

India looks grand from space, Shubhanshu Shukla tells PM from Space Station

Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacted with Group Captain and Axiom-4 mission pilot Shubhanshu Shukla, who scripted history by becoming the first Indian on the International Space Station.

The Sikh Times New Delhi .

India looks grand and bigger from space than it does on a map, Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla, the first Indian aboard the International Space Station, said in a conversation with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday. Shukla, 39, who is the mission pilot of the Axiom-4 mission, is the second Indian to travel in space after Rakesh Sharma back in 1984.

Praising Shukla for creating history, PM Modi said while the astronaut was far away from the motherland, he was still the closest to the hearts of Indians. "Aapke naam mein bhi shubh hai aur aapki yatra naye yug ka shubharambh bhi hai (Even your name carries the word shubh (auspicious), and your journey marks a new and hopeful beginning, a shubh aarambh, for the youth of our nation)," PM Modi said.

"Right now, while we are speaking, the feelings of 140 crore Indians are connected with you. I stand here representing the excitement, pride, and hopes of every Indian. As you carry our national flag into outer space, I extend my heartfelt congratulations and wish you the very best for your mission," the Prime Minister added.



In response, Shukla said he was safe and doing fine aboard the Space Station and called it a "whole new experience". He also said he was extremely glad to represent India in space.

"I would like to thank you (PM Modi) and the 140 crore Indians for their wishes. I am extremely fine and safe

here. I am extremely glad, and this is a whole new experience. My 400-km journey from the Earth to orbit is not just my journey, but of the entire country. When I was young, I never felt that I could become an astronaut. However, under your leadership, the country has the opportunity to fulfil its dreams," he said.

Shukla was launched on a SpaceX Dragon spacecraft from NASA's Kennedy Space Centre in Florida to the Space Station on Wednesday. The spacecraft completed a 28-hour journey before executing a flawless docking manoeuvre at the ISS's Harmony module.

He is joined by mission commander Peggy Whitson of the US, and mission specialists Sawsz Uzanski of Poland and Tibor Kapu of Hungary. Shukla told PM Modi that he saw Earth as a complete planet with no borders visible and "it is our home". "When we saw

India for the first time, we saw that India really looks grand, very big, in fact, much bigger than what we see on the map. When we see the Earth from outside, it seems that no border exists, no state exists, no countries exist. We all are part of humanity. The Earth is our one home and all of us are in it," he said.

Travesty: Vice President backs call to drop 'secular', 'socialist' from Preamble

The Sikh Times New Delhi .

Echoing the words of Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS) General Secretary Dattatreya Hosabale, Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Saturday slammed the Congress for including the words 'secular' and 'integrity' in the Preamble to the Constitution during the Emergency calling it a 'travesty of justice' and 'sacrilege to the spirit of Sanatana'.

Calling the added words nasoor (festering wound), he said that the alterations posed "existential challenges" and called on the nation to reflect on the original intent of the Constitution's framers.

Speaking at a book launch in Delhi, he called the Preamble the soul of the Constitution and claimed that the particular portion of the constitution is not changeable. "The Preamble is not changeable or alterable. It is the basis



on which the constitution has grown. The Preamble is the seed of the Constitution. It is the soul of the constitution," said Dhankhar. His remarks came days after RSS general secretary Dattatreya Hosabale called for a national debate on whether the words "secular" and "secular" should remain in the Preamble.

Hosabale also argued that these terms were not part of the Constitution as originally drafted by BR Ambedkar and were inserted during the Emergency (1975-77).

Referring to the 42nd Constitutional Amendment Act of 1976, which inserted the three words, he said it was done "casually, farcically, and with no sense of propriety" during a time when several opposition leaders were jailed under Emergency rule. Hosabale's remarks have sparked a political backlash, with the Congress and other opposition parties accusing the RSS of "political opportunism" and a "deliberate assault" on the Constitution's foundational values. An editorial in Organiser, a magazine affiliated with the RSS, supported the call for review, saying it was not aimed at dismantling the Constitution but at restoring its "original spirit," free from what it called "distortions" introduced during the Congress-led Emergency.

Shri Sood criticized the so-called Delhi education model. He said the self-proclaimed Delhi model and its so-called Education Minister from the Aam Aadmi Party—who is going to jail over the liquor scam—have completely failed. Despite being the national capital with all available resources, Delhi's government schools have just a few hundred smart boards. In contrast, Gujarat—despite facing natural challenges such as annual floods in several districts—has successfully established over one lakh smart classrooms. This completely exposes the failure of the so-called Delhi model. Shri Sood's visit was aimed at observing the implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and the best educational practices adopted by different states. He remarked that the reforms introduced by Gujarat in government schools are commendable and that other states should take inspiration from them.

Present on the occasion were the District Education Officer of Surat, administrative officers from the Municipal Primary Education Committee, the District Primary Education Officer, and school administrators, along with other officials.

Parag Jain, IPS officer who played key role in Op Sindoor, is new R&AW chief

Kolkata law college guard arrested in gang-rape case, had ignored

Agency New Delhi .

The Kolkata Police on Saturday arrested a security guard of South Kolkata Law College in connection with the gang-rape of a first-year student on the college premises. This is the fourth arrest in the case, following the earlier arrests of three individuals, including the prime accused—a Trinamool Congress leader.

According to police sources, the preliminary investigation revealed that the security guard, Pinaki Banerjee, was present at the time of the gang-rape. Acting on the accused's instructions, he left his guard room, leaving the woman alone. Despite her repeated pleas for help, the guard failed to assist her, police said.

Sources added that it was his responsibility to report the incident to college authorities or the police, but he did neither. His negligence was established during questioning, following which he was placed under arrest.

The 24-year-old student was assaulted for several hours inside the security guard's room on June 25 by the key accused, Monojit Mishra, a former president of the college's Trinamool Congress Chhatra Parishad unit and reportedly an organisational secretary of the south Kolkata wing of the TMC's student body. Two others—



current students—stood by and watched the crime. The incident came to light on Friday, sparking widespread outrage.

The woman alleged that the security guard was made to sit outside the room after the main gate of the college was locked. She also said that the college's main gate was locked during the incident, and although the security guard was present, he did not intervene.

The prime accused, Monojit Mishra, was arrested on Wednesday, while co-accused Zaib Ahmed, 19, a first-year student, and Pramit Mukherjee, a second-year student, were arrested on Thursday.

According to the student's complaint, she was attacked when she reached the campus to file a form for examination. She was taken by force to the guard room, where she was undressed and raped. The woman was assaulted allegedly after she rejected a marriage proposal from Mishra, who recorded the act and later used the videos to blackmail and threaten her.

A medical examination confirmed the allegations and there was evidence of forceful penetration, bite marks and nail scratches on her body, according to police.

Parag Jain, a 1989-batch Punjab cadre IPS officer, will take over as R&AW chief from July 1, bringing decades of intelligence and counter-terror experience to India's external spy agency.

Agency New Delhi .

The Narendra Modi government on Saturday named senior IPS officer Parag Jain as the next chief of the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), India's external intelligence agency. Jain, a 1989-batch IPS officer of the Punjab cadre, will take charge on July 1 for a fixed term of two years, replacing incumbent chief Ravi Sinha, whose tenure will end on June 30.

Known within intelligence circles as a 'super sleuth', Jain brings to the top post a reputation for effectively combining human intelligence (HUMINT) with technical intelligence (TECHINT), a mix that officials say has been crucial to several high-stakes operations.

One of his most lauded contributions in recent years was during Operation Sindoor, where intelligence inputs under his leadership enabled precision missile



strikes on terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. While the missile hits took minutes, insiders stressed that years of groundwork and painstaking network-building made such pinpoint targeting possible. Jain's extensive experience on the ground in Jammu and Kashmir, one of

India's most challenging security theatres, is also expected to weigh in his favour as the country navigates an increasingly volatile global security environment.

Described by senior officials as methodical and discreet, Jain has held several key roles throughout his career. He was promoted to the rank of Director General of Police (DGP) in Punjab on January 1, 2021, though he was then serving on central deputation and thus received only notional benefits.

Let North Indians learn Tamil: Kanimozhi on Amit Shah's 'Hindi not foe' remark

DMK MP Kanimozhi responded to Union Home Minister Amit Shah's assertion that Hindi is not an enemy of any language by asserting the same for Tamil, urging North Indians to learn South Indian languages.

The Sikh Times Chennai .

As the language debate continues to intensify with Union Home Minister Amit Shah recently weighing in by saying that Hindi is not an enemy of any language, DMK MP Kanimozhi on Saturday retorted that neither is Tamil, and urged people from North India to learn the language.

Shah recently said that Hindi is not an enemy of any Indian language, but rather a friend to all, and that there should be no opposition to any language in the country.

"If Hindi is not the enemy of any language, then Tamil is also not the enemy of any language. Let them learn Tamil. Let the people of North India learn at least one South Indian language. That is true national integration," she said.

The DMK leader emphasised, "We are not anyone's enemy. We are friends to all. Learn our language too". However, she did not name Shah in her comments. The MK Stalin-led DMK government in Tamil Nadu has been engaged in a fierce standoff with the Centre over what it describes as an attempt to impose Hindi in the state—particularly through the National Education Policy (NEP), which mandates the teaching of three languages in schools.

