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Four air-launched missile strikes by IAF on May 10 and Pakistan was on the mat

The Sikh Times
Sanjay Kumar

New Delhi, May 24: Pakistan's Operation Bunyan al-Marsoos retaliation to Indian Operation Sindoor on



May 10 lasted just eight hours with Islamabad desperately calling the US to intervene on its behalf for a ceasefire, after four major air strikes by IAF pulverized the air-bases, air assets and air defenses of the enemy on the intervening night of May 10, according to people familiar with the matter. IAF fighters launched precision missiles that struck Pakistan four times on May 10, with Rafale-launched SCALP missiles and SU-30 MKI-launched Brahmos missiles taking

out the northern air command-control network at Nur Khan airbase in Chaklala in the first strike itself, the people added. The last strike was carried out at Jacobabad and Bholar air bases but by that time Pakistan had folded and was seeking US intervention for cease fire. The so-called Bunyan al-Marsoos operation that Pakistan launched at 1.00 am on May 10 with the promise of destroying Indian air bases in the next 48 hours as per communication intercepts, lasted only till 930 am as India went in hard against Pakistan using an assortment of air to surface missiles, the people said. India's S-400 air defence system in Adampur went into action no less than 11 times during Operation Sindoor and destroyed a Pakistani SAAB-2000 airborne early warning system as far as 315 kilometres away deep in Pakistan. Indian Air Force also has proof of its missiles having downed one C-130 J medium lift aircraft, a JF-17 and two F-16 fighters on ground and in the air, they added.

Don't worry, everything will be normal: Rahul

The Sikh Times
Simmi Kaur Babbar

Poonch (J-K), May 24: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Saturday reached out to school students here who lost two of their mates - 12-year-old twins Zain Ali and Urwa Fatima - to Pakistani shelling, consoling as well as encouraging them to "study hard, play hard and make lots of friends". "Don't worry, everything will come back to normal," he said while interacting with the friends of the two deceased children. During an hour-long whirlwind tour of Poonch town bruised by heavy shelling from across the LoC during the India-Pakistan military standoff earlier this month, the leader of the opposition in the Lok Sabha interacted with the students of the convent school which lost Ali and Fatima. Though the school escaped the shelling between May 7 and 10 that left 28 dead and over 70 others injured, its two students died in Poonch town on May 7. They were among the 13 civilians who died in Poonch district the worst-hit by the shelling. "You've seen a bit of danger, you've seen a bit of a frightening situation. But don't worry, everything will come back to normal. And your way of responding to this problem should be that you

study really hard, you play really hard and you make a lot of friends in school. Okay? Will you do that? Good," Gandhi told the students of Christ School. His presence at the school brightened up



the students who were seen clapping and waving at the former Congress president who shook hands with them. "Big hug to all of you. Love you and thank you," he said before leaving. He visited the families of those who lost their lives in the shelling and inspected damage to the houses and religious

places, including a Gurdwara. Accompanied by party leaders, including AICC General Secretary in charge of the party's Jammu and Kashmir affairs Syed Naseer Hussain, AICC general secretary G A Mir, J-K Congress chief Tariq Hameed Karra and former ministers Vikar Rasool Wani and Lal Singh, Gandhi paid obeisance at Singh Sabha Gurdwara. When Gandhi was leaving the Singh Sabha Gurdwara, a man in the crowd expressed his faith in the Congress leader to raise their voice at the national level. "Prime Minister Narendra Modi did not even mention Poonch (during his address to the nation in the aftermath of Operation Sindoor but we have faith that you will raise our issue," he said after Gandhi halted in his steps to hear the man dodging the security apparatus to come closer. During an interaction with a young girl whose house was badly damaged, she told Gandhi that they were five sisters and their father died 16 years ago. Recounting the horrifying experience, the girl said they were on the ground floor when the shell hit the house and they had a miraculous escape. Some residents sought Gandhi's intervention in enhancing the compensation for their damaged houses.

CM Saini participated in the 10th Governing Council meeting of NITI Aayog

The Sikh Times
Sourabh Sharma

Chandigarh, May 24: The 10th meeting of the Governing Council of NITI Aayog was held in New Delhi on Saturday under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Sh Narendra Modi. The meeting was attended by Chief Ministers from various states, including Haryana Chief Minister Sh Nayab Singh Saini. During the meeting, the Prime Minister emphasized the need to accelerate the pace of development. He said that if the Centre and all states work together as Team India, no goal is beyond reach. A developed India is the aspiration of every citizen. When every state progresses, the nation progresses. This is the collective dream of 140 crore Indians. In the meeting, Chief Minister Sh Nayab Singh Saini presented Haryana's Vision Document-2047, highlighting the state's active contribution in achieving the national goal of 'Developed India @2047'. The document outlines

Haryana's target of becoming a one trillion-dollar economy by 2047 and aims to create 50 lakh new jobs. The Chief Minister said that the Prime Minister's vision, policies, and decisions have consistently served the national interest. The vision of a developed India encompasses self-reliance, prosperity, empowerment, capability, inclusiveness, and technological advancement. It is our shared responsibility to realize this vision. To ensure Haryana's active contribution to the national vision, the Haryana Government has developed the State Vision Document-2047 in alignment with the Nation's Vision Document. He said that the State Vision Document sets a target of transforming Haryana into a one trillion-dollar economy by the year 2047. He further urged that, once finalized, the Haryana Vision-2047 be integrated into the national-level Developed India Dashboard. Sh Nayab Singh Saini said

that special emphasis has been placed on six key areas to contribute towards building a developed India. These priorities have also been incorporated into the state



budget for the current financial year. To prepare Haryana for the future, a new entity called the Department of Future has been established. This department will explore development opportunities through cutting-edge technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Quantum

Computing, and Robotics. Acting as a nodal agency, the Department of Future will spearhead long-term strategic initiatives, technological foresight, and integrated policy-making to realize a trillion-dollar economy and promote inclusive development, aligned with Haryana's Vision 2047. The Chief Minister said that Haryana is establishing the Haryana AI Mission to advance Artificial Intelligence initiatives. Recently, the state signed an agreement with the World Bank to support this effort. The Haryana Venture Capital Fund is actively working to promote startups by providing internships, mentorship, and affordable infrastructure for the youth. In addition, the state government has encouraged private investors to create a Fund of Funds worth Rs 2,000 crore, aimed at positioning Haryana as a major hub for innovation and entrepreneurship through strategic investments in startups. The Chief Minister highlighted that tech-

Himachal CM Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu Seeks Higher Allocation Of Funds For Central Schemes

The Sikh Times
Tejinder Kaur Babbar

Shimla: Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu on Saturday emphasised upon special needs of the hill states and said they should be considered for higher allocation of funds by relaxing eligibility criteria in central schemes. Speaking at the 10th governing council meeting of Niti Aayog here, chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Chief Minister demanded the release of funds due to the state, which have been pending for a long time. "If the long pending dues are released by the Centre well in time, Himachal Pradesh will itself become self-reliant," he said. The Chief



Minister elaborated on the state government's vision to bring the state to the most favourite tourist destination on the tourism map of the country. "The government envisions a compact package for tourism promotion which includes and will integrate religious tourism, eco tourism, water tourism, nature tourism, health tourism, etc, which can attract all kinds of tourists from the country as well as from abroad. We are also expanding the Kangra airport to facilitate the landing of the larger planes, which will add to the economy of the region as footfall of tourists will increase manifold," he said. He pleaded about state's rights in hydropower projects and raised the issue of free royalty and handing over the projects under public sector undertakings (PSUs) and central public sector undertakings (CPSUs), which had completed 40 years. The Chief Minister raised the matter of royalty aligned with the state government's energy policy. He outlined the policy, which mandates a 12 per cent royalty for the first 12 years, 18 per cent for the subsequent 18 years and 30 per cent for the next 10 years in the power projects. He said private companies already comply with this policy and emphasised that central PSUs should also follow it. The Chief Minister also informed that Himachal Pradesh is the "lungs of northern India" and has contributed a lot to preserving the green cover, and added that the state should get a Green Bonus for protecting the environment.

Mobile deposit counters to set up at polling stations: EC

New Delhi, May 24: In a major relief for voters, the Election Commission (EC) on Friday said it would set up mobile phone deposit counters at polling stations. Several voters who go to cast their votes take their phones inside polling booths by concealing the device in their clothes due to the absence of a facility to deposit it. In another move, seeking to rationalise poll day management, the EC decided to allow parties and candidates to set up booths to distribute unofficial voter identification slips at 100 metres from the polling station entrance. Till now, the limit was 200 metres from the "polling location". These two key reforms will first be implemented in Bihar, where assembly polls will be held later this year. "Recognising the increasing coverage and usage of mobile phones in both urban and rural areas and the challenges faced not only by the voters at large but also by senior citizens, women and PwD electors in managing mobile phones on the poll day, the Commission has decided to allow a mobile deposit facility just outside the polling stations", the EC said in a statement. Only mobile phones shall be allowed within 100 metres of the polling station and that too in switched-off mode. Very simple pigeonhole boxes or jute bags shall be provided near the entrance door of the polling station.

If Centre, states work together like Team India, no goal is impossible: PM Modi

The Sikh Times
Navdeep Singh Sahni

New Delhi, May 24: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said if the Union government and states work together like Team India, no goal is impossible. Modi is chairing the 10th Governing Council meeting of Niti Aayog. There is a need to increase the speed of development, he said. "We have to increase the speed of development. If the Centre and all the States come together and work together like Team India, no goal is impossible," Niti Aayog in a post on X quoted the Prime Minister as saying. The theme of the Governing Council meeting is 'Viksit Rajya for Viksit Bharat@2047'. "Viksit Bharat is the goal of every Indian. When every state is Viksit, then Bharat will be Viksit. This is the aspira-



tion of its 140 crore citizens," Modi said. The council, the apex body of Niti Aayog, includes all state chief ministers, lieutenant governors of Union Territories, and several Union ministers. Prime Minister Modi is the chair-

man of Niti Aayog. "We should have the aim of making each state viksit, each city viksit, each Nagar Palika viksit and each village viksit. If we work on these lines, we will not have to wait till 2047 to become Viksit Bharat," Modi said. The prime minister also suggested that states should develop at least one tourist destination per state at par with global standards and by providing all facilities and infrastructure. "One State: One Global Destination. It would also lead to the development of the neighbouring cities as tourist places," he said. Noting that India is getting rapidly urbanised, Modi said, "We should work towards future-ready cities". Growth, innovation and sustainability should be the engine for the development of India's cities, he added. Modi also emphasised the need to work towards the inclusion of women in the workforce. "We must make laws and policies so that they can be respectfully integrated into the workforce," he said. It is the first major meeting of the prime minister with chief ministers of all states and lieutenant governors of Union Territories after Operation Sindoor.

Will not be silenced by terrorism: Tharoor

The Sikh Times
Naresh Malhotra

New Delhi, May 24: Congress MP Shashi Tharoor, who is leading a multi-party delegation to five countries, has asserted the mission would be to give the world the message that "we will not be silenced by terrorism" and that "we don't want the world to look away either". Tharoor made the remarks late last night just before his delegation left for a visit to Guyana, Panama, Colombia, Brazil and the United States. In a video message posted on X, Tharoor said, "I'm heading off to five countries leading an all-party delegation to Guyana, Panama, Colombia, Brazil and the United States, and the reason we are going is to speak for the nation, to speak about this horrendous crisis we were subjected to in which our country was attacked by terrorists in the cruellest possible way." The Thiruvananthapuram MP said the delegation is a mission of peace and hope, and will one day remind the world that India stands for all the values "we need to preserve in the world today". "We need to speak up with clarity and con-



viction for our country, for our response and to give the world the message that we will not be silenced by terrorism and we don't want the world to look away either," the MP from

and not of hatred, killing and of terror. Jai Hind," he said in his video message. Tharoor also posted pictures of the delegation members at the airport before boarding the flight. The delegation led by Tharoor comprises Shambhavi (IJP-RV), Sarfaraz Ahmed (JMM), G M Harish Balayogi (TDP), Shashank Mani Tripathi (BJP), Bhuvaneshwar Kalita (BJP), Milind Deora (Shiv Sena), Tejasvi Surya (BJP) and former diplomat Taranjit Sandhu. It will travel to Guyana, Panama, Colombia, Brazil and the US. India's multi-party delegations to different countries will emphasise Pakistan's links to terrorism, including the 9/11 attack in the US, and assert that the recent conflict was triggered by the Pahalgam terror strike and not Operation Sindoor as alleged by Islamabad. After the briefing by Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri to four of the seven parliamentary delegations here on Friday, delegates said they will work to bust the Pakistani narrative of projecting India as the aggressor by underscoring the links of Pahalgam terrorists to the country. Three delegations were briefed by Misri on Tuesday and are already on tours of their destinations.

Muhammad Yunus to continue as Bangladesh's interim govt chief

The Sikh Times
Nasiruddin

Dhaka, May 24: Muhammad Yunus will remain as the head of Bangladesh's



interim government, an adviser in his cabinet said on Saturday amid speculation that the Nobel laureate has been considering resignation. "He (Yunus) didn't say he will leave. He said that while we face many obstacles in carrying out the work and responsibilities assigned to us, we are overcoming them," Planning Adviser

Wahiduddin Mahmud told reporters after an unscheduled meeting of the advisory council, according to news agency AFP. The planning adviser also added that none of the advisers in the interim government were going anywhere, as the responsibility entrusted to them is significant and they cannot abandon their duty, according to AFP. The surprise meeting of the advisory council was held hours before Yunus is scheduled to meet leaders of top political parties in Bangladesh and days after Yunus reportedly threatened to quit. His press secretary, Shafiqul Alam, told AFP earlier today that Yunus would meet leaders of the powerful Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and Jamaat-e-Islami. No agenda for the talks has been released. Yunus, who assumed office following a mass uprising in Bangladesh last year, has reportedly threatened to resign if political parties fail to support him. Bangladesh's political crisis escalated this week, with rival parties protesting on the streets of the capital Dhaka, with a string of competing demands.

NEWS BOX

Red alert for Nilgiris, Kovai Ghats; orange for Dindigul



CHENNAI. The Regional Meteorological Centre (RMC) in Chennai has issued a severe weather warning for Tamil Nadu, with a red alert declared for the Nilgiris and ghat areas of Coimbatore on May 25 and 26. The met office forecasts isolated extremely heavy rainfall exceeding 204.4 mm in these regions, signalling potential disruptions due to intense monsoon activity.

An orange alert has been issued for Dindigul, Theni, and Tenkasi districts, where heavy to very heavy rainfall is expected during the same period.

The monsoon onset over Kerala is anticipated within the next two days, setting the stage for increased rain across southern India. In Tamil Nadu, the RMC predicts that rainfall activity will commence on Saturday in the Nilgiris and ghat areas of Coimbatore, gaining momentum on Sunday and intensifying further on Monday and Tuesday.

The escalation is attributed to a well-marked low-pressure area over the Eastcentral Arabian sea, likely to develop into a depression within 24 hours, and another low-pressure system expected over the North Bay of Bengal by May 27.

Authorities have urged residents in the affected areas to stay vigilant, with the IMD advising against unnecessary travel and recommending preparedness for potential flooding and landslides, especially in hilly terrains. Thunderstorms accompanied by gusty winds of 40-50 kmph are also forecast in parts of Tamil Nadu, Pudukcherry, and Karaikal through May 27.

People raise concerns as more cracks appear on NH 66 in Kozhikode

KOZHICKODE. More cracks have been spotted on under-construction NH 66 stretches, this time at Thiruvangoor and Ambalapadi in Kozhikode, sparking concerns. During the heavy rain on Thursday night, small pieces of concrete from the underpass at Ambalapadi fell on a two-wheeler rider travelling towards Cherukulam. In Thiruvangoor, a 400-m-long crack was seen at an under-construction flyover on the NH stretch.

"The concrete pieces, though small, could have led to a major accident. Luckily, the biker escaped. We informed the highway officials and the construction firm about the crack and water leak, but they termed it a normal matter," said Suresh Palora of Ambalapadi.

"When they spotted the crack on Thursday, the residents informed the police, after which traffic through the underpass was restricted at 11.30pm. The authorities inspected the place and restored traffic after the road was deemed safe," said Safeena Edavazhi Peedikayil, the councillor of Eranielkal division. An engineer from KMC Constructions Ltd, the contractor working on the Vengalam-Ramanattukara stretch of the NH, said bridges are being constructed in different phases and there would be gaps at joints when they continue expansion in each phase. "It would be a two-inch gap. It were the pieces of cement putty used to fill the gap that fell. There is nothing to worry about," said Nasar, the engineer. At Thiruvangoor, the crack reportedly formed a few days ago and has been sealed with tar. However, the residents alleged the authorities did not inspect the damaged portion and only poured tar on the crack.

No active Covid cases in Telangana, public immunity strong: DPH

HYDERABAD. Asserting that the public has developed immunity, Director of Public Health Dr B Ravinder Nayak on Friday urged citizens not to panic over reports of an uptick in Covid-19 cases nationwide and two reported cases in AP.

"Given previous exposure, the public has likely developed a level of immunity which reduces the risk of widespread transmission," Dr Nayak said, reassuring citizens that there were currently no active cases in the state.

Doc tests positive, recovers

Recently, a pulmonologist residing in Kukatpally tested positive and has fully recovered after following the five-day protocol, the Medchal-Malkajgiri DMHO confirmed on Friday.

