to the Wayanad landslide victims is in its final shape. MPLADS funds would be utilised for this mega project. A collective decision has to come towards this which would be announced in the coming days," the leader said.

Earlier on Wednesday, Antony contributed Rs 50,000 towards CMDRF in the presence of Satheesan and other leaders at his official residence.

He was speaking after launching the Thalekunnil Basheer Memorial Building construction fund-raising programme to which he contributed Rs 1,000 to Satheesan. Meanwhile, Governor Arif Mohammed Khan contributed Rs 5 lakh to the CMDRF on Wednesday.

ATS busts mephedrone lab in Bhiwandi

Ahmedabad. The Gujarat anti-terrorist squad (ATS) conducted a raid on a flat in Bhiwandi, Maharashtra, on Tuesday, uncovering a clandestine mephedrone manufacturing operation, and seized 793.23kg of liquid mephedrone (MD).

On July 18, the Gujarat ATS had busted a similar facility at Kareli village in the Palsana taluka of Surat district. It resulted in the confiscation of 4kg of mephedrone and 31.409 kg of liquid mephedrone, with an estimated market value of approximately Rs 51.409 crore.

After the raid on Tuesday, two fugitive suspects, Yunus Shaikh and his brother Mohammad Adil Shaikh, were apprehended. According to sources, an ATS officer had received a confidential tip-off that Yunus and Adil were running a mephedrone (MD) manufacturing and distribution operation from a flat in the Nadi Naka area of Bhiwandi in Maharashtra.

Senior ATS officers meticulously verified this

input through multiple sources. After confirmation, a specialized team from the Gujarat ATS raided the flat on Aug 5, where they found an active mephedrone (MD) manufacturing operation in progress. The raid yielded a seizure of 10,969 kg of semi-liquid mephedrone (MD) and 782.26kg of liquid mephedrone (MD), stored in barrels. The seized contraband's value in the international market is estimated at about Rs 800 crore. The ATS team also seized the manufacturing equipment including grinders, motors, glass flasks and heaters. Both Yunus, 41, and Adil, 34, residents of Sukena Manzil near Chinch Bunder post office in Dongri, Mumbai, have been arrested in the case, ATS officials confirmed. Subsequent interrogation revealed that Yunus was involved in smuggling gold and electronic items from Dubai. It was during one of his trips to Dubai that Yunus forged an alliance with an unknown individual. In collaboration with Adil, they decided to

make money by illegally manufacturing and distributing mephedrone.

They leased a flat in a secluded place in Nadi Naka nine months ago, collected the necessary raw materials and equipment and began manufacturing mephedrone. Sources said that an individual named Sadiq, who was their accomplice, is on the run. Further investigation is underway to find out to which places the illegally manufactured mephedrone was sent, who received it and who are the others involved in the racket.

Why Bangladesh is banking on Yunus Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, renowned for popularizing microcredit in Bangladesh through Grameen Bank, has faced challenges with Sheikh Hasina's government. Although he significantly impacted the country's development and global recognition, his alleged political intentions and related controversies led to his removal from Grameen Bank and various legal issues.

Anna Canteens in Vijayawada ready to open

VIJAYAWADA. The renovation of Anna Canteens in Vijayawada, overseen by the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC), is completed. The government is planning to inaugurate 100 Anna Canteens across the State on August 15, with nearly Rs 80 lakh allocated for renovating 11 canteens in Vijayawada.

These canteens had ceased operations during the previous YSRC government, and their buildings were repurposed. With the TDP-led NDA government back in power, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has approved the revival of Anna Canteens statewide. Consequently, renovation efforts commenced.

The State government has also earmarked funds for constructing new Anna Canteens to provide affordable meals. The budgets are as follows: Rs 8.00 lakh each for canteens at

APSRM School, Ranigari Thota (Cement Godown), Sai Baba Temple near Netaji Bridge, and Patamata High School. Similarly, Rs 7.00 lakh each for canteens at Dhama Chowk, Bavaji Pet (Gulabi Thota) near AS Raju Bridge, Singh Nagar, and Budameru Vagu, Ayodhya Nagar. Additionally, Rs 6.75 lakh for the canteen at RTC Workshop Road, Vidyadharapuram, and Rs 6.50 lakh each for canteens at Gandhi Mahila Kalasala and Housing Board Colony.

Speaking to TNIE, VMC Commissioner H M Dhyanchandra stated, "The revival of Anna



Canteens is a significant step towards providing affordable meals to the public. We

are working diligently to ensure these canteens are ready for the inauguration and can serve the community effectively."

He added that the 11 Anna Canteens within VMC limits are ready to start.

The renovations, including food counters, supply counters, and washrooms for males and females, are 100 per cent complete. The outer and inner designs have also been finished.

Dhyanchandra mentioned that he has inspected the sites twice and will visit once more on Thursday to check for any additional work needed.

THE SIKH TIMES

Edited, Printed, Published
Owned by Simmi Babbar
N - 31, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar
Delhi-110009
Printed at Qaumi Patrika Printing
Press, A-4/A-144, Tronica City
(Loni), Ghaziabad (Uttar Pradesh)
Corporate Office:
5, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg,
Press Area, ITO, New Delhi
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RNI No. DELENG/2008/25465

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NEWS BOX

US auto workers union chief calls Trump 'sellout' over ties with Elon Musk

Detroit. United Auto Workers President Shawn Fain on Wednesday criticized Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump's ties to billionaire Elon Musk while campaigning for Democratic Vice President Kamala Harris. Musk endorsed Trump for November's election after the former president survived an assassination attempt in July. Later that month, the Wall Street Journal reported Musk planned to commit around \$45 million a month to a new pro-Trump super political-action committee. However, after that report's publication, both Musk and Trump said the Tesla CEO never pledged any such donation. For months, Donald Trump has gone around trashing our state, trashing our industry, trashing the American autoworker, saying he was against electric vehicles. And then something happened," Fain said on Wednesday while campaigning for Harris.

We saw Elon Musk announce he was going to give Donald Trump \$45 million dollars a month. And all of a sudden, guess what, Trump changed his tune," Fain added, calling Trump a "sellout." Trump has opposed any electric car mandate and been critical of EV policies under Democratic President Joe Biden but he has said recently he supports electric vehicles. "I'm for electric cars. I have to be, because Elon endorsed me very strongly. So I have no choice," Trump said at a weekend rally, but added he supports electric vehicles "for a small slice." He went on to add: "You want to have gas-propelled cars, you want to have hybrids, you want to have every kind of a car imaginable." UAW has endorsed Harris, who became the Democratic presidential candidate recently after Biden stepped aside as candidate.

UK Muslim ice cream vendor's sweet gesture, gives out free cones to riot police

London. A British Muslim social media star who travels around the country in his ice cream van has thanked police officers trying to control racist and anti-immigration riots by handing out free cones. Mr Tee, King of Desserts, posted a TikTok video taken in the English city of Sunderland that amassed over 2.6 million views, in which he offered a police van full of officers ice creams, with the theme tune to 1980s hit TV show 'The A-Team' blaring. "We just thought we'd show them a little bit of love," Mr Tee, whose real name is Ashiq, told Reuters. The two-minute clip - in which one policeman asked for a special birthday ice cream for a colleague - struck a chord with the British public, the vast majority of whom think the riots are unjustified, according to a recent YouGov poll.

"This is brilliant - remember under the uniforms there is a dad, husband, uncle brother, human," said commenter sayithowitis1970. Riots have erupted at anti-immigration protests in towns and cities across the UK in the last week, with attacks by far-right groups on hotels housing asylum seekers and on mosques. Mr Tee said most of the praise for his video came from non-Muslims who value their community. "It's just a very small minority that are unfortunately (not) feeling in this way," Mr Tee said. Based in the northern Welsh town of Wrexham, Mr Tee said he would take a week off to let the tensions around the country die down. "Some people are scared to leave the house, ladies especially, they don't want to be seen walking about with their hijabs," he said. But Mr Tee pointed to the reaction to his video as a reason for hope.

"It just showed the genuine true colours of the UK and the people that live here, and obviously the welcoming side of the people here," he said.

France seeks FBI's help in probe of train sabotage before Paris Olympics: Report

Paris Police in France investigating the sabotage of high-speed rail lines hours before the Paris Olympics's opening ceremony have asked the US's FBI for help, two sources with direct knowledge of the French inquiry said. Investigators called in the FBI after media organisations, including Reuters, received an email the police believe may have been sent by the perpetrators. It set out a rambling list of grievances but did not explicitly claim responsibility.

The email, signed by "an unexpected delegation", was sent from a riseup.net address, a Seattle-based collective that says it provides "communication and computer resources to allies engaged in struggles against capitalism and other forms of oppression". The saboteurs targeted four high-speed TGV lines heading into Paris with incendiary devices, causing travel chaos hours before a global audience tuned in to follow the parade of Olympic athletes along the River Seine on July 26.

There have been no arrests. French officials suspect domestic far-left groups, but have not ruled out foreign involvement. As riseup.net is US-based, French police have asked the FBI to push that organisation to identify the email account-holder, the two sources told Reuters. The FBI declined to comment. Riseup did not respond to an emailed request for comment. The FBI would need to subpoena Riseup to hand over the details, but Riseup would be unlikely to comply. We will actively fight any attempt to subpoena or otherwise acquire any user information," it says on its website. "We do not share any of our user data with anyone." In a 2020 interview with Belarusian anarchist group Pramen, Riseup said it had never complied with a foreign legal request. "We regularly get legal requests from all around the world. We are not required to respond, and so our policy is to not." However, the FBI has previously served warrants on Riseup.

In 2012, FBI agents seized a server used by Riseup as part of a probe into bomb threats. In 2017, Riseup begrudgingly complied with two FBI warrants seeking the identity of accounts involved in extortion. The author of the email railed against France's arms, energy and nuclear sectors, and criticised a TGV network as only benefiting "a few privileged people". They said the impact of the attacks - "spoiling tourists' trips or disrupting holiday departures" - was minimal when compared with the legacy.

Kamala Harris shuts down Gaza protesters: If you want Trump to win, say that

Pro-Palestinian protesters chant 'genocide' slogans at Kamala Harris's rally
 - Kamala Harris gives blunt warning to protesters for repeatedly interrupting her
 - Gaza war launched by Israel last October claims nearly 40,000 lives so far



World US Vice President Kamala Harris, the Democratic presidential nominee, on Wednesday (local time) criticised a group of people who interrupted her while they were protesting against the war in Gaza. Harris, visibly irritated, fired back at the protesters, saying they should either say they wanted former President Donald Trump to win or listen to her speaking. While addressing a rally in Romulus in

Michigan, protesters repeatedly chanted "genocide" slogans at the Vice President as a mark of protest against Israel's war on Gaza, now into its tenth month. The Hill reported. "Kamala, Kamala you can't hide, we won't vote for genocide," the protesters said and booed at her. Reacting to the protesters' interruption, she said, "I'm here because we believe in democracy. Everyone's voice matters,

but I am speaking now. I am speaking now," Harris said amid cheers from her supporters. As Gaza protesters continued to interrupt her speech, Harris took aim at them. "You know what, if you want Donald Trump to win, then say that. Otherwise, I'm speaking," she said, drawing cheers from the crowd. The protesters were escorted out of Harris's rally as they continued protesting and

raising slogans. The Gaza war is a major issue in Michigan, a battleground state which has a high Arab-American population. Harris, as a member of President Joe Biden's administration, has come under fire for not doing enough to help civilians in the war-ravaged coastal enclave. A section of Democrats have expressed concerns that the Biden administration's handling of the Gaza war could cost them votes in the November 5 election, The Hill reported. Michigan, which has 15 electoral votes, was carried by Biden in the 2020 election. Like Biden, Harris has vowed ironclad support for Israel but has also stressed that it also mattered how the Jewish nation carried out its military response against Hamas. She also raised the high civilian casualties, calling it "devastating" and said she could be silent on seeing the sufferings of the people there. Nearly 40,000 people have died since Israel launched a full-fledged attack against Hamas in Gaza after the Palestinian outfit attacked the Jewish nation and took some 250 hostages on October 7 last year, which triggered.

Indian-American Congressman condemns Bangladesh violence, targeting of Hindus

Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi and Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries condemned recent violence in Bangladesh, urging the interim government led by Muhammad Yunus to end unrest and ensure justice.

"As Bangladesh prepares to swear in its interim government, I urge all government officials, the new administration and police chief, and the people of Bangladesh to do all they can to end the violence that has emerged across the country, including



the brutal targeting of the country's Hindu minority, their homes, businesses, and their temples," Krishnamoorthi said in a statement on Wednesday. He said the violence must stop and those responsible must be

brought to justice to help the people of Bangladesh move forward as a nation. He added that he will continue to closely monitor developments in Bangladesh in coordination with the US State Department. Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries said that he is deeply concerned and saddened by the violence, casualties and human rights abuses in Bangladesh over the past weeks. Jeffries noted that Bangladesh's new leadership must bring with them respect for democratic principles and the rule of law and a commitment to investigating the attacks, calling for accountability for those responsible and demanding justice for the victims.

"Under the leadership of the Biden-Harris administration, the United States will continue to closely monitor the situation unfolding and we encourage all parties to refrain from further violence," he said.