Tamil Nadu has alleged that the policy is a backdoor attempt to introduce Hindi forcefully, often accusing the Centre of withholding education funds from



the state due to its refusal to implement the policy. Earlier this week, Amit Shah said that

language had been used in the past as a tool to divide India, but such attempts had never succeeded. He added that the Modi government would ensure Indian languages become a strong medium for uniting the country. He reiterated that Hindi is not an opponent of any Indian language, but a friend to all, and added that there should also be no opposition to any Indian language in the country.

These remarks came just days after Shah stated that those who speak English would soon feel ashamed, and that the formation of such a society is imminent.

Amit Shah says Hindi is a friend, not a foe, of any Indian language
DMK's Kanimozhi responds, says the same holds true for Tamil
Urge North Indians to learn Tamil, calls it 'true national integration'

NEWS BOX

Chandigarh: Man accused of abetment to suicide in Manimajra, case registered



Chandigarh. In a case of alleged abetment to suicide reported in Manimajra, a 34-year-old man has accused another person of mentally harassing his father over a financial dispute, leading to his father's death.

According to the police, an FIR under Section 108 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) has been registered at Manimajra police station on the complaint of Rahul, a resident of Manimajra. Rahul alleged that Idam Khan Gill, also a resident of the area, had been repeatedly pressuring his father, Satish Kumar, regarding a loan amounting to Rs 12 lakh.

Due to alleged constant mental harassment, Satish Kumar reportedly died by suicide at his residence on the evening of June 25 around 6.54 pm. He was immediately rushed to PGIMER, Chandigarh, where doctors declared him brought dead. Police have initiated a thorough investigation into the matter to ascertain the circumstances surrounding the death. Further action will be taken based on the findings, said the police.

Surat witnesses creek floods, roads inundated; Limbayat most affected



Surat. Owing to the incessant rainfall over the last three days, low-lying areas in Surat were on Friday inundated. Surat also witnessed creek floods. Limbayat, which houses the migrant population working in textile and other industries, was the most affected. Relief camps have been set up in several municipal corporation schools for around 227 people who were affected by creek floods, while water was being cleared in some areas.

Sources in the Surat Municipal Corporation (SMC) stated that from June 23 to 26, a total of 459 mm of rainfall was recorded in Limbayat, accounting for 30 per cent of rainfall received by the area in the entire monsoon season. Apart from this, due to the heavy rain in the upper catchment areas, the water levels of Mithi Creek and Koili Creek, which pass through Limbayat, had risen to 8.85 meters and 7.50 meters, respectively. However, on Friday, the water levels in these creeks dropped to 7.35 meters (Mithi) and 6.75 meters (Koili), respectively. The dip in the water level was led by a sea tide.

During June 23-26, a total of 36 complaints of waterlogging were received at Limbayat's zone-level control room, out of which 15 complaints were disposed of, and work on the remaining was in progress.

Security guard of Kolkata law college where student was raped held, fourth arrest in case



Kolkata. The Kolkata police Saturday arrested the security guard of a law college in the city in connection with the alleged rape of a 24-year-old student inside its campus on Wednesday. This is the fourth arrest in the case.

"We have arrested a security guard of the college," said Rupesh Kumar, Joint Commissioner of Police, Crime. He has been identified as Pinaki Banerjee, a resident of Khardaha who was on duty when the crime took place inside the college. In her complaint, a copy of which is with The Indian Express, the survivor had alleged that she was raped inside the guard room after the security guard was told to leave.

"We found discrepancies in the guard's statement and the survivor has made a direct complaint against him. His role when the crime was being committed is being investigated. He will be produced in court today," said a senior Kolkata police officer.

Earlier, the police had arrested three people over the matter, including Monojit Mishra, the prime accused who is a former leader of the Trinamool Congress's (TMC) student wing and an ex-student of the college. The TMC has claimed that Mishra is no longer associated with the party. The other accused have been identified as Zaib Ahmed and Pramit Mukherjee.

Ahead of 50th anniversary, Sion's iconic Guru Kripa, whose samosas were loved by Raj Kapoor and Dilip Kumar, debuts in South Mumbai

Guru Kripa's first branch has been opened near the Royal Opera House on Charni Road.

Mumbai. In the late 1960s, Vishindas Wadhwa — whose family came to India during Partition and settled in Mumbai — found success selling samosas from a thela (hand cart). In 1975, he went on to establish what would become Sion's beloved Guru Kripa. Over the next five decades, it earned a loyal following for its samosas, tikki chole, and a range of savouries, as well as mithais like the Sindhi specialty Sev Barfi, made with khoya and sev. Its reputation spread far beyond the neighbourhood. But for South Mumbai residents, there was always one complaint: "It's too far!"

Ahead of its 50th anniversary this August, third-generation custodians Bharat and Sunaina have addressed this long-standing gripe by opening Guru Kripa's first branch — just a stone's throw from the Royal Opera House on Charni Road. "What better

gift to my grandfather than taking his culinary repository to a bigger audience," said Bharat on a weekday afternoon, just two days after the shutters were lifted.

Spread across 800 sq ft, the Charni Road outpost functions as a mithai retail outlet and delivery kitchen and offers an elevated experience. While the original 1,500 sqft store evokes nostalgia with its classic mithai-and-snack shop vibe, the new branch is more contemporary in

design. There's a truck-style mithai station, a hamper counter, and a "wall of fame" showcasing celebrity visitors and key milestones in the brand's journey.

"We wanted it to be an experience centre where every corner tells a story," Bharat shared. "So



we gave it a retro South Bombay touch." Pointing to a wall behind the savoury counter, he drew our attention to a series of black-and-white photos featuring the Asiatic Library, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus, and the BMC building. "This is our ode to South Bombay."

Unlike the original outlet, where customers can grab a quick samosa while standing outside or enjoy a full meal in the air-conditioned seating

area, this new branch is strictly takeaway and delivery. "We did want a small dine-in section," Bharat admitted. "But it didn't fit the space and what we set out to do with this experiment." In the hour we spent at the shop, the counter stayed busy with walk-ins sampling mithai or picking up snacks for home. "The response has been great, people are happy that it's now accessible," he said, adding that early favourites include samosas, gulab jamun, sugar-free dates mithai and their recently launched Biscoff barfi, and Jain-friendly snacks like chole tikki, sandwiches, and Sindhi-speciality dal pakwan.

Guru Kripa's samosas, of course, have a cult following of their own. Legend has it that Raj Kapoor and Dilip Kumar were regulars, and that when Amitabh Bachchan suffered a near-fatal injury on the sets of *Coorie*, Vishindas Wadhwa distributed samosas while praying for his recovery. "When Mr Bachchan learned of this, he visited us, enjoyed the samosas, and declared them his favourite," Bharat recounted proudly.

We asked him for the real marker of success: the number of samosas sold. He smiled shyly before revealing, "We sold 1,000 samosas each on day 1 and day 2." Fifty years on, it seems life has come full circle for Vishindas Wadhwa's Guru Kripa.

Stark difference in labour costs pushes Maharashtra farmers to grow illegal HTBt cotton variety

Pune. Over the last few years, Laximant Kauthankar has refrained from using genetically modified cotton variety, commonly known as Bt cotton, and has completely switched to using the unauthorised Herbicide Tolerant Bt (HTBt) cotton. This farmer from Adgaon Budruk village in Akot taluka of Akola knows such cultivation is illegal but claims that simple economics pushes him towards it. "Weed control alone in Bt cotton would cost me over Rs 20,000 per acre. In the case of HTBt, the same would cost Rs 2,000. So why should I not go for it?" he asks. Kauthankar says the input shop in his village hardly sees any sale of Bt cotton — most farmers have crossed over to HTBt for the same reason as him. Like him, other cotton growers in Maharashtra have lapped up the unauthorised transgenic cotton, fully knowing the illegality of



their act. Central government regulations stipulate fines as well as jail term for the cultivation of non-authorised GM crops. India has so far allowed the commercial release of Bt cotton. Bt stands for *Bacillus thuringiensis* — the name of the bacteria whose gene has been inserted into the cotton seed. HTBt is the next generation of GM cotton and allows the plants

to resist the spray of the commonly applied herbicide glyphosate for weed control. But the sale, production as well as storage of this variant is illegal in the country. But for farmers like Kauthankar, the ground situation matters. "Consider this: for an acre of land, I would require around four cycles of weeding during the entire 6-7 month cycle of the cotton crop. For a single weeding, I would require around 15 labourers and thus the total requirement for labourers would be around 60. At a daily wage of Rs 300 per day, the total labour expenditure for weeding turns out to be Rs 18,000. Even if I arrange the money, where are the labourers?" said the farmer who cultivates cotton and soyabean over 40 acres of his holding. On the other hand, HTBt cotton requires spraying of the herbicide, and the total cost of this operation across the entire cotton crop cycle comes to Rs 2,000 per acre.