Dr Nayak stated that small mutations in viruses like Covid are common, and people have already developed immunity to tackle the virus.

Experts stress on precautions

Dr Nayak added that, in most cases, symptoms are mild or asymptomatic, and simple home care such as steam inhalation and rest ensures recovery within a week. "However, high-risk groups, such as the elderly, pregnant women, children and those with compromised immunity, should be cautious and seek medical advice," he said. Dr Nayak told that so far there are no guidelines from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare or the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

Coimbatore police probe suspected murder of youth with ADHD at Pollachi

COIMBATORE. Coimbatore District (Rural) police have formed six special teams to investigate the suspected murder of a 23-year-old man with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), who had been staying at a home for persons with intellectual disabilities in Pollachi. Two of the six individuals associated with the home have been detained, while the others are being traced.

The missing youth has been identified as S. R. Varunkanth, son of T. Ravikumar and Banumathi of Amman Nagar, Karavali Mathappur. Trustees of the home initially told the parents that their son had gone missing during an outing to Aliyar Dam. However, the family later received information that their son had been severely beaten by staff on 12 May and obtained a video showing him with serious injuries, seated on the floor.

According to police, two of the detained suspects confessed that the youth had died and his body was buried at farmland owned by the trust at S. Nagoor near Nadupuni. However, attempts to exhume the body on Friday were halted after the exact burial location could not be determined.

Varunkanth had been admitted on 4 February to the Yuthira Charitable Trust (Special Children

Care and Training Centre) at Rathinasabapathy Puram for rehabilitation. "The family agreed to pay Rs 40,000 per month and Rs 1 lakh as a donation, of which Rs 50,000 had been paid. They were allowed to visit the youth once every six months," police said. "On 15 May, after learning of his disappearance during the

credible information about physical abuse at the home, along with a video confirming the injuries. On Thursday, they approached Superintendent of Police Dr K. Karthikeyan, who transferred the case to Mahalingapuram Police Station, which has jurisdiction over the care home.



alleged outing to Aliyar Dam, his father Ravikumar lodged a complaint with Aliyar Police. The trust cooperated initially and shared this version with the authorities."

However, CCTV footage from the previous week showed no evidence of the youth being present at Aliyar Dam. The family later received

Two days ago, all six suspects comprising staff and trustees went absconding. Police have since detained two, who revealed that the youth had been murdered and buried.

Meanwhile, officials from the District Differently-abled Welfare Department reported that 26 inmates were residing at the home. Most have since been relocated to their native places. Seven were forcibly moved to the house of a suspect's relative in Pollachi following the incident. Of these, six were rescued on Thursday and one on Friday. Efforts are ongoing to reunite them

with their families.

"The home was recognised (without government funding) by the Commissionerate for Welfare of the Differently-abled on 12 May, based on its progress over the past three years. It has now been closed due to the case and violations related to fee collection," sources added.

Judicial panel to submit report on Munambam land row next week in Kerala

Justice Ramachandra n said the terms of reference of the commission is to protect the interests of the Munambam residents.

KOCHI. The judicial commission appointed by the state government to resolve the dispute triggered by Kerala Waqf Board's claim over 404 acres of land in Munambam will submit its report next week, said chairman Justice (ret'd) C N Ramachandran.

"An appointment with the CM will be sought and the report submitted before May 31. I'm preparing the draft. Once it's done, it will take only two days to finalise the report," he told.

Justice Ramachandran said the terms of reference of the commission is to protect the interests of the Munambam residents. "The commission's objective and the state government's view is the same—protecting people's interests," he said. If the need is for a consensus, he said the government should go for it. "If all parties involved — the government, Waqf Board and Farook College — can discuss and resolve the matter, they should.



Else, the government, using its powers, should acquire the land," he said. He did not indicate whether these views would be in his final report.

However, acquiring the land is not easy, said an expert on the condition of anonymity. "First, there

is the problem of compensation. Why should Farook College, which has sold the land, be compensated? The question then is who should be compensated," said the expert.

"Our hope lies in decisions government will take"

"What the government can do is, through a settlement initiative, buy the land for a token price of Rs 1 and give it to the residents," the expert said. On the problem that the land was being considered waqf, the expert said, "It is not." Meanwhile, the agitation by the residents entered 200 days. Joseph Benny, the convenor of the Munambam Bhoo Samrakshana Samithi, said residents are placing high hopes on the commission's report. "We are looking forward to the steps the government will take once the report is submitted. With the new Waqf Amendment Act providing us no succour, our only hope lies in the decisions the government will take," he said.

Chalavadi approaches Horatti for privilege motion against Kalaburagi SP

BENGALURU. Leader of Opposition in the Council Chalavadi T Narayanaswamy on Friday approached Council Chairman Basavaraj Horatti, seeking his permission to move a breach of privilege motion against Kalaburagi Superintendent of Police and other officers. As Horatti was not in office, Chalavadi spoke to him over phone and submitted the proposal to the personal secretary at Vidhana Soudha.

On being heckled and his alleged 'illegal detention' at the government guesthouse in Chittapur on May 21, Chalavadi alleged that officers were party to it. "Kalaburagi SP Aduru Srinivasulu and Additional SP Mahesh Meghannavar, DySP Shankar Gowda Patil, CPIS Chandrashekar Thigadi, Nataraja Lada and other officers kept silent

and performed their duties in a manner that led to my privileges being breached by participating in this criminal and shameful act," he



alleged, seeking action against them. Chalavadi was visiting Chittapur to attend a Tiranga Yatra programme organised in honour of Indian soldiers involved in "Operation Sindoor".

Soon after he arrived at the Government Guesthouse at 3.30pm, some goons, claiming to be Congress workers, staged a

protest in front of the main gate, using abusive language and shouting slogans, he alleged.

"Kalaburagi SP Aduru Srinivasulu did not arrive or respond properly to my call. But around 07.38 pm, the group forcibly entered the Circuit House premises. They threw a blueprint on my official government vehicle and damaged the vehicle. They tried to attack me, used low-level language, insulted and threatened me. Police were staring at me and were getting repeated phone calls. They were acting as per instructions given. I was trapped in that guesthouse for more than six hours and they kept me in illegal detention," he said.

Trouble broke out after Chalavadi allegedly made a derogatory remark against RDPR minister and Chittapur MLA Priyank Kharge.

GHMC to pursue criminal action against hospital for fake birth certificates

HYDERABAD. The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) has decided to initiate criminal proceedings against Metro Hospital in Tolichowki after it came to light that the institution fraudulently issued 65 birth and eight death certificates. Alerted to the scam, the GHMC, in coordination with the local police, conducted a detailed inquiry into the hospital's records. The investigation confirmed that the certificates had been issued without proper verification.

As a result, all 73 certificates have been cancelled. The GHMC also recommended cancellation of the hospital's registration and the medical registration of the doctor involved. GHMC officials told that verification procedures will be tightened to prevent such incidents in the future.

In a separate case, the GHMC framed charges against certain registrars after discrepancies were found during a suo motu investigation into reported home births. The probe revealed that four of the births, three in Falaknuma circle and one

in Malakpet circle, had not occurred. The health assistant involved has been dismissed from service. The registrars of the respective circles have been instructed to file criminal cases against the parents, neighbours and advocates who vouched for the "births". The GHMC had identified



74 home births within its jurisdiction. Upon random checks ordered by the then GHMC commissioner, it was found that 38 of these were registered at Shishu Vihar, a facility for orphaned children. The inquiry determined that four registrations were invalid, and the corresponding birth certificates have since been cancelled.

Karnataka High Court says owners of land on which flat is built can't retain any title

BENGALURU. The Karnataka High Court recently ruled that owners of the land on which an apartment complex has been constructed cannot retain any title after they execute sale deeds in respect of the apartment. The high court said that a statement in the sanctioned plan, "remaining area of the proposed property and remaining area of the owner reserved for", would not infer that the land owners had retained the property for themselves and could utilise it exclusively and independently of the apartment complex.

Justice NS Sanjay Gowda on April 25 passed the order while allowing a petition filed by Keerthi Harmony Apartment Owners Association at Kalkere in the city, questioning the licence granted by the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) in favour of the landowners, Hanumantha Reddy and others.



The landowners had applied and secured approval of the building plan for an apartment building that they proposed to construct.

Home Buyers' Forum welcomes order "Even if it is assumed that the plan did indicate that an extent of 1,104.40 sq metre had been retained for future development by the land owners, by virtue of the fact that after the plan was approved, the property

was conveyed by the erstwhile land owners in favour of the apartment owners, the ownership of the entire property stood transferred collectively to the apartment owners.

Hence the BBMP could not have entertained the plea of the erstwhile land owners who put forth the representation that they had retained an extent of 1,104.40 sq mtr and were entitled to put up a new apartment building on that extent," the court noted.

The court quashed the approval given by the BBMP, holding it wholly illegal. It observed, "The entire plot measuring 5 acres 16 guntas or 2,35,224 sq ft stood in the ownership of the entire apartment owners collectively, and the erstwhile landowners possessed no title to seek approval of the plan from the BBMP. The provisions of the Karnataka Apartment

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Gurcharan Singh Babbbar
Mob : 9654077232, 9971359517
Website : www.sikh-times.in
Email : sikh-timesindia@gmail.com

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Legal Advisors:

Advocate Mohd. Sajid
Advocate Dr. A.P. Singh
Advocate Manish Sharma
Advocate Pooja Bhaskar Sharma

Towering nightmare: NCR Residents marooned as lifts of highrise out of order for 6 days

NOIDA. Forty families are living a nightmare in a 22-storey tower at La Residentia with both its lifts out of order, leaving them with two choices - stay indoors and put everything else on hold or make the arduous trek up and down the stairs daily. This is the second time this month that this nasty shock of highrise living has stared at NCR residents. In the first week of May, flooding of the basement at Prateek Grand City in Ghaziabad had crippled elevators across all its 24 towers, each 28 floors high, forcing over 12,000 residents, children, elderly, and the pregnant among them, to negotiate endless flights of stairs.

Tower 29 of La Residentia in Greater Noida West is a standalone building, so unlike in condominiums where two or more towers are connected by pathways precisely in anticipation of such emergencies, residents can't switch to lifts in another tower. Among the families who live here are elderly people, working professionals

and at least one resident who is pregnant. Residents told TOI the lifts have been out of service since May 17. The purported reason is faulty cables that need replacing.

La Residentia does not have an AOA and is managed by the developer. It has 3,256 flats across 39 towers. Possession for around 1,800 flats has been given since 2017 across towers 1 to 29. The other towers are under construction. La Residentia's maintenance team claimed the lifts aren't completely dysfunctional and work intermittently. Residents, however, countered this, saying the lifts have been inactive and prone to snags even when functional. One of the reasons for the problems, they alleged, is that the lifts are underloaded with a supply of 350V when they need 400V. Sumil Jalota, a resident, said because of the defunct lifts, children have been forced to miss school, domestic helps aren't coming and



deliveries have stopped, leaving families marooned in their flats and cutting them off from access to essentials like medicines and groceries. Amitabh Jha, 52, a 9th floor resident with a respiratory ailment, had to move to his sister's apartment in Sector 71 to attend court. "I was compelled to do it because neither lift is working," said Jha, who is an advocate.

He said this was waiting to happen as the developer had not addressed repeated complaints about lift snags and voltage fluctuations. Aditya Srivastava, who lives in an apartment on the 15th floor, is appearing for his fourth semester BCom exams at Delhi University, also shifted to a relative's flat in Sector 75. Aditya (21) has a slipped disk and is not allowed to climb more than three floors at a time. Ravi Raj Singh, maintenance manager of the society, told TOI on Friday the lifts had a "technical problem" with the cable. He said new cables were procured and, because of the storm, had reached the society only on Thursday evening. "The new cables are being installed and both lifts are expected to be operational from tonight."

No pre-launch sales: Rera makes public notice mandatory before registration in Gurgaon

Gurgaon. Developers must now publish notices in newspapers soon after applying for Rera registration of their housing projects, according to a new directive from the real estate regulator. The mandatory public disclosure, announced by Rera (Gurgaon) chairman Arun Kumar, marks a crucial step in preventing pre-launch sales — often conducted without formal approvals — and protecting homebuyers' interests.

The public notice requirement ensures transparency by officially announcing that a promoter has applied for, but not yet received, Rera registration. "Now, it will be difficult for a promoter to mislead an investor into booking a unit during the pre-launch stage. Buyers can now track a project's registration status in real time," said Kumar, adding that the public notice will not only validate assertions made by promoters but put Rera's accountability in the spotlight also. Gurgaon — a hyper-active real estate market — has long

2018 visa rejection got Nuh quack in touch with Pakistan official: Probe

Gurgaon. It was a 2018 visa application to visit relatives at Purana Kahna locality in Lahore that allegedly got Nuh resident Mohammad Tarif in touch with Pakistan High Commission officials, who roped him in to spy for Islamabad, police investigation has found. Tarif, a quack from Tauru Sadar area of Nuh district, was arrested on May 19 for allegedly carrying out espionage activities.

TOI had earlier reported that Tarif is suspected to have provided photos and videos of the Indian Air Force base in Sirsa, which Pakistan attempted to strike with a missile during the military confrontation earlier this month following India's Operation Sindoor strikes on terrorist bases inside Pakistan and PoK. Police sources said on Friday that Tarif had made several calls to numbers starting with the international code +92, assigned to Pakistan.

"Most of his calls were to an official of the Pakistan embassy in Delhi, Aasif

and an associate identified as Zafar, were also named in the FIR filed by Nuh police. Tarif's visa application was rejected at the time because of incomplete documentation, after which another Nuh resident — Umar Behra — got him in touch with Balooch. Balooch allegedly asked Tarif to arrange for two SIM cards, which he brought from Jaipur. The source said Tarif purchased several Vodafone SIMs and handed them over to the high commission official. In return, Balooch allegedly helped Tarif get a visa to visit his relatives for 15 days in Lahore in 2020. That was his first trip to the country. Tarif made two more visits, in 2021 and 2023. y 2023, Tarif was allegedly in touch with Zafar, whose role is unclear. "Tarif also provided SIM cards to Zafar, who further tasked him to gather sensitive information about IAF in return for lakhs of rupees," a source said. Investigators found that Tarif had tried to enter the Sirsa air base before tensions between

not enter the base because of security there, but managed to send photos from outside," the source added. TOI had reported earlier this week that Tarif had attempted to remove specific chat records from his mobile phone before his arrest. Police found that Tarif handed over his passport to a friend in Gorakhpur. Nuh cops have reached out to their counterparts in UP to recover it. The quack was the second Nuh resident to be arrested on charges of espionage since India launched Operation Sindoor in the aftermath of the April 22 terror attack in Kashmir's Pahalgam. "We are checking if Arman (26), arrested from Rajaka in Nuh, and Tarif had any common links," a senior police officer said on Friday. Tarif was charged under BNS Section 152 (endangering sovereignty, unity, and integrity of the country) besides sections 3 (spying), 4 (communicating with foreign agents) and 5 (disclosing secret official information) of the Official

Cut down collection points, push for zero waste vision, ULB chief tells MCG

Gurgaon. ULB director Pankaj on Friday instructed MCG officials to expedite legacy waste processing and increase its capacity. He also directed them to reduce the number of secondary waste collection points in the city to move towards "zero dumping ground". The sanitation system of the city, in terms of the areas, should be fully recorded on a digital map to ensure that new officials are well-informed, the minister told MCG officials. Officials informed the director, who visited Bandhwari on Friday afternoon, that two agencies were currently engaged in the legacy waste processing at the Bandhwari landfill site. Earlier in the day, the director held a meeting with the MCG officials and told them municipal work should be both technical and manual, adding, all officials should oversee cleanliness during their visits. He said, "Roads, drainage, sewerage networks and water bodies should be mapped. The number of secondary garbage collection points should be reduced to move towards zero dumping grounds." Pankaj suggested mapping water bodies, roads, drainage and sewerage networks, besides the areas assigned to the sanitary inspectors and officials, to monitor the city's sanitation effectively. The director inspected the material recovery facility at Nathupur village and the micro STP in Sector 43, where he gathered information from officials about the operation and technical aspects of these facilities.

He visited the command and control centre at GMDA office in Sector 44 to observe the smart technologies in use. During the meeting, MCG commissioner Pradeep Dahiya mentioned that the process for a new tender for door-to-door garbage collection is underway.

2 dead, 2 injured as soil mound caves in at Faridabad railway station site



Gurgaon. Two women labourers lost their lives while two were injured at Old Faridabad Railway Station after a part of the soil collapsed during basement excavation work at the site. The mishap took place when the excavation work was underway for construction of a new building at the station. A large pit was being dug to lay the foundation for supporting columns, and soil was being removed using an earthmover. According to eyewitnesses, some workers took a break from the scorching heat and sat near the excavation site to rest, and three women labourers and one male labourer were sitting near the pit when a sudden landslide of loose soil buried them alive. Other workers who were at the site immediately rushed to their rescue, clearing the debris using the earthmover. However, when the workers were rushed to BK Hospital, two of them died during treatment. The deceased were identified as Navita of Bihar and Namita from West Bengal. Rajpal, the in-charge of the GRP police station at Old Railway Station, confirmed that all workers were engaged in construction work. Preliminary investigations found that none of the labourers had access to safety equipment. He further stated that the incident occurred due to serious violations of safety norms. "A First Information Report (FIR) will soon be registered, and strict action will be taken."