Hezbollah has fired over 7,500 rockets at Israel since beginning of Gaza war

World Israel is battling on two fronts now. While it has launched a counter-operation against Hamas in Gaza, the Israeli forces are facing another challenge in the north from Lebanon's Hezbollah group. According to data from security forces of Israel, between October 9, 2023 and August 6, the Iranian terror army proxy of Hezbollah has launched over 7,500 rockets toward Israel, out of which 6,500 landed on Israeli territory. This shows that 1,000 rockets either misfired or landed back in Lebanon and Syria. "That is a crime against humanity and another reason why Hezbollah needs to be kicked out of Lebanon, to protect the Lebanese people, never mind Israel. They are a menace to Lebanon", Israeli government spokesperson David Mencer said on Wednesday. Since the beginning of the war, Hezbollah has also launched 187 drones into Israel. Over 43 people, including 23 civilians (including an Indian national) and 19 members of Israel's security forces have been killed due to the attacks by Hezbollah since the beginning of the war. The civilian casualties includes eight children aged between seven and 13 years and four children aged between 14 and 18 years,

Deforestation in Brazil's Amazon rainforest dips to lowest level in 8 years

Brasília. Deforestation in Brazil's Amazon rainforest slowed by nearly half compared to the year before, according to government satellite data released Wednesday. It's the largest reduction since 2016, when officials began using the current method of measurement. In the past 12 months, the Amazon rainforest lost 4,300 square kilometers (1,700 square miles) of land, roughly the size of Rhode Island. That is a nearly 46% decrease compared to the previous period. Brazil's deforestation surveillance year runs from August 1 to July 30. The figures are preliminary and come from the Deter satellite system, managed by the United States and used by environmental law enforcement agencies to detect real-time deforestation. The most accurate deforestation calculations are usually released in November. Amazon deforestation has steeply declined

since the end of far-right President Jair Bolsonaro's rule, in 2022. Under his



government, forest loss reached a 15-year high. Still, much remains to be done to end the destruction. President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva pledged "deforestation zero" by 2030. His current term ends in January 2027. About two-thirds of the Amazon lies within Brazil. It remains the world's largest rainforest, covering an area twice the size of India. The

Amazon absorbs large amounts of carbon dioxide, keeping the climate from warming even faster than it would otherwise. It also holds about 20% of the world's fresh water and biodiversity that scientists have not come close to understanding yet, including at least 16,000 tree species.

At the same time, deforestation in Brazil's vast savannah, known as the Cerrado, increased by 9%. The native vegetation loss reached 7,015 square kilometers (2,708 square miles) - an area 63% larger than the destruction in the Amazon. The Cerrado is the world's most biodiverse savannah, but less of it enjoys protected status than the rainforest to its north. Brazil's boom in soybeans, the country's second-largest export, have largely come from privately-owned areas in the Cerrado.



Israel said in a statement. A total of 258 people have been wounded in the attack by Hezbollah, including 119 civilians and 139 security forces, it said. A total of 62,224 people, including 15,728 minors, have been displaced internally since the beginning of the war, Israel said.

"Think of the disruption to their education," Mencer said. A total of 98 villages, cities and towns in the northern part of Israel and the Gaza area have been evacuated since the beginning of the war and the total number of evacuees is over 1.40 lakh Israelis, of which 80,000 are of working age. Israel further said that over 1.38 lakh acres of land were burnt due to fire caused by the rocket strikes since the onset of the war.

Israel not invited: US envoy to Japan to skip Nagasaki atomic bomb memorial

Tokyo. U.S. Ambassador to Japan Rahm Emanuel will skip this year's atomic bombing memorial service in Nagasaki because Israel was not invited, the embassy said Wednesday. Emanuel will not attend the event on Friday because it was "politicised" by Nagasaki's decision not to invite Israel, the embassy said. He will instead honour the victims of the Nagasaki atomic bombing at a ceremony at a Buddhist temple in Tokyo, it said. An atomic bomb dropped by the United States on Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945, destroyed the city, killing 140,000 people. A second bomb dropped three days later on Nagasaki killed 70,000 more. Japan surrendered on Aug. 15, 1945, ending World War II and the country's nearly half-century of aggression in Asia.

Nagasaki Mayor Shiro Suzuki had indicated his reluctance in June to invite Israel, noting the escalating conflict in the Middle East. He announced last week that Israel was not invited because of concern over "possible unforeseen situations" such as protests, sabotage or attacks on attendants. Nagasaki hoped to honour the atomic bomb victims "in a peaceful and solemn atmosphere," he



said. Suzuki said he made the decision based on "various developments in the international community in response to the ongoing situation in the Middle East" that suggested a possible risk that the

ceremony would be disturbed. In contrast, Hiroshima invited the Israeli ambassador to Japan to its memorial ceremony on Tuesday among 50,000 attendees who included Emanuel and

other envoys, though Palestinian representatives were not invited. Nagasaki officials said they were told that an official of the U.S. Consulate in Fukuoka will represent the United States at Friday's ceremony. Five other Group of Seven nations - Canada, France, Germany, Italy and the U.K. - and the European Union are also expected to send lower-ranking envoys to Nagasaki.

Envoys from those nations signed a joint letter expressing their shared concern about Israel's exclusion, saying treating the country on the same level as Russia and Belarus - the only other countries not invited - would be misleading. The envoys urged Nagasaki to reverse the decision and invite Israel to preserve the universal message of the city's ceremony. The exclusion of Israel would make their "high-level participation" difficult, they said. British Ambassador to Japan Julia Longbottom, who attended the 79th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima on Tuesday, told Japanese media that she planned to skip the Nagasaki ceremony because the city's decision to exclude Israel could send a wrong message.

News box

History-sheeter attacks YouTuber over video

Hyderabad. A YouTube news channel operator was allegedly attacked by a history-sheeter, Sohail, at Vattapally on Tuesday night. The YouTuber, Mubeen Mirza, suffered severe injuries on his face and head and is now undergoing treatment at a hospital. He is out of danger now. Mailardevpally police suspect Sohail resorted to the attack as Mirza may have telecast news against him.

On Tuesday night, Mubeen, 35, was at his office, when the accused, who was already waiting there, attacked him with a sharp object, causing him to collapse with bleeding injuries. One of Mubeen's friends rushed him to a nearby hospital, and later he was shifted to Osmania Hospital for better treatment.

A prima facie probe revealed that Mirza had telecast a news item on his channel, claiming Sohail was involved in illegal activities. Sohail had initially warned Mirza of dire consequences if he did not pull down the link from the channel and then resorted to the attack.

History-sheeter, brother-in-law killed in Baghpat; 1 held Baghpat police apprehended 26-year-old Harendra Singh for his role in the murders of Kuldeep Kumar, a history-sheeter, and his brother-in-law Kavindra Kumar. Singh confessed, revealing the prime suspect targeted Kuldeep out of resentment. The victims were lured to a secluded field and killed. Police are investigating further to catch the main suspect and others involved.

Watch video: Uber driver in New York claims racist attack as passenger pepper sprays him because he's brown. A woman allegedly pepper-sprayed her Uber driver in Midtown Manhattan due to his skin color. A video shows Shohel Mahmud being attacked by his passenger, Jennifer Guilbeault, without provocation. Guilbeault's friend tried to stop her. Mahmud called 911, and Guilbeault was apprehended. Mahmud considers the incident a hate crime, though police are not investigating it as such.

Mali breaks diplomatic ties with Ukraine, alleges involvement in attack by armed groups. The Malian government announced severing diplomatic ties with Ukraine following claims of Ukraine's involvement in a deadly attack on Malian soldiers and Russian mercenaries.

Cops crack whip on wrong-side driving

Hyderabad. Hyderabad traffic police have said that the number of road accidents due to wrong-side driving has come down from eight deaths to one. Till date in 2024, a person died and 128 persons suffered injuries, whereas last year eight persons had died and 150 persons suffered injuries, police said.

On Wednesday, traffic police conducted a special drive against wrong-side driving and 668 motorists, including 659 two-wheeler riders, were caught.

"This violation is punishable under Sections 119/177 & 184 of the MV Act," Hyderabad additional commissioner of police (Traffic) Viswa Prasad told.

"The Hyderabad traffic police would like to warn the wrong-doers indulging in wrong-side driving that such special drives will be continued and suitable and stringent legal action will be taken in future, including registration of FIRs under Section 125 and 281 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, which carry a punishment of imprisonment up to six months or fine of 1,000 or both," said the police official on Wednesday.

Why Zomato is betting on its dark side to drive future profits. Over the past year, Zomato's stock price increased by 160%, outperforming the Nifty Midcap 50's 50% rise. Despite strong financials and market share growth, analysts urge caution due to the company's historic losses and the asset-light nature of the business. Zomato's expansion into dark stores and non-grocery segments may impact future profitability.

BC quota in local bodies post survey of sub-castes

Hyderabad. The govt will most likely opt for gram panchayat elections based on the voters list. Once the Election Commission of India-approved voters list for the local bodies is received by the state, officials from panchayat raj and rural development department, municipalities and municipal corporations will approach voters to know the political representation of SCs, STs, BCs and other communities.

This report will be submitted to the BC Commission which will analyse and recommend reservations for BCs local body-wise and send its recommendations to the state govt. The entire process will take at least 45 days from the day officials start the door-to-door exercise.

In the door-to-door exercise, govt enumerators will list out the political representation of various sub-castes of BCs in local bodies. A final list of sub-castes of BCs who have had representation in local bodies in the past and those who did not have at all will be prepared, their educational, socio-economic conditions and along with it even the population of BCs could be enumerated as over 90 per cent of citizens in the rural areas are part of the voters list.

EV battery explodes, destroys house

Ahmedabad. A blast in an e-scooter battery left everything inside a home in ashes in the Vasna area early on Wednesday. The fire erupted while the battery was charging, requiring a swift rescue operation by the Ahmedabad Fire and Emergency Services (AFES) team to save three residents.



According to AFES officers, the incident occurred in the third-floor flat of Siddha-Shila Apartments around 4.30am. "The scooter's owner, a young man of about 20 years old, was asleep near the charging battery in the drawing room when a sudden explosion, triggered by a spark, set the house ablaze," said a resident of the apartment building, seeking anonymity.

The resident said that the man's mother and sister were sleeping in another room and were trapped by the fire and the smoke. "They were asleep in the bedroom where the window was open. This saved their lives as the air flowing in through the window, dispersed the smoke."

They then sought refuge in the balcony of the house until AFES personnel arrived and rescued them. The young man managed to escape first, said the officers. The inferno consumed various household items, including a TV, washing machine,

air conditioner and dining tables. One family member said that the explosion took place even though they had bought a new battery for the scooter on July 4. The e-scooter itself had been purchased just two years ago for Rs 75,000. This incident is not an isolated one in Ahmedabad. A showroom of e-vehicles in Asarwa caught fire on Friday. Three electric buses were charred at the Vastral depot, managed by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation, while they were being charged on June 24.

Pet dog sets house on fire after chewing cell phone battery pack: Watch In Tulsa, Oklahoma, a house fire ignited after a dog chewed on a lithium-ion battery pack from a cell phone. Video footage showed

the battery exploding, spreading flames and smoke. Thankfully, the pets escaped unharmed. The Tulsa Fire Department warned about the dangers of lithium-ion batteries, highlighting the potential risks of improper usage and storage.

Best Inverter Batteries with Advanced Durability And Longevity. The article introduced premium inverter batteries designed to address frequent power outages with enhanced durability and quick charge capabilities. It reviewed several models, highlighting their strong performance, low maintenance, and easy installation. The batteries by Livguard and LUMINOUS offered capacities ranging from 160 Ah to 200 Ah, ensuring reliable power backup for homes during outages. BTS Suga's DUI incident: Police confirm he was riding an electric scooter, not a kickboard. BTS's Suga faced police investigation for riding an electric scooter under the influence on August 6. Reports clarified he was using a scooter, not a kickboard. BIGHIT Music apologized, confirming Suga wore a helmet but had his license revoked and was fined. He is currently serving in the military, expected to complete his service by 2025.

Small buys & small towns drive fashion business

MUMBAI. India's smaller urban centres and rural regions are driving the growth of the \$130-billion lifestyle market, about 80% of which is led by the fashion segment that includes apparel, footwear and accessories. Urban regions beyond the top 50 cities and rural collectively account for about 67% or two-thirds of lifestyle consumption in the country, which is home to a large cohort of young Gen Z shoppers, according to a joint report by Bain and Myntra.

Online platforms have played their fair share in democratising access for consumers — about 50% of more than 175 million e-shoppers come from households with an annual income of less than Rs 10 lakh. Two in three of them come from beyond the top 50 cities.

"Online shopping is filling up the access gap. Consumers sitting in beyond the top 50 cities have the same exposure to brands and trends as their metro and tier one counterparts. As consumers become more comfortable, they are buying products across multiple categories and for different occasions. About 40% of our sales from international brands come from tier two plus cities," Myntra CEO Nandita Sinha told TOI.

The lifestyle market is expected to touch \$210 billion by 2028 from about \$130 billion currently. The online lifestyle segment, which is pegged at \$16-17 billion, is estimated to grow to \$40-45 billion by 2028 as the market is still underpenetrated at 13% (of the total market), leaving enough room for growth. "Because of the low penetration base that we have in e-commerce shopping for fashion, there is an opportunity for us to grow beyond the inflationary pressures that the overall market (fashion industry) is seeing," said Sinha. For Myntra, markets like Jaipur, Patna, and Guwahati are growing very well.

A large part of the growth for the lifestyle market, particularly online, going ahead will come from the Gen Z shoppers. Gen Zs are digital natives who seek fresh fashion trends, buy more frequently and comprise 60 million of the e-lifestyle shoppers. "Gen Z shoppers today account for only 25% of GMV (gross merchandise value). But as they enter the job market, their contribution will go up," said Shyam Unnikrishnan, partner at Bain.