Air India 171 crash: Last DNA match day after family holds symbolic funeral

Vadodara . Friday marked Ashadhi Beej, when Kutchhis celebrate their new year. But the Khimani family was grieving. They were grieving the loss of their loved one, Anil Khimani (32), who was on the London-bound AI 171 that crashed in Ahmedabad on June 12. They were also grieving because he was the only body among the 241 dead that had not yet been identified through a DNA match. Searching for "closure" and to "overcome the guilt" of not being able to bid a respectful farewell, the Khimani's held a "symbolic" funeral at Dahisara, their village in Bhuj, on Thursday followed by a prayer meeting on Friday.

Hours after the prayer was held, however, a senior government official told The Indian Express that they were finally able to find a DNA match and identify Anil's body.

Multiple rounds of processing for DNA extraction were undertaken, considering that the sample was too degraded with charring... But eventually, it was matched. The family will be informed, the DNA match will give them final closure," the official said. Speaking to The Indian Express earlier Friday, Anil's older brother Rakesh said "the reason for organising the symbolic funeral was that two weeks had passed since the crash".



Chandigarh. The agitation at Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University (CCSHAU) has intensified, with female students alleging that food services in university hostels were abruptly discontinued. Protesters continued raising slogans late into Thursday night, accusing the university authorities of harassing them. While the university administration claimed the hostels were vacated as a routine measure following the completion of exams, students asserted they were left without basic necessities.

On Friday, a group of aggrieved female students met senior university officials, alleging that no dinner was provided the previous evening.

PhD student Nikita voiced her resentment to the authorities: "We are standing hungry in front of you. Why has our food been stopped? What is our crime?"

On Thursday night, we kept requesting

our hostel warden with folded hands that we are hungry and want food. The hostel warden replied that no one would come to talk to you." She added, "We got food at 11 pm after the intervention of policemen. On Friday morning



again, our hostel warden announced that she would not allow us food at the hostel." The Director of Students' Welfare, Dr S K Pahuja, responded by saying that hostel evacuation was part of a scheduled plan to conduct repairs and renovations.

He added that no academic work was

pending for over a month, implying students could return home. However, Nikita contended: "We have stayed here earlier too during summer vacations with special permissions and were provided food. What has changed this time? Why has our food been stopped? We have faced a lot of mental harassment. My thesis is due in 10 days. We have already paid a late fee for an extension. How can I go home? Please understand us — we are like your daughters." Another student questioned the officials directly: "Had your daughter been a student here, would she have faced the same treatment?"

Director (Research), Dr Rajbir Garg maintained that the students' claims regarding closure of hostels were false, stating that "the vacating of hostels for repair work during summer is a standard procedure". As tensions continue to rise, students have declared that they will observe a complete shutdown of the university on July 2 if their demands are not met by then.

ED launches probe into 'Rs 800 crore graft' case linked to Navi Mumbai dredging project

Earlier, the CBI booked the former chief manager of the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority and Tata Consulting Engineers, Mumbai, in connection with the case.

Mumbai. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has launched a money laundering investigation into the Rs 800 crore graft case linked to the Capital Dredging Project at Nhava Sheva port in Navi Mumbai. The central agency registered an Enforcement Case Information Report (ECIR) on Friday and initiated a probe to examine the money laundering aspect of the entire graft case, the CBI said.

The ED's case is based on the predicate offence registered by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) around 10 days ago. The CBI lodged a case against former chief manager of the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) Sunil Kumar Madabhavi, Tata Consulting Engineers (TCE), Mumbai, as well as several private individuals and entities. The other accused named in the First Information Report (FIR) include TCE

director Devdutt Bose; M/s Boskalis Smit India LLP, Mumbai; and M/s Jan De Nul Dredging India Pvt Ltd, based in Chennai. The case, registered on June 18, 2025, stems from allegations that a criminal conspiracy was orchestrated between JNPA officials and a consortium of private firms, one based in Mumbai and the other in Chennai, to siphon off public funds under the guise of project payments, the CBI said.

Irregularities in Capital Dredging Project According to the CBI, the alleged irregularities occurred during the execution of a Capital Dredging Project aimed at deepening the port's navigational channel to accommodate larger vessels. During Phase-I of the project, JNPA reportedly made excessive payments totalling Rs 365.90 crore to contractors for supposed over-dredging work. However, the

payments came under scrutiny after it was revealed that during Phase-II, which coincided with the maintenance period of Phase-I, an additional Rs 438 crore was disbursed under the claim that no over-dredging had taken place in the previous phase, thereby contradicting earlier assertions.

CBI raids in Mumbai, Chennai

After lodging the FIR, the CBI teams raided the

residences of former JNPA officials, offices of the private companies involved, and the premises of the consulting firm at five locations in Mumbai and Chennai. A large cache of project-related documents, digital devices, and evidence, allegedly indicating illicit investments made by public servants linked to the scam, has been seized during the exercise.

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Gorakhpur to extend grand welcome to President Murmu: CM Yogi

The Sikh Times

Gorakhpur, June 28: Gorakhpur is set to extend a grand welcome to President Droupadi Murmu as she arrives in Uttar Pradesh to inaugurate the state's first AYUSH University. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, determined to ensure flawless arrangements for the President's two-day visit, personally inspected preparations for the second consecutive day at Pipri in Bhatat, where the Mahayogi Guru Gorakhnath AYUSH University is located. President Murmu will inaugurate the university on July 1 and later visit the revered Gorakhnath Temple by road. To ensure smooth travel, CM Yogi reviewed the entire route from the temple to the university on Saturday, inspecting key junctions such as Nakha Overbridge, Sports College Chauraha, Karimnagar Chauraha, Jhunja Mod, and Medical College Road. The President's visit spans two days, June 30 and July 1. On the first day, she will grace the convocation ceremony of AIIMS Gorakhpur. The following day, along with inaugurating the AYUSH University, she will also inaugurate academic facilities at Mahayogi Gorakhnath University in Sonbarsa Balapar, including an auditorium, Panchakarma center, and girls' hostel. CM Yogi, accompanied by senior administrative and police officials, as well as university representatives, issued

clear instructions that the event must be executed with utmost grandeur and precision. Prior to his route inspection, the Chief

including Mayor Dr. Manglesh Srivastava, BJP State Vice President and MLC Dr. Dharmendra Singh, MLAs Shriram Chauhan,



Minister held a meeting with senior BJP leaders and public representatives at the Gorakhnath Temple conference hall, urging everyone to take full responsibility in making the President's visit memorable. Several prominent leaders attended the meeting,

Rajesh Tripathi, Vipin Singh, Mahendra Pal Singh, Dr. Vimlesh Paswan, Pradeep Shukla, and Sarvan Nishad. Also present were BJP Regional President Sahajanand Rai, District President Janardan Tiwari, and former President Rajesh Gupta.

Sushil Cham wishes Harji Mann on becoming Halka Incharge

Phagwara, June 28 (Shiv Kaur) Aam Aadmi Party's newly appointed incharge of Phagwara Vidhan Sabha constituency Harnoor Singh (Harji) Mann and Constituency MP Dr. Rajkumar Chabbewal were warmly welcomed by Sushil Cham (Bobby), owner of the travel agency, all the staff and members of Cinema Road Market Association upon their arrival at the office of Classic Travels located on G.T. Road Phagwara today. During this, Sushil Cham wished Harnoor Singh Mann on becoming Halka Incharge. He said that Harji Mann is a young leader and the people of Phagwara have high expectations from him. He expressed confidence that Harji Mann will do excellent work for the betterment and development of Phagwara like his father Joginder Singh Mann. During this, Cinema Road Market Association President Harbans Lal congratulated Constituency MP Dr. Rajkumar Chabbewal and Harji Mann were informed about the problems related to the market and appealed to get them resolved. President Harbans Lal also appealed to solve the problem of rainwater filling the GT Road Service Lane and Cinema Road in view of the rainy season and to get the sewage cleaned in time.

Canal bath turns tragic in Jhajjar, bodies of two cousins found after search

The Sikh Times

Jhajjar: A weekend meant to offer respite from the searing heat ended in tragedy for two cousins in Jhajjar district, as the bodies of Amit (32) and Vikas (28) — both residents of Azad Nagar — were recovered from the Akehri Madanpur pump house on Sunday morning, two days after they went missing while bathing in the Jawaharlal Nehru Canal near Matanhail village. According to police, the two had entered the canal on Friday evening, hoping to cool off from the oppressive temperatures. When their motorbike, slippers and wallets were later found abandoned near the canal bank, alarm bells

rang. Suspecting drowning, authorities launched a search and rescue operation with divers and boats, but efforts proved fruitless until Sunday. It was only when staff at the Akehri Madanpur pump house noticed something lodged in the filter system that the grim discovery was made. They immediately informed the police, who arrived at the spot along with a team from the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) to examine the scene and collect evidence. Both Amit and Vikas were working as apprentice carpenters at a workshop in Khaparwas village. Their employer confirmed that the two had left work early on Friday, saying they were heading

for a bath in the canal. When they failed to return home, their worried families filed a missing report, triggering the search operation. Police officials stated that both victims were believed to be competent swimmers, but the strong current and high water levels in the canal likely overwhelmed them, leading to the tragic drowning. After a preliminary forensic examination, the bodies were taken to the Jhajjar Civil Hospital for post-mortem. They were later handed over to the bereaved families for final rites. The victims, both married and fathers to young children, leave behind grieving households and a community in mourning.