Maximum temp rises 2°C in Gurgaon, but high winds, thunderstorms likely



Gurgaon. The city witnessed a slight rise in mercury on Friday, with the minimum temperature soaring to 26.6 degrees Celsius, 1.7°C higher than the previous day. The maximum temperature also rose to 36°C, 2.5°C higher than the day before. IMD issued a yellow alert across Haryana, cautioning residents about gusty winds, thunderstorms and lightning till May 29. Authorities advised residents to stay hydrated, avoid outdoor activities during peak afternoon hours, and remain alert to sudden weather changes.

Meanwhile, Delhi is likely to get very light to light rain accompanied by thunderstorms, lightning and dust-raising winds on Saturday. A yellow alert (to be aware) has been issued. The Commission for Air Quality Management on Friday revoked measures under Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) Stage I, enforced in Delhi-NCR on Wednesday. The city did not see any rainfall from 8.30am to 5.30pm on Friday. The day temperature rose to 37.1 degrees Celsius, three degrees below normal, but higher than 34.7 a day earlier. The night temperature also saw a rise. The minimum temperature rose from 20.8 degrees Celsius on Thursday to 26.4 on Friday. The IMD has predicted gusty winds of 40-50 kmph, which may at times rise to 60 kmph during the thunderstorms with dust-raising winds on Friday night and Saturday. There is a possibility of thundery development on Sunday and Monday. "The city is likely to receive rain along with thunderstorms on Saturday. However, heatwave conditions are unlikely in Delhi over the next few days," a Met official said. Rain on Wednesday and strong winds for the past two days aided in the dispersion of pollutants, so Delhi's air quality stayed in the moderate category. Revoking GRAP Stage I on Friday with immediate effect, CAQM said,

including hidden encumbrances like high-tension lines, roads running through plots and inadequate infrastructure.

"The notice will indirectly regulate pre-registration advertisements and promotional activities. It will also inform buyers that the project is not yet registered with Rera, encouraging them to verify all claims and approach the regulator for authentic details, including deficiency in infrastructure," Kumar said. In the past, several premium projects in the city were sold out entirely before receiving Rera registration, leaving buyers with little legal recourse in case of delays or irregularities. The move aims at empowering homebuyers with timely information before taking investment decision.

Gurgaon. At several points along the Badshapur stormwater channel are industrial units that routinely release untreated wastewater into the drain, which eventually flows into Yamuna river, dumping in it a cocktail of toxic pollutants. Wastewater laced with chemicals was seen being discharged into the 29km Badshapur channel in Sector 34 of the city, and Kankrola village of Manesar on Friday. In Sector 34, a stream of wastewater was flowing steadily from industrial outlets directly into the stormwater channel. The stream was murky and emitted a pungent odour. Foam and oily residues floated on its surface, indicating the presence of



untreated effluents. Along the channel, vegetation was sparse and withered — a possible effect of prolonged exposure to effluents. Some 10km away, TOI spotted illegal dyeing units operating in Kankrola

village. At first glance, these appeared to be shut down, but rows of denims were hung out to dry in an open area on the rear side of the plot, which was barricaded only by iron grilles. Despite being in plain sight, spotting these units wasn't easy. A narrow, unpaved path is the only link to the main road in the village. Residents said waste dumping was not a one-off exercise. "We have seen at least 20 tankers openly dumping untreated sewage and waste illegally into the drain at the same area. It's a common practice at night and early mornings, when they think no one is watching," said Rakesh Yadav, who lives in Khandsa village in Sector 34.

Underpass on Dwarka e-way shut for repairs for week



Gurgaon: The underpass on Dwarka Expressway near Sector 102 will remain closed during the next week as National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) undertakes urgent repairs based on recommendations from Central Building Research Institute (CBRI). One carriageway of the underpass — from Sector 9 towards Sector 102 — was shut for commuters on Thursday evening and will remain closed till May 25. The opposite carriageway — from Sector 102 towards Sector 9 — will then be closed from May 25 to May 29. The phased closure is intended to minimise disruption to traffic. The underpass was opened to traffic in June last year. Residents have been complaining about leakage issues within less than a year of its opening, demanding a permanent fix. The closure aims to resolve prevailing

water seepage caused by damage to movement joints, though no structural distress was reported, an NHAI official said on Friday. The official said, "It is completely safe." According to a site assessment conducted earlier this month by the team of CBRI officials, along with NHAI and L&T officials, water ingress is occurring through the movement joints due to possible membrane damage and a high-water table in the area. The team said the issue is limited to leakage and does not compromise the underpass's structural safety. "But because of the high water table in the area, CBRI suggested targeted repair measures to arrest the seepage. Polyurethane grouting, which is quick-setting and reacts with water, has been recommended as the most effective solution. The repair work is being

carried out urgently and in line with Indian Road Congress and MoRTH guidelines, with strict adherence to curing protocols and on-site safety," the team said. While other grouting options — such as cementitious, chemical and microfine — were considered, polyurethane was preferred due to the nature of the leakage. The procedure involves drilling near the affected joints, cleaning the area, injecting grout and following strict curing standards.

Sector 102–102A underpass already underwent repairs using grouting last month by the expressway's maintenance agency. NHAI subsequently brought in CBRI for a detailed structural review, which led to the current round of repairs.

Built at a cost of Rs 24 crore, the 585-metre-long, four-lane structure lies beneath the Dwarka Expressway and was designed to ease congestion and improve connectivity across the rapidly growing residential sectors.

26-year-old steals laptops, phones from parked cars, arrested in Ghaziabad

Ghaziabad. A 26-year-old man was arrested from the Kaushambi area for allegedly stealing laptops and other valuables after breaking the glass of four-wheelers in public areas across NCR. Police said the accused, Riaz, who came to NCR from Badaun, and his associate Shoaib of Gazipur, would roam the streets in auto rickshaws in search of parked vehicles near eateries or markets to steal valuables. Shoaib is still absconding. ACP Indirapuram Abhishek Srivastava said Riaz resides in Delhi with his accomplice, Shoaib Khan. "Together, Riaz and Shoaib used to break the windows and locks of parked cars in

Ghaziabad and NCR areas to steal laptops and mobile phones. Then sell the stolen goods at low prices to a person named Praveen, who owns a computer shop in Noida," the ACP said.

On the evening of May 20, 2025, the two accused broke the lock of a car parked on the roadside in front of Yashoda Hospital and took a laptop from a bag on the back seat. On May 23, while they were heading towards Dabur crossing to sell the stolen laptop, they saw police checking. Fearing arrest, both accused turned the auto around and tried to flee but cops caught Riaz, the ACP said.

NEWS BOX

China Pledges Support For Overseas Students After Trump's Harvard Curb

Beijing. China will safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of its overseas students and scholars, the foreign ministry said on Friday, responding to the Trump administration's decision to block Harvard University from enrolling foreign students.

US actions will undoubtedly affect its image and credibility, said Mao Ning, spokesperson for the ministry, during a regular press briefing, adding that educational cooperation between China and the US benefits both parties.

427 Rohingya May Have Drowned In Two Shipwrecks In May: UN



world. The United Nations said Friday it feared that 427 Rohingya, Myanmar's persecuted Muslim minority, had perished at sea in two shipwrecks on May 9 and 10 off the Myanmar coast. If confirmed, this would be the "deadliest tragedy at sea" involving Rohingya refugees so far this year, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said in a statement. The Rohingya have been persecuted in Myanmar for decades. Thousands of them risk their lives every year by fleeing repression and civil war in their country by sea, often aboard makeshift boats.

"The UN Refugee Agency is gravely concerned about reports of two boat tragedies off the coast of Myanmar earlier this month," a statement read. UNHCR said it was still working to confirm the exact circumstances surrounding the shipwrecks but preliminary information indicated that a first vessel carrying 267 people sank on May 9, with only 66 people surviving. A second ship with 247 Rohingya on board capsized on May 10, with just 21 survivors, the UN agency said. The Rohingya on board were either leaving Bangladesh's huge Cox's Bazar refugee camps or fleeing Myanmar's western state of Rakhine, the statement said. Rakhine state has been the scene of fierce fighting between the military and the Arakan Army, an ethnic minority rebel group, over control of the territory.

The dire humanitarian situation, exacerbated by funding cuts, is having a devastating impact on the lives of Rohingya, with more and more resorting to dangerous journeys to seek safety, protection and a dignified life for themselves and their families," said Hai Kyung Jun, who leads UNHCR's regional bureau for Asia and the Pacific.

Why King Charles III Is Delivering A Rare Speech In Canada

Toronto. King Charles III is coming to Canada to deliver a message: Canada is a sovereign nation distinct from the United States. U.S. President Donald Trump's repeated suggestion that the U.S. annex its northern neighbor prompted new Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney to invite Charles to give the speech from the throne on Tuesday where he will lay out the Canadian government's agenda when Parliament reopens. The monarch is the head of state in Canada, which is a member of the British Commonwealth of former colonies. "Canada has a steadfast defender in our sovereign," Carney said when he announced the visit earlier this month.

Why is Charles visiting Canada?

It is extraordinarily rare for the monarch to deliver what's called the speech from the throne in Canada. Charles' mother, Queen Elizabeth II, only did it twice in her 70-year reign. The last time was in 1977.

Canadians are largely indifferent to the monarchy, but Carney has been eager to show the differences between Canada and the U.S. and he said that the king's visit clearly underscores the sovereignty of Canada. The Americans had a revolution to gain independence from Britain. Canada remained a colony until 1867 and continued thereafter as a constitutional monarchy with a British-style parliamentary system. "We're different," former Quebec Premier Jean Charest said. "We are not the United States. It sounds simple, but that's what the visit says." "We don't have the same institutions. We don't have the same history," Charest said. "We are a different country with a different choice in terms of how we built ourselves, and King Charles tells that story." This will be Charles' first visit as monarch. He visited Canada 19 times as prince. The king has been showing his support for Canada in recent months, including displaying Canadian military medals on his chest during a visit to a Royal Navy aircraft carrier. Historian Robert Bothwell said that the king's speech in Parliament "is a gesture of solidarity and identity that can be construed to be a gesture of support." But new U.S. Ambassador to Canada Pete Hoekstra said sending messages isn't necessary. "We're thrilled that the king will be here. If there's a message in there, you know, there's easier ways to send messages. Just give me a call. Carney can call the president at any time," Hoekstra told the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. "But I know what the implication is. It's, oh about... the 51st state, it's over. And, you know, move on." What is the speech from the throne?

The speech sets the legislative agenda for a new session of Parliament. It's not written by the king or his advisers in the U.K., as the king serves as a nonpartisan head of state.

US Senators Upbeat About Mending Canada Ties After Mark Carney Meet

Canada-US relations
withered in recent months
after US President Donald
Trump slapped punishing
tariffs on Canadian goods.

world. A group of US senators said Friday they felt hope after meeting with Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney towards repairing bilateral relations and securing a new trade and security deal. Republican Senator Kevin Cramer of North Dakota said he was "encouraged by what we've heard today and I'm encouraged by what we're seeing in terms of moving forward together." The delegation, which also included Democrats Jeanne Shaheen, Amy Klobuchar, Tim Kaine and Peter Welch -- all of whom represent states that border Canada -- met with Carney as well as



senior Canadian ministers for national defense, industry and foreign affairs. "We hope that this meeting will continue very positive discussions toward ensuring that some of the cracks that appeared in the relationship in recent months are healed and we move forward together," Shaheen told a news conference. Canada-US relations withered in recent months after US President Donald Trump slapped punishing tariffs on Canadian goods

including automobiles, steel and aluminum, and mused about making Canada the 51st US state. Canada sends three-quarters of its exports to the United States, and Canadians have been angered by the tariffs and rhetoric, leading many to boycott US goods and travel. Trump has since suspended some of the US tariffs pending negotiations, while Canada has paused some countermeasures for six months. But the latest jobs report shows the

levies are already damaging the Canadian economy while leading to increased volatility in the markets.

The US senators said the strained relationship has been hard for Americans too, especially in states that border Canada. "Every single day, we feel it. We know it's been bad," Klobuchar commented. "But we just want to get to a better place, and that's why we're here today." There are tremendous opportunities to grow both economies, she added, "if we stick together." Cramer suggested that Canada and the United States close ranks against China, which he described as the number one threat to North America. "Therein lies what I believe to be one of the greatest opportunities to heal this relationship, because we can unite around that common adversary with our integrated supply chains and some of the unique qualities of each country," he said. "We don't have as much potash as y'all do, we don't have the critical minerals that Canada does," Cramer added.

2016 Jewel Thieves Who Stole Kim Kardashian's \$4 Million Ring Convicted

world. The Auschwitz museum warned on Friday against Facebook posts with "harmful" AI-generated fictional images of victims of the Nazi German death camp, condemning them for "falsifying history." The museum at the site of the former Auschwitz-Birkenau camp has long used its own social media accounts to publish authentic victim photos, names and information to raise Holocaust awareness. Now the museum has discovered that at least a couple of Facebook pages were producing similar victim bios but with fictional information or photos. "People have started to notice that there are pages, including one called '90's History' where there are short bios of the victims as well as photos that were clearly made by artificial intelligence," said museum deputy spokesman Pawel Sawicki. "Producing artificial images of real people, or what



is even more troubling, producing false identities of victims, is certainly troubling and also very harmful for the memory of those who died at Auschwitz," he told AFP. Such posts were harmful because "producing artificial information, last names, is

falsifying history", said Sawicki. This sort of disinformation could even lead to Holocaust denial, he added. "There is of course a danger that if we have these fake people, then perhaps someone could claim that the whole thing is made up," said Sawicki.

Australia Begins Clean-Up After Floods Kill 5, Damage 10,000 Properties

Australian authorities
started clean-up efforts
after floods claimed five
lives and inundated more
than 10,000 properties in
the country's southeast.

Sydney. Australian authorities started clean-up efforts on Saturday after floods claimed five lives and inundated more than 10,000 properties in the country's southeast. The New South Wales emergency services agency said damage assessments were under way in the state for the mid-north coast region after the floods that cut off towns, swept away livestock and destroyed homes this week. "Early estimates indicate at least 10,000 properties may have been damaged following record flooding," the agency said in a statement. Conditions had improved since Friday in the impacted areas of



Australia's most populous state, it said. Even so, hundreds of flood-hit residents were still in evacuation centres, State Emergency Services commissioner Mike Wassing said at a media conference in Sydney, with 52 flood rescues being made overnight. The latest flood-linked death was that of a man in his 80s, whose body was found at a flooded property about 50 km (31 miles) from Taree, one of the worst-hit towns, police said. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, forced on Friday to cancel a trip to Taree due to floodwaters, said it was "awful to hear the news of more loss of life". "All of our thoughts

are with his loved ones and the community at this time," Albanese said in a statement. The floods, sparked by days of incessant rain, submerged intersections and street signs in mid-north coast towns and covered cars up to their windshields, after fast-rising waters burst river banks. At their peak, the floods isolated around 50,000 people. Australia has been hit with more extreme weather events that some experts say are the result of climate change. After droughts and devastating bushfires at the end of last decade, frequent floods have caused destruction since early 2021.

After Shootings, Washington's Shaken Jewish Community Looks To Bolster Security

→ The shooting of a couple was the latest act of violence aimed at Jewish Americans linked to outrage over Israel's military offensive in Gaza.

world. When Adam Zimmerman chaperoned his son's fourth-grade class field trip to the natural history museum in Washington on Wednesday, he didn't give a second thought to security. Hours later, outside a different museum a few miles (km) away, two Israeli embassy employees were gunned down in what was widely viewed as an act of antisemitism. "It was a horrific reminder for me - as a Jewish parent in this city - that we all have to be looking over our shoulders all the time," said Zimmerman, 43, a media consultant from Rockville, Maryland.

The fatal shooting of the young couple after an event at a Jewish museum has deeply shaken the U.S. capital's Jews, and has led to a review of security protocols at synagogues and other institutions.

"The same seeds of antisemitism that led to Europe in the 1930s and 1940s are still killing people on the streets of Washington, D.C. in 2025," said Zimmerman, whose grandparents were Holocaust survivors. It was the latest act of violence aimed at Jewish Americans linked to outrage over Israel's escalating military offensive in Gaza, a response to the October 2023 attacks by Hamas militants that killed 1,200 in southern Israel. The Washington shooting took place outside the Capital Jewish Museum, where the American Jewish Committee was sponsoring an annual young diplomats reception. The lone suspect, who was charged with two counts of first-degree murder on Thursday, told police on the scene, "I did it for Palestine. I did it for Gaza," according to court records. Alan



Ronkin, regional director of AJC's Washington office, said security was tight at the event, even though the suspect, Elias Rodriguez of Chicago, managed to enter the museum in the chaos that ensued in the aftermath of the shooting outside. He was apprehended inside. "We are going to revisit our security protocols, and make sure we follow the recommendations of the experts," said Ronkin, who added the community is "shaken but resilient." Ron Halber, chief executive officer of the Jewish Community Relations Council of

Greater Washington, said that local law enforcement has increased patrols around Jewish institutions in Washington since the killings. "A lot of us are looking over our shoulder today," said Halber. "But we have to keep leading proud open Jewish lives. I'm certainly not going to let it deter me from any public or private event." Most Jewish institutions in the city already have robust security, including armed guards at most synagogues, according to Halber. "The big discussion that's going to happen is how long does the perimeter extend - one block, two blocks," he said. "Every Jewish organization is increasing their security, whether it's having more guards standing outside during more hours of the day, or if they didn't have any, adding them," said Gil Preuss, CEO of the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington. "Right now it's short term, and we'll see whether there's a permanent change in the level of security. My guess is yes."