Eating 'greens' can pep up your mood, beat depression: Study

Hyderabad. Indian cricket star Virat Kohli could have replaced his chicken tikkas with tofu to improve his cover drives, but a recent University of Hyderabad (UoH) study suggests there are more reasons to switch over to the mock meat club. Its top two factors: better brain health and lower levels of depression and anxiety. According to the findings of the UoH study—published in the European Journal of Nutrition recently—following a vegetarian diet can also enhance one's mood and promise healthy aging.

"Adopting a vegetarian diet may be a viable strategy for promoting cognitive health and emotional well-being. The consumption of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, common components of vegetarian diets, may be linked to a reduced likelihood of experiencing depression and anxiety," said Varalakshmi Manchana, who led the study conducted by a two-member team from UoH's School of Medical Sciences.

The researchers studied 304 adults—all aged above 40 and comprising a mix of vegetarians and non-vegetarians—for six months before arriving at the data.

Further, analysing the eating patterns, the study found that those subscribing to a plant-based diet have a higher intake of protein, calcium, folate, and vitamin C. Their vitamin B12 is low. On the other hand, meat-fish eaters consume more carbohydrates, sodium, riboflavin, iron, and vitamin B12. "The higher intake of protein among vegetarians suggests a potential positive impact on mental health, as adequate protein is vital for overall brain function," the findings stated. Also, when compared to non-vegetarians, the non-meat eaters often exhibit elevated levels of antioxidants in their bloodstream and experience reduced oxidative stress. This, the study found, contributed to higher "cognitive function abilities" among vegetarians.

Mapping nutritional psychiatry, the study concluded that long-term vegetarian diets can lead to a lower incidence of depression among people. "The unique cultural and regional context of this study, and its potential to unveil insights into a less-explored area, are the cornerstones of its contribution to the broader discourse on vegetarianism and cognition," said

Varalakshmi, who is currently spearheading research in nutritional and physical interventions for healthy cognitive aging. Explained: This is why vegetarian thali has become expensive than non-vegetarian thali. A recent CRISIL report revealed that vegetarian thalis in India became costlier in July, rising by 11% compared to the previous month, due to soaring vegetable prices, particularly tomatoes. In contrast, non-vegetarian thalis saw a 6% increase. The stable price of broiler chickens contributed to the slower rise in non-veg thali costs.

7 types of vegetarian diets and which is the best. The article detailed seven types of vegetarian diets, highlighting their health and nutritional benefits. Types discussed included lacto-vegetarian, ovo-vegetarian, lacto-ovo vegetarian, vegan, raw vegan, pescatarian, and flexitarian diets.

While all have their own merits, the vegan diet was identified as particularly beneficial due to its comprehensive health benefits and positive environmental impact despite needing careful nutritional planning.

Businesses heave a sigh as cur-phew gets extended

BENGALURU. Muskaan Jain was quite happy when she got the news of the Karnataka government issuing an order extending the deadline for hotels, pubs, and shops to remain open until 1am. "I finish work pretty late. My only way of unwinding is catching up with friends over a drink. Sometimes, it used to be cut short because of the previous deadline, but the 1am deadline works out better," says the 25-year-old mechanical engineer.



Shutting down pubs and restaurants early was a huge limitation on these businesses. Terence Prasad, general manager of Uru Brewpark, says the move will bring significant relief to the staff. "With the 11pm deadline, we used to get the last order at 10pm, and all the orders would come at the same time. The staff used to be under a lot of pressure, but with the 1am

deadline, orders will be spread out, and the staff will be able to relax. Revenue-wise also, it's better because people start late and would like to stay longer," says Prasad. Meanwhile, Prathik Shetty, founder of The Reservoir, says the move will not make a huge impact on the drinking crowd. "The later deadline is nice for people who want to grab dinner late. But what would have been good for bars is permission to stay

open until 2am. What I noticed is that reservations used to start from 7-8 pm, but now they start from 9-9.30 pm. This is mainly due to workload and traffic. So people only have around two hours to unwind. At least a 2am deadline should be allowed on weekends," he explains. The F&B industry is happy with the move, residents of commercial areas like Indiranagar aren't thrilled. Vishwarup Roy, a 50-year-old resident of Indiranagar, says it's a never-ending menace. "Multiple complaints have come from the residents of Defence Colony," says Roy. The rule also applies to other business establishments that come under BBMP. Husna Sait, who runs a fashion boutique on Commercial Street, says the move is not exactly beneficial for an outlet like her's.

Vizhinjam International Seaport Limited: Kerala govt to be guarantor for loan



THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. The state government will become a guarantor for the Vizhinjam International Seaport Limited (VISL) to take a loan of Rs 2,100 crore from Nabard. The cabinet on Wednesday decided to issue a nod for various norms in the loan document with amendments. The government guarantee, earlier given for taking a loan from Hudco, will be cancelled.

The government will allow VISL managing director to sign the agreement. Also, the government will pay the interest of the loan taken from Nabard.

Other decisions
 * Dr P T Baburaj has been appointed as State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities.
 * A decision was taken to extend the tenure of Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation director K J Joseph for one more year with effect from July 19.
 * The government will provide five-year guarantee for 8 crore, for the State Handloom Development Corporation to take a loan from Kerala Bank.

TN government expedites land acquisition to convert 10km of ECR into six lanes

CHENNAI. In light of the proposed 14.6km four-lane elevated corridor from Jayanthi Theatre Junction to Uthandi on East Coast Road (ECR), and the modernisation of Thiruvanniyur bus stand, the state highways department has expedited land acquisition for converting the 10.3 km stretch of ECR from Thiruvanniyur to Akkarai into six lanes.



Last week, nearly 20 buildings opposite Thiruvanniyur bus stand were demolished to facilitate the widening work. Once the six-lane work is complete, construction of the elevated corridor is likely to be taken up by next year, according to senior highways officials.

The ECR stretch from LB Road-OMR intersection to Uthandi experiences heavy traffic congestion throughout the day, mainly due to vehicles travelling between densely populated residential areas along ECR.

According to the Indian Road Congress norms and highway guidelines, an elevated corridor should be constructed if 40% of the road traffic is heading straight without deviations. "ECR now meets the criteria for an elevated corridor," an official said. The road carries about 1.2 lakh vehicles daily. Official sources also told TNIE about 85% of the land acquisition is completed for widening the 8.7km stretch passing through Kottivakkam, Palavakkam, Neelankarai, Injambakkam, and Sholinganallur. "Civil works are underway for the 8.7km stretch, which involves constructing stormwater drains, culverts, and medians. For the remaining 1.6km in Thiruvanniyur, 50% of the land acquisition work is complete, and document verification is underway for remaining buildings," said an official. The official added that the project was delayed due to issues in acquiring natham land parcels, as cases were filed

seeking increased compensation and against alienation of government land. "Additionally, the ongoing ECR widening works are synchronised with two metro water projects, including laying of pipelines for a water supply scheme and a sewerage system. Only after metro water completes the work can we commence civil works for road laying." In March, the state highways department allocated

52 lakh to conduct a techno-feasibility study for developing the 14.6km four-lane elevated corridor. "During the study, vehicle density, two-way traffic, traffic movement to linked roads from ECR, and locations for down ramps will be studied. Once the six-laning project is complete, the works may be taken up next year," added another official.

Trump, Harris poles apart on Indian govt's human rights policies

THE Indian foreign policy establishment is keenly following the twists and turns of the US presidential campaign. Despite the rise of China and, with it, the growing global importance of its top leader, it is the US President who holds, by far, the most important political office on the planet. The US President and his administration's decisions impact almost every country and issues of international significance, such as climate change. President Joe Biden had been his party's obvious candidate for this year's presidential election. There was no hint that this would change till Biden performed disastrously in the debate with his predecessor Donald Trump on June 27. Thereafter, a growing number of Democrats demanded Biden's replacement with another candidate because it became increasingly clear that he would lose the election. Yet, it took Biden more than three weeks to decide on giving up the candidacy. Finally, on July 21, he announced that he would not contest the election and endorsed Vice-President Kamala Harris as the party's candidate. The Democrats, in disarray, quickly rallied around her and the race is now between Trump and Harris. Opinion polls indicate that both are almost tied in the swing states, where this election will really be decided. Trump was generally leading Biden by substantial margins in the swing states by early summer. It was also becoming increasingly clear that the infirmities of age were telling on Biden. Hence, despite Trump's conviction in the Stormy Daniels hush money case in May, his candidature continued to remain strong. Would it then be wrong to assume that some influential voices in the Indian system, especially those with intimate professional knowledge and experience of US politics, had reached the conclusion by mid-June that it was more than likely that Trump would trump Biden in the polls. While the Ministry of External Affairs announced Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Russia on July 4, it is believed that the dates for the visit were finalised around June 21. With Biden's debacle in the debate and his disinclination to give up his candidature, the impression that Trump would be the next US President would have been only strengthened before Modi's Russia visit. India has continuously exercised its strategic autonomy and displayed this from the beginning of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. This has been evident through its increasing purchase of Russian oil. However, it is one matter to do this and quite another for Modi to visit Moscow. There would have obviously been comfort in doing so if the assessment was that Trump would be back in the White House in January next year. And, this was because it is known that his views on the Ukraine issue are, at least, till now, at great variance with Biden's. The race for the Oval Office has entirely changed with Harris as the Democratic Party's candidate. It can no longer be assumed that Trump will win the election. Hence, is Modi's proposed visit to Ukraine later this month a hedging exercise? Harris is likely to remain strong on Russia. This question also arises because of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's intemperate comments on Modi meeting Putin in Moscow. It is understood that Modi will also visit Poland along with Ukraine. Modi has been correctly insisting on the path of peace and diplomacy for a resolution of the Ukraine issue. But the conflict is hardly ready for a resolution. Though Modi's international reputation is strong, does India have the heft to play a role in matters of European security and bringing warring parties together? This crucial question has to be faced squarely. At a basic level, India can successfully deal with Trump or Harris as the next incumbent of the White House.

What led to Hasina's fall & flight

Awami League govt exacerbated the crisis by mishandling the student protest movement

REGIONAL stability in South Asia saw a marked improvement after Sheikh Hasina assumed power in Bangladesh in January 2009. Her cooperation with New Delhi in addressing insurgent and terrorist threats in India's northeastern states and the decisive action she took against Islamists in Bangladesh significantly enhanced the security situation in the region. Hasina's uninterrupted 15-year rule was largely marked by peace and tranquillity, which, in turn, spurred economic development in Bangladesh and bolstered regional cooperation. Several long-standing issues between India and Bangladesh were amicably resolved during her tenure, facilitating increased sub-regional collaboration, particularly as the regional organisation SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) remained largely ineffective. However, the dramatic collapse of law and order on August 4, which led to Hasina's ouster, can undermine these achievements and set back the progress made in both national and regional contexts. The trigger for the deterioration in the security situation was the resurfacing of student protests, resulting in around 100 deaths and injuries to hundreds. The police used tear gas and rubber bullets on protesters demanding Hasina's resignation. The government imposed an indefinite nationwide curfew and banned access to the Internet to quell the protests.



These demonstrations began in June, with student activists at Dhaka University agitating against a controversial quota system in government jobs that reserved 30 per cent of the positions for the family members of war veterans who had participated in the 1971 Liberation War. The protesters argued that the system was discriminatory and favoured Hasina's Awami League party; they demanded a merit-based system instead. The quota system, established in 1972, was briefly abolished in 2018 but later reinstated. It was abolished once again after nearly 200 students were killed by the security forces in July. The protests paused for a while after the Supreme Court scrapped/slashed quotas but resumed over the demand for justice for those killed. The stir evolved from being focused on the quota issue to a broader anti-government movement that witnessed the participation of people from diverse sections of society, including

celebrities and garment manufacturers. Support for the protests also grew among former military figures, including ex-army chief Gen Iqbal Karim Bhuiyan, who turned his Facebook profile picture red as a gesture of solidarity. This was significant as a large number of former army officers in Bangladesh have backgrounds in the Pakistani army. There were also allegations that the protesters were being used by the Opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party and Jamaat-e-Islami for their own political goals. Amid the unrest, the army intervened to

attempted to use its student wing, the Bangladesh Chhatra League, against the protesters, forgetting that the student wing was not an auxiliary police force and should not attack fellow students. It was actually the forces aligned with the ruling party that initially caused the protests to degenerate into civil disorder.

The worsening situation in Bangladesh drew the attention of the United Nations (UN), which called for a cessation of violence, the release of detainees, the restoration of access to the Internet and a meaningful dialogue. India, concerned about the situation but limited in its ability to intervene as it is an internal matter of Bangladesh, has advised its nationals to avoid travel within that country. New Delhi is also worried about the spillover of the unrest in Bangladesh, particularly in the states bordering the neighbouring country. The crisis has brought to the forefront the cumulative grievances of the citizens: rising prices of daily necessities, the pernicious influence of syndicates and unchecked corruption permeating almost every branch of the government. The people were also frustrated with the government's determination to suppress political opposition. The Bangladeshi economy has faced significant challenges of late, particularly a crisis of foreign currency. While the economy was performing well, citizens paid less attention to the democratic political space available to them. However, as the economic situation began to

deteriorate, concerns over jobs, employment and political freedom became increasingly important. The Hasina government exacerbated the crisis by mishandling the student protest movement, treating the agitators as political adversaries. The army chief announced that an interim government would take charge, promising that the military would stand down and investigate the deadly crackdown on protesters.