Accused 'sold' login credentials for altering 300 IDs on Parivar Pehchan Patra portal

The Sikh Times

Rohtak: Preliminary investigation into the alleged tampering of the Parivar Pehchan Patra (PPP) portal case, which came to light in Karnal on Friday, has pointed to a nexus between a local Citizen Resource Information Department (CRID) official and Common Service Centre (CSC) operators. Sources said an accused official revealed during the interrogation that he had "sold" his login credentials, which were then used to illegally alter the details of around 300 family IDs, enabling beneficiaries to fraudulently qualify for var-

ious welfare schemes. "The accused further disclosed that fake documents were prepared to support these illegal changes in professional details. The racketeers would share the bribes based on the financial aid received under the welfare schemes. Besides altering occupations, they changed the name of the district, split family IDs, and even deleted names of family members from the PPP records," claimed the sources. The FIR registered in the case also states that the CRID official's social media accounts on WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, and Telegram should be examined

technically to detect possible collusion with other individuals involved. Two persons, including Ankit Kumar, a CRID official deputed at Municipal Council office in Nissing (Karnal), and Sunny, a CSC operator, were booked by the Karnal Police two days ago on charges of cheating, criminal breach of trust, criminal conspiracy, and under relevant provisions of the Information Technology (Amendment) Act, 2008. The complaint was filed by the District Citizen Resources Information Manager. The CRID official is accused of sharing his login credentials, including ID, password, and one-time passwords (OTPs), with CSC operators and others, to alter details of family IDs allegedly in exchange for bribes. Meanwhile, Ram Lal, Station House Officer (SHO) of Nissing Police Station, Karnal, told "The Tribune" that preliminary investigations point to the involvement of multiple individuals. Ankit appears to be part of an organised network, possibly operating across Haryana. We are investigating the case from multiple angles and have launched raids to locate another accused believed to be in hiding," said the SHO, adding that the official is, currently, in police remand.

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CISF National Fire training initiative : 380 Fire fighters trained in 150 cities, across 22 States/UTS

The Sikh Times

Chandigarh: The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) designed a specialized course to upgrade the skills of state fire service personnel. Throughout 2023-24, the CISF's prestigious Fire Service Training Institute (FSTI) in Hyderabad conducted 11 training batches, training 274 personnel from 113 cities. The CISF, India's dedicated fire wing, has been the only Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) spearheading a nationwide fire training programme. During the CISF Raising Day 2023, the Union Home Minister in his address has tasked the CISF with training firefighters from 100 Indian cities. This momentum continued into 2025 with the

allocation of five additional batches. Four of these have already been completed, benefiting 106 participants from 46 cities across 10 states. The fifth session is scheduled to begin on August 25, 2025. To date, this vital programme has successfully trained 380 firefighters from a total of 150 cities across 22 States and Union Territories. The CISF is also ready to accommodate additional training slots in the 2025 calendar if states are willing to nominate their firefighters for the course. The training curriculum is designed to focus on modern firefighting and rescue techniques, alongside crucial disaster management skills. Special emphasis is placed on addressing the complex challenges posed by dense urban environ-

ments and hazardous industrial areas. The programme covers advanced topics such as sophisticated fire response mechanisms, preparedness for Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) emergencies and the handling of chemical warfare agents, reflecting the evolving nature of modern threats. Sharing information in this regard a CISF spokesperson said that as the only CAPF with a dedicated Fire Wing, the CISF is committed to enhancing the technical skills of fire personnel and fostering a proactive culture for fire safety and disaster management preparedness. Our training programmes are continuously updated to reflect the latest in fire safety research and practices, ensuring our firefighters are

DELHI

GK came in support of Diljit Trolls cornered the film 'Sardar Ji 3'

The Sikh Times

New Delhi (28 June 2025)

International Punjabi singer and actor Diljit Dosanjh's horror comedy Punjabi film 'Sardarji 3' has created a controversy over Pakistani actress Hania Aamir. Now

the reaction of former president of Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee Manjot Singh GK has come to the fore on this matter. GK has objected to the opposition to the film by people of right-wing ideology because of Hania Aamir. GK said that the shooting of this film was over in February 2025. Whereas the Pahalgam attack happened later. If there are no objections to playing cricket between India and Pakistan in Dubai and

Pakistan media panelists sitting on national media channels, then why is there a ruckus over the acting of the Pakistani actress? GK said that freedom of expression cannot be different. If the censor board imposes unnecessary cuts on the Diljit starrer 'Punjab 95', then no one speaks. Whereas 'Punjab 95' was based on the life of human rights activist Bhai Jaswant Singh Khalra. However, Bhai Jaswant Singh Khalra had made public the extrajudicial killings of 25

thousand Sikh youth by the Punjab Police, for which he had to pay the price with his life. Expressing concern over the ideological disability of Sikh organizations, GK said that the Delhi Committee is silent on the injustice being done to Diljit's films. Just like it was silent on the



devalued portrayal of Sikh characters in Kangana Ranaut's film 'Emergency'. The Delhi Committee has also kept its mouth shut on the advertisement issued by the Haryana government calling Baba Banda Singh Bahadur as "Banda Bairagi". Whereas this is the surrender of ideology in front of government influence. GK called the ban on the film 'Sardarji 3' unnecessary and an obstacle to freedom of expression.

Health Minister Arti Singh Rao Reviews Hospital Development Works in Rewari & Narnaul

Chandigarh, June 27:

Haryana Health and Family Welfare Minister Arti Singh Rao chaired a high-level meeting with senior officials in Chandigarh to review the status of ongoing infrastructure and service enhancement projects in government health institutions, particularly in Rewari and Narnaul districts. The meeting focused on expediting key initiatives related to hospital safety, construction progress, utility infrastructure, and essential facilities aimed at improving healthcare delivery and patient experience.

Minister directed the Public Works Department (PWD) to complete all ongoing repair works at the hospital by the end of July. She also reviewed the construction of the foot overbridge connecting the hospital to the trauma centre and instructed the PWD to

ensure that all four lifts are fully installed and operational by July 15. On the proposed upgrade of the mortuary, it was informed that the plan is expected to be approved by the Chief Architect by Monday, after which the PWD will prepare a detailed estimate. The

Minister also issued directions to resolve the issue of waterlogging at the Rewari Civil Hospital to prevent service disruptions during monsoons. While reviewing the functioning of District Hospital, Narnaul, the Health Minister directed the PWD to initiate re-ten-

dering for the construction of the 200-bed hospital and begin work without further delay. She also ordered the removal of waterlogging in the basement of the hospital building and instructed that proper drainage lines be laid to prevent future issues. Further, the 4

Chemical spray used to force family out of car

New Delhi: In a shocking case that has exposed a new method of robbery on Delhi roads, a family traveling from the Capital to Karnal on Friday became victims of a well-planned heist near Adarsh Nagar flyover. The robbers allegedly used a chemical spray on the car's windscreens which further spread in the car, causing severe irritation and itching to the passengers and forcing them out, before snatching a handbag containing cash, a mobile phone, and diamond jewelry. Despite having tracked the location of the stolen phone through a mobile app and informing the police, the family claims no concrete action has been taken yet.

According to the FIR registered at Adarsh Nagar Police Station, the incident occurred around 8:10 pm on MG Road. The complainant, Dyanand Singh, 70, a resident of Karnal, stated that two young men on a motorcycle came close to their white Toyota Crysta car and sprayed an unknown chemical on the vehicle's windscreens while the car was moving along the heavily trafficked stretch. The chemical, once circulated through the air conditioning vents, caused severe irritation, suffocation, and itching, forcing the passengers to halt the vehicle and exit in panic. As the family members stood by the roadside trying to understand what had happened, the same two bike-borne individuals returned at high speed and snatched the handbag from one of the women before fleeing in the opposite direction. The bag reportedly contained an iPhone, cash, important documents including Aadhaar, PAN and ATM cards, and diamond rings.

As per the complainant, his son, using a family tracking app installed on the stolen phone, was able to trace its last known location to an area in East Delhi. The family immediately reported this information to the police, hoping for swift action. However, they allege that even after sharing the specific location of the suspects, no visible effort has been made by Delhi Police to either recover the stolen items or apprehend the culprits. A case under Sections 304(2) and 35 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita has been registered. According to the

duty officer and officials from PS Adarsh Nagar, a team has been formed, and efforts are ongoing to trace the accused. "We are investigating all aspects of the case and following all leads, including the location shared by the victim's family," said a police official.

RELIABILITY IMPROVEMENT IN SIGNALING SYSTEM IN KATIAR DIVISION

Tender Notice No. : KIR-N-2025-K-24;

Dated: 26-06-2025. E-Tenders are invited

by the undersigned for the following work:

Name of Work : Reliability improvement in signaling system by

means of Repair, Replacement and Restoration of Amara Raja Integrated Power Supply arrangement over Kathiar Division. Tender Value: ₹1,70,85,120/-

Earnest Money: ₹2,35,400/- Date & time of closing of tender at 15:00 hrs. on

18-07-2025. For complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available upto

15:00 hrs. on 18-07-2025 in website

www.ireps.gov.in

DRM (S), Kathiar

Serving Customers With A Smile

YARD IMPROVEMENT UNDER ALIPURDUAR DIVISION

E-Tender Notice No.: 44/NW/APD-1

Dated: 26-06-2025. E-tenders are invited

by the undersigned for the following work:

Name of Work : Yard Improvement

in New Banewas, New

Alipurduar, Samuktala, Srirampur Assam

and Gosaigaon hat yard.