NEWS BOX

Aid pours in, corporation school girl set to realise dream

CHENNAI. The office of Minister P.K. Sekarbabu has assured full support for the education of D. Shriya, a city corporation school topper, through all possible means. This announcement came after a TNIE report, published on May 22, highlighted her financial struggles despite securing admission to Ethiraj College for Women. The college's chairman, V.M. Muralidharan, also confirmed that the institution will support her in every way.

The assurance follows article titled "Every mark spells determination for this corp school girl", which detailed Shriya's remarkable resilience.

Just two years ago, Shriya was washing and filling soda bottles to help her family make ends meet. Despite these hardships, she scored an impressive 565 out of 600 in her Class 12 board exams.

Responding to a quote tweet based on report about her need for financial assistance, Muralidharan tweeted, "Ethiraj College will certainly support Shriya in every way we can! Proud of her remarkable achievement—she truly embodies the spirit of our institution! Best wishes!"

Shriya has also received generous support from individuals. Harshitha Mruthyunjaya, founder of the Bangalore-based firm Alcon Architects, has pledged to cover the cost of her college books. She personally spoke to Shriya to understand her needs. "I will follow up with her," Harshitha told.

Additionally, three donors have contributed a total of Rs 11,700 to help Shriya purchase college essentials, including clothes, a bag, and footwear.

Semmenchery Police launch outreach to help low-income students pursue higher education

CHENNAI. It is not part of their duty, but the police officials in Semmenchery are doing their bit to encourage students from low-income families in Perumbakkam and Kannagi Nagar pursue higher education.

The community outreach initiative, launched on Thursday, targets students living in Tamil Nadu Urban Habitat Development Board (TNUHDB) tenements in Perumbakkam and Kannagi Nagar who have completed Class XII but are unable to continue studies due to financial constraints or other hurdles.

To motivate students, the police are carrying out awareness drives through loudspeaker announcements and door-to-door campaigns. Students who have already applied in colleges could submit application forms, mark sheets, and certificates to the police officials, and they would help follow up with institutions.

"To those facing financial difficulties, we're assuring help in finding sponsors. For those who've applied, we'll speak to college management and help them with admissions. So far, 85 students have signed up," a police officer said. Lauding their efforts, CM MK Stalin, on X platform, said, "I congratulate the police personnel who are trying to bring students to colleges, realising that education is protection."

Delivery partners outline labour rights violations in Hyderabad

HYDERABAD. Delivery workers of Zepto have outlined a series of grievances, ranging from drastically reduced wages to unsafe working conditions and lack of social security, in a formal appeal to the labour commissioner. The TGPWU stated that Zepto riders are earning as little as Rs 10 to Rs 15 per delivery, with no guaranteed minimum income.

Workers also report extreme delivery timelines of 10-15 minutes per order, which forces them to drive at high speeds, risking their safety. Additionally, delivery partners say they are subjected to arbitrary fines, ratings-based penalties, and account suspensions, often without transparency or recourse. The workers alleged that the operational expenses, including fuel, mobile data, and vehicle maintenance, are borne entirely by the workers, adding to their financial burden. The union further raised concerns about the classification of delivery personnel as "partners" rather than employees, effectively denying them rights to collective bargaining and coverage under labour laws.

Luxury car import case accused found guilty of using fake passport

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. A CBI Court in Thiruvananthapuram has found Alex C Joseph, the Tiruvalla native accused of fraudulently importing luxury cars, guilty in a fake passport case. The court found him guilty on various charges that carry a cumulative punishment of eight years. However, he will have to spend only three years behind bars as the punishments run concurrently. Former police Sub-inspector Vinod Krishnan, who was arraigned the second accused in the case, was acquitted for want of evidence. Alex was allegedly involved in importing luxury cars by evading customs duty. He allegedly used the names of workers returning from foreign countries to import luxury cars. The cars were declared as used ones, thereby claiming a duty cut. The current case in which he has been punished was registered in 2012 when he was arrested by the immigration department from the Hyderabad airport.

Is there a solution to the chaos in Namma Bengaluru?

Chaos. A search to understand the word better revealed: "Complete disorder and confusion". In Physics, it is explained as "the property of a complex system whose behaviour is so unpredictable as to appear random, owing to great sensitivity to small changes in conditions". That is as far as understanding the word is concerned. This simple five-letter word can however send the brain into a spin when we experience it. For that, you need to be in Bengaluru—probably the most ideal place to experience chaos in action.

Let's start from the very beginning about the city and chaos.

A city is an urban area with a high population density. It has a high concentration of residential areas. A city is a centre of commerce, culture, administration, markets, educational institutions, hospitals and medical centres, sports, and recreational and leisure facilities spread across it. These are linked by roads and streets, and supported by essential mobility infrastructure, water supply, and sanitation systems. Ideally, it needs to support a sustainable cradle-to-grave life, guaranteeing a comforting sense of safety and security.

Chaos in the city sets in with the failure of civic systems, processes, deliverance of services, enforcement and law & order mechanism.



When that happens, masses take the failure for granted, and take advantage of the lenience of laws, weak enforcement, which translates to lack of deterrence to unlawful behaviour—and civic administrative shortfalls.

In chaotic Bengaluru, unpredictability and randomness prevail. One just can't be sure how long it takes from point A to point B by road. The cause could be anything from traffic

gridlocks en route resulting from unqualified drivers—although armed with valid licences—contributing their worth with their "driving skills"; incomplete road or drain works; a road rage incident holding up traffic, regardless of whether an ambulance in an emergency is stranded in it; convoy of a political heavyweight forcing traffic movement to a grinding halt; or processions on the roads... it is like rules and their enforcement do not exist, or enforced for questionable reasons.

The visual aspects of chaos are pedestrians being forced to walk on the roads (jay-walking) due to absence or lack of proper footpaths; insecurity of women, elders and children in public spaces; public urination and spitting; littering without a care for its implications; unauthorized constructions, building plans and encroachments... the list goes on.

It is more than two decades since then Bangalore, now Bengaluru, shed its last vestiges of being the "Pensioner's Paradise". Today, that once-Pensioner's Paradise is one of the cruelest for elders and pensioners. One of the impacts of chaotic Bengaluru is that it has become unfriendly to elders. It is as if the city has been designed to be vengeful at their very existence.

Rumours of temple closure spike pilgrim surge at Telangana's Vemulawada

RAJANNA-SIRCILLA. As the government's previously announced plan to expand the Sri Raja Rajeshwara Swamy temple in Vemulawada approaches, rumours have triggered a massive surge in pilgrim numbers. A few days ago, Government Whip Aadi Srinivas announced that the expansion work would begin on June 15.

However, with no official confirmation regarding the closure of the temple, there has been a spike in footfall, with local reports indicating that daily pilgrim numbers have jumped from the usual 20,000 to over 50,000 in recent days, especially on Fridays and weekends.

Responding to the situation, both temple officials and Aadi Srinivas have clarified that no final decision has been made regarding the commencement of expansion works.



Speaking to , temple executive officer K Vinod Reddy dismissed the rumours, stating, "The news that the temple will be closed from June 15 is far from the truth. Detailed plans regarding darshan arrangements and the Bheemeshwara Temple facilities will be

announced soon."

He further explained that the expansion of the main temple premises will only commence once proper facilities for devotees are in place at the Bheemeshwara Temple. The expansion will follow the principles of Agama Shastra, ensuring spiritual and architectural sanctity.

"The temple will not be closed entirely during the expansion. Daily rituals and pujas will continue. However, the procedure for allowing devotees will be finalised soon," said Srinivas, urging devotees not to fall for unverified rumours.

Among the crowd was Raju Naik, a devotee from Warangal district, who visited the temple with his family. "We decided to come now, fearing we might not get another chance once the renovation starts," he said.

Centre allots 2k electric buses for Hyderabad to help fight pollution: Minister Ponnamp

HYDERABAD. Disclosing that the Centre has allocated 2,000 electric buses to Hyderabad under the Prime Minister's e-Drive scheme, Transport Minister Ponnamp Prabhakar called the development a significant step towards reducing pollution in the city.

A release issued on Friday stated that the state government has already introduced a comprehensive Electric Vehicle (EV) policy aimed at curbing pollution, which includes a 100% tax exemption on EVs. As part of its green public transport initiative, the Telangana government has set a target to operate a total of 2,800 electric buses within the Outer Ring Road (ORR) area of Hyderabad.



It was mentioned that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, along with Ministers Uttam Kumar Reddy and Ponnamp Prabhakar, had earlier met with Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy to request central assistance for electric buses. Prabhakar expressed satisfaction that the Centre has responded positively to their appeal by allocating 2,000 buses and urged the Union government to also consider sanctioning the remaining 800 buses to meet the full requirement. It is worth mentioning that Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel, HD Kumaraswamy, on Thursday, chaired a high-level meeting to review the rollout of electric buses under the ambitious PM e-Drive Scheme, with a focus on four key states—Telangana, Karnataka, Delhi, and Gujarat.

Amenities in place, but disabled still can't Mount railway station

However, in terms of improving accessibility, especially for persons with disabilities (PwD) and the elderly, several concerns remain.

CHENNAI. As part of the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, the redeveloped St Thomas Mount railway station, inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday, has brought in additional amenities for rail passengers.

These include a 12-foot-wide additional foot over bridge (FOB), digital display boards on platforms and FOBs, improved parking facility, and improved platform shelters. Positioned to become a key multimodal transport hub with connections to the MRTS, metro, and MTC bus services, the station has been redeveloped at a cost of Rs 11.04 crore.

While the northern entrance (towards Alandur) has seen beautified and developed, the southern entrances (towards Adambakkam and Madipakkam) remain largely untouched. Four escalators have been installed to improve passenger movement, and the newly added digital boards displaying upcoming station schedules have been well received by commuters.

Likewise, two escalators at the western side linking the FOB have received overwhelming patronage among users. A newly constructed FOB now connects the Metro and MRTS stations and links the northern and southern ends of the platform.



station, largely easing congestion that previously plagued the old six-metre-wide FOB at the eastern side.

However, in terms of improving accessibility, especially for persons with disabilities (PwD) and the elderly, several concerns remain. The station lacked lifts and disabled-friendly ramps on all platforms except Platform 1A.

S Jayalakshmi, a regular commuter and a person with disability, pointed out the station has an access ramp only at the main entrance leading to platform 1A. "There is no such facility for platform 2, and lifts are also unavailable, which are essential for the elderly and persons with disabilities," she said.

A statement by the Freedom of Movement Coalition (FMC), a pan-Indian group focussed on transport equity, one of whose members conducted an audit at the station on Friday, said after spending Rs 11.04 crore, the station remains as unsafe for blind passengers and out of bounds for passengers with restricted mobility. Inconsistent and non-standard tactile warnings, designated parking for disabled being located on top of an elevated pavement with no kerb ramp, use of polished granite in ramp rendering it unsafe, no lowered counter for wheelchair users were some of the key concerns raised by FMC.

S Shanthi, a working woman, noted the Automatic Ticket Vending Machines (ATVMs) near the Metro station exit often malfunction.

Accused mother claims ignorance of sexual abuse by husband's brother on four-year-old in Kerala

—In custody for allegedly throwing her child into the Chalakudy river, the woman told police she was driven to murder by frustration over her husband's family showing excessive interest in the child.

KOCHI. In the case relating to the death of a four-year-old girl in Mattakkuzhi, Ernakulam, the murder-accused mother has stated that she was unaware the child had been subjected to sexual abuse by her husband's brother.

The woman, currently in police custody for allegedly throwing the child into the Chalakudy river, told investigators she was frustrated with the way her husband's family showed excessive interest in the child, leading her to the murder.

"During questioning, she said she often felt alienated by her husband's family, and even from her own daughter," a police officer with the probe team said. The woman reportedly believed that her husband was planning a second marriage, which intensified her anxiety about her daughter's future.

"She told us that she had nightmares of the child growing up under the care of a stepmother. And

in a state of emotional turmoil, she convinced herself that ending the child's life was a way to 'save' her," the officer added. Substantiating



these claims, Beena, the Mattakkuzhi ward representative and a local resident, said the woman harboured the belief that the child received excessive affection from her paternal relatives, which deeply frustrated her.

"As neighbours, we knew the child's paternal family, especially her grandmother, far better than we knew the accused. They were all incredibly loving towards the child and that seemed to upset her," Beena said. She also recalled a previous incident where the mother allegedly attempted to give the child poison-laced ice cream. "The neighbours intervened as mediators at the time. Even then, she expressed the same concern that her husband and his family were alienating her from the child and that the child herself appeared to be more attached to them. We advised her not to misinterpret the relatives' affection as a threat, but rather to take pride in the fact that the child was so loved. Unfortunately, she didn't seem to embrace that perspective," Beena said.

"The depth of love the community had for the child was clearly visible in the crowd that gathered for her public homage", she added.

Heavy showers, winds cause damage across Thiruvananthapuram

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. Heavy rain and strong winds on Friday caused widespread damage in the city. Trees were uprooted in several areas, roads were blocked, and power lines snapped.

A tree fell near the Thiruvananthapuram Medical College Police Station, injuring one person. Trees also fell on roads near the Reserve Bank, Altharamoodu, Mukkola Junction, Kattakada, Maranallloor, Panangode and Venganoor, disrupting traffic. Near the Greenfield Stadium in Kariavattom, a tree fall blocked the national highway. In Vizhinjam and Maruthankuzhi, trees fell on power lines, cutting off electricity in nearby places. Around ten electric poles were broken and wires snapped in over 20 locations.

Burn victim flown in by air ambulance critical in Kerala

KOCHI. A 54-year-old woman who was trafficked to Malaysia and suffered serious burns there while doing house chores was flown to Kochi in an air ambulance. However, the condition of Mini Bhargavan, hailing from Idukki, remains critical. Mini, who was flown in on Thursday night in an MH 108 aircraft of Malaysian Airlines, has been shifted to Kalamassery Medical College for expert treatment.

She is being provided the best treatment following the direction of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and the subsequent intervention of NORKA-Roots.

Health Minister Veena George reviewed the progress in her condition and gave necessary direction to the hospital superintendent.

A medical board will be formed to coordinate the treatment of Mini, who is currently being provided ventilator support. Though Mini was admitted to Penang General Hospital in Malaysia on May 7 after she suffered burns, her employer did not inform her relatives.

BrahMos: The bolt from the blue

AIR power pioneers asserted during the Great War years that aerial power is inherently offensive and should be independent; control of air is essential for victory; bombers would always penetrate defences and the enemy's will could be broken through strategic bombing. Recently, the Indian Air Force, with the combination of air-launched BrahMos and Su-30 MKI, reaffirmed that these tenets still hold true, forcing Pakistan to request a ceasefire. In 1983, the Government of India formed the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme. Initially, it was focussed on ballistic missiles. But the devastating effect of US ship- and air-launched Tomahawk cruise missiles on Iraqi air defence systems during the 1991 Gulf war inspired India. In 1998, Dr APJ Abdul Kalam signed a pact with his Russian counterpart, establishing the BrahMos Aerospace joint venture. In 2001, the first test launch of BrahMos was conducted. BrahMos is a two-stage cruise missile with a solid-propellant booster in the first stage that accelerates the missile to supersonic speeds. Once separated, a liquid-fuelled ramjet engine takes over, propelling it to a cruising speed of Mach 3. It operates at altitudes of 15 km to 10 m and has a range of 300-800 km. It carries a 200-300 kg conventional warhead and operates on the fire-and-forget principle. After firing, it autonomously navigates to its target, using inertial navigation, satellite guidance and terrain contour-matching, achieving accuracy of less than one metre. The air-to-surface version was launched in 2017 and inducted into 222 Squadron, Tigersharks, in 2020. Its speed, accuracy and kinetic impact makes BrahMos one of the deadliest conventional cruise missiles. A direct hit from BrahMos can destroy reinforced bunkers, warships or command centres through its momentum. Its kinetic energy is 32 times of the US Tomahawk missile.

As ground-based air defence systems have become more accurate and lethal, the operational freedom once enjoyed by aerial platforms has diminished. The Ukraine-Russia war is a live example. After suffering heavy losses in the early stages, both sides avoided overflying contested areas and relied on long-range standoff weapons. A similar approach was observed in the recent India-Pakistan conflict, when neither Indian nor Pakistani aircraft crossed the border. Pakistan relied on Turkish-made drones. Most of them were intercepted. Pakistan also used the 'Fateh' ballistic missile. Ballistic missiles have large-radar cross-section and follow a predictable, high-altitude parabolic trajectory. It makes them vulnerable to interception. Sure enough, India intercepted all missiles. In contrast, India launched BrahMos missiles from Su-30 MKIs to destroy targets with pinpoint accuracy. Though detailed results remain classified, the operational impact was undeniable. These missiles ensured minimal risk to pilots while achieving precision strike objectives. Due to its low-altitude, supersonic cruise profile, BrahMos is virtually impossible to intercept with existing air defence systems. Indian scientists are already developing a future, more lethal version, BrahMos-NG (Next Generation). This will be smaller and lighter, enabling integration with platforms such as Tejas, Mirage and Rafale. Importantly, there will be no compromise on speed, range, lethality or stealth. Equipped with Active Electronically Scanned Array radar, it will offer enhanced precision. Simultaneously, a hypersonic version, known as BrahMos-II, inspired by the Russian Zircon missile, is being developed. It will be powered by scramjet to have a speed of more than 8 Mach and range of over 1,500 km. It will be impossible to intercept. This missile could be a true game-changer.