The Bangladeshi army is unlikely to remain at the helm for long, as it is a major beneficiary of the UN peacekeeping operations, and the UN does not encourage such an arrangement. As seen during the time of the caretaker government in 2007, the army prefers backseat driving, similar to the situation in Pakistan. However, for India, the bilateral relations will now depend on the new regime that emerges once the dust raised by the protests settles.

restore order. Army chief Gen Waker-Uz-Zaman had first directed officers to ensure peace. However, as the situation threatened to spiral out of control, the army took an ambiguous stance. On August 3, the army chief had addressed officers at the military headquarters in Dhaka, emphasising that "the Bangladesh army is the symbol of trust of the people." He assured them that the army would stand by the people and the state in times of need, but he did not clarify if the army supported the protests. Though the peace and tranquillity during Hasina's rule brought economic prosperity to Bangladesh, she was accused of entrenching power by using state institutions and suppressing dissent. It was alleged that the Awami League, supposedly the people's party, had lost touch with the populace. These clashes were among the deadliest in the country's history of civil unrest. The Awami League

Protect the voiceless

Authoritarian govt gets its comeuppance

THE alarming increase in wildlife crime in northern India is a stark reminder of the ongoing battle between conservation efforts and illegal activities. Over the past five years, a staggering 683 wildlife crime cases have been reported across Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chandigarh. This data, obtained from the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB), reveals the grim reality facing our nation's biodiversity. Uttar Pradesh, with 425 cases, and Uttarakhand, with 152, are the epicentres of these crimes, highlighting the severe threats to local wildlife. These cases include poaching, forest fires, encroachments and the smuggling of animal body parts. Notably, Himachal reported cases involving the trafficking of snow leopard skins and bear gall bladders, underscoring the diverse and valuable wildlife targeted by poachers. While the WCCB's efforts, including cyber-patrolling and training enforcement officers, are commendable, they are not enough. The decline in cases in UP from 158



in 2019 to 19 in 2023 may suggest some progress, but it is also an indicator of the work that remains. The data points to the fact that while some states have seen a reduction, others continue to struggle, and emerging trends like the trafficking of exotic species at airports show that poachers are adapting and finding new ways to circumvent the law. The urgency to address wildlife crime cannot be overstated. Protecting our wildlife is not just about preserving individual species; it's about maintaining the ecological balance and ensuring a sustainable future for all. This fight requires a multifaceted approach, including stricter enforcement, public awareness campaigns and robust international cooperation. If investigative and enforcement methods do not evolve and stay ahead of poaching syndicates, India's richly diverse ecosystems will suffer the consequences. We must safeguard the natural heritage for future generations.

Greater localisation is the key to equitable economic growth

INDIA does not have a growth problem: its GDP is growing faster than other countries. The problems of the Indian economy are its inequitable growth and the harm caused to the natural environment. India's policymakers must adopt new theories of growth. In the prevalent theory of economic development, labour must move from agriculture into manufacturing, and then to services. Therefore, the productivity of agriculture must be improved with inputs provided by the industry (fertilisers, pesticides, machinery), and surplus labour moved into manufacturing. India's manufacturing sector is not able to provide enough employment to workers displaced from agriculture. This is the structural reason for large numbers in India remaining in agriculture. Economists measure the productivity of all sectors—agriculture, manufacturing, and services—by the amount of labour required to produce its output. The productivity of agriculture is improved by reducing the amount of human labour required to produce food from the soil, and substituting it with other technological inputs—machines, chemicals, etc. The productivity of manufacturing is improved by reducing human labour input, substituting it with technology; similarly for services. It is not the size of its GDP that determines whether a nation is more advanced than others: it is the per capita GDP that counts. Technology, including AI, can improve productivity in all sectors by increasing the output of human effort or eliminating it altogether. Economically advanced nations that have more financial capital can afford to use more technology than labour. The measure of productivity of Indian economic enterprises must be changed. More labour and less capital must be used for growth and improvement of the Indian economy's performance. Scale is a concept beloved by managers. Large-scale factories and farms, each specialising in the production of a single item or crop, enable the use of standardised machinery and inputs (chemicals, components, etc), also produced in large-scale factories, thereby reducing overall costs. However, large-scale production requires larger markets for every factory and

farm. Underutilised large factories and farms can be a waste of capital.

International trade expands markets for specialist producers, each producing what it does best. In trade theorist David Ricardo's example, the Portuguese should produce port wine and the British textiles, and trade with each other; rather than the British trying to grow grapes in their climate and the Portuguese learning to run mechanised textile mills. Global GDP is higher when each country produces only what it does best and imports the rest of its needs. Increased global trade with reductions in costs of transportation (containerised supply chains, giant ships and large cargo planes), along with a decline in trade barriers, has enabled faster globalisation and increased the global GDP in the last 30 years.

'Free market' economists say that a market is the most efficient way for fixing prices by matching supply with demand. A change in price also provides a signal to investors to adjust production capacities. This simplistic view of a market is blind to inequities in markets caused by unequal power between capital owners and the providers of perishable resources. Workers who have only their time and work to sell must be employed regularly, and paid on time, or their lives are wasted. Workers and farmers with perishable produce cannot withhold the sale to induce price rises, whereas their buyers can delay purchases and payments, compelling them to sell at a loss. With the expansion of global trade, the power of consumers over producers (workers and farmers) has increased. Buyers threaten to find lower cost sources in other countries if they cannot obtain lower prices from the current suppliers. Inequalities in incomes and wealth have been increasing between those



who earn their incomes and wealth from financial investments and workers and small farmers, even in advanced countries (unless farmers are heavily subsidised). Environmental scientist Vaclav Smil analyses the use of fossil fuels in the modern economy in How the World Really Works: A Scientist's Guide to Our Past, Present and Future. They are used in the production and distribution of four foundational materials for modern civilisation: steel, concrete, plastics and food. He evaluates the 'total system' requirements of fossil energy in the production of these.

Food is the most fundamental of these for human survival: more fundamental than steel, concrete and plastics. Food systems are also the largest users of fossil fuel-based

inputs. Fertilisers are produced from fossil-fuel feedstock. Farm machinery is made of steel and runs on fossil fuels. Plastics are used for hygienic transportation of food in global supply chains. Fossil fuel-based solutions became integral for increasing the scale of food production and distribution for meeting the needs of the human population, which increased in the last 100 years from two billion to eight billion (1.4 billion in India). The world does not have a problem with the overall quantity of food produced any more. The problem is the inequitable distribution and wastage of food. Smil calculates the benefits of locally circular, organic multi-cropping systems. He says they could be the solution for the world. He wonders though: "Could we return to purely organic cropping, relying on recycled organic wastes and natural pest controls, and could we do without engine-powered irrigation and without field machinery by bringing back draft animals? We could, but purely organic farming would require most of us to abandon cities, resettle villages, dismantle central animal feeding operations, and bring all animals back to farms to use them for labour and as sources of manure.

Are we prepared to do this?" The solution for the twin problems of environmental degradation and inequitable economic growth is less globalisation and more localisation. About 64 per cent of the people in India live in rural areas (36 per cent in China, 17 per cent in the US). They mostly work on farms and in small industries in rural areas, not in large factories that use automated equipment. Rather than trying to catch up with rich countries on their historical development paths, India should take advantage of its present realities. Local, systemic, small-scale agricultural solutions, and small industries, cooperatively managed by communities in their own villages and towns,



"Non-thermal effects" could be reinterpreted as a normal cellular response to an increase in temperature. This heat can activate several messenger system, gene expression and production of heat shock protein in order to defend the cell against stress caused by heat.

According to a study conducted by The Journal of the American Medical Association - exposure to radio frequency signal waves within parts of the brain closest to the cell phone antenna resulted in increased levels of glucose metabolism.

In non-thermal effects, following problems can be seen.

- Blood-brain barrier effects
- Cancer
- Cognitive effects
- Electromagnetic hypersensitivity like tingling sensation in the skin of the head, headache, dizziness, loss of mental attention etc.
- Sleep disorders
- Behavioural effects

Reduce the effect of phone radiation

In order to lower the effects of mobile phone radiation follow these simple steps:

Keep some distance Behind every phone packaging, in fine prints most of the mobile brands recommend to keep your cell at least 10millimeters away from your body. Learn to maintain some distance with your tiny buddy. It may sound difficult but it is not impossible.

Weak signal is bad

Cell phones release more radio frequency radiation when the signal is low. That means, if your signal is low avoid using your cell phone to prevent unnecessary harm.

Choose hands-free headsets

Always choose hands-free headsets, as it will help to reduce the radiation emissions to the brain.

Switch sides

Change hands (and ears) frequently while talking on your cell phone to limit the amount of exposure to one side of your head.

Use speakers to dial numbers

The radiofrequency radiation is strongest when your phone is attempting to place a call, so hold it away from your head until you hear someone pick up.

Your cell phone can give you Cancer

Mobile is an inseparable part of our life. We are completely dependent on our mobile phones and everyone has it, even school children. We are pretty sure that most of us are Nomophobiacs at least till some extent. You may have read reports that this tiny, super functional gadget can be life threatening, but is it the truth? There are reports that radiation can even turn your brain into an omelette. We did a little research and got you some factual answers.

Radiation from your mobile?

Yes! Radiation is present from mobile phone in the form of electromagnetic waves. Through a particular radio frequency on these electromagnetic waves, you are able to make and receive calls. The radiation emission is present in small amounts from your mobile as these emissions are of short range waves.

Radiation absorption

Small amount of radio waves emitted from your mobile is

absorbed by the body. According to Wikipedia - the maximum power output from a mobile phone is regulated by the mobile phone standard. In most systems the mobile and the base station check reception quality, signal strength and the power level. It is increased or decreased automatically within a certain span to accommodate different situations - when you are inside or outside the building or vehicle.

The rate at which energy is absorbed by the human body is measured by the Specific Absorption Rate (SAR). SAR data for specific mobile phones, along with other useful information, can be found directly on manufacturers' websites.

Effects by mobile radiation

The effects can be of two types - thermal and non-thermal.

Thermal effects

One of the most common effects by electromagnetic waves is dielectric heating. When a person uses a cell phone, most of the heating effect will occur at the surface of the head. This heating can increase your head temperature by a fraction of a degree. However this heat is less than the heat obtained by sunlight. The blood circulation isn't affected much, as the brain's blood circulation is capable enough to deal with excess heat, but the cornea of the eyes is not accustomed to a lot of heat.

Non-thermal effects

The communications procedure used by mobile phones often result in low-frequency pulse from the carrier signal.



5 habits to avoid for better Sleep

If you're sleep-deprived get rid of these patterns of behaviour, today...

Nighttime snacking

It might be tempting to reach out for that slice of uneaten pizza or a box of doughnuts, but this is actually one of the most common habits that can keep folks from getting shut-eye. Late night eating is said to cause a gastro esophageal reflux disorder, in which where the stomach acid goes back into the esophagus causing acid reflux, say experts. This gives acidity and makes a person feel uncomfortable.

Exercising very late

Exercise is certainly a good habit but doing so in the late hours of the day is unwise. Experts outline the connection between a lower body temperature and achieving quality sleep. When you exercise it raises the body temperature and increases the metabolism. So, while this works

well during the day, it's not ideal if you want get into sleep mode.

Watching too much TV

Unfortunately the TV set is believed to be a part of the bedroom, but actually watching your fav crime or drama shows from your bed can set the pulse racing and make the rain too active. Also an exposure to violent programming is said to cause nightmares. Doctors advise meditation or prayer that helps to relax the system. One may also curl up and read a book.

Working after hours

Most people tend to either spend late hours at the office or bring work home for late night. But this habit can cause stress and tension that leads to insomnia and loss of appetite. Pouring over a work presentation, number crunching or talking to colleagues can make the mind very alert, and push up adrenalin and stress levels — quite the opposite scenario for a restful night.

Talking too much

Sometimes due to hard schedules, finding time to talk with your spouse at bedtime might seem like the only option. However, if the conversation escalates into an argument, it can shoot up energy levels and cause feelings of anger and fear that takes away sleep. Fights also make it impossible to fall asleep afterwards. The ideal thing to do is make time for settling issues and important topics at some time during the day.



Foods You should learn to love

Experts say that more often than not, this is based on an irrational dislike from your childhood or even that the food hasn't been prepared the right way. But by refraining from certain foods, you may actually be missing out on certain nutrients which are so essential for good health. Here are some of the most commonly hated foods, which you should include in your diet...

Mushrooms

Unless you're allergic to mushrooms, there is no reason why you shouldn't include them in your diet. Make an effort and get used to the taste and texture of mushrooms, which are rich in proteins and B vitamins and are also the only vegetable to naturally contain Vitamin D.

Celery

This crunchy vegetable is full of nutrients like vitamin K, potassium and folate, is known to lower blood pressure and is also low in calories. Blend some celery and add it to a soup.

Brussels sprouts

Rich in vitamins K, C and omega-3 fatty acids, Brussels sprouts are also high in cancer-fighting substances (glucosinolates). To ensure that they tempt your tastebuds, opt for fresh sprouts rather than frozen, and never overcook them so as to avoid their unpleasant smell.

Fish

Are you among those who is put off simply by the smell of fish and consequently refuses to touch it? Whether it is the smell, texture or bones that put you off, here's something that will help change your mind. Fish have great sources of protein and the oily kinds are also packed with omega-3 fatty acids, which is good for your heart and brain. To make fish more appetising, have it with a healthy marinade to enhance its flavour.

Tomatoes

Some people dislike tomatoes in any form, while others stay away from the raw fruit but have no qualms about eating it in a sauce or cooked form. Fortunately research says that the antioxidant lycopene is better absorbed by your body when it is eaten in a processed/

cooked form than the raw variety. Lycopene is known to fight heart disease and cancer.

Broccoli

If not cooked correctly, almost no one will say they like broccoli. So instead, skip soggy, boiled broccoli for a recipe that is tastier. Rich in antioxidants, you could try lightly roasting broccoli with olive oil, garlic and seasoning.