Tender Value: ₹2,41,22,790.25; Earnest Money:

₹2,70,600.00. E-tender will be closed

at 15:00 hrs. on 18-07-2025 and opened

at 15:30 hrs. on 18-07-2025. The

complete information with the tender

documents of above e-tender will be

available in the website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>

DRM (W), Alipurduar Jn.

NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

Serving Customers With A Smile

E-AUCTION PROGRAMME FOR SALE OF RAILWAY SCRAP MATERIAL

E-Auction programme for sale of Railway Scrap material under jurisdiction of Dy.CMMN/RFR New Jalpaiguri for the month of JULY' 2025 unit wise, is hereby fixed as under:

For GSD-New Jalpaiguri

SN Month Date Fixed

1 JULY' 2025 15-07-2025 & 30-07-2025

For Alipurduar Division

SN Month Date Fixed

1 JULY' 2025 15-07-2025 & 30-07-2025

For Kathiar Division

SN Month Date Fixed

1 JULY' 2025 15-07-2025 & 30-07-2025

Interested bidders may participate in E-auction through IREPS website

www.ireps.gov.in

Dy. Chief Material Manager/ New Jalpaiguri

NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

Serving Customers With A Smile

NEWS BOX

Allotment of 3.7 acres of prime land to IAMC illegal, rules

Telangana HC

HYDERABAD. The Telangana High Court on Friday set aside a Government Order (GO) dated December 26, 2021, issued by the previous BRS administration allotting 3.7 acres of prime land in Raidurg to the International Arbitration and Mediation Centre (IAMC). The court, however, upheld related GOs providing financial support to the IAMC and requiring referral of certain disputes to the centre. The market value of the land is around Rs 350 crore, according to sources. The then government also sanctioned a grant of Rs 50 crore for the construction of the IAMC. The foundation stone for a permanent building was laid on March 11, 2022, by the then-Chief Justice of India Justice NV Ramana in the presence of the then chief minister K Chandrasekhar Rao.

A bench of Justice K Lakshman and Justice K Sujana was hearing PILs filed by advocates Koti Raghunatha Rao and A Venkatrami Reddy questioning the legality of the GOs granting land, funding and arbitration referrals to the IAMC. The PILs said that the IAMC was a private entity receiving state support without a legal basis.

The bench held that the allotment was in breach of the 1975 Rules on alienation of state land. It ruled that land cannot be allotted free of cost to a private body unless it is for a public purpose and with the collection of market value.

The bench also noted that the IAMC was not registered under the Companies Act at the time of allotment, making the process invalid.

Hyderabad to get sculpture park around KBR walkway



HYDERABAD. The GHMC, in collaboration with the Krishnakriti Foundation, will develop the Hyderabad Sculpture Park around the Kasu Brahmananda Reddy (KBR) Walkway in Jubilee Hills under the Corporate Social Responsibility programme. The primary objective is to enhance the area with public art installations and improve the overall aesthetic appeal of the walkway.

Popular for walking, jogging and enjoying nature, KBR Park is a well-known green space in Hyderabad. The sculpture park is intended to beautify the urban landscape and provide a more appealing experience for visitors and walkers at KBR National Park. The project is being undertaken as part of the GHMC's CSR initiatives, demonstrating a commitment to social and environmental responsibility. Officials said the collaboration with the foundation focuses on integrating art and culture into the urban environment, creating a unique space at the popular KBR Park. On Thursday, the GHMC Standing Committee approved the proposal and recommended it to the GHMC Council for awarding the work. Recently, the foundation submitted proposals to the zonal commissioner of Kharibabad to take up the project. The initiative includes enhancing the city's visual landscape, creating a cultural landmark, promoting public engagement, encouraging CSR partnerships.

Pilgrims troubled as Bhadrachalam chokes on garbage amid sanitation staff protest over reduced salary

KHAMMAM. Due to poor sanitation, the temple town of Bhadrachalam has been in a state of disarray for the past two months. Sources said the outsourcing staff have not been discharging their duties because of reduced salaries.

The unhygienic conditions are troubling pilgrims visiting from across the country. Locals have also criticised the government's inaction. Garbage has piled up across the town, including near the temple.

Of the 285 sanitation and drainage workers, nearly 140 have stopped reporting to duty. Most of the absentees are from the drainage and road-cleaning sections. Officials said only seven out of 90 drainage workers are currently on duty. Earlier, the gram panchayat paid each worker Rs 12,000 per month. This was reduced to Rs 9,500 recently. "We can't run our families on such low pay," said worker K Ramana, adding that daily-wage labourers earn up to Rs 15,000 a month. "Despite working 8 to 12 hours a day, we are paid just Rs 9,500," he lamented.

Local resident B Shanker Reddy said the mosquito menace has worsened, causing illness, especially among children and the elderly. Another resident, B Ramana Reddy, said the issue must be resolved urgently as Bhadrachalam is a temple town. Devotees have also raised complaints about the foul smell and garbage heaps. Gram Panchayat executive officer Ch Srinivas said the issue has been taken up with the government and that they are managing sanitation with the available staff.

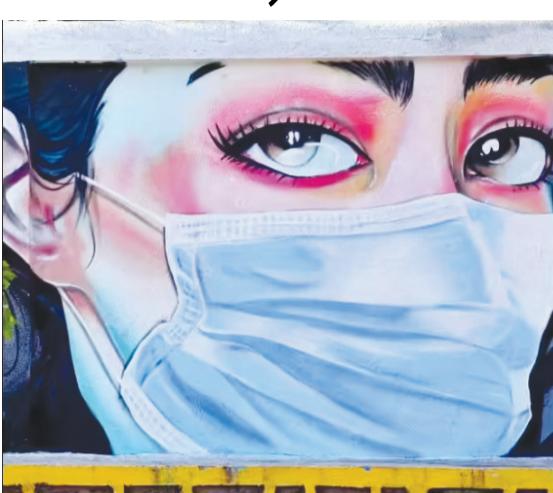
1.2 lakh orphans across Maharashtra fail to get monthly assistance of Rs 2,250 from state govt

Nashik. More than 1.2 lakh orphaned children across Maharashtra have not received the monthly monetary assistance from state govt since Sept 2024. The guardians of these children have alleged that the assistance was stopped after state govt began providing aid to women through the Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana. The children are given assistance under the Krantijyoti Savitribai Phule Child Care Scheme. The list includes children who lost either one or both their parents due to Covid-19.

A senior officer from the Women and Child Development Commissionerate, Pune, admitted that there were more than 1.2 lakh such orphans across the state who received the assistance and have not received any money for 10 months now.

"There has been some technical issue regarding funds, and as soon as it is resolved, the funds will be cleared," he said on the condition of anonymity. When asked if the reason for the non-disbursement of funds to these orphans was connected to the Ladki Bahin scheme, the officer refused to comment. Despite several attempts, state minister for women and child development Aditi Tatwade was not available for comment till the time of going to press.

According to the Economic Survey of Maharashtra 2024-25, the scheme had 80,224 beneficiaries in 2023-24 and 1,05,595



beneficiaries till Dec 2024. Maharashtra govt incurred an expenditure of Rs 190.97 crore in the 2023-24 financial year. However, till Dec 2024, govt had only spent Rs 40.5 crore on the scheme.

There are as many as 7,300 such orphans receiving aid in Nashik district. They last got the money in their accounts in Aug 2024. Panchavati resident Sanket*, one of the beneficiaries of the scheme, said, he received Rs 2,250 every month in his bank account directly from state govt. "I lost both my parents to Covid. I stay with my maternal uncle, who is a labourer. My sister and I are not receiving the

aid now. We don't know when we will get this assistance regularly," he said.

Std VIII student Aziz*, who lives in the Old City area, faced a similar plight. "I lost my father due to Covid-19. I have a younger brother, and my mother works in a private hospital. The assistance helped us get admission in a good private school," he said. Aziz added: "The non-receipt of assistance is taking a toll on me and my school, which is putting pressure on my family for the fees." Many guardians said the children were not a burden on them but sought govt assistance due to the situation they were forced into since Covid. "My wife succumbed to Covid, and it happened despite spending a huge amount on medicines. I had to sell my two-wheeler and other valuables to arrange for funds of about Rs 1.5 lakh. I also lost my job. This is the reason that I am seeking govt assistance for the future of my two children," said Ramesh Patil, a worried parent.

The beneficiaries include orphans under the age of 18, children whose parents cannot be traced, kids who have not been adopted, those who have lost one parent or are impacted due to family disputes and under govt child care. Children of people with leprosy, HIV or other serious life-threatening ailments, or kids of convicts serving life sentence and those whose both parents have a handicap are also eligible for the financial assistance.