Operation Sindoor: Breaking Gordian knot of terror & talks

After the CBSE and other board exams results, the 'toppers' are in the news once again. but we fail to notice the agony of the 'losers'.

Foreign Minister S Jaishankar's clanger last week that "at the start of the operation we messaged Pakistan, we were hitting only terrorist targets and not Pakistan's military so it could stay out" (though it chose not to) has proved disingenuous. Why was it said 20 days after Operation Sindoor? Earlier, at Uri and Balakot, "exclusion of Pakistan military" was qualified after the operations. So was it this time. But Pakistan's response was inevitable. The MEA has clarified it was said during phase 1 at the end of the operation when the DGMOs spoke. Nearly three weeks on, smoke over Bahawalpur and Muridke has not settled down. The fog of war has not lifted. Truth remains the first casualty. The ceasefire has no expiry date. Two terrorist incidents have taken place in Shopian and Tral and six local terrorists killed. Pahalgam culprits have not been caught. A new Multi-Agency Centre has come up; akin to shutting the stable door after the horse has bolted. For the sixth time, Donald Trump has said he "managed to arrange ceasefire and avoid a bad nuclear war." In all previous India-Pakistan conflicts, US crisis management has been a notable feature.

During Kargil and Balakot, diplomacy was riding on the back of the military. In Op Sindoor, Indian diplomacy could not keep pace with the velocity of the brilliantly executed operations that had only one questionable supporter, Israel. No neighbouring country has backed India's kinetic response, though all have condemned the Pahalgam attack without naming Pakistan. China and Türkiye have come out in support of Pakistan. Despite India's veiled denial of US intercession, diplomatic teams are being sent abroad for fire-fighting. Pakistan is following suit. In the month of July, Pakistan will hold the UNSC presidency, during which Kashmir is likely to come up.

Both India and Pakistan have celebrated victory. The balance of advantage in the aerial exchange is unarguably with India. Pakistan will live to fight another day as cross-border terrorism will not cease soon. While India may not have a national security policy, it has coined a complex counter-terrorism doctrine, declaring a terrorist attack an act of war and removing the light between proxies and sponsors. Delhi has dispensed with Pakistan's deniability and dossiers exchange. Not only is Op Sindoor the shortest stand-off, non-contact skirmish, but also the briefest nuclear crisis. For the first time, the IAF has taken the honours by proving to be the sword arm. It has established air power is minimally escalatory. The termination of the operation was qualified with "any Pakistan misadventure would attract a corresponding



response." Pakistan's inevitable one-notch-up response therefore had escalation built in. Rawalpindi had to escalate to de-escalate and get off ramp. Superior technology and skill in delivery enabled India to maintain domination over escalation control. This has restored deterrence and expanded space for conventional operations by raising Pakistan's nuclear threshold. During the conflict, there was no nuclear signalling, except US detection of dynamic targeting that set off the nuclear alarm. The sale-worthiness of made-in-India and tested against Pakistan weaponry has enhanced even as the Chinese watched with a hawk eye. Despite the stunning rise of technology, the man behind the machine is supreme. The foot soldier will dominate in conquest and defence of territory (PoK and LAC). Op Sindoor was a war of attrition and achieving psychological ascendancy. The relevance of the Army will remain due to India's unsettled borders, internal instabilities and defending sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The internationalisation of Kashmir and re-hyphenation with Pakistan have already happened. On bilateralism, Islamabad's National Security Committee stated on April 25 in response to Delhi's slew of non-kinetic measures that "Pakistan shall exercise the right to hold all bilateral agreements with India including but not limited to Simla Agreement in abeyance till India desists from its manifest behaviour of fomenting terrorism inside Pakistan, non-adherence to international law and UN resolutions on Kashmir." The US may say it has "influence", not "control" over Pakistan, it exercises both. The Composite Dialogue begun in 2004 has remained on-off since 2008. The contours of the post-Pahalgam dialogue will be known after the cessation of firing stabilises into ceasefire. India should drop the charade: response was against terrorist infrastructure not the military, proportionate, responsible and non-escalatory. Ironically, Op Sindoor was required to break the Gordian knot terror and talks won't go together.

To address casteism, society needs to acknowledge it first

Our society, which allows the turpitude to divide communities by turning its face from it, needs to look at it in the eye and stare it down with a steely resolve

Unlike in the rest of the country, casteism is usually a private affair in Kerala. One rarely gets to experience it in public spheres, thanks to the social revolutions the state has gone through. So when it recently raised its ugly head again, there was a furore across Kerala. It reminded us that the scourge still exists in deep layers among all the communities in the state. The Thiruvananthapuram police had, on April 23, registered a case for the "theft" of 18 grams of gold from a house where a Dalit woman worked as household help. She was summoned to the police station the same evening. There, she claimed, she was not given food or water through the night and was not even allowed to sleep. When she asked for drinking water, she reported she was told to get it from the toilet. The next day, she was released after the complainant informed police that the "stolen gold" had been found misplaced at home. The story shocked Kerala's psyche. The government suspended



the sub-inspector for lapses in taking the woman into custody without a preliminary probe. Two days later, an assistant sub-inspector was also suspended. In neighbouring Tamil Nadu, the bastion of Dravidian politics, the principal of a school and two other employees in Pollachi were booked this week after a

menstruating Dalit schoolgirl was forced to write her annual examination outside the classroom. Around the same time, three Dalit men died at a Tiruppur dyeing factory after inhaling toxic gas while cleaning a sewage tank, an act proscribed by several laws and regulations. These recent cases in the two states stand out in their treatment of the marginalised. That such gross human rights violations are still happening in apparently progressive states like Kerala and Tamil Nadu is a bigger shame. Swift action by the authorities in the Thiruvananthapuram and Pollachi cases is welcome. But action against casteism does not stop there. Caste works in conscious and subconscious ways—and we can address it only when we acknowledge it. Our society, which allows the turpitude to divide communities by turning its face from it, needs to look at it in the eye and stare it down with a steely resolve.

The AI class we are bunking

Within the world of artificial intelligence, agentic AI is fast emerging as a critical frontier. The basic AI education our institutes are imparting is no longer enough. We need courses that explore the inner workings of cognitive architectures—models that allow AI agents to reason and decide

Self-driving cars, drones that deliver vaccines to remote villages, financial systems that adapt real-time. These are no longer in the realm of science fiction; they're fast becoming a part of the global artificial intelligence landscape. Yet, many in India, including our educators, are unfamiliar with "agentic AI"—the specific kind of AI that underpins these technologies. So, what is agentic AI? Think of it as a level up from traditional AI. These intelligent systems respond to data and can make independent decisions, learn from their environment, and interact with other intelligent agents. They don't just process—they adapt, plan, negotiate and sometimes even disagree. In essence, they behave a bit like us. The current AI curriculums in many of our institutions are rich in machine learning, computer vision and natural language processing. Impressive, yes. However, there's a noticeable gap in preparing students to design systems that can reason, collaborate, and operate autonomously in unpredictable settings. This isn't about just adding another topic to the AI syllabus. It's about recognising a disruptive transition in how machines think and act—and ensuring India's future engineers are ready for it. Agentic AI is more than a collection of algorithms. It draws from diverse disciplines—cognitive science, decision theory, robotics and ethics, to name a few. It's about creating intelligent entities that can make real-time decisions based on context, memory, internal goals and social cues. That is a complex task. And it requires a rethink of how we teach AI. So far, most university courses focus on AI that works with static data sets—systems that are told what to do. What's missing are courses on agents that figure things out for themselves. Our universities must train the students to master the principles behind multiple agents interacting—whether cooperating or competing—in shared environments. This is the backbone of



applications like autonomous fleets, robot-assisted manufacturing and intelligent supply chains. And let's not forget ethics. Tough questions stare at us as machines begin to make decisions independently. How do we ensure fairness? What does transparency mean when machines independently change their strategies mid-task? These are not casual asides. They're central to designing AI that earns human trust. That said, change is in the air. Some IITs are developing real-world applications where students build autonomous systems to solve sustainability and urban infrastructure challenges. Indian industry players are moving beyond AI-powered dashboards to agentic platforms that reimagine how enterprises run. Startups, too, are rising to the occasion, building niche solutions that draw heavily on agentic AI models. This surge of activity outside the classroom offers something our universities need to

embrace—experiential learning. Startups, for instance, are perfect playgrounds for aspiring AI professionals. They offer the chaos and creativity that agentic AI demands. Unlike large corporations, startups pivot quickly, take risks, and break things. That's precisely the environment where tomorrow's AI innovators learn to thrive. Yet, the foundation still lies in education. And here's where Indian universities have a real opportunity. They must introduce courses that explore the inner workings of cognitive architectures—the models that allow agents to reason and make decisions like humans. The curriculum must include lab experiments that let students build agents that learn by doing, not by being told. Educators must bring interdisciplinary perspectives from psychology, neuroscience, and ethics to explore the full implications of intelligent behaviour. Right now, such course offerings are missing from our university

engineering education. What we need is mainstream exposure—early, accessible, and hands-on. Does this all really matter for India? The answer, unequivocally, is yes. We do not want to produce coders anymore. We must shape the architects of the next digital age. And agentic AI is not some distant frontier—it's already impacting defence, climate modelling, healthcare, and global supply chains. The country that trains its talent to lead in this space won't just earn patents and profits; it will mould global norms, influence technological standards, and perhaps even set the ethical tone for autonomous systems worldwide. For Indian higher education institutes, the message is clear. Teaching our students to master basic AI isn't enough. If our higher education institutions are serious about preparing students for the age of intelligent machines, they must go far beyond teaching the mechanics of algorithms or neural networks. We must enable students to think critically about how autonomous systems learn, adapt, and interact, often in unpredictable environments. The curriculum must integrate this technical know-how with a clear grasp of social impact and ethical design. This approach requires an interdisciplinary outlook. Designing an AI model is one thing; anticipating how it behaves when faced with conflicting values in the real world is quite another. What should an AI system do when choosing between efficiency and fairness? Who is accountable when algorithms go wrong? Questions like these are the edge cases of tomorrow's challenges, and our students must be ready to address them. It's a rare confluence of need, talent, and timing—Indian educational institutes must act—to become a launchpad for creative disruption in intelligent autonomy. That journey can begin right now in Indian classrooms, so long as we prioritise relevance over being tied to legacy systems.



A perfect summer getaway, Andaman and Nicobar, is an archipelago at the confluence of the Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea. With an array of thrilling water sports, leisure facilities, and a host of activities, a vacation in Andaman and Nicobar can be as relaxed or filled with adventure as you'd like it to be. The weather is temperate most of the year and the best time to visit is between December-May. If you're planning to head here in this summer break then here's a pick of outdoorsy things which will keep you busy.

Radhanagar Beach, Havelock Island



Beach number 7 (or more commonly known as Radhanagar Beach) was bestowed with the title of 'Asia's Best Beach' in 2004 by the TIME magazine. Known for its picturesque sunset, white sand and turquoise blue waters, the beach is a very popular hub lying on the western coast of Havelock Island. There's a watersports centre at the beach where visitors can hire snorkelling and scuba equipment and boats.

Havelock Island, the Andamans



Havelock Island at the Andamans is the most popular spot for scuba diving. Home to one of the richest coral reef ecosystem in the world, the waters here are pristine, and teeming with diverse marine life. There are two diving operators on Havelock—Barefoot Scuba and Dive India—which provide wannabe divers with training and all the requisite equipment. Both the operators are PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors) certified dive centres.

➤North Bay Beach, Port Blair

Located just 15 minutes away from the Rajiv Gandhi Water Sports Complex, the North Bay Beach offers one of the easiest water sports—Sea-walking—in Andaman and Nicobar. Walking barefoot on the base of the sea offers you an exquisite view of rich marine-life and the corals. If you're heading to Andaman and Nicobar, don't miss this. Skilled life guards accompany you underwater, to ensure maximum safety.



Must-visits in
Andaman and
Nicobar

▣ Mangrove creek, Baratang Island



Baratang Island is located about 100 kilometres away from the Port Blair city and offers a boat-safari, amidst the nature-made tunnel of thick mangrove plantations. A variety of exotic birds can be spotted along the lush trail of dense tree knots and canopies. This mangrove creek leads to the magnificent Lime Stone Caves, for which you must carry a torch with you.

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Best time of the day to visit:

Morning and afternoon.

Required equipment: A transparent helmet, which pumps the oxygen in from an oxygen cylinder kept in the pontoon.

Mt. Harriet, the Andamans

This trek stretches up 16 kilometres starting from Mt. Harriet to Madhuban, winding across a picturesque terrain. Expect to see exotic birds and rare plants along the lush trail. Taking a guide along is highly recommended. Tents and all the trekking equipment are available on hire from the Andaman Teal House. Do not forget to acquire food, water, torch, and first aid, before you start. The best time to go hiking here is November-April.

Rajiv Gandhi Water Sports Complex,

Port Blair

Located in the heart of Port Blair, the Rajiv Gandhi Water Sports Complex offers an array of aqua-sports: banana rides, jet skiing, parasailing, speed boat rides, rowboat paddling, you name it! This ought to be your first pit-stop in the Andamans. The Centre is well-equipped with changing rooms, and trained staff to ensure safety. The State Theatre of Opera and Ballet is yet another lavish construction, made of marble and gold trimmings. The tickets can get very expensive, but if you want to see a good Kazakh, Russian or Italian opera this is the place to be. You might not think of Kazakhstan as a prime place to experience such European culture, but the productions at the State Theatre of Opera and Ballet are as good as any you'll find in the old cities of Europe. This opera house can easily rival those of Vienna and Budapest. Apart from shows, the building in itself is worth the visit—filled to the brim with interesting pieces of art. The staff is very polite and helpful.



In Harvard T-shirt, Raghav Chadha's blunt message amid row: Wear my colours

■ AAP MP and Harvard alumnus Raghav Chadha called for safeguarding academic freedom and global collaboration of the university, as he criticised US President Donald Trump's move to bar the university from enrolling international students.

New Delhi. Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MP Raghav Chadha, a Harvard University alumnus, slammed US President Donald Trump's recent decision to bar the Ivy League institution from enrolling international students. Calling it a move detrimental to dreams and future of international students, he urged the protection of academic freedom and the promotion of global collaboration.

The move marks the latest escalation in an ongoing standoff between Harvard and the White House, following the university's refusal to comply with Trump's demands for reform. On Thursday, the US President revoked Harvard's authority to enrol international students, a decision that has since been temporarily blocked by a US court.

"I stand with Harvard and all international students whose dreams and futures are under threat. We must defend academic freedom and global collaboration," the AAP leader tweeted,

along with a photo of himself wearing a Harvard T-shirt. Chadha remarked, "President Trump's recent move threatens the dreams and futures of international students at Harvard and

The Trump administration, earlier this week, revoked the university's ability to enrol international students, with the Department of Homeland Security alleging that Harvard has created an unsafe campus environment by allowing "anti-American, pro-terrorist agitators" to assault Jewish students on campus. It also accused Harvard of coordinating with the Chinese Communist Party, saying it hosted and trained members of a Chinese paramilitary group as recently as 2024.

This was Trump's latest move against the university, following his earlier actions of blocking several federal funds and revoking its tax-exempt status after the university refused to comply with his demands for sweeping changes, including limiting campus activism. The university pushed back by filing legal suits of its own.

Harvard enrolls almost 6,800 foreign students at its campus in Cambridge, Massachusetts, accounting for more than a quarter of its student body. Most are graduate students, coming from more than 100 countries.



beyond. As a proud member of the Harvard community, I wear my colours to show support for inclusion and academic freedom."

The AAP leader attended Global Leadership and Public Policy for the 21st Century programme at Harvard Kennedy School, the world's leading institution for public policy.

Rain, thunderstorm likely in Delhi-NCR today, alert for winds up to 70 kmph

New Delhi. Light rainfall is expected in parts of South Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR) over the next two hours, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said in a morning update issued at 5:40 am on Friday. It has also issued an orange alert for most parts of Delhi-NCR, warning of gusty winds reaching speeds of up to 70 kmph. According to the forecast, areas likely to witness light showers include Dwarka, Palam, IGI Airport, Vasant Vihar, Vasant Kunj, Mehrauli, Chhattarpur, IGNOU, Ayanagar, and Deramandi in South Delhi, along with Faridabad and Ballabhgarh in NCR.

Residents are advised to stay indoors and take the necessary precautions. The weather department, in its forecast, predicted a partly cloudy sky for Delhi on Saturday. These conditions are expected to bring some relief from the heat, with the maximum temperature hovering around 37 degrees Celsius. Between May 22 and May 28, Delhi is expected to witness fluctuating weather patterns. Temperatures are likely to rise gradually through the week, reaching a high of 40 degrees Celsius on both May 26 and May 28. The minimum temperature is also set to increase, starting at 21 degrees Celsius on May 22 and climbing to 29 degrees Celsius by the end of the forecast period, the weather department said.

On Friday night, the weather department issued an orange alert for heavy rainfall over the next two to three hours in several districts across Gujarat, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, and Himachal Pradesh. Earlier this week, a powerful storm swept through parts of Delhi-NCR and Uttar Pradesh on Wednesday night, claiming at least 50 lives and leaving dozens injured. Noida, Ghaziabad, Moradabad, Meerut, and Baghpat were among the worst-hit areas. The storm also uprooted trees and electric poles, causing damage to homes and vehicles across the region.