Tofu

Tofu has a great protein quantities, cholesterol-lowering properties and contains phytoestrogens, which are known to help alleviate symptoms of menopause. To give it some flavour, experts recommend marinating it with soy sauce before cooking.

Avocados

The texture of avocados may seem unappetising but this healthy fruit is high in vitamin E, potassium and essential fatty acids and great for your heart and skin. Blend avocados with lemon juice, oil and seasoning. It becomes a healthy alternative to mayonnaise.

Peanut butter

Peanut butter has several health benefits, which include lowering cholesterol levels and keeping heart disease at bay. To dilute the stickiness of the spread, add it to a salad dressing.



Himachal Pradesh cloudburst death toll mounts to 22, over 100 roads closed

New Delhi: The death toll from cloudburst-triggered flash floods in Himachal Pradesh has reached 22, with rescue operations ongoing to find over 30 missing people. The flash floods were reported in Kullu's Nirmand, Sainj and Malana, Mandi's Padhar and Shimla's Rampur. The worst hit was Samej village in Rampur subdivision, where about 25 people went missing. Nine bodies have been recovered from Mandi's Rajbhan village, three from Nirmand and Bagipul in Kullu district and 10 from Samej and surrounding areas of Dhadkol, Bro and Sunni Dam in Shimla district.

Twelve out of the 22 bodies have been identified so far and DNA samples for others are being taken for identification of the bodies. Incessant rain in the state has caused landslides and the closing of over 100 roads in Himachal Pradesh.

A total of 109 roads, including 37 in Mandi, 29 in Shimla, 26 in Kullu, six in Kangra, four each in Kinnaur and Lahaul and

Spiti, two in Sirmour and one in Hamirpur, are closed while 58 transformers and 15 water supply schemes are disrupted, as per the state emergency operation centre. Furthermore, as the rains continued to pound the region, the local meteorological office issued an orange alert of heavy to very heavy rainfall, thunderstorm and lightning at isolated places in the state for Saturday. The weather office has also cautioned of low to moderate flash flood risk in isolated parts of Kangra, Sirmour, Chamba, Shimla, Kullu, Kinnaur, Solan and Mandi districts in the next 24 hours. The Met also said that monsoon activity is likely to intensify in the next five to six days with fairly widespread rains. Over 650 rescuers from teams of the Army, NDRF, SDRF, ITBP, CISF, Himachal Pradesh Police and home guards are involved in the search and rescuers have intensified the search operation by

deploying more machinery, sniffer dog squads, drones and other equipment. Chief of Defence Staff Anil Chauhan said that the Army has intensified its rescue operations. "In response to the devastating cloudburst that struck Samej Village in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh, extensive rescue operations are currently in progress. The civilian administration has deployed 10 heavy-duty excavators to aid in the efforts. Additionally, the Army has deployed two drones to assist in the search and rescue operations. Medical assistance has been provided to 65 patients affected by the disaster. Tragically, one body was recovered near the Lunhari area in the Sutlej River by the state administration," he said. A total of 94 people were killed in rain-related incidents between June 27 and August 7 and the state suffered losses amounting to Rs 787 crore, according to the officials.



Bulldozer action on UP salon where barber massaged customer's face with spit

NEW DELHI: District administration officials in Uttar Pradesh's Kannauj demolished a salon where a barber was caught on camera applying his spit while massaging a customer's face. The barber, Yusuf, was arrested after a video of him capturing the disgusting act went viral on social media. It is being said that the salon that was built was an illegal encroachment.



In the video, Yusuf, is seen applying cream and massaging the face of a customer, whose eyes are closed. Taking advantage of the situation, the accused is seen spitting on his left hand and applying his spit to the customer's face, who is unaware of the barber's

act. After he commits the act, Yusuf is seen giving a thumbs up in the video while the customer opens his eyes and also gives a thumbs up while smiling. The video went viral, Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) activists staged a protest against Yusuf and demanded strict action against him.

Top Court To Hear Petition Seeking Postponement Of NEET-PG 2024 Today

New Delhi: The Supreme Court said on Thursday that it will hear the petition tomorrow seeking to reschedule the NEET-PG 2024 due to the allocation of "highly inconvenient" exam centres and concerns about the normalisation of marks. Advocate Anas Tanwir, who is appearing for the petitioners, has mentioned the plea before the bench led by the Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud and sought an urgent listing of it. CJI Chandrachud assured that the matter will be listed for hearing tomorrow. NEET-PG 2024 is scheduled to be held on August 11.

The candidates have approached the Supreme Court and preferred seeking directions to the respondents to reschedule the NEET-PG 2024 Examination on the ground that the petitioners and many similarly placed candidates have been allocated cities that are highly inconvenient for them to reach, further seeking details of the formula for normalisation of the four sets of question papers, and seeking clarity on ensuring that the normalisation formula is disclosed to the candidates, thereby eliminating any possibility of arbitrariness in the process.

The petitioners said that the allocation of test cities was made on July 31 and the specific centres are scheduled to be declared on August 8. The petitioner, while appreciating that the same has been done to curb any malpractice in the examinations, however, given such short notice, it has become highly difficult for students to make arrangements for their travel to their specific cities. The petitioners submitted that more than two lakh students are scheduled to appear in the examination. The examination is scheduled to be held in 185 test cities, therefore resulting in the non-availability of train tickets as well as the hiking of airfares due to dynamic pricing, thereby making it almost impossible for a large number of students to reach their test centres, the petition said. The petition further submitted that the respondent had announced the date of the examination will be on August 11 and that it would be conducted in two batches. "The fact that the examinations will be conducted in two batches and that the formula for normalisation is unknown to the candidates thereby causing an apprehension to the petitioners herein. There is a likelihood that one batch of candidates may face a more difficult question paper than the other batch.

Chief of Defence Staff raises concerns over border tensions with China, Pakistan

NEW DELHI: Chief of Defence Staff of the Indian Armed Forces, Anil Chauhan, has said the unrest in Bangladesh is concerning. In the wake of the regime change in Bangladesh, the CDS said tensions on borders with other countries are already prevailing. "India has its own share of security challenges, we have a proxy war raged by Pakistan in Jammu and Kashmir, a sudden escalation of which is now being seen in Pir Panjal Range," CDS Anil Chauhan said while speaking at a conference on Military Ammunition in Delhi.

"The prolonged border dispute with China is yet to abate," he added. "There are two major security challenges that we are facing, the instability in our neighbourhood is another cause of concern for us. For a large nation like India, with plentitudes of security

problems, it cannot remain dependent on foreign imports of war fighting and sustenance, especially in an environment where global security and government are in a state of flux," the



CDS said. **MUHAMMAD YUNUS TO TAKE OATH AS HEAD OF INTERIM GOVERNMENT IN BANGLADESH**
Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus is set

to take oath as the head of Bangladesh's interim government on Thursday, as he made a fervent appeal to everyone to stay calm and "refrain from all kinds of violence" to make the best use of "our new victory". As authorities scrambled to bring the law and order situation under control, Army chief Gen Waker-Uz-Zaman on Wednesday announced that the interim government will take oath around 8 pm on Thursday. He said the advisory council may have 15 members.

Gen Zaman further said THAT the armed forces will provide all possible support to 84-year-old Yunus after Sheikh Hasina resigned as prime minister and fled the country following violent anti-government protests spearheaded by the Students Against Discrimination movement.

Opposition MPs Protest Outside Parliament Against Rising Vegetable Prices

New Delhi: MPs from different political parties in the opposition held a protest against the price rise of onions and other vegetables, outside the parliament on Thursday. As a mark of protest, MPs also wear garlands made of onion as they raise the slogan 'pyaaj ka daam kam karo...' launching a scathing attack against the centre led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, RJD MP Manoj Jha said, "Legal guarantee on MSP is a huge issue. A govt which gives an account of expenses made on athletes in Parliament...It has no shame...An account should be given of how much taxpayer's money is spent on the PM and the Cabinet ministers."

Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Priyanka Chaturvedi said that onion farmers in Maharashtra are permitted to export their produce while onion farmers in

Gujarat are allowed to. "Farmers are demanding that a government which promised to double farmers' income



should at least give MSP. Maharashtra onion farmers are not allowed to export their produce, while onion farmers in Gujarat are allowed to. Our protest is against this," said Chaturvedi. Meanwhile, the BJP-led government is slated to introduce the

Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024 in the Lok Sabha on Thursday to amend the Waqf Act, 1995. The bill seeks to "effectively address issues" related to the powers of the State Waqf Boards, registration and survey of waqf properties and removal of encroachments. The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024 is listed for introduction by Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju in Lok Sabha. Congress Lok Sabha MP KC Venugopal submitted a notice to oppose the introduction of the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024 in the Lok Sabha. Congress MP Mr Hibi Eden also gave notice to oppose the bill.

The Samajwadi Party will also oppose the Waqf Bill in Parliament. Congress MP K Suresh who is the party's chief whip in the Lok Sabha said that the opposition is not in favour of the bill.

Delhi coaching deaths: Probe says owners responsible, misuse of basement

New Delhi: A magisterial probe conducted in the Delhi coaching centre incident that claimed the lives of three UPSC aspirants has accused the officials of MCD's building and work department of allowing Rau's IAS Study Circle to operate a library in the basement without any proper drainage facility. In the report submitted to the Revenue Department on Wednesday, the probe stated that the "owners and management of RAU's IAS Study Circle were also responsible for the criminal negligence by indulging in dangerous misuse of the basement without regard to the lives of the students." The probe revealed that the "violation of rules" in the building was noticed before the July 27 incident by officials of MCD and the Fire Department. However, they took no action against the owner.

The report highlighted that the building where the coaching centre was housed had permissions for "office/business" use, for which no "NOC" was required. However, as it was used for



"educational purposes," the building required a "No Objection Certificate" from the fire department. Earlier in 2023, following a fire engulfing a coaching centre in Mukherjee Nagar, the civic body issued a notice citing "misuse" of property. "The failure to seal the basement after the issue of the misuse

notice and not even mentioning the same in the show cause notice and misleading the deputy commissioner of the factual field position of misuse appears to be deliberate misconduct with malafide intentions on the part of the concerned engineers of the building department of MCD," the report was quoted by news

agency PTI in its report.

The Fire Department also neglected to report the "misuse" of the building's basement as a library to the MCD during an inspection on July 1 this year, it said. "The fire department should not have granted a fire safety certificate dated 9.7.2024 concealing the misuse of the basement as a library in violation of the building by-laws provisions of MPD-2021. This is a serious lapse on the part of the fire services inspection team," the report noted. It also accused MCD officials of encroachment on stormwater and a lack of desilting.

The report mentioned that the drains in the area had not been desilted for the past five years, in spite of being prone to waterlogging because of their low-lying location. Delhi's Revenue Minister ordered a magisterial probe, and the preliminary report in this regard was submitted on July 29. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has taken over the case following the Delhi High Court's August 2 order.

Muslim women in waqf boards, central council: Key features of Waqf bill

NEW DELHI: The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, the first major legislation set to be introduced by the Modi 3.0 government, has stirred a hornet's nest among Muslim organisations and the opposition. The bill, which aims to streamline the manner of registration of waqf properties through a central portal, was tabled by the government in Parliament on Thursday. The bill proposes renaming the Waqf Act, 1995, as the Unified Waqf Management, Empowerment, Efficiency and Development Act.

BUT, WHAT IS WAQF?

In simple terms, waqf refers to any property dedicated solely for religious or charitable purposes under Islamic law. Once a property is declared waqf, it becomes irrevocable. The amendments to the bill aim to tackle this issue. Around 30 waqf boards in the country control properties spread over 9 lakh acres, with an estimated value of Rs 1.2 lakh crore. This makes the waqf boards the third-largest owner of land in India after the Railways and Defence Ministry.

WAQF (AMENDMENT) BILL KEY FEATURES

Among key proposals include the formation of a Central Waqf Council and state Waqf Boards, which would have representation of Muslim women and non-Muslims. As per the bill, two women will be appointed in all state boards as well as the central council.

The bill aims to make the District Collector the arbiter on whether a property is waqf property or government land. In the 1995 Act, such decisions are taken by the Waqf Tribunal. There have been allegations of this power being misused by vested interests for grabbing property.

It also proposes the creation of a separate Board of Auqaf for the Boharas and Aghakhans. The draft law also provides for the representation of Shias, Sunnis, Bohras, Agakhans in the waqf boards. Moreover, the legislation aims to give the Centre the power to direct the audit of any waqf by an auditor appointed by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India.

The bill mandates the requirement of a valid waqfnama, which basically is a deed or a document through which a person expresses an intention to donate a property. The existing law allows a person to give a property as waqf through an oral agreement.



High Blood pressure:

Exercise and tips

Commonly referred to as a 'silent killer', high blood pressure or hypertension is a leading cause of death globally.

of developing hypertension. Family history Having a family history of high blood pressure places you at a greater risk of developing the condition.

Lifestyle issues It is a well-known fact that your lifestyle can affect your risk of developing it. Major lifestyle flaws include high intake of alcohol, excessive smoking, too much salt and not eating sufficient fruits and vegetables.

Tips to prevent and control:

One of the primary

time set, you can also opt for shorter bursts of activity as they count too.

Weight training Although these exercises can lead to sudden spikes in your blood pressure levels, they can have long term benefits. Make sure that you consult a physician before embarking on any weight training programs.

Yoga and meditation In order to prevent this condition, yoga postures and meditation techniques should also be incorporated in your daily routine. The prime effect of these fitness programs is that they help combat stress and saturate the mind with tranquility.

Deep-breathing exercises According to a recent research published in the American Journal of Hypertension, a person can regulate his blood pressure level by 'harnessing' the body's own natural pressure regulator.