Fragments of grief: At 171 families cling to mementos from ashes — scorched gold jewellery and torn clothes, which tell stories of loss, are all that remain

AHMEDABAD/VADODARA. The debris of the ill-fated flight AI 171 may have been cleared from Meghanagar, but for the families of the 241 lives lost in the June 12 crash, the emotional wreckage remains. For many, closure comes in fragments: a child's lone shoe, scorched jewellery, torn clothes. These fragile items, returned by authorities, now carry unbearable meaning. They are fragments of love, loss, and all that never got to be said.

For Yasin Vora of Ahmedabad, a bar of gold serves as the last tangible link to his wife Yasmin Bano, 51. "Yasmin had got a bracelet so our daughter-in-law could wear it for a baby shower, as it is customary to wear gold on that day. She was wearing it on the flight," says Yasin. A local goldsmith, moved by the tragedy, cleaned the jewellery without charge. "The ornaments were damaged, so we had it refined into a gold bar. I will keep it forever."

Yasmin had planned to fly on June 9 but



delayed her journey to travel with his nephew Parvez, 31, and Parvez's four-year-old daughter Zuveriya who also died in the crash. His nephew Ejaz Vora says fragments of Parvez's and Zuveriya's clothing were buried with them. Yasmin was headed to London to visit her sons, both expecting children. What should have been a joyous six-month visit turned into a farewell none could imagine. Another grieving relative from Ahmedabad,

who refused to be named, said he received a single shoe and an anklet belonging to the child who died in the crash. "That's all we got. That's all we could bury," he says quietly. In Bharuch, Dr Salim Kukreja recalls receiving the charred remains of his sister Sajida Salim's clothes and necklace. "We never opened the body bag. The necklace is the last thing I have of her." Rafik Daud from Diu holds his son Faizan's ring tightly. "They sent it along with his remains. It was proof of his identity. We got it cleaned and keep it close now."

In Anand, the prominent Halani family mourns three members: Badruddin Halani, 62, Yasmin Halani, 60, and Malek Rajabali Halani, 65. They were headed to the UK to visit family. After the crash, Aseem Halani received only a piece of his father's trouser and a charred belt. "Nothing of my mother remains," he said. Riyaz Halani, Malek's son, received two scorched gold bangles. "They were on her wrists when she died."

Guj sees fastest 30% monsoon rain in 10 yrs



Ahmedabad. On Friday, Gujarat crossed 30% of the seasonal rainfall with an average cumulative 257 mm of rainfall. According to State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC) data, the average cumulative rainfall on June 7 was 7 mm, indicating that in a matter of 20 days, the state received 250 mm of rain, which is 28% of the season's total rainfall. The SEOC data indicate that it was the most vigorous monsoon in June the state has seen in at least the past 10 years.

To put the figure in perspective, the average rainfall till June 27 for the past five years was 10.6% - the highest, 14%, was recorded in 2020 at 118 mm of rain.

According to India Meteorological Department (IMD) data, the state's departure from normal this year till June 27 was 135% or more than double. Across the state, several districts such as Surat, Jamnagar, and Bhavnagar recorded major rainfall in the past 10 days. While all the regions of the state recorded significant rainfall, the SEOC data indicate that 22 out of 34 districts received over 25% of seasonal rainfall so far. Ashok Kumar Das, director of IMD Gujarat, said that

the long-range forecast (LRF) of IMD for India indicated normal to above-normal rains for India at large, which was also true for Gujarat. "This year, we have seen a good monsoon trough extending from the Arabian Sea to the Bay of Bengal. The state also benefited from cyclonic circulations over Rajasthan and Gujarat. Thus, this year's rains are relatively higher compared to normal," he said, adding that traditionally July and August are the months with high rainfall and monsoon activities for Gujarat. "For the next few days, almost all regions of the state are expected to receive good rainfall."

Gujarat has suffered a loss of life due to heavy rains, with nearly 30

people reported dead due to rain-

related emergencies this season. Parts of north Gujarat and Surat city recorded major rains this year that resulted in damage to property. Experts said that for the past two decades, the state is experiencing a change in weather patterns where the hitherto semi-arid regions of Saurashtra and Kutch are recording excessive rains.

This year, the arrival of the monsoon took place simultaneously in south Gujarat and coastal Saurashtra. The monsoon covered the majority of the state in a matter of two days — again a record for one of the fastest coverages for the state. Ahmedabad: On Friday, Gujarat crossed 30% of the seasonal rainfall with an average cumulative 257 mm of rainfall. According to State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC) data, the average cumulative rainfall on June 7 was 7 mm, indicating that in a matter of 20 days, the state received 250 mm of rain, which is 28% of the season's total rainfall. The SEOC data indicate that it was the most vigorous monsoon in June the state has seen in at least the past 10 years.

The doctor who had grown his beard for religious reasons refused the same, even as he agreed to abide by the hygiene requirements of the hospital including wearing a mask to "hide his beard".

He decided to forgo the seat at the hospital, because the administration was refusing to budge. "They clearly told him to shave or trim his beard or not take admission at all," a source at the hospital told the Indian Express.

When contacted the hospital administration clarified, "We have not denied admission to anyone. We were allotted the candidate and

Asked to 'trim' his beard, Kashmiri doctor loses seat at Coimbatore hospital

Hyderabad. A Kashmiri doctor — Zubair Ahmed — has accused Kovai Medical Centre and Hospital located in Coimbatore of forcing him to "quit his super speciality seat". The doctor, who was allotted a seat at the nephrology department of the hospital after he cleared the NEET-SS was allegedly told by the hospital administration that he will have to either shave or trim his beard if he were to take admission.

The doctor who had grown his beard for religious reasons refused the same, even as he agreed to abide by the hygiene requirements of the hospital including wearing a mask to "hide his beard".

He wanted him to trim it because in the nephrology department which he was planning to join he will be dealing with several patients whose immunity is low. Personal hygiene in such cases is absolutely important," a spokesperson of the hospital told the Indian Express. According to sources at the hospital, Dr Ahmed had written to NBEMS "accusing the hospital of discrimination".



Karnataka tiger deaths: Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre warns of strict action against officials if negligence is proven

The tiger deaths were discovered by forest patrol staff during routine monitoring of the reserve forest area. Initial investigations suggested that the big cats died from consuming meat laced with toxic substances. The forest minister has directed the principal chief conservator of forests to conduct a thorough inquiry soon after the tigers were found dead and asked him to submit the report within three days.



Bengaluru. Karnataka Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre Friday said that strict action would be taken against suspects responsible for the deaths of five tigers at Male Mahadevshwara Hills in Chamarajanagar district. Speaking to reporters after visiting the forest where a tigress and her four cubs were found dead in a case of suspected poisoning, Khandre said that the suspects had even attempted to burn the carcasses. "Officials and experts who have arrived for the investigation have expressed suspicion that the tigers died due to poisoning. This is a crime, and strict action will be taken against those responsible for this heinous act," the forest minister said. "The state is ranked second in the number of tigers because the state government has taken all necessary steps for wildlife conservation. But the death of five tigers in a single day is a very painful and

heartbreaking incident. This incident has caused great pain," he added. Referring to the high-level investigation ordered by him into the tiger deaths on Thursday, the minister said, "The order has been given. Representatives of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) have also arrived here. Wildlife experts and witnesses have also arrived. The post-mortem examination has been conducted as per the rules and the bodies have been cremated."

Khandre further said that "there are reports that the outsourced frontline forest staff were not being paid on time. This will also be investigated and action will be taken to pay the frontline staff on time." The minister warned that action will be taken against forest department officials if the investigation were to reveal negligence on their part.

Hi-res Skymet forecasts topower BMC's rain response



Mumbai. In a first-of-its-kind move, BMC is set to collaborate with private weather agency Skymet to receive hyperlocal rainfall forecasts for each of the city's 24 municipal wards. The forecasts will not only offer 24-hour advance alerts but also "nowcasts" within three hours of an expected extreme weather event. While India Meteorological Department (IMD) will remain the official authority for weather alerts, BMC plans to use Skymet's ward-level forecasts as a "parallel lens" to enhance its preparedness. An MoU is being drafted, and Skymet is expected to begin issuing alerts starting July 1. The move follows widespread flooding on May 26, when IMD's red alert was issued after severe waterlogging had already disrupted the city. Although civic officials have refrained from publicly criticizing IMD, sources say the delay prompted BMC to seek a second opinion system to better anticipate such events and position resources.

As part of the pro bono agreement, Skymet will gain access to live data from Mumbai's 120 automatic weather stations. In return, it will provide real-time, ward-specific forecasts. "If there's a mismatch between the two forecasts, both IMD and Skymet will be asked to re-evaluate their models," said a senior civic official.

Additional municipal commissioner Ashwini Joshi, who also chairs the city's district disaster management authority and heads the environment department, said, "The govt already uses Skymet's services, particularly in agricultural forecasting."

Skymet CEO Yogesh Patil said, "Our system will leverage five years of historical data from BMC's weather stations and deliver two types of forecasts: a 24-hour advance alert and a nowcast 3 to 6 hours before an event, both at the ward level," he said.