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar backs Op Sindoor, says terrorism is enemy of mankind

New Delhi. Spiritual guru Sri Sri Ravi Shankar has supported India's Operation Sindoor, which was launched to avenge the killings of 26 people by Pakistan-backed terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam last month, stressing that terrorism was an enemy of mankind. In an exclusive interview with India Today TV, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar said sense prevailed between India and Pakistan following a four-day military conflict and credited New Delhi's strong diplomatic postures against Islamabad while dealing with cross-border terrorism.

"Terrorism is the enemy of mankind. Not just our country; even Pakistan has suffered because of terrorism. In that case, when there are hubs of terrorism that have been sprouting in any part of the world, we must go and teach the terrorists a lesson. The government has done the right thing," he said. He underlined the ceasefire understanding between India and Pakistan after the military conflict, saying it was a "wonderful thing" and compared it with the ongoing Israel-Hamas war in Gaza.

"It (Operation Sindoor) is not against the people of any country or religion. We are against terrorism and one must not be confused. Some terrorists killed our innocent people after doing religious profiling. One cannot simply take it as a lightdown. They have to take the right action and that is being done," he said.

"We are against something that is destroying humankind and human values. I am glad that sense has prevailed on both sides. We have come to an understanding now. More dialogues are coming up which is the most wonderful thing. Otherwise, it could have gone like what is happening between Israel and Palestine," he said. In the early hours of May 7, the Indian armed forces launched Operation Sindoor and targeted nine terror camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (POK), killing 100 terrorists. India's strikes prompted a counterattack from Pakistan, which launched a barrage of missiles and drones at several Indian cities and military installations.

UPSC exam: Delhi Metro services to begin at 6 am today



New Delhi. Services on select Delhi Metro lines will begin earlier than usual on May 25 to facilitate candidates appearing for the Civil Services (Preliminary) Examination conducted by the UPSC, the DMRC said on Thursday. Services from terminal stations on Line-7 (Pink Line), Line-8 (Magenta Line) and Line-9 (Grey Line) will begin at 6 am, instead of the usual start time of 7 am on Sundays. The early operations will help candidates reach their examination centres on time, the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) said. "This arrangement is being made to facilitate the candidates appearing for the Civil Services (Preliminary) Examination held by UPSC this Sunday," Anuj Dayal, Principal Executive Director of DMRC, said in a statement.

On the Pink Line, services will begin from Majlis Park, Majlis Park-Shiv Vihar, Shiv Vihar and Majpur-Babarpur towards their respective terminal stations at 6 am. Similarly, trains on the Magenta Line will start at 6 am from Janakpuri West and Botanical Garden. However, services from Krishna Park Extension will begin slightly earlier at 5:50 am, he said.

CBI chargesheet against ex-chief of government firm and others in corruption case

New Delhi. The CBI on Friday filed a chargesheet against five accused, including the former chairman-managing director (CMD) of Broadcast Engineering Consultants India Limited (BECIL), in connection with alleged bribery and loan disbursement amounting to Rs 50 crore.

Based on a reference from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, the CBI registered a case on September 3 last year to probe alleged irregularities in the sanction and disbursement of a venture loan of Rs 50 crore by George Kuruvilla, BECIL's former CMD, to a private firm, The Green Billions Limited (TGBL), Mumbai, represented by Prateek Kanakia, CEO and founder. Investigation revealed that during 2022, Kuruvilla allegedly entered a criminal conspiracy with then General Manager of BECIL, WB Prasad, then Legal Advisor of BECIL, Ashish Pratap Singh, and Kanakia, with an intent to cheat BECIL to the tune of Rs 50 crore on the pretext of sanctioning and disbursing the venture loan to the Mumbai-based company under a consortium agreement and a general venture loan deal.

In furtherance of the said criminal conspiracy, the accused officers of BECIL obtained a short-term corporate loan of Rs 80 crore from IREDA, out of which they disbursed Rs 50 lakh to TGBL in three tranches of Rs 12.50 crore, Rs 17.50 crore and Rs 20 crore respectively, on April 8, 2022; June 20, 2022 and December 30, 2022.

The 50 crore venture loan was disbursed to the accused company for a waste-to-energy project of the Pune Municipal Corporation, the CBI said.

Investigation also uncovered that, in furtherance of said criminal conspiracy, Kanakia did not utilise the disbursed funds in the project for which the funds were released. He, instead, diverted most of the funds to his own use and paid undue advantage of Rs 2 crore in April 2022 and Rs 1 crore in April 2023 to the main accused Kuruvilla. To misuse the remaining amount of the sanctioned and disbursed loan of Rs 80 crore by IREDA to BECIL, the accused officers of BECIL sanctioned additional funds of Rs 25 crore to TGBL. The original documents related to the project at BECIL were destroyed by the accused, the CBI alleged.

Starting Bihar elections, voters have to deposit mobile phones at polling booths

New Delhi. In a big relief for voters, the Election Commission of India (ECI) on Friday announced that it is introducing a new facility for people who will be allowed to deposit their mobile phones at polling booths. As per the latest guidelines, voters will be able to deposit their mobile phones at designated counters outside the booth before casting their vote. The commission has announced that the responsibility for safeguarding mobile phones will rest with its staff once voters hand them over before entering the booth. After casting their vote and getting their finger inked, voters can retrieve their phones and even take a selfie as they exit. This facility is expected to be rolled out starting from the third phase of the Bihar Assembly elections later this year.

In an effort to make the electoral process more transparent and inclusive, the



ECI, under the leadership of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, has also decided to allow political parties and candidates to set up temporary help desks within 100 metres of polling booth entrances. These desks will be used to distribute unofficial voter slips. Until now, such booths were only permitted 200 metres away from the polling station entrance.

The decision to allow mobile phone deposit counters comes in view of the

growing usage of mobile devices in both urban and rural areas, and the practical challenges faced by voters, especially senior citizens, women and persons with disabilities, on polling day.

As per the new rules, voters will be permitted to carry their phones only in a switched-off state within a 100-metre radius of the booth. Pigeonhole boxes or jute bags will be provided at the entrance to safely deposit phones. However, mobile phones will strictly not be allowed inside the polling stations. The Election Commission said that certain polling stations may be exempted from this provision if adverse local conditions warrant it, as determined by the returning officer.

It also clarified that Rule 49M of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961, which ensures the secrecy of voting inside polling stations, will continue to be strictly enforced.

Pak's decades of terror, Pahalgam last straw: India on Indus treaty move at UN

New Delhi. India's decision to place the Indus Waters Treaty with Pakistan in abeyance following the Pahalgam terrorist attack was the result of a well-considered process, driven by multiple factors, India said at the United Nations on Friday. New Delhi specified that it was Pakistan, not India, that violated the 1960 water-sharing agreement.

Parvathaneni Harish, India's Permanent Representative to the UN, dismissed the "disinformation spread by the Pakistani delegation" regarding the Indus Waters Treaty, highlighting key factors that led to the suspension of the treaty, also including repeated instances of cross-border terrorism, with the recent Pahalgam attack being the latest example.

"India entered into the Indus Water Treaty 65 years ago in good faith. The preamble of the treaty describes that



the treaty was concluded in a spirit of goodwill and friendship. Throughout the six and a half decades, Pakistan has violated the spirit of the treaty by inflicting three wars and thousands of terror attacks on India. In the last four decades, more than 20,000 Indian lives have been lost in terror attacks, the most recent of which was a dastardly targeted terror attack on tourists in Pahalgam last month," the envoy told

the Security Council. He stressed that though Islamabad harboured terrorism against India, New Delhi has "shown extraordinary patience and magnanimity" throughout this period. "Pakistan's state-sponsored cross-border terrorism in India seeks to hold hostage the lives of civilians, religious harmony, and economic prosperity," he added.

According to Ambassador Harish, apart from regional security concerns, other factors, including India's energy requirements and dam safety, also necessitated the decision.

"In these 65 years, far-reaching fundamental changes have taken place, not only in terms of escalating security concerns through cross-border terror attacks, but also growing requirements for producing clean energy, climate change, and demographic change," he specified.

Monsoon to arrive in Kerala within 24 hours, earliest onset in state in 16 years

■ This year's monsoon onset in Kerala is set to be the earliest in the last 16 years. The last time the monsoon arrived this early in the state was in 2009 and 2001.

New Delhi. The monsoon is set to arrive in Kerala within the next 24 hours, nearly a week ahead of its usual schedule. This year's onset in Kerala is set to be the earliest in the last 16 years. All favourable conditions for the onset of the monsoon have developed over the state, with heavy rainfall lashing several parts of Kerala over the past two days due to a combination of a low-pressure area and

the advancing monsoon system.

The last time the monsoon arrived this early in the state was in 2009 and 2001, when it reached the state on May 23. The normal date for the monsoon's onset over Kerala is June 1. However, the earliest recorded arrival was on May 11 in the year 1918. On the other hand, the record for the late onset was in 1972, when monsoon rains began as late as June 18.

In the last 25 years, the most delayed arrival occurred in 2016, when the monsoon entered Kerala on June 9.

SOUTHERN STATES FORECAST

In the southern states, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) predicted isolated extremely heavy rainfall over Kerala, coastal and south interior Karnataka, and Konkan and Goa on Saturday. Heavy to extremely heavy rainfall is likely over Kerala and coastal Karnataka through May 29, with gusty winds reaching 40-50 kmph. Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh will also see scattered showers and thunderstorms



over the next five days, the weather department said.

WESTERN STATES FORECAST

Maharashtra A depression has formed over the east-central Arabian Sea near the south Konkan coast and was located about 40 km northwest of Ratnagiri early on May 24. It is expected to move eastwards and cross the coast between Ratnagiri and Dapoli later this morning. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on

Friday afternoon issued a red alert predicting heavy rainfall in the coastal districts of Maharashtra. According to the weather report, Mumbai may experience thunderstorms accompanied by lightning, with light to moderate rainfall and winds gusting up to 40 to 50 kmph in isolated areas.

Goa

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a red alert for Goa, predicting heavy to very heavy rainfall till Sunday. The state government has urged people to stay away from rivers and waterfalls as a precaution. Several parts of the coastal state were lashed by intense showers over the past 24 hours.

NORTHERN STATES FORECAST

Delhi-NCR

Meanwhile, light rain is likely in parts of South Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR) over the next two hours, according to an IMD update issued at 5:40 am on Friday. An orange alert has also been issued for Delhi-NCR, with gusty winds expected to reach up to 70 kmph.

48 hours in Milan



Navigli

After visiting the art gallery, make your way towards Milan's trendy Navigli neighborhood, noted for its charming canals and vibrant nightlife. The oldest canal, Naviglio Grande, is lined with restaurants and pubs, as well as old barges fitted out as bars. You'll be able to find dinner and drinks in the area, a great way to wrap up your first night in Milan.

Pinacoteca di Brera

Just a few blocks from the castle is Milan's largest art

Known for fashion and design, Milan is located in northern Italy and is the country's second largest and most cosmopolitan city. Offering top-notch art, culture, history and food, Milan is the perfect spot for a weekend of urban exploration.

collection, Pinacoteca di Brera, which houses Giovanni Bellini's 'Madonna and Child' and Francesco Hayez's 'The Kiss'. The gallery closes at 7:15 pm, so you'll have plenty of time to browse.

Parco Sempione

For an afternoon stroll, head over to Parco Sempione, a beautiful city park ornamented by the Porta Sempione (Arch of Peace) and the 14th-century Castello Sforzesco (Sforza Castle). The castle's fountain, nicknamed the 'Torta degli Sposi' (wedding cake) for its design, is a magnet for children in need of a quick splash in the summertime.

Galleria Vittorio Emanuele

Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II is home to a number of luxury shops, including Prada, Gucci and Louis Vuitton—and some of Milan's oldest bars and restaurants. Scope out a lunch spot in the Galleria and stop by Zucca in Galleria afterwards for a cup of coffee or an aperitif.

Opened in 1867 with the inauguration of the Galleria, Zucca was the first to offer Campari, a popular brand of Italian bitters.

Piazza del Duomo

No trip to Milan is complete without a visit to Piazza del Duomo (Cathedral Square), the city's main square. There you'll find the city's Gothic cathedral, the Duomo—it is the largest cathedral in Italy and the fourth largest in the world. The architecture inside and out is worth a close look. Ladies, make sure you cover your shoulders and legs (above your knees), or you won't be permitted to enter the cathedral. If you happen to be wearing a sleeveless shirt, there are a number of vendors in the piazza taking advantage of the opportunity by selling scarves and shawls.

Ristorante Pizzeria

If you're staying in Navigli, end your day with dinner at Ristorante Pizzeria Sant'Eustorgio, a restaurant and pizzeria that features simple dishes, a wide wine selection and terrace seating overlooking Piazza Sant'Eustorgio.

Pasticceria Marchesi

While in the Magenta neighbourhood, stop by Pasticceria Marchesi for the best sugar-coated croissants (called brioche) in the city. Circa 1824, Pasticceria



Marchesi is one of the oldest pastry shops in Milan. Don't forget to spend a few hours exploring on your own—after all, that's when the most exciting discoveries can take place.

Santa Maria delle Grazie

Make time to visit Santa Maria delle Grazie, a church and former monastery with a beautiful facade and interior. The church is home to Leonardo da Vinci's 15th-century masterpiece—The Last Supper. In order to see the painting, you will need to book a tour at least a few days in advance, as it is only shown to small guided tours for its protection.

Rinomata Gelateria

Stop by retro-styled Rinomata Gelateria (Ripa di Porta Ticinese, 1) for crepes or ice cream and continue your stroll along Naviglio Grande, as Gelateria doesn't offer seating. Navigli is worth a second look, as its beauty isn't limited to the night hours and it offers a completely different vibe during the daytime. Strolling along the canals in the afternoon, you'll encounter specialty boutiques and shops, rather than neon-lit bars.

Colonne di San Lorenzo

In front of the church stands the Colonne di San Lorenzo, Milan's best-known Roman ruin. Dating from the 2nd century, the columns were moved to their current location during the 4th century.



Perfect summer destinations in India

Planning a vacation in India is a challenging task with the country's incredible diversity throwing up a long list of names. From tropical islands and tea plantations to lush valleys overlooking the mighty Himalayas, there is no dearth of options when it comes to planning the perfect summer getaway in India.

Coorg (Kodagu), Karnataka

Spread out across the Western Ghats, the misty valley of Coorg offers the perfect getaway from the scorching summer heat. Fondly referred to as the 'Scotland of India' due to its verdant beauty and pleasant weather conditions, Coorg has a special place among all hill stations in India. A place where you can just sit around and watch the fog roll by.

Rishikesh, Uttarakhand

Styling itself as the 'Yoga Capital of the World', Rishikesh is a magnet for spiritual seekers. Surrounded by the fast-flowing Ganga and forested hills, the setting is definitely conducive for relaxing and meditation. Rishikesh is also a popular white-water rafting centre and backpacking hang-out.

Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh

A heady mix of religion, history and nature, Tawang is one of the least discovered towns in Arunachal Pradesh. Dotted with Buddhist monasteries and mystical gompas on one end and a war memorial on another, the valley begins to work its magic on travellers the moment they start descending the hills.

Ooty, Tamil Nadu

Established as a retreat from the scorching heat of the

summer by the British, Ooty is a visual delight filled with pretty cottages, fenced flower gardens, thatched-roof churches and terraced botanical gardens. Venture a few kilometres out and find yourself surrounded by greener, quieter areas dotted with an abundance of pine trees.

Darjeeling, West Bengal

Surrounded by emerald-green tea plantations and set against a backdrop of jagged white Himalayan peaks, Darjeeling is nestled away in the northern regions of West Bengal. A journey on the 'Toy train,' which meanders up the hills to Darjeeling from New Jalpaiguri in the plains is a great way to explore and soak in the magnificent surroundings of this hill station.

Munnar, Kerala

Sprawling tea plantations, picture-perfect towns and winding lanes make Munnar a perfect destination for those looking for respite from the summer heat. Although the town itself is forever buzzing with activity, wander a few kilometres out and you'll be engulfed in a thousand shades of green.



Pahalgam, Kashmir

Known as the 'Valley of Shepherds,' Pahalgam is a low-rise town that stands at the confluence of Lidder River and Sheshnag Lake. The surrounding mountains contain many picturesque spots and over 20

lakes to which countless guides and horsemen and more than eager to take you to.

Manali, Himachal Pradesh

With mountain adventures beckoning from all directions, Manali is the perfect destination for those looking to unwind during the summer months. Backpackers come to hang around in the villages near the main town and adventure tourists come for trekking, paragliding, rafting and skiing. About 53 km away from Manali is the famous Rohtang Pass offering up breathtaking sights of glaciers, peaks and valleys.

Nainital, Uttarakhand

A welcome relief from the heat of Delhi, Nainital is a small town in Kumaon which encircles the picturesque Naini Lake. There's a busy town bazaar and a web of walking tracks around the forested hillsides, which have enticed travellers since pre-independence days to retreat to Nainital during the summer months.

Andaman and Nicobar Islands

The perfect summer getaway, Andaman and Nicobar Islands offer tourists a relaxed tropical ambience and an array of thrilling adventure activities. Tourists from all over the world visit this tropical paradise for its rich and diverse marine life which is best seen while snorkelling and scuba diving around its many pristine beaches.