Breathing techniques are easy and effective ways to curb elevated levels of blood pressure. Regular and right breathing techniques can help you maintain normal blood pressure. However, for long term effects, always remember that you will have to follow these exercise and lifestyle tips on a regular basis. The benefits last as long as you continue with the planned fitness regime.

This is largely due to unawareness regarding early detection and cure. In India, around 16 per cent of people above 20 years of age suffer from high blood pressure. However, a single high reading does not necessarily imply that you have hypertension. Moreover, even if you were informed recently that you have the condition; there is absolutely no reason to panic. All you need are some basic lifestyle tips and a well-planned exercise routine and you will be as fit as a fiddle.

blood on your blood vessels increases the desirable value (above 90-119 systolic and 60-79 diastolic).

Prime risk factors:

Some of the major factors that increase your risk of developing the condition are:

Age Increased levels of blood pressure are closely associated with age and the effects of an unhealthy lifestyle gradually build up.

Ethnicity Generally, it is observed that people belonging to the African-Caribbean and South-Asian communities have increased probability



Practice moderation if you drink alcohol - Quitting smoking - Regulating the excessive intake of salt and sodium - Frequent regulation of your health by visiting health care professionals at periodic intervals.

Exercise tips for managing blood pressure:

Becoming active and incorporating regular physical activity in your day-

to-day living helps make your heart stronger. This, in turn, can lead your heart to pump more blood with less effort, thereby lowering the force on your arteries and the subsequent reduction of blood pressures.

Aerobic training This form of training can have a major influence on your blood pressure levels. This can include anything from walking, running and hiking to biking and even swimming. On an average, target at least 30 minutes of aerobic activity for most days of the week. In case, you are unable to manage this

'Fitness at workplace' is the latest mantra in the corporate world. Companies have realised that regular exercise boosts employee morale, enhances productivity, reduce absenteeism and signs of burnout or depression.

Nowadays, the corporate employees not only stretch themselves beyond their responsibilities, but also stretch their muscles in the office gym.

A little bit of planning and a few small additions in one's office routine can help one a healthier lifestyle. According to a World Health Organisation report, India could incur losses to the tune of \$237 billion by 2015 due to rise in lifestyle diseases like heart disease, diabetes, stroke and cancer, because of unhealthy workplaces.

Here are some easy everyday things you can do to get healthy and fit while at your workplace:

Stay hydrated:

Water helps your body with physical and mental performance, detoxification and

Fun ways to keep fit

fit in your office

avoid monotony.

Make reasons to walk around:

Give yourself several reasons to take a break and move around after every 40 minutes. Simply getting up and moving around for a few moments can keep you focused, less fatigued and feeling better. For example, avoid ordering a cup of coffee/ tea at your desk, go and get it yourself or while speaking with someone on cell phone walk around till you end the call. Get down from your car if driven by a chauffer a few blocks before your office and walk the remaining distance provided you leave home 10 to 15 minutes before your usual time.

Hit the office gym in lunch hours:

Try to exercise for 30 minutes during the lunch time and grab a bite at your desk afterwards. Encourage having an area of a simple gym in your office. It could be jogger or a stationary bicycle or a treadmill.

Simple stretching:

People often face stress, back and joint pains and weight gain problems at work. To get rid of such health problems, while sitting in your chair, flex your feet and circle your ankles, stretch your legs and arms as frequent as you can.

Take the stairs:

Whenever possible, get moving and take the stairs rather than the elevator. Taking stairs will keep you fit and energetic.

Pack healthy snacks:

Rather than buying chips, junk food and sodas during office hours, bring some granola, fruit or raw veggies to snack on. This healthy diet will keep your energy levels fit and steady.

Conduct meetings on the go:

When it's practical, schedule walking meetings or brainstorming sessions. Do laps inside your building or take your walking meetings outdoors.

Participate in different office games:

Office games such as table tennis, basket ball are an interesting way to keep healthy and fit. These games not only keep your energy levels high but also keep your body in good shape.

Use neem oil, garlic for mosquito free home
As the national capital battles one of its worst dengue seasons, experts suggest natural methods like neem and coconut oil concoction or garlic to keep the mosquito-borne tropical disease at bay.

Neem oil acts as a great indoor mosquito-repellent owing to its smell that wards off mosquitoes. One can make an effective insecticide by mixing neem oil and coconut oil in equal proportion and rub it on the exposed parts of a body.

- Another natural method to keep mosquitoes at bay is to plant Tulsi near the window panes. The plant has properties that do not allow mosquitoes to breed.

- A mixture of lemon oil and eucalyptus oil is extremely effective in warding off mosquitoes naturally. Both have the active component cineole in it carrying antiseptic and insect repellent properties, which makes them effective when applied to the skin.

- Camphor is an easily available ingredient that kills mosquitoes in a house. Made from the extract of a tree, this compound has been found to have the longest mosquito repellent effect as compared to other natural products. Burning camphor in a closed room can be extremely effective in keeping mosquitoes at bay.

- Garlic might smell bad, but that is exactly why mosquitoes stay away. All you need to do is crush a few pods of garlic, boil them in water and spray the liquid in the room.



digestion. Keep a water bottle at your desk and you'll find it much easier to drink the recommend eight glasses of water each day. It will ease stress and result in sustained energy throughout the day. You can also supplement it with fresh lemonade and coconut water, etc, to

Tata Motors shares gain 2% in intraday trade. Here's why

NEW DELHI. Shares of Tata Motors rose in intraday trade after Moody's upgraded the company's corporate family rating (CFR) to Ba1 from Ba3, maintaining a positive outlook on all other ratings. Tata Motors shares were up 1.75% at Rs 1,043.15 on the Bombay Stock Exchange at 11:53 am, and the company's market capitalisation rose to Rs 3.83 lakh crore. While the stock is down nearly 6% in the past five trading sessions, it has gained 32% in this calendar year and nearly 72% in a year. It may be noted that Moody's also upgraded Tata Motors' senior unsecured instruments' ratings to Ba1 from Ba3 while maintaining a positive outlook. For the first quarter of 2024-25, Tata Motors reported a 74% year-on-year increase in consolidated profit after tax (PAT) to Rs 5,566 crore, compared to Rs 3,203 crore in the same quarter last year.

Revenue from operations for the April-June quarter rose by 5.7% to over Rs 1.07 lakh crore.

RBI MPC: Real GDP growth projection for FY25 retained at 7.2%

New Delhi The Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has maintained its projection for India's real GDP growth at 7.2% for FY25, despite moderating the outlook for the first quarter, Governor Shaktikanta Das announced on Thursday. "Domestic economic activity remains resilient. The steady progress of the southwest monsoon, higher cumulative Kharif sowing, and improving reservoir levels bode well for Kharif output. Manufacturing activity continues to gain momentum, supported by improving domestic demand," Das said while announcing the MPC's decision to keep the benchmark rates unchanged at 6.5%. While the forecasts for FY25's second, third, and fourth quarters were left unchanged, the projection for the first quarter was reduced to 7.1%. In its June 2024 meeting, the MPC had projected India's GDP growth at 7.2% for FY25, with quarterly growth rates of 7.3%, 7.2%, 7.3%, and 7.2%. The Indian economy grew at 8.2% in FY24.

However, the Economic Survey released in July 2024 ahead of the Union Budget forecasted a more conservative growth rate of 6.5-7% for the current financial year, citing global uncertainties and domestic



challenges. Prominent global rating agencies like the IMF and ADB have projected growth at 7%.

The Survey said, "...the Survey conservatively projects a real GDP growth of 6.5-7%, with risks evenly balanced, cognizant of the fact that market expectations are on the higher side." A normal rainfall forecast by the India Meteorological Department and the satisfactory spread of the southwest monsoon so far are expected to improve agricultural sector performance and support the revival of rural demand. The Economic Survey also highlighted a bright outlook for India's financial sector but emphasized the need to remain vigilant about vulnerabilities, warning that India cannot afford over-financialization at this stage.

On successful trajectory to profitability: Akasa Air



NEW DELHI. Akasa Air is hopeful of becoming one of the top 30 airlines in the world by the turn of this decade, the airline said on Wednesday as it completed two years of operations. Akasa also said it is on a successful trajectory towards profitability and expects seat capacity to rise 50% on an annual basis this fiscal year. "Akasa's unwavering commitment to cost leadership, supported by operational and financial discipline, has set the airline on a successful trajectory toward profitability. In the last fiscal year, Akasa achieved a 300% growth in available seat kilometres (ASKM), setting a new record for airline growth that surpasses 122 years of global history," the airline said. It added, "With the strong financial foundation the airline has built, it anticipates a year-on-year increase of 50% in its available seat kilometres."

The airline, which now has a market share of less than 5% in the domestic market, operated its first commercial flight on 07 August 2022 from Mumbai to Ahmedabad. Akasa now operates over 900 weekly flights across 22 domestic and five international destinations, achieving the milestone of serving over 11 million passengers in two years. In January 2024, the airline announced a firm order of 150 aircraft to support its expansion plans. In March 2024, it became the first Indian airline to fly overseas in a record period of 19 months. Vinay Dube, founder & CEO, Akasa Air, said, "In this past year, we have been India's leader in on-time performance while registering greater operational reliability, and lowest customer complaints, and cancellations in the industry."

Adani Enterprises to raise Rs 12K cr via QIP

Share sale will lead to 2.75-3.3% dilution of promoters' stake in the company



NEW DELHI. The flagship Gautam Adani Group firm -- Adani Enterprises Ltd (AEL) -- will be testing waters in the equity market for the first time since its aborted follow-on offer in February 2023. The company is planning to raise Rs 10,000-Rs 12,000 crore via qualified institutional placement (QIP) as early as September this year. Sources close to the development confirmed the plans of Adani Enterprises. As per sources, top banks like State Bank of India (SBI), ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank are likely to participate in the QIP. Some foreign banks including Jefferies are likely to participate in the current round of the fundraising. Last year, it had to scrap its

Rs 20,000 crore follow-on offer after the Hindenburg report was released on 24 January 2024. The report had levelled serious allegations of price rigging and insider trading, among others, on Adani group. AEL in May this year has decided to enter the capital market again with Rs 16,600 crore

equity fundraising plan to fund its growth plans.

QIPs are an easier way of raising money through sale of shares to institutional investors. The share sale by Adani Enterprises may lead to 2.75-3.3% dilution of promoters' shares. Currently, promoters hold 74.92% in Adani

Enterprises. After the company had to cancel its FPO plans in February 2024, the US-based GQG Partners had come to its rescue and bought shares worth Rs 15,500 crore in four Adani Group companies including Adani Enterprises. Adani Enterprises houses energy & utility, infrastructure (including airports), minerals, metals and mining and direct-to-consumer businesses. AEL has a market cap of Rs 3.6 lakh crore. Its shares were trading at Rs 3,186 a piece, still 21% below its all-time high of Rs 4,019 prices achieved in November 2022. It has debt of Rs 56,664 crore as of June 30, 2024, up from Rs 50,124 crore at the end of March quarter. It has been able to improve its net debt/EBIDTA ratio from the high of 5.2 times at the end of FY22 to 2.1 times at the end of first quarter of FY25. Recently, Adani Energy Solutions (AESL) raised Rs 8,373 crore via QIP route. This marks AESL's first equity raise in capital market since its demerger and listing from Adani Enterprises Limited in July 2015.

UPI transaction limit raised to Rs 5 lakh for tax payments

New Delhi The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced an increase in the transaction limit for tax payments through the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) on Thursday. The new limit is set at Rs 5 lakh, up from the previous cap of Rs 1 lakh. The increase in limit aims to simplify and facilitate higher-value tax transactions for consumers. RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said, "Currently, the transaction limit for UPI is Rs 1 lakh except for certain categories of payments that have higher limits. We have decided to enhance the limit for tax payments through UPI to Rs 5 lakh per transaction. This will make it easier for consumers to make tax payments using UPI." The current UPI limit, set at Rs 1 lakh, has been periodically reviewed and adjusted for different types of transactions, including capital markets, IPO subscriptions, loan collections, insurance, medical, and educational services. With the new change, tax payments, which are frequent and often high in value, can now benefit from this increased limit. In addition to the higher transaction limit, the RBI introduced a new UPI feature called 'Delegated Payments'. This feature allows a primary user to authorise another



individual, known as a secondary user, to carry out UPI transactions up to a specified limit from the primary user's bank account. The secondary user does not need a separate UPI-linked bank account. This feature is expected to boost the adoption of digital payments by making it more convenient. Governor Das also announced that the repo rate would remain unchanged at 6.5%. Alongside this, the RBI revealed several measures to enhance the digital lending ecosystem. One of these measures includes creating a public repository under a regulated entity to ensure accurate credit information. Lenders are now required to report credit information to Credit Information Companies (CIC) every two weeks, which will provide borrowers with faster updates. Furthermore, the RBI is

reducing the cheque clearing cycle from two working days to just a few hours, which will speed up the process significantly. Despite the unchanged repo rate, inflation continues to be a concern. The inflation rate rose to 5.08% in June, exceeding the RBI's target of 4%. This rise, particularly in food prices, has complicated the possibility of rate cuts. Governor Das emphasised that price stability is essential for sustained economic growth and that monetary policy must remain focused on controlling inflation. Following the RBI's announcement, there was a noticeable reaction in the financial markets. India's bond market saw a decline, with the 10-year yield increasing by 2 basis points to 6.88%. The rupee's value remained stable, but the benchmark NSE Nifty 50 Index fell by up to 0.7%. This policy decision comes amid global market volatility, influenced by recent actions from central banks in advanced economies. The Bank of England reduced interest rates last week, and there is increasing pressure on the Federal Reserve to lower rates to support the economy.