JP Nadda: BJP president with nine lives

As the world's largest political party contesting serial elections, notching more hits than misses and running governments at the Centre and 14 states, the BJP is known to be a stickler for organisational propriety and discipline. It's no mean achievement considering that the exercise of executive and legislative power alters the dynamics within a party for the worse.

In the long years when the BJP was in the opposition, it scrupulously adhered to its own Constitution—as distinct from the Indian Constitution—particularly when confronted with imbroglios involving the leadership. The veto power lay with the extended family's head, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, that had the last word and sometimes shot down the BJP's proposals and decisions to party leaders' discomfiture. The RSS's assertions were manifest after the BJP was seated at the Centre and some states. Competing pulls and pressures became inevitable as the playing field grew larger and the stakes for BJP leaders bidding for absolute power became apparent. In 1991, when L K Advani became the opposition leader in the Lok Sabha, without a fuss he relinquished the BJP presidency for Murli Manohar Joshi. The import of this act gets amplified when in 2005, he scripted encomiums for Muhammad Ali Jinnah during a visit to Jinnah's mausoleum in Karachi.

Following the first outery of protest from Gujarat, where Prime Minister Narendra Modi was the chief minister and in the thick of fighting local body polls, Advani was pressured by the BJP and RSS's sarsanghchalak K S Sudarshan to quit office as the BJP chief. But ringed by a cabal of new friends and advisers who advocated the merits of converting to secularism, Advani fought back for a while and eventually gave up office. If the BJP and Advani had still not become the forces they were by then despite the BJP losing the 2004 election, the view was he would have acquiesced.

Notwithstanding the skirmishes in BJP-ruled states—most notably between two factions in Gujarat, of which one was aided by Modi, then a state general secretary—the party made it a point to hold organisational polls from the lowest tier every three years. Rivalries often surfaced at the mandal and district tiers, but these were quelled to allow the process of appointing a new president to go on. So far in its history, the top post was never contested in the BJP, unlike the Congress which held polls twice to elect its president. It was either the RSS's writ that prevailed, pre-empting the inevitability of a contest that would have undermined the Sangh's own authority or the parivar's unified purpose to reach the commanding heights which disallowed disruptions in an all-important quest for absolute power. The current incumbent, J P Nadda, leads a charmed life. The soft-spoken and amenable party president—who has no choice but to lie low in the highly centralised power structure run by the Modi-Shah duopoly—is nearly at the end of a five-year term. It's a record in a party whose Constitution stipulates two terms of three years each to a president. He stepped into the post once Amit Shah demitted office in 2019 on becoming a central minister. Nadda hangs on to the post even after his induction in the Union cabinet, which was believed to be the first sign that a successor was being readied. His continuance has virtually put to rest the 'one person, one post' principle. But who cares for the party's Constitution any longer? When an old-timer timorously brought up the subject of not adhering to the book at an internal meet, he was told that the Constitution existed because of the party and not the other way—so there was no need to obsess over its importance.

Where is the much-awaited successor? A plethora of names are bandied about periodically. But like the cat with nine lives, each time the succession chatter gains momentum, Nadda manages to survive. He was seldom embroiled in a controversy like his role model, former party president Kushabhai Thakre, who served during Atal Bihari Vajpayee's prime ministerial tenure.

The higher judiciary serves as a bulwark against injustice. If the judiciary hesitates to step in to restore people's faith in a just order, we as a nation stand doomed.

A three-member committee comprising two Chief Justices of high courts and a judge of a third high court, selected then Chief Justice of India (CJI) Justice Sanjiv Khanna, examined more than 60 witnesses and inspected the residential premises. The panel concluded that Justice Varma could not explain satisfactorily the presence of sacks of Rs 500 notes, some of them damaged by the fire. The committee recommended impeachment proceedings against the judge as this was the course prescribed in the Constitution for the dismissal of a Supreme Court (SC) or high court judge. The CJI and the SC's Collegium of senior judges recommended Justice Varma's transfer back to the Allahabad High Court, his parent HC, in March itself. The CJI had instructed the Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court not to allot judicial work to Justice Varma while he was in the Capital. The CJI at that time had an onerous duty to perform. He was well aware that public trust in the integrity of the higher judiciary had to be salvaged. At the same time, no scope should be left for people to think that the judiciary at the highest level was involved in any form of cover-up of a recalcitrant brother judge. In my opinion, the CJI passed the test with distinction. He opted for transparency, a route rarely favoured by government agencies under attack.

The judiciary and the armed forces of the country are the only two institutions left which people still respect. All others, including the media to a great extent, have fallen by the wayside. If these holdouts are politicised or weakened by corruption, the present system of governance would slip into full-fledged dictatorship.

The higher judiciary serves as a bulwark against injustice. When winning elections at any cost becomes more important than ensuring good governance by upholding the rule of law, instances of injustice are bound to increase. If the judiciary hesitates to step in to restore people's faith in a just order, we as a nation stand doomed! Corruption in the judiciary is becoming a problem. The CJI and other senior judges should sit up and take notice. As corruption in society increases, as it is happening today, leaders from all walks of life should ponder over measures to combat the disease. Prime Minister Narendra Modi used to say that he would not touch tainted money and also not allow those under his watch to do so. It is to be noted that he has not been repeating this boast nowadays. Corruption in public life goes on as merrily as before. Even his party, which was voted to power in 2014 as it swore to end corruption, has not bucked the trend. Having completed 11 years in power, Modi's party is absorbing in its ranks assorted Congressmen, Shiv Sainiks and others who had been named and even prosecuted by his government for big-time corruption. An English term, "washing machine",



has entered common parlance in Mumbai. Former Cabinet Secretary BG Deshmukh was a good friend of mine. He and I, along with Dr Raj Kumar Anand, a leading paediatrician of Mumbai, formed the Public Concern for Governance Trust (PCGT). The Trust concentrates on college and school students, trying to make them good citizens by imbibing good values. We felt that this was the only way concerned citizens like us could contribute to fight corruption. A girl who served on the staff of our NGO competed for a First-Class Judicial Magistrate's appointment in Maharashtra. She was selected. Having worked with our NGO, where she herself was involved in spreading noble values among the youth, we are confident that there will be at least this one dispenser of justice to perform her dharma, as the Gita expects every good human to do without any expectation of a reward. The PCGT's trustees will follow her career with much interest. Reverting to Justice Varma's case, some previous impeachment proceedings went in vain. This may not happen this time round as the BJP has taken the correct stand, supporting the findings of the three-member committee which passed muster with the

collegium of five senior judges of the Supreme Court. Opposition parties cannot afford to vote against this motion.

In a court of law, it might have been more difficult, though not impossible, to sustain the charges. The main omission of counting the burnt and unburnt notes could come to the rescue of the accused. The leading legal luminary who has taken the judge's brief will certainly play up this defect in the prosecution case. The firemen and the security detail who were the first responders talked of sacks of currency notes and burnt notes scattered on the ground. If a HC judge was not involved, the panchnama would have been drawn up. It would have sealed the culprit's fate. But the imperative of informing the CJI and getting his consent at each stage threw up impediments to the normal procedure. Three judges of repute have concluded that sacks of money were seen by the first responders but were removed by Justice Varma's personal staff before the Delhi High Court officials could arrive at the scene. The then CJI's decision to hide nothing from the public and keep it informed at all stages has helped to build public trust in the higher judiciary, but there is a long road ahead.

Develop a robust aviation maintenance ecosystem in India

The safety of the millions flying every day rests squarely on ensuring the regulator tasked with overseeing it has the resources to perform its job. The recent crash unequivocally underscores this

The recent Air India crash, whose causes are still being investigated, casts a harsh light on an issue critical for aviation safety—the country's maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) ecosystem. It's not merely about fixing aircraft, but having a well-regulated backbone to ensure that every plane taking off is fit to do so. MRO is not an option; it's a critical pillar of aviation safety. However, the sector is in a nascent stage in India even after years of regulatory efforts to establish an ecosystem. The crash and the frequent flight cancellations due to technical glitches should be seen as a warning for the government to address the challenges the sector faces and clear the hurdles to its development. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)—the body that oversees aviation safety and enforces MRO standards in the country—faces its own share of challenges. A Parliamentary Standing Committee report tabled just days before the Air India incident highlighted that the DGCA is facing a staggering 53 percent vacancy. How can the country's primary safety regulator effectively



audit MRO providers, ensure compliance with complex civil aviation requirements and oversee a rapidly expanding sector—reflected in the number of airports growing from 74 to 220—with over half its sanctioned posts vacant? Similarly high levels of vacancy plague the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security, which is responsible

for security, and the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau. All this adds up to a systemic oversight deficit in the country. The domestic MRO sector is hobbled by some inherent deficiencies. A Niti Aayog report has highlighted manufacturing monopolies that restrict access to vital data and manuals, inadequate infrastructure such as modern hangars and specialised training facilities, and a lack of universal recognition for DGCA's certifications, which severely hinders India's ability to undertake high-value MRO work. While policy adjustments like GST reduction are welcome steps, they alone cannot address the foundational issues hampering the sector's growth and efficacy. The safety of the millions

flying every day rests squarely on ensuring the regulator tasked with overseeing it has the resources to perform its job. The recent crash unequivocally underscores this. Building a robust MRO infrastructure and filling critical regulatory vacancies are not avoidable expenses—they are essential investments needed to save lives.