Perfect summer destinations in India



Wipro CEO Pallia took home Rs 53.4 crore in FY25; Executive Chairman Rishad Premji's pay doubled

BENGALURU. Wipro CEO and MD Srinivas Pallia, who assumed the role in April last year, took home about Rs 53.4 crore (\$6.27 million) in FY25, according to the IT services firm's latest 20-F filing with the US Securities and Exchange Commission.

Interestingly, Wipro Executive Chairman Rishad Premji's remuneration more than doubled from Rs 6.4 crore in FY24 to about Rs 13.7 crore (\$1.6 million) in FY25, due to the increase in the company's net profit. In FY24, Rishad Premji did not take any variable pay. He was entitled to a commission at the rate of 0.35% on incremental consolidated net profits of the company over the previous fiscal year. "However, in light of the fact that the incremental consolidated net profits for fiscal year 2024 was negative, the company determined that no commission was payable for fiscal year 2024 to Premji," the company had said in its FY24 annual report. In FY24, Wipro's former CEO Thierry Delaporte took home about Rs 166 crore, which made him the highest-paid CEO of the Indian IT sector. There were no stock options granted to Rishad Premji in fiscal year 2025.

The filings also mentioned that as of March 31, 2023, 2024 and 2025, the company and its subsidiaries had more than 250,000, 232,000 and 230,000 employees, respectively. As of March 31, 2023, 2024 and 2025, more than 49,000, 41,000 and 38,000, respectively, of these employees were located outside India. "We have increasingly focused on hiring local resources in the countries where we operate. Highly trained and motivated people are critical to the success of our business. To achieve this, we focus on attracting and retaining the best people possible," the company said. In July 2024, the company adopted a new scheme for the grant of employee stock options, performance stock units and/or restricted stock units to the eligible employees of the company and Wipro Limited group companies. The company also said in its filings that the cost of revenues decreased by 2.17%, primarily due to a one-time employee restructuring cost of Rs 383.8 crore in fiscal year 2024. Its total employee compensation costs decreased due to lower average headcount in fiscal year 2025 as compared to fiscal year 2024 and was partially offset by the impact of salary increases and promotions.

Rupee vs Dollar: INR ends 3-day losing streak, gains 50 paise to end at 85.45/USD

Mumbai. The rupee snapped its three-day losing streak and settled for the day higher by 50 paise at 85.45 against the US dollar on Friday, on a sharp fall in the dollar index and surge in domestic equities, amid rise in risk appetite for riskier assets. Forex traders said, the rupee which had lost 53 paise in the last three trading sessions, settled with significant gains on Friday largely supported by the weakness of the American currency in the overseas market. However, a slight recovery in crude oil prices and foreign fund outflows capped the appreciation bias in the local unit to some extent. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee witnessed heavy volatility. It opened at 85.95 then touched an intra-day high of 85.11 and a low of 86.10 against the US dollar. The domestic unit settled for the day at 85.45, higher by 50 paise over its previous close. On Thursday, the rupee depreciated 36 paise to close at 85.95 against the US dollar. "We expect the rupee to trade with a positive bias on underlying weakness in the US dollar index and improved global risk sentiments. However, selling pressure from foreign investors may cap sharp upside movement," said Anuj Choudhary – Research Analyst at Mirae Asset Sharekhan. Choudhary further noted that traders may take cues from existing home sales data from the US. "USD-INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of 85 to 85.70," he said. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading lower by 0.60 per cent at 99.36, on rise in risk appetite in global markets and strength in riskier currencies. Easing of US treasury yields also pressurised the greenback.

Why Apple may choose to stay for 'Make in India' iPhones even after Trump's 25% tariff slap

New Delhi. The Global Trade Research Initiative said on Saturday that even if the US imposed a 25% tariff on iPhones manufactured in India, production costs would still be significantly lower than making the devices in the United States. The GTRIs' comments came in the wake of US President Donald Trump's recent statement threatening to impose a 25% tariff on iPhones if Apple chose to produce them in India. Despite this threat, the GTRI report demonstrated that Indian manufacturing remained a financially viable option for Apple, ANI reported.

Why are iPhones so expensive?

Breaking down the value chain of a \$1,000 iPhone, the report highlighted the global nature of its production, involving parts and expertise from more than a dozen countries. Apple itself claims the largest portion of the value, around \$450 per device, through its brand, software, and design. US component manufacturers, including Qualcomm and Broadcom, contribute approximately \$80, while Taiwan adds \$150 through chip manufacturing. South Korea supplies around \$90 via OLED screens and memory chips, and Japan provides \$85, mainly through camera components. Germany, Vietnam, and Malaysia contribute a further \$45 through smaller parts. The report said that even though India is a major assembly hub, it receives just about \$30 per device, amounting less than 3% of the retail price.

IndusInd Bank: Ashok Hinduja expresses unwavering support including equity infusion

Ashok Hinduja not only said that he had full confidence in the board to deal with the situation and emerge stronger but also mentioned that he is ready to chip in with additional equity if the situation warranted it.

Kolkata. Ashok P Hinduja, chairman, IndusInd International Holdings has expressed his unwavering support to IndusInd Bank against the backdrop of recent accounting discrepancy with an estimated impact of Rs 1,577 crore on the bank. In a statement Hinduja has also mentioned "swift actions to address the


discrepancies, and expressed confidence that the situation would "lead to higher standards of transparency and governance, leading to rebuilding trust in the bank".

The discrepancy reported by IndusInd Bank shocked the Indian banking sector, where IndusInd Bank is an emerging force in the private sector banking theatre and triggered concerns over corporate governance and financial stability. On March 10, the bank management reported a financial misstatement centering derivative transactions. According to reports, the impact was quantified at Rs 1,577 crore, or 2.35% of the bank's net worth.

Investors reacted with alacrity and the next day the stock dived 27% and the scrip was put in the Futures & Options ban list. Confidence in the board

"I express my continued, unequivocal trust in the Chairman & Board of Directors of the Bank for their appropriate, swift actions in order to address discrepancies

and attendant areas of concern... This would lead to higher standards of transparency and governance, leading to rebuilding trust in the Bank. The



coordinated efforts of current management under the guidance and monitoring of the Board and other stakeholders have ensured that the bank's business remains healthy, with robust capital adequacy. The continued confidence of the customers in the Bank shows their trust in the institution, which has always been upheld. This shall be a


new dawn with a sanitised slate to regain the position the Bank enjoyed for many decades," Hinduja said in a statement.

What RBI had said

After the development, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) stepped in to assuage nervous customers and said that IndusInd Bank remained 'well-capitalised'. Its financial position was also 'satisfactory.' "The Reserve Bank would like to state that the bank is well-capitalised and the financial position of the bank remains satisfactory," the banking regulator wrote in a statement. "The stance of the Regulator in addressing the issues in a very orderly manner with suitable guidance, as demonstrated by them in past for the banking sector, is commendable. Though the Capital Adequacy of the Bank is quite healthy, for business growth, should any further equity be required, IIHL, as the promoter of IBL, remains committed to supporting the Bank, as it has done over the past 30 years," Hinduja added.

Trump targets Samsung after tax threat to Apple for India shift: Wouldn't be fair

New Delhi It seems Apple is not alone in facing US President Donald Trump's tariff threat. The eccentric US President has also targeted Apple's rival Samsung and warned that the South Korean company would also face a 25% import tax if its phones were not manufactured in America. Speaking to reporters in the White House, Trump said the tariff would apply to any phone manufacturer selling devices in the US. "It would be more. It would also be Samsung and anybody that makes that product. Otherwise, it wouldn't be fair...when they build their plant here, there is no tariff," Trump said. The remarks came as he stepped up the pressure on Apple to build its iPhones in the country. "I have long ago informed Apple CEO Tim Cook that I expect the iPhones that will be sold in



the United States of America to be manufactured and built in the United States, not India, or anyplace else. If that is not the case, a tariff of at least 25% must be paid by Apple to the US," Trump said in a post on Truth Social.

Trump's post saw Apple's shares falling 2.6%, wiping out approximately USD 70 billion. Last week, Trump expressed his displeasure with Apple over the company's move to manufacture iPhones to be sold in the

US at plants in India. The US President's tariff bogey hits the plans of Apple to diversify its production capabilities. According to analysts, around 90% of Apple's smartphones are assembled in China. However, amid the US's trade war with China, Cook said in an earnings call earlier this month that the majority of iPhones sold in the US for the June quarter would "have India as their country of origin", according to CNN.

However, Samsung doesn't rely on China for smartphone manufacturing and a majority of its operations take place in India, South Korea, Vietnam, and Brazil.

The South Korean tech giant closed its last phone manufacturing factory in China in 2019.

Gold prices in India see a notable increase: review

CHENNAI. Gold Prices in India, as of the weekend, have seen a notable increase. On Saturday (May 24) gold recorded an average price of ₹9,769 per gram (24 Karat- 999 purity), and ₹8,956 per gram (22 Karat -91.6% purity).

These rates reflect a steady rise in gold prices over the past few weeks, influenced by various global and domestic factors.

Global Market Influences

Internationally, gold prices have been experiencing upward momentum. Analysts predict that gold could reach up to \$4,000 per ounce within the next year, driven by global economic uncertainties and inflation concerns.

In India, this global trend is mirrored, with prices steadily climbing. For instance, on May 8, 2025, 24 Karat gold was priced at ₹9,960 per gram,



Interest in 3-year FD: Know what SBI, HDFC Bank etc are paying

Kolkata. Did you know that SBI (State Bank of India) boasts of more than 50 crore customers — a number which is bigger than the combined total population of the US and Russia. And a significant number of them put their money in FD (fixed deposits). Therefore, you can easily understand how significant the interest rate on fixed deposit SBI pays is to a very large number of people. Not only SBI. The interest rates big banks such as HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank pay to its customers is of immense significance to crores of people. The reason — a number of people, especially those who are retirees and young people who are averse to taking risks — depend on the interest income from FDs both to run their families and for appreciation of capital. However, interest rates in India have started firmly on the downward march. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has already slashed the Repo rate twice



in February and April and experts state that the rate cut will continue in the current financial year. The retail inflation rate is below the RBI's target of 4% and if it remains in that zone, RBI will keep slashing rates in order to infuse growth in the economy for raising consumption and employment generation. Interest rate on SBI FD

As RBI slashes key interest rates, all banks, including SBI, will cut deposit rates as well. So it is crucial that customers grab interest rates before they are further reduced. The interest rates that State Bank of India is offering

to general customers from May 16, 2025 is 6.55% and 7.05% for senior citizens. SBI trimmed the rates from 6.75% and 7.25% for general customers and senior citizens respectively. The rate cut came following the RBI slashing Repo Rate in February and April by 25 basis points in each instance.

Interest rate on HDFC Bank FD, ICICI Bank FD Now turn to HDFC Bank, the biggest private sector bank in the country. HDFC Bank is offering 6.65% interest on FD of three-year tenure to the general customers and 7.15% to senior citizen customers. ICICI Bank, the second biggest private sector bank in the country, is offering an interest rate which is higher than both SBI and HDFC Bank on the three-year fixed deposit. It is paying 6.75% to general customers and 7.25% to senior citizens for all FDs involving less than Rs 3 crore.

indicating a consistent upward trajectory .

Cultural Significance and Demand

Gold holds immense cultural and economic significance in India. It is considered a symbol of prosperity and security, especially during weddings, festivals, and other significant life events. This cultural affinity drives consistent demand, particularly during peak seasons like Akshaya Tritiya and wedding months.

However, the recent price hikes have led to cautious buying behavior among consumers. While gold remains a preferred investment avenue, the increased costs are prompting buyers to reconsider their purchases .

Market Trends and Predictions

Despite the recent price increases, some experts anticipate a potential correction. Gold prices have fallen approximately 7% from their peak in April 2025, and there's speculation that they might drop to ₹88,000 per 10 grams . Investors are advised to monitor market trends closely and consider diversifying their portfolios to mitigate risks.

RBI Announces Record Rs 2.69 Lakh Crore Dividend Bonanza For Modi Govt

The RBI has also increased its contingency risk buffer (CRB) to 7.5 per cent from 6.5 per cent earlier at the meeting of its Central Board held on Friday.

New Delhi. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday approved its highest-ever dividend of a staggering Rs 2.69 lakh crore to the PM Narendra Modi-led Central government for the financial year 2024-25. The dividend payout is a robust 27.4 per cent increase over the corresponding figure of Rs 2.1 lakh crore for the previous year. The record dividend will help to keep the fiscal deficit in check while enabling the Finance Ministry to continue with its expenditure on big-ticket infrastructure projects to spur growth and social welfare schemes to uplift the poor in 2025-26. The RBI has also increased its contingency risk buffer



(CRB) to 7.5 per cent from 6.5 per cent earlier at the meeting of its Central Board held on Friday. The CRB helps cover potential hits like bad loans, falling asset values, or sudden economic shocks. Economists had expected the RBI's dividend to the government to surpass a record Rs 2.5 lakh this year as the central bank earnings, through the sale of dollars to prop up the rupee as it sharply depreciated during 2024-25, are reported to have shot up.

In September 2024, foreign exchange reserves peaked to \$704 billion and the RBI is estimated to have sold over \$125 billion since then, according to estimates by Nomura and DBS Bank. The previous record dividend transferred to the government stands at Rs 2.1 lakh crore during 2024-25. This was a record jump from the Rs 87,416 crore transferred to the government in 2023-24 for the profit made in 2022-23. Among the RBI's earnings, forex transactions are the most

significant in light of the central bank's measures to lower rupee volatility by strong dollar purchases earlier in fiscal 2025 and difference in the current versus historical exchange rate. Added to this are the interest income on government securities and earnings from funds extended to banks in the midst of previous tight liquidity. Earnings on forex transactions were substantial with gross dollar sales tracking at \$371.6 billion in fiscal 2025 till February compared to \$153 billion in fiscal 2024, according to IDFC First bank's Chief Economist Gaura Sengupta. The higher dividend creates fiscal space of 0.1 per cent to 0.2 per cent of GDP, estimates Sengupta. With support from the higher-than-budgeted RBI surplus and savings on a few expenditure heads, the Central government is in a fairly strong position to counter the growth slowdown risks and any potential emergency spending requirements. Apart from helping to lower the fiscal deficit, the RBI dividend will be a significant infusion to core liquidity in the banking system during the current financial year.

NEWS BOX

SRH Assistant coach delighted with Ishan Kishan's 'mature' innings vs RCB

New Delhi. Sunrisers Hyderabad assistant coach Simon Helmot was full of praise for Ishan Kishan, following his match-winning innings against Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) in Match 65 of the Indian Premier League 2025 (IPL 2025). Kishan played a magnificent innings of 94 off 48 balls with the help of seven fours and five sixes as he guided SRH to a massive score of 231/6 in their allotted 20 overs. It was the first 50-plus score for Kishan after 12 innings as he had earlier begun the season with a breathtaking century against the Rajasthan Royals (RR) in the opening game of his team. Following his marvellous innings, Simon Helmot was in awe of Kishan as he praised him for pacing his innings well.

“Ishan Kishan played a very mature innings — he certainly held the innings together for us. Our batters assessed the wicket well, and we felt it was a good surface to bat on, so a big total was going to be necessary. We maintained an aggressive approach, but it was also important to have a set batter at the end to capitalize on the final overs. As a batting unit, I think we stayed on course. Ishan, once again, played an excellent innings, and we had some solid contributions throughout the lineup,” said Helmot in the post-match press conference. Kishan walked



in to bat after a fiery start from Abhishek Sharma and Travis Head, who together added 54 runs for the first wicket in 24 balls. The wicketkeeper batter held one end and was successful in forming crucial partnerships with Heinrich Klaasen and Aniket Verma.

India's Test Squad Announcement For England Live Updates

He brought up his half-century off 28 balls and later accelerated in the end to take SRH's score past 230. Meanwhile, the victory vs RCB was fifth for SRH in the ongoing season. They're ranked eighth on the points table with five wins from 13 matches, having 11 points to their name. The Pat Cummins-led side will be eager to finish the tournament on a high note as they take on Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) on May 25.

I'm trying my best and managing my workload as much as possible: Mohammed Shami

NEW DELHI. Mohammed Shami's fitness status is a topic of discussion ahead of India's Test team selection. The veteran fast bowler has had an ordinary IPL season and is still feeling his way back after a long injury layoff. Excerpts from an interview...

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Are you physically fit to take on the workload of playing a five-Test series in England?

I'm trying my best, doing hard work, performing strength exercises, attending practice sessions regularly, delivering maximum numbers of balls in the nets and managing my workload as much as possible.



Red ball ke liye workload badhana padega (for red-ball cricket, the workload needs to be increased). The series is right after the IPL. There's also an India 'A' series. So, it is hectic for everybody.

With Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli having retired, do you feel India will miss out on crucial experience on the England tour?

Aaj kal ke cricket mey senior aur junior ka kahan fark hai (the distinction between youngsters and senior players doesn't really exist in today's cricket)! All are mature enough for international cricket these days due to the huge exposure in the IPL. The important thing to see is how the team is formed and what combinations are made. So in that sense, mera aur Bumrah ka rahna zaroori hai (it's important for me and Bumrah to be present on the England tour). Leading the bowling unit is important. Are you satisfied with your performance in the IPL so far? No, I am not satisfied. I couldn't deliver what I wanted to. I didn't meet expectations. But still, I feel I can give my best in any format, any time if given the opportunity.