RBI proposes to reduce cheque clearance time to a few hours

New Delhi. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced a major change in the cheque-clearing process.

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das announced this new initiative during the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting announcement.

The new system aims to cut the time needed for cheque clearing from the current two-day period to just a few hours. "Cheque Truncation System (CTS) currently processes cheques with a clearing cycle of up to two working days. To improve the efficiency of cheque clearing and reduce settlement risk for participants, and to enhance customer experience, it is proposed to transition CTS from the current approach of batch processing to continuous clearing with 'on-realisation-settlement'. Cheques will be scanned, presented, and passed in a few hours and on a continuous basis during business hours. The clearing cycle will reduce from the present T+1 days to a few hours," said a RBI press release. Governor Shaktikanta Das explained that the updated system is designed to simplify and speed up the cheque-clearing process. This move addresses long-standing delays in fund transfers and aims to make transactions more efficient overall. "At present, cheque clearing through Cheque Truncation System (CTS) operates in a batch processing mode and has a clearing cycle of up to two working days. It is proposed to reduce the clearing cycle by introducing continuous clearing with 'on-realisation-settlement' in CTS. This means that cheques will be cleared within a few hours on the day of presentation. This will speed up cheque payments and benefit both the payer and the payee," said the RBI Governor. With this new system, account holders can expect faster processing of cheque-based transactions. This change will allow funds to be credited more quickly, which is beneficial for urgent payments and better financial planning. Both individuals and businesses will see improved liquidity and a more efficient banking experience. The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) opted to maintain the key repo rate at 6.5%, continuing its focus on the 'withdrawal of accommodation'. This marks the ninth consecutive meeting in which the central bank's six-member MPC has decided to keep the key policy rates unchanged.

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said four members of the 6-member MPC voted in favour of keeping the policy repo rate unchanged at 6.5%.

Gold, silver Gold, silver price : Precious metals record hike on MCX

New Delhi Both gold and silver prices recorded a hike on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) on Thursday, August 8, 2024. Gold futures, maturing on October 4, 2024, stood at Rs 69,000 per 10 grams on the MCX, after recording a jump of Rs 35 or 0.05 per cent. The previous close was recorded at Rs 68,965. Meanwhile, silver futures, maturing on September 5, 2024, witnessed a marginal hike of Rs 248 or 0.31 per cent and were retailing at Rs 79,148 per kg on the MCX against the previous close of Rs 78,900. The gold and silver prices in India depend on several factors, including the value of the rupee against



the dollar. Global demand also plays a key role in determining the trends observed in the rate of precious metals.

GOLD, SILVER PRICES IN INTERNATIONAL MARKET

Prices of safe-haven gold edged higher on Thursday, supported by Middle East tensions and optimism surrounding U.S. rate cuts, while traders awaited economic data for clues on the Federal Reserve's policy trajectory, news agency Reuters reported. According to the latest metal report, spot gold rose 0.3 per cent at \$2,389.42 per ounce by 0331 GMT, while, U.S. gold futures dipped 0.2 per cent to \$2,428.40.

Among other precious metals, spot silver rose nearly 1 per cent to \$26.84 per ounce.

RBI retains FY25 inflation projection at 4.5%, warns against 'food price shocks'

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das stressed the need for vigilance to prevent the spillover effects of persistent food inflation and to preserve the gains made in monetary policy credibility.

New Delhi. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has maintained its inflation forecast for the current fiscal year at 4.5%, despite ongoing concerns about food prices and geopolitical tensions that could impact crude oil prices. RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das stressed the need for vigilance to prevent the spillover effects of persistent food inflation and to preserve the gains made in monetary policy credibility. The central bank has now projected inflation for the second, third, and fourth quarters of FY25 at 4.4%, 4.7%, and 4.3%, respectively. In its June policy, the inflation forecasts were slightly lower at 3.8%, 4.6%, and 4.5%, respectively. Inflation stood at

4.9% in the first quarter of FY25. Additionally, the RBI has provided its inflation forecast for the first quarter of the next fiscal year, pegging it at 4.4%.

Das mentioned that while the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) might overlook temporary spikes in food inflation, it cannot afford to do so if the inflation persists. The RBI Governor said the MPC remains focused on inflation and supporting price stability to ensure growth, highlighting that inflation is moderating, but the pace is slow. Kapil Gupta, Executive Director- Research, Nuvama Institutional Equities, said, "The RBI policy was largely a status quo policy, both on rates and stance. Policymakers remain comfortable with the evolving growth trajectory and emphasized that RBI remains resolute in aligning headline inflation to the target of 4% on a durable basis." "While core inflation is benign, the stubborn food inflation poses the risk of second round effects and there requires constant vigil.



Thus, policymakers are in no rush to lower their guard as of now. Trajectory of domestic food inflation and evolving path of the Fed rate are the key monitorables in the near-term," he added.

RBI MPC policy rate decision

With a four-to-two majority, the RBI's Monetary Policy Committee decided to keep the repo rate unchanged at 6.5% for the ninth consecutive time. The decision comes amid speculation that the Federal Reserve may cut rates in September due to weak jobs data, raising concerns about a potential recession in the world's largest economy. However, Das reiterated the RBI's stance of not mirroring developed

world policies and basing decisions on domestic factors like recent bountiful rains and other local conditions. Das noted that while India's growth remains robust and core inflation has moderated to historic lows, fuel group disinflation could reverse in the coming quarters due to the base effect wearing out. He acknowledged that high food price momentum likely continued in July, slowing the disinflation process in the first quarter of FY25. The MPC must carefully consider the impact of food inflation, given its significant role in overall inflation. Experts have highlighted that higher food inflation could prevent overall inflation from declining significantly. The cost of key vegetables like onions, tomatoes, and potatoes has risen, with a Crisil analysis indicating that the cost of a vegetarian thali in India increased by 11% sequentially in July. Concerns about weather variations impacting inflation and economic stability persist.

NEWS BOX

Rohit Sharma on India's batting debacle vs Sri Lanka: Weren't smart against spin

New Delhi. Rohit Sharma said that India lacked smartness while batting against spin in the ODI series against Sri Lanka. On Wednesday (August 7), the Men in Blue slumped to a massive 110-run defeat in the third game at the R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo. After being asked to chase down a target of 249, the visitors were bowled out for 138 in 26.1 overs. Rohit praised Kusal Mendis and Avishka Fernando for manipulating the field to good effect by playing sweeps, paddle sweeps and reverse sweeps. Fernando's 96 and Mendis' 59 laid the platform for the home team. They also put on a partnership of 82 runs for the second wicket. On the back of their performance, Sri Lanka won the series 2-0. They were consistent with sweeps, taking their chances. There weren't a lot of runs scored down the ground. They didn't use the feet as much as we expected. It was about using sweeps and piercing that deep square leg and midwicket field. That is something we failed to do as a batting unit. We didn't play enough sweeps, reverse sweeps, or paddle sweeps, and used our feet too much. That was the difference," Rohit said after the match. "If you look at Kusal Mendis and Avishka Fernando today [who put on an 82-run stand], they got a lot of runs square of the wicket. They were using the turn, and sweeping, making the fielder move left and right. They were smart with how they batted and we were not,"



Rohit added. "We did not dominate against spin" Jeffrey Vandersay picked up six wickets in the second ODI after which Dunith Wellalage wrecked the Indian batting with a five-wicket haul. "All in all, we need to admit where we have made mistakes, we didn't dominate against spin. On such wickets, you need to dominate a bit and the Sri Lankan spinners had consistently kept us under pressure in all three games," Rohit added. In all three matches, India were asked to bat second and they failed to chase down targets.

Mirabai Chanu vows to work harder after missing medal in Paris: Tried my best

New Delhi. Mirabai Chanu was disappointed after she failed to win a medal in weightlifting in Paris Olympics 2024. On Wednesday, August 7, the 30-year-old finished fourth in the women's 49kg category event, missing out on a spot in the top three. She lifted a total of 199 kgs (88 in snatch and 111 in clean and jerk). Back in 2021, Chanu won the silver medal, but this time around, she couldn't quite put her best foot forward. However, the weightlifter took the defeat in her stride and pledged to work harder to make a strong comeback in the 2028 edition of the Olympics in Los Angeles. "I tried my best to win a medal for the country but I missed it today. It is a part of the game, we all sometimes win and sometimes lose," Mirabai told after her campaign. "Next time I will work harder to win a medal for the country. I will try my best and will deliver my best performance in the next game," Mirabai added. Interestingly, Mirabai finished only a point less than Thailand's Surodchana's tally of 200 (88 in snatch and 112 in clean and jerk).



Mirabai Chanu delivered a commendable performance at the South Paris Arena, displaying her prowess in the snatch segment by achieving her personal best. Her exceptional strength and technique were evident as she lifted with precision and confidence. However, the clean and jerk phase presented significant challenges, preventing her from reaching the heights she had previously achieved. Despite her valiant efforts, Chanu finished 8 kilograms shy of her personal record of 207 kilograms. This marked a notable deviation from her usual performance standards, reflecting the intensely competitive field she faced. China's Hou Zhihui, a bronze medallist from the Tokyo Olympics, emerged as the event's standout, capturing the gold medal with a thrilling and decisive final lift.

Quincy Hall gets a gold in the Olympic 400 meters with yet another US comeback on the Paris track

Hall reeled in three runners down the stretch of the 400-meter final Wednesday to deliver another heart-stopping win for his country at the Stade de France.



SAINT-DENIS, France. As the flash of red, white and blue streaked past one sprinter — then the next, then the next — the American man delivering the latest out-of-nowhere comeback on the track said he had one thing going through his mind: "Get home, son! Get home, son!" Quincy Hall got home in first, then fell to the ground and did snow angels. Just another routine day in a come-from-behind kind of Olympics for the USA. Hall reeled in three runners down the stretch of the 400-meter final Wednesday to deliver another heart-stopping win for his country at the Stade de France. He finished in 43.40 seconds, beating Britain's Matthew Hudson-Smith by .04 seconds; they are now the

fourth- and fifth-fastest men in history at the distance. Hall's late push came the evening after American Cole Hocker rocked his sport by coming from way back to beat the favorites in a memorable men's 1500. Add in Noah Lyles, whose only lead in his 100-meter thriller Sunday came at the exact point he crossed the finish line, and it's easy to see a pattern. "I've got determination," Hall said. "That's what got me to that line. A lot of hurt, a lot of pain." The win came about an hour after Lyles advanced to the final of the 200 meters despite finishing second to Letsile Tebogo in his semifinal. Lyles will race for

the gold medal Thursday. Things did not look good for Hall with 100 meters to go. Things looked bad for Hall, a 26-year-old who starred at South Carolina and who breeds dogs, as the eight sprinters approached the final curve. He was 5 or so meters behind Hudson-Smith and 2012 champion Kirani James, both to his left, and as they rounded the bend, Hall was making up ground on Jareem Richards to his outside. It looked to be shaping up as a good battle for bronze. With his arms pumping low and wide and his head bobbing, Hall passed them all, then thrust his chest out to beat the

Brit. Hall fell to the ground and scissored his arms and legs back and forth — snow angels in 80-degree weather on the bright purple track. "I just wanted to keep doing what my coach told me to do, just keep driving and keep driving and get home," Hall said. Lost in that chaos was Samukonga, the Zambian, who also came from nowhere to take third. Hall is the first American since LaShawn Merritt in 2008 to capture gold in the one-lap race that the country dominated for decades before that. He joins the likes of Michael Johnson, Jeremy Wariner and Lee Evans among the champions the United States has produced in the most tactical sprint on the track program.

"I knew these guys would get out try to see who they could throw off their race," he said. Turns out, not him. The new champ's reaction when he crossed the line: "I just won. It's over. Next four years, I can say I'm Olympic champion." US takes silver and almost pulls upset in steeplechase Morocco's Soufiane El Bakkali defended his title in men's steeplechase, finishing in 8 minutes, 6.05 seconds for a .36-second win over America's Kenneth Rooks. Rooks had the lead heading into the homestretch and was looking to pull off a massive upset, but El Bakkali overtook him.

India to face Spain in Olympic bronze medal match: H2H, all you need to know

- India will face Spain in the bronze medal match
- India leads the head-to-head against Spain
- India will welcome back Amit Rohidas back into the mix



New Delhi. It has been a whirlwind couple of days for the Indian contingent, which would all start with the men's hockey team's agonizing loss to Germany in the semi-final. The Indian team was probably the best team on the day but the world champions were able to edge through in the end and get into the final. The Indian team were left heartbroken, but all is not lost for the team. They will compete for the Bronze medal for the second Olympics in a row and this time they will be facing Spain. The

Spanish side has been on the rise in the world of hockey and the Paris Olympics 2024 is a testament to this. While it started with a 4-0 loss to Great Britain, Spain would pull off the big upset in the form of a 2-0 win over Germany in the group stages. This was followed by a draw against France and a win against South Africa. They would then make it to the quarterfinals, where they secured the biggest win so far in the form of Belgium, who they beat 3-2. Spain will be confident coming into the contest and the Indian team would need to be on their toes. The best thing

is that India will welcome back Amit Rohidas to the side after the defender served his one-match ban. He was sorely missed in the semi-final and the Indian team will be aiming to finish the campaign with the bronze medal.

India vs Spain: Head to Head

India and Spain have played 16 games so far and it is the Indian team that leads the head-to-head 6-5 at the moment. 5 matches have ended in draws between both sides. The last time India and Spain met was in the FIH Hockey Pro League earlier this year, where India won 8-7 in a shootout after the match had ended 2-2. In the last 5 matches, India have beaten Spain 4 times. In the Tokyo Olympics, India would beat Spain 3-0.