Family values: Court affirms Tamil Nadu's inclusive gender traditions

Madras High Court's ruling that same-sex couples can form a family is a testament to Tamil Nadu's progressive legacy rooted in Indic traditions, activism and legal reforms. The state has led in establishing significant milestones for LGBTQIA+ rights in the country

In a landmark ruling delivered earlier this month, the Madras High Court affirmed that same-sex couples can form families without legal marriage. It marked a major milestone for LGBTQIA+ rights in India, particularly in Tamil Nadu. Emerging from a habeas corpus petition, the ruling addressed the case of a 25-year-old lesbian woman detained by her natal family. Her partner sought her release so that they could live together. While securing her freedom, Justices G R Swaminathan and V Lakshminarayanan expanded the definition of family under Indian law, emphasising personal autonomy and right to self-determination.

It comes decades after the 2002 suicide of two lesbian women in Erode's Satyamangalam forest after facing societal rejection of their relationship. Despite this, the 2025 verdict builds on Tamil Nadu's progressive legacy rooted in both legal reforms and Indic traditions fostering wider acceptance of diverse identities. The verdict signals progress while recognising the concept of a "chosen family" under Article 21 of the Constitution, which guarantees life and personal liberty. The court's assertion that "marriage is not the sole mode to found a family" validates non-traditional relationships and offers hope where despair once prevailed. Despite a section of society refusing to accept gender-diverse communities, every May to July, vast numbers of indigenous gender-variant and diverse SOGIESC (sexual orientation, gender identity, expression, and sex characteristics) communities in south India honour their patron deities at temples such as those for Koothandavar Aravan in Tamil Nadu, and for Ellamma, Bhagavati and Mariamman across the

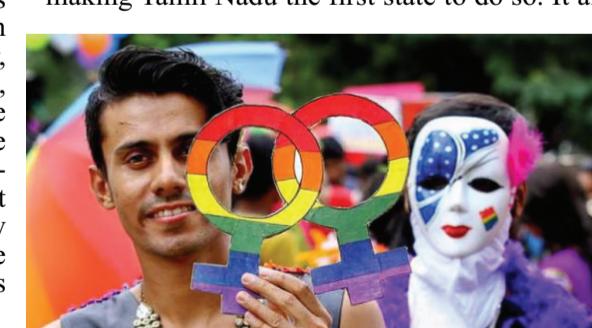
region. These communities enact gender-specific Hindu rituals, which have historically provided sacred spaces for early LGBTQIA+ activism. This cultural acceptance, though not universal, has helped shape a more inclusive societal framework and complemented the legal efforts.

The court's legal reasoning in the latest case was meticulous. The detainee confirmed her lesbian identity and desire to live with her partner, exposing familial coercion. The judges, referencing the Supreme Court's 2023 ruling in the Supriyo @ Supriya Chakraborty case, noted while same-sex marriage remains unrecognised, same-sex couples can still form families. The court criticised police inaction and directed law enforcement to protect the couple, reinforcing the judiciary's role in safeguarding individual rights against societal and familial pressures.

Tamil Nadu's history of activism and legal milestones has been crucial in reaching this point. In 1994, former Chief Election Commissioner T N Seshan granted voting rights to transgender individuals, setting a precedent for inclusion. In 2004, advocate G R Swaminathan, now a judge, secured voter identity cards for transgender people, prompting the state to publicise their voting rights. By 2006, a government order aimed to improve transgender living conditions, promoting counseling to prevent disownment and ensure educational access.

In 2008, Tamil Nadu established a transgender welfare board, and in the early 2000s, it introduced one of India's first transgender welfare policies, offering free gender-affirming surgeries and socio-economic benefits. Asia's first Genderqueer Pride

Parade and Education Fest for school children and college students were organised in 2012. Anjali Gopalan of Naz Foundation flagged off the event in Madurai. In 2019, the Madurai bench of the Madras High Court led by Justice Swaminathan banned forced sex-selective surgeries on intersex infants, making Tamil Nadu the first state to do so. It also



became the first to recognise and register marriages of transgender and intersex persons under the Hindu Marriage Law, amend police guidelines to prevent harassment of the LGBTQIA+ community, ban conversion therapy, and include LGBTQIA+ issues in curriculums in 2017.

Organisations like Srishti Madurai and Orinam Collective have supported these efforts through legal petitions, providing shelters, funds and organising workshops, pride parades, embedding queer rights within Tamil Nadu's cultural and legal fabric. Today, the Tamil has native terminologies for diverse SOGIESC identities, which is missing in many Indian languages.

Festivals and rituals at temples like Koothandavar

Aravan, where gender-diverse individuals are celebrated, has provided a foundation for LGBTQIA+ activism. These sacred spaces, where GIESC communities perform rituals honoring deities associated with fluid gender identities, have historically challenged societal norms, fostering a sense of belonging and resistance against discrimination. This cultural acceptance, though not without resistance, has been a catalyst for legal victories, like the latest ruling, which resonates with the communal spirit of these traditions.

Despite these advancements, challenges persist. The 2002 suicide underscores the personal struggles behind legal progress, with financial hardships and exclusion remaining prevalent. The latest verdict complements rulings by former Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justice Venkatesh of Madras High Court, creating an ecosystem where personal identity and relational freedom are upheld as matters of dignity and public interest, the ruling has sparked broader discourse on queer rights, inviting debate on legal recognition of diverse family structures. It signals a future where all, regardless of sexual orientation, can live with integrity and autonomy.

The ruling is a testament to the enduring power of activism. Activists are continuing to push for comprehensive legal recognition, including same-sex marriage, and cultural acceptance to address ongoing discrimination. Building on decades of progress, the latest judgement ensures that love in all its forms is protected, offering a path towards an inclusive future where past tragedies are not repeated.

Insurance scam busted, 7 held in Ghaziabad

Ghaziabad: Seven persons were arrested on Friday for operating a fake insurance policy racket that targeted over 1,500 people nationwide. Two suspects, former employees of a Noida call centre, allegedly stole customer data and contacted victims with fake promotional offers. The group created counterfeit receipts using specialised software after receiving payments from victims. They opened their office in a car and earned approximately Rs 4.5 crores through the fraud. Police identified the prime suspects as Aman Aggarwal (29) and Rahul Sharma (23). The five other accused were identified as Aftab Alam (25), Rahul Yadav (30), Deepak Singh (25), Garvit Tyagi (24) and Jagjit Singh (26). Alok Priyadarshi, additional CP of Ghaziabad, told TOI that Aman and Rahul worked at HAXR Company in Noida in 2021. This company was an authorised centre for various insurance policies from companies like Reliance, Bharti Hexa, Cigna TTK, HDFC and Bajaj. "They provided the mule bank account details to victims and provided fake insurance documents to them. For contacting policyholders, they used pre-activated SIM cards with fake IDs provided by a person named Mukesh (absconding)," Alok said. The accused were booked by Cyber police station under the sections 3(5) (acts done by several people in furtherance of common intention), 318 (4) (cheating), 336 (3) and 338 (forgery), 340 (using forged documents) of BNS and Section 66 of the IT Act.

A decade gone, GDA frees Rs 800cr land for Indirapuram Extension project

Ghaziabad: Ghaziabad Development Authority (GDA) recently freed 10 hectares of its land worth Rs 800 crore in Kanawni in Indirapuram. The land parcel was encroached upon for more than 10 years, where illegal shanties and huts came up. A GDA official said the land parcel will be clubbed with the Indirapuram Extension scheme — covering an area of 34 hectares — where the development authority is planning a new township. "Last week, GDA carried out a major anti-encroachment drive in Kanawni in Indirapuram, in which the land was reclaimed. Now the development authority has started erecting pillars and the area has been fenced to secure it," the official said. The official said GDA now plans a request for proposal for the said land parcel and a detailed project report will be made. The Indirapuram Extension scheme was launched in 2004, involving about 92 hectares of land in Mahindarpur Kanawani village, for which compensation to farmers was given at the rate of Rs 1100/sqm. In 2005, about 225 farmers who owned 35 hectares of land got a stay from Allahabad high court over enhanced compensation, as a result of which GDA was not able to take the parcel of land into its possession, and since then, the project has remained in a state of limbo. The matter got further compounded in 2014 when the Land Acquisition Act 2014 came into force, which decreed that landowners be given compensation four times the market value. The project became financially untenable for GDA due to the new land acquisition law, so in 2019, GDA wrote to the state govt seeking to de-notify the remaining 35 hectares of land. But GDA, on 20 May 2022, received a shot in its arm in the form of a Supreme Court order involving the Ayodhya Development Authority. The case was similar with respect to GDA's Indirapuram Extension housing scheme. The court, in its May 2022 order, said that any issue pertaining to land compensation that was initiated before the Land Acquisition Act 2014 came into existence should be dealt with the land rates prevailing prior to 2014, irrespective of the fact whether the land could be acquired or not.

Soiled clothes, tied hands, inmates locked in rooms: Shocker at Noida old-age home

Noida: Clothes stained with excreta, soiled bedspreads, several inmates with hands or feet tied, and some without clothes. At least 40 men and women — most