How India's NextGen Test squad will look like: The England tour probables

India are set to announce their squad for the 5-match Test tour of England on Saturday, May 23. Head coach Gautam Gambhir and national selector Ajit Agarkar will hold a press conference in Mumbai, which will give fans clarity on who are set to be earmarked for the future of Indian Test cricket.

New Delhi. With the retirement of Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, two key spots have opened up in the playing XI, sending Indian into an immediate transitional phase. The availability of two spots in the playing XI in turn, has opened up places in the extended squad as well. The Indian Test team is at a critical juncture, having lost back-to-back series against New Zealand and Australia. They need a strong showing in England to



restore belief—and who better to lead the charge than Gautam Gambhir, a man who has always worn his heart on his sleeve. However, Gambhir will be under pressure due to the recent results and he would like to carefully handpick the men he wants to surround himself with, in what might turn out to be a tough away tour against the Bazballing England. This Indian team will truly be a Gautam Gambhir side, as he is expected to have significant input on squad selection following the retirements of the two senior players. New faces are expected to be included in the Test squad, especially since India have already named

several rising stars in their A team. On that note, here's how India's 16-member squad could look for the England Test tour:

Batters
Yashasvi Jaiswal, KL Rahul, Sai Sudharsan, Shubman Gill, Yashasvi Jaiswal and KL Rahul should be given the opener's slot, considering the partnership they forged in Australia in 2024–25. Rahul's experience of opening in English conditions could prove invaluable on this tour. Shubman Gill transitioned to No. 3 once India moved on from Cheteshwar Pujara in the red-ball format. It might be time for him to move down one more spot and take over Virat

Kohli's role. Shubman has the technique and temperament to control the pace of the game and should be earmarked as the next great in red-ball cricket.

Wicketkeeper
Rishabh Pant

The X-factor of the team—Rishabh Pant should be the first-choice keeper in the Test format. He is already out of the ODI and T20I squads and had a disappointing season in the Indian Premier League.

It would benefit him if the Indian management shows some trust during the England tour. Dhruv Jurel can be named as Pant's backup.

Spinner
The toss-up will be between Ravindra Jadeja and Washington Sundar. Gambhir has shown a preference for Sundar during his brief stint with the Indian team, but it will likely be Jadeja who gets the nod. Kuldeep Yadav is likely to miss out on the England Tests.

Fast Bowlers
Nitish Kumar Reddy, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj, Prasidh Krishna, Akash Deep

This is the pace attack India will rely on to win the Test series. The last time India toured England, in 2021, Virat Kohli's team rattled the English side.

India's next Test captain: Is Shubman Gill ready for the big job

New Delhi. The transition period in the Indian Test team began two years ago. Senior pros who once formed the backbone of the batting line-up were gradually eased out, and India began experimenting with rookies in the bowling unit. Yet few would have predicted that on Saturday, 24 May - just weeks before the much-anticipated England tour - the senior selection committee would be sitting down to choose not only a new captain, but also a replacement for the iconic No. 4 spot, long held by one of the game's greats. Winter is finally here. India are heading into the next cycle of the World Test Championship without Virat Kohli, R. Ashwin and Rohit Sharma. Ashwin retired midway through the Border-Gavaskar Trophy last year, and in May, Kohli and Rohit both called time on their Test careers - within a span of just five days. India's Test Squad Announcement For England Live Updates It was widely expected that Kohli would tour England and guide a relatively inexperienced side, especially after Rohit's exit. But the former captain surprised many by announcing his retirement

Napoli clinch fourth Serie A title as Scott McTominay becomes club legend

Scott McTominay helped Napoli lift the Serie A title on Friday, cementing his place as a legend of the club notably after his move from Manchester United. He was adjudged league's Most Valuable Player (MVP) for 2024-25.

New Delhi. SSC Napoli secured their fourth Serie A title with an emphatic 2-0 victory over Cagliari Calcio at the Diego Armando Maradona Stadium in Naples on Friday. Club midfielder Scott McTominay and Romelu Lukaku rose to the occasion, scoring a goal each, which sealed the home

win for the Neapolitan side, also ensuring that they held off Champions League finalists Inter Milan, who did win their final game but fell short with a point in the



title race. McTominay remained in the limelight during the entire game as he broke the deadlock with a spectacular scissor-kick goal only three minutes before half-time, handing a lead to Napoli. Only six minutes into the second half, his former Manchester United team-mate Lukaku made the game

safe with a second goal. The Scottish player ended the campaign with 12 goals and six assists, and the clinical effort also earned him the Serie A Player of the Season award. He was part of a lucrative £25.7 million deal that saw his exit from Man United in August 2024, but in no time, he became a fan favourite in Naples. His exceptional performances and work ethic have led him to be compared with club legends, and fans affectionately call him “McFratm” and “McMaradona.” The 28-year-old has thrived under the mentorship of manager Antonio Conte, who has advanced his midfield role.

It is said that Conte even made adjustments in his own tactical arrangements to accommodate McTominay's strengths, as he shifted from a traditional three-center-back formation to four. This update allowed McTominay to play on the left side of midfield as he often joined the attack and sometimes even positioned himself higher than Lukaku.

KL Rahul, not Shubman Gill, is the right choice for Team India captaincy'

NEW DELHI. As India prepares to name a new Test captain while unveiling the squad for the crucial five-match series in England, former wicketkeeper-batter Saba Karim has thrown his support behind Shubman Gill. In contrast, ex-chief selector Kiran More believes KL Rahul is the better option to lead the side. Following Rohit Sharma's retirement from Test cricket earlier this month, Gill has emerged as one of the leading contenders for the role. Rahul, who has captained India in three Tests previously, is also firmly in the conversation, especially given his consistent presence in the red-ball setup.

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Other names doing the rounds include pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah — who has led India in three Tests — and wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant. However, Bumrah may not be available for all five Tests in England, while Pant, despite his impressive record overseas, could be a strong candidate for the vice-captaincy instead. “You have Shubman Gill, KL Rahul, and Rishabh Pant.

Considering this is the start of a new WTC cycle, I would go with a young, talented leader—Shubman Gill. Although he's yet to fully establish himself at the Test level, I'd like to see the selectors make a bold move,” said Karim on Follow The Blues - Selectors



Meet episode on JioHotstar. We've seen his leadership skills in the shorter format with GT, and he seems to be in a very happy space when leading. That should bode well for India,” added Karim, who has previously served as a national selector. More, however, stressed the importance of experience,

making his case for KL Rahul — expected to open the innings with Yashasvi Jaiswal in the upcoming series, having formed a solid partnership on the Australia tour. “I would go with KL Rahul — he's an experienced campaigner. I don't want to put too much pressure on Shubman Gill. He hasn't done enough in Test cricket yet. He hasn't played much domestic cricket either, so there's a lot of learning still to do in the longer format,” said More.

“Let him grow — maybe he can be vice-captain for a year or two. For now, KL Rahul is the right choice. He has the experience, temperament, and communication skills needed to lead,” he added.

India's high-stakes Test series against England, part of the 2025–27 ICC World Test Championship cycle, will run from June 20 to August 4. The matches are scheduled to be played at Headingley, Edgbaston, Lord's, Old Trafford, and The Oval. India will be aiming to win a Test series in England for the first time since 2007.



from his favourite format. While acknowledging it was a difficult decision, Kohli called it a timely one. India have now been fast-tracked into a transition phase as significant as the one between 2011 and 2013, when the team moved past icons like Sachin Tendulkar and Rahul Dravid. All eyes are now on head coach Gautam Gambhir and selection committee chief Ajit Agarkar, as they meet at the BCCI headquarters on Saturday to pick the squad for the five-Test series in England. While several key questions await answers, the biggest of them all is: 'Who will be India's next Test captain?' In an ideal world, the answer to this question is straightforward: Jasprit Bumrah. Arguably the world's best pacer, Bumrah had expressed his desire to lead India in whites, and once he got the opportunity, he proved his worth.

Shubman Gill as Test captain will be a bold move: Saba Karim backs young batter

Former India cricketer Saba Karim backed Shubman Gill to become India's next Test captain, calling it a bold but progressive step as the BCCI prepares for a new leadership era ahead of the England tour.

New Delhi. As India braces for a new era in Test cricket, former cricketer and ex-selector Saba Karim has thrown his support behind Shubman Gill as the ideal candidate to take over the captaincy reins. With Rohit Sharma retiring from the longest format earlier this month, the BCCI is set to name a new Test skipper ahead of the crucial five-match series in England, beginning June 20. And while the decision is expected to shape India's red-ball identity for the new World Test Championship cycle, Karim believes opting for Gill could be both forward-thinking and

high-risk. Speaking on Follow The Blues – Selectors Meet on JioHotstar, Karim said he sees leadership potential in the 25-year-old, who has already begun to shoulder responsibilities in white-ball formats. Gill currently serves as vice-captain in ODIs and T20Is and led India during the T20 series in Zimbabwe in 2024. He also highlighted that despite his limited captaincy credentials in Tests, his temperament and exposure at the international level make him a strong contender. “You have Shubman Gill, KL Rahul, and Rishabh Pant. Considering this is the start of a new WTC cycle, I would go with a young, talented leader—Shubman Gill. Although he's yet to fully establish himself at the Test level, I'd like to see the selectors make a bold move. We've seen his leadership skills in the shorter format with GT, and he seems to be in a very happy space when leading. That should bode well for India,” he said. However, the former wicketkeeper also acknowledged that Gill is



still in the process of cementing his place in the Test side. Having played 32 matches and

scored 1,893 runs with five hundreds, the Punjab batter has shown promise but not yet dominance. That, Karim suggested, is what makes a potential captaincy offer to Gill a “bold move” by the selectors.

The Ajit Agarkar-led selection committee will meet at the BCCI headquarters on Saturday to finalise the Test squad for the England tour, which kicks off at Headingley. Apart from Gill, other names reportedly in the mix for the leadership role include wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant and pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah. Gill's captaincy stint in the IPL with Gujarat Titans has given Indian cricket a glimpse of his leadership style. But whether that experience translates into a role as India's Test captain remains to be seen. One thing is clear: the decision will mark a significant shift, not just in personnel, but in approach — and Karim believes Gill might just be ready to embrace that challenge.

Trisha Krishnan

Owens The Night At Thug Life Pre-Release In Polka Dot Saree

Fresh off the success of her back-to-back releases Vidaamuyarchi and Good Bad Ugly, Trisha Krishnan is now gearing up to captivate fans once again with Thug Life. Determined to keep the buzz alive, the actress recently made a show-stopping appearance at the film's pre-release event. She later treated her Instagram followers to a series of stunning photos, giving them a closer look at her graceful ensemble. Wrapped in six yards of sheer elegance, Trisha Krishnan radiates grace and beauty in every frame. Her teal-coloured polka dot saree, which she paired with a matching sleeveless blouse, enhanced her already stunning visage to a whole new level. Keeping it minimal with her accessories and makeup, she opted for sleek jewellery and soft glam makeup. Along with the photo,



Trisha wrote, "Flow." Trisha Krishnan is also making headlines for her stunning dance performance in Thug Life's second single, Sugar Baby. Composed by AR Rahman, the song is packed with a fresh and vibrant feel, thanks to the high-energy rhythm. In the song, Trisha totally captivated fans with incredible dance moves and undeniable confidence, confirming her status as a talented actress in Indian cinema. Talking about Thug Life, the film directed by Mani Ratnam is set for a worldwide theatrical release on June 5, 2025. It features Trisha alongside Kamal Haasan, who is playing the lead role in the film. A few intimate scenes featuring the two shown in Thug Life's teaser released earlier triggered online criticism.

Despite the hullabaloo, Trisha remained

unbothered as she opened up on her excitement even before signing the film. Talking to News18, the actress said, "I think that's something I knew when they announced the film and I had not even signed it."

So that's when I knew, wow, this is magic. And I was not even part of the film at that point in time. "In Thug Life, Kamal Haasan stars as Rangaraaya Sakthivel Naicker. He is joined by Silambarasan TR, Trisha Krishnan, Ashok Selvan, Aishwarya Lekshmi, Joju George, Ali Fazal, Sanya Malhotra and Rohit Saraf for the star-studded cast. Following its theatrical release, Thug Life will stream on Netflix. Its OTT release date is expected to be around July 3, 2025.



Sonali Bendre

Radiates 'Summer Glow' In Beige Floral Dress

Sonali Bendre is melting hearts with her latest post and we don't blame her. On Thursday, the actress posted a bunch of pictures on Instagram with a short caption that read, "Summer glow." In the photos, Sonali is seen striking some stellar poses, putting her fashion prowess into display. In one of the frames, she is looking away from the camera, posing for a candid click. For her photoshoot, Sonali Bendre stunned in a floor-length beige asymmetrical dress, adorned with delicate, black floral line art prints. She complemented her look with metal earrings and matching rings along with minimal glam. The actress left her tresses open, adding to her feminine allure. Looking ahead, Sonali Bendre is set to feature in an untitled action-thriller series alongside Ali Fazal next. Directed by Prosit Roy, the show is reportedly based on the infamous Ranga and Billa, involved in a notorious 1978 case in Delhi about kidnapping and murder of two teenagers, Sanjay and Geeta Chopra. Earlier this year, a source close to the production shared, "The



team has been researching the case in detail for months now. The show, which has commenced shooting in the capital, will focus on the events as they unfolded following the murder case. It's being treated with sensitivity and aims to show how deeply the case affected Delhi. The shoot is currently ongoing in various parts of the city."

On the personal front, Sonali Bendre is married to filmmaker Goldie Behl, son of director Ramesh Behl. The duo met each other for the first time on the sets of the 1994 film Naaraaz. It is directed by Mahesh Bhatt. After the meeting, they started feeling for each other and gradually started dating. Years after dating each other, Sonali tied the knot with Behl on November 12, 2002. The duo welcomed their son in 2005. Sonali Bendre was last seen in a cameo appearance in Remo D'Souza's film Be Happy.

Expanding her horizon, she also made her OTT debut in 2022 with The Broken News. The series was also renewed for another season, released last year. Her character as a journalist won hearts, solidifying her versatility as an actress.

Sophie Choudry Says Man Flashed At Her In Mumbai's Bandra: 'He Was Unzipping...'



Sophie pointed out that this wasn't the first time she'd experienced such vile behavior. "The first time someone flashed at me was when I was a schoolgirl in London. It happens across the world, but that doesn't make it any less horrifying."

The conversation took a wider turn when Sophie highlighted the everyday challenges of being a public figure, especially when it comes to personal space and boundaries. "One thing celebs deal with constantly is fans who want photos. And while that's totally okay, there are those who try to use that moment to get too close. They'll pretend it's innocent and try to slip their hand around your waist," she said. Sophie, however, has a clear boundary. "Now, the first thing I say when someone asks for a photo is, 'No hands.' My team is also very alert about this. I'm happy to pose with you, respectfully, but you don't get to touch me. That's not part of the deal."

Over the years, Sophie Choudry has carved a unique identity in the entertainment industry. She began her career as a singer and quickly gained popularity with chartbusters like Habibi, Le Le Mera Dil, and Babylove. Her distinctive voice and glamorous presence made her a staple at music awards and live events.

Sophie ventured into Bollywood with David Dhawan's Shaadi No. 1 and followed it up with notable appearances in Pyaar Ke Side Effects, Shootout at Wadala, and Once Upon Ay Time in Mumbai Dobaara!. In 2014, she entered the reality TV space with Bigg Boss 8, and later danced her way through Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa 7. Though she may have exited those shows early, her impact has been lasting. Courageous and vocal, Sophie continues to use her platform to advocate for dignity, safety, and respect for women—not just in showbiz, but everywhere.

Move Over Sunshine, Sherlyn Chopra's Yellow Saree Is The Brightest Thing Around



Sherlyn Chopra has always made heads turn with her appearance. Her latest outing was no different. The reality TV star was spotted in Juhu on her way to the ISKCON temple. She opted for a traditional look, going in for a yellow chiffon saree with golden embellishments. Sherlyn paired it with a sleeveless golden blouse, a pearl choker and silver watch. For her makeup, the actress donned her signature bold look with pink lipstick and a small red bindi. She kept her hair in a classy low bun. Outside the ISKCON temple at Juhu, Sherlyn was seen surrounded by kids, and the actress humbly took pictures with every one of them.

On her way out of the temple, Sherlyn took time to pose for the cameras. She was seen holding a puja thali in her hand filled with fruits and prasada. The actress also posted a clip of her visiting the temple with the caption, "Temple visits are an opportunity to be in the presence of something greater than ourselves."

Sherlyn rose to fame from her modeling career and her tenure as a host on MTV Splitsvilla's sixth season. She made headlines earlier this year when she was spotted on a night out with a baby. Later, the actress took to social media to post her pictures with the toddler. She captioned the post, "A blessing that no one can replace..."

Her photos sparked speculation about whether she embraced motherhood. Sherlyn was seen with the baby after she revealed that she cannot become a mother due to an autoimmune condition known as systemic lupus erythematosus. She is currently under medication for the illness. Sherlyn had stated that getting pregnant would be life-threatening for both the child and her.

On the work front, Sherlyn was last seen on Paurashpur. Alongside Sherlyn, the series also cast Kajol Tyagi and Payal Raha in prominent roles. This historical drama follows a clash between the characters in the search for the supreme monarch. Sherlyn has Gehu, Ganna Aur Gun in the pipeline.