India vs Spain: When and where to watch

The India vs Spain Paris Olympics 2024 bronze medal match will be played on August 8, Thursday at 5:30 PM IST. The match can be viewed on the Sports 18 1 and Sports 18 2 channels and livestreamed on the JioCinema website and app.

After Vinesh Phogat's disqualification, Sarah Hildebrandt wins wrestling gold

Paris Sarah Hildebrandt of the United States put a chaotic morning behind her to win the women's 50kg freestyle event, after Vinesh Phogat's disqualification from the bout on Wednesday, 7 August in Paris. Hildebrandt was originally scheduled to meet Vinesh Phogat in the gold medal match but the Indian was disqualified for being overweight. Cuba's Yusneylys Guzman, who lost to Phogat in Tuesday's semi-finals, was promoted instead and Hildebrandt prevailed 3-0 to win the gold after claiming bronze in Tokyo three years ago. "My mind and body are not computing everything, especially with the chaotic morning I had with the change of opponent," Hildebrandt said at the mixed zone while nibbling a muffin. "It was very strange, like 'Oh my god, I just won the Olympics'" she said of the assumption she had prevailed by forfeit. "So there had to be a reset. I took a nap, woke up, and it was like a fever dream." Earlier in the day, Vinesh

Phogat was disqualified from the women's 50kg wrestling final at the Paris Olympics. The 29-year-old was found ineligible to compete on the second day as she was found



100 grams overweight during the weigh-in on the day of the final. Despite the best efforts from Vinesh Phogat's team on Tuesday night, the wrestler missed the weight on Wednesday. Vinesh Phogat was in the 50kg permissible limit on Tuesday. She

stunned World No. 1 Yui Susaki in the opening round before working her way through in the quarter-final and the semi-final to become the first-ever Indian woman to reach the Olympic wrestling final. The Indian Olympic Association (IOA), in an official statement, confirmed the disqualification. It also requested all stakeholders to ensure Vinesh Phogat's privacy. The International Olympic Committee confirmed Vinesh Phogat's disqualification, confirming that Cuba's Yusneylys, who lost to Vinesh in the semi-final, will play the Gold medal match. "VINESH Vinesh (IND) failed second day weigh-in. According to the article 11 of the International Wrestling Rules, VINESH Vinesh (IND) will be replaced by the wrestler who lost against her in the Semifinal. Therefore GUZMAN LOPEZ Yusneylys (CUB) will compete in the Final. Repechage SUSAKI Yui (JPN) vs LIVACH Oksana (UKR) will become Bronze Medal," International Olympic Association's statement read.

the list of 12 athletes who made it to the final. When will Neeraj Chopra's javelin throw final at the Paris Olympics 2024 take place? Neeraj Chopra's javelin throw final at the Paris Olympics 2024 will take place on August 8, Thursday. Where will Neeraj Chopra's javelin throw final at the Paris Olympics 2024 take place? Neeraj Chopra's javelin throw final at the Paris Olympics 2024 will take place at Stade de France in Paris. What time will Neeraj Chopra's javelin throw final at the Paris Olympics 2024 start? Neeraj Chopra's javelin throw final at the Paris Olympics 2024 will start at 11:55 PM (IST). Where will Neeraj Chopra's javelin throw final at the Paris Olympics 2024 be broadcast? Neeraj Chopra's javelin throw final at the Paris Olympics 2024 will be telecast on the Sports18 1 SD and Sports18 1 HD TV channels. Where to watch the live-streaming Neeraj Chopra's javelin throw final at the Paris Olympics? Neeraj Chopra's javelin throw final at the Paris Olympics 2024 will be streamed live on the JioCinema app and website.

Don't retire: Vinesh Phogat's uncle Mahavir urges wrestler to rethink

Vinesh Phogat's uncle, Mahavir Phogat, has urged the Indian wrestler not to retire and said that he will make her understand to change her decision.

UPDATED. Vinesh Phogat's uncle and childhood coach and mentor, Mahavir Phogat, has urged the Indian wrestler to not retire and re-think her call. Vinesh announced her retirement from wrestling during the early hours on August 8, Thursday. Her decision came after she was disqualified from the 50kg freestyle wrestling final event at the Paris Olympics 2024. However, Vinesh's uncle, who gave wings to her dreams to become a wrestler, felt that this decision had come out of sheer disappointment from her. "She informed about the news early in the morning at 5:00

am. This announcement could have come because of the kind of mental state she must be in after losing out on a medal despite coming so close. After meeting Vinesh, will make her sit and explain to her to change this decision and work hard on herself. Whenever anyone reaches this close a medal win, they can take such a kind of decision out of anger," Mahavir uncle said while speaking exclusively to India Today.

Vinesh to play LA Olympics 2028?

Mahavir uncle also mentioned that him alongside other wrestlers, including Bajrang Punia would urge her to come out of retirement and participate in the LA Olympics 2028. This was her third Olympics and being this near to good broke her heart. This is common that any athlete who could do this in anger. When she returns, we all me, Bajrang Punia and others will, motivate her for the upcoming 2028 Olympics. In 2016, she could not win the Olympics due to injury. In 2020 and 2024, she was under pressure due to protests against the federation and Brij Bhushan. I think could give her respite, but it's hard. "He also wants to prepare his younger daughter for the



upcoming Olympics in 2028 and asked the female wrestlers to give their everything for the next Games. "In the future I will talk with Sangeeta, my younger daughter to prepare for the Olympics. Will make 100 Vinesh Phogat who will be winning medals in the Olympics. I want to say women wrestlers that start preparing for the 2028 Olympics and appeal to coaches to train athletes with

discipline. There is no conspiracy. They have their rules and this happened according to rule book." Mahavir uncle said.

Mahavir uncle's support for Vinesh

There was a sense of disappointment, dejection and sorrow on Mahavir uncle's face after the grappler was disqualified, as he broke down soon after. However, as a guru and her uncle, he does not want Vinesh Phogat to give up on her dreams. In fact, he wants Indian women wrestlers like Vinesh and Sakshee Malikhh to inspire the next generation of female wrestlers to fight in the Los Angeles Olympics 2028.

Vinesh appeals against disqualification

Meanwhile, Vinesh Phogat has appealed against her disqualification from the wrestling final at the Paris Olympics 2024 with the Court of Arbitration for Sports (CAS). The move by the Indian wrestler comes after she was not allowed to compete in the finals of the women's 50kg category after missing her weight by just 100 grams. Vinesh, who had won the semi-final bout via a 5-0 margin, was the first Indian woman wrestler to qualify for the final in the Olympics.

Preity Zinta

Attends Taste Of India Festival In Toronto, Says 'Nothing Compares To Our Desi Food'

Preity Zinta has long been celebrated for her on-screen talent. She has earned global acclaim. Recently, she was honoured as a special guest at a food festival in Toronto, where she expressed her heartfelt gratitude to the organisers for the opportunity. The actress shared a captivating clip compilation from the event, highlighting the extensive array of Indian delicacies on display. The festival attracted numerous foreigners and tourists who delighted in the feast. Additionally, the event featured cultural dances and songs. Preity Zinta lit the lamp at the festival and could also be seen capturing the happy environment around her. Summarising her experience at the festival, she wrote, "What an amazing weekend in Toronto for another event for Taste of India, the largest food festival in



North America. So humbled & so happy to see all those smiling faces. Nothing compares to our desi food & our desi vibe. Thank you Rinku Shah and Taste Of India Festival for making me a part of your tribe. I loved every part of being in Toronto. A big shout out to everyone in Toronto for showering me with so much of love."

Her fans were excited to see her being invited to the prestigious festival. One of them stated, "You gave them so many good

memories!! Memories to cherish forever," while another person said, "It was rare, I was There." Earlier this year, the actress graced the Cannes Film Festival in style. She visited the event to present the renowned Pierre Angenieux Award to Santosh Sivan, a popular Indian cinematographer. Preity Zinta first collaborated with him in Dil Se. Meanwhile, the actress well known for her roles in iconic films like Dil Se, Kal Ho Naa Ho and Veer-Zaara, has been gone from the big screen for a long time. She will soon be seen in Lahore 1947 alongside Sunny Deol. The film is directed by Rajkumar Santoshi. The film marks Preity and Sunny's long-awaited reunion on screen. The duo had already appeared together in several films like Hero: Love Story of a Spy, Farz and Bhaiaji Superhit. The actress also wrapped up shooting for the film in June.



Marathi Actor Hardik Joshi's Beardless Look Viral



Marathi actors Hardik Joshi and Akshaya Deodhar are some of the most beloved couples in Marathi cinema. They are particularly known for their roles in the serial Tujhyat Jeev Rangala. Hardeek enacted the role of Ranvijay Gaikwad, aka Ranada. On the other hand, Akshaya played the role of Anjali Pathak and has now become the owner of a saree brand. They recently shared their picture on Instagram and Hardik's fans were surprised with his clean-shaven look. In the previous photos uploaded on social media, the Tujhyat Jeev Rangala actor had sported a heavy beard which became a part of his look. Now, in the recent picture, besides the beardless look, it appears that he had also shed some weight which added to his healthy appearance in the photos.

Hardik and Akshaya's followers dropped heart emoticons in the comment section signifying their love for the couple. Both lovebirds have never shied away from painting the tinsel town red with their romantic pictures. On Valentine's Day, Hardik shared a special post on Instagram to celebrate Valentine's Day. In the post, he shared snaps with Akshaya, where she is wearing a white shirt and blue jeans. On the other hand, Hardik is wearing a matching white shirt and pants. The snaps capture them lovingly gazing at each other, showcasing their affection and bond on this special day.

Recently, on the show Bus Bai Bus, Hardik opened up about how he proposed to Akshaya. He said, "I have known Akshaya for around 5 years. We met on the show Tujhyat Jeev Rangala and bonded well. She became my great friend, but the thought of marriage was not in my head." The actor further said, "It was my mother who asked me to propose the idea of marriage to Akshaya." Hardik remembered his mother telling him that now he is at home for some time and he should think about his wedding. The Tujhyat Jeev Rangala actor recalled his mother saying that this is the right time to get married, otherwise, he will get busy with your other projects.

In Rare Appearance, Mira Rajput Spotted With Daughter Misha



Bollywood actor Shahid Kapoor's daughter, Misha, is all grown up. The little star was recently spotted in Mumbai's Bandra with her mother, Mira Rajput, after a quick salon session. Shahid and Mira, who welcomed their first child, Misha, in August 2016, have since chosen to keep their kids away from media attention. In a rare appearance, the mother-daughter duo was spotted after their salon visit. In the video, while Misha runs ahead of her mother, seemingly to quickly evade the media and get into their car, Mira follows behind attentively. While Mira chose a plain black T-shirt with blue bell-bottom jeans, her daughter looked cute in a simple white dress with a matching hairband.

Notably, the family is back in the bay after their recent Europe vacation. Mira Rajput, who is quite active on social media, took to Instagram and shared pictures and videos of her trip. In one of the videos, she could be seen exploring picturesque locations, with, of course, her kids in company. Prior to that, she also attended Taylor Swift's Eras Tour concert in Munich with her daughter Misha. The mommy-daughter took a selfie at the concert, which she later shared on Instagram. "Core memory with my sunshine swiftie. We couldn't believe it! Mother daughter trip of dreams," Mira wrote.

Her Instagram feed is filled with moments from their family outings, get-togethers and vacations. For those unaware, Shahid Kapoor and Mira Rajput got married in 2015. They welcomed their daughter the next year. In 2018, they were blessed with a son, Zain. Mira, a businesswoman by profession, recently launched her own skincare brand, Akind.

What's Next For Shahid Kapoor?

Last seen in Teri Baaton Mein Aisa Uljha Jiya, alongside Kriti Sanon in the lead, Shahid Kapoor next has Deva in the pipeline. He will be seen opposite Pooja Hedge. Directed by Rosshan Andrews, the action-entertainer is set to release on October 11, 2024.

Niharika Konidela's

Pink Saree Look Portrays A Perfect Blend Of Tradition And Modernity



Apart from her acting and production ventures, Niharika Konidela is a popular name on social media. She frequently shares tidbits from her personal life and updates the fans on her projects as well as fashion photoshoots. The actress's recent social media photoshoot proves why she is considered a leading name in fashion in the industry. Niharika took to her official Instagram handle to share the new shoot, donning a traditional ensemble. The images show the actress in a homely setting, wearing a stunning light-pink saree. The pink blouse of the attire is tailored with a plunging neckline along with little sequin embroidery, across the cloth. The saree's drape is printed with colourful checks, resting elegantly over her left shoulder. She has accessorized the look with silver-hued jhumkis, a bangle and a huge earring. The whole look is complemented by the graceful nose ring the actress has opted to wear. Niharika has captioned the post, "Idhemi gaaradi," completing it with a light pink heart emoticon.

Fans share their praises and appreciation for the images in the comment section below. The first user complimented, "You look great, you got the perfect body language." A second user shared, "Super, mind-blowing expressions." While a third fan stated, "Dream girl." And a fourth fan shared, "Wonderful look." Several fans flooded the replies with heart and heart-eye emoticons. The post has been liked over 227,000 times on the platform.

At the moment, Niharika is busy with the promotions of her production, titled Committee Kurrollu. The film is being helmed by Yadu Vamsi, who is also credited as its writer. The cast of the film includes Sai Kumar, Goparaju Ramana, Sharanaya Suresh, Sri Lakshmi, Teena Sarvya, Prasad Behara and many others. It is being produced by Jayalakshmi Adapaka, Niharika Konidela, Padmaja Konidela and Ramesh Manyam, under the banner of Pink Elephant Pictures. The music on the film is done by composer Anudeep Dev while the cinematographer is Edurolo Raju and Anwar Ali has done the editing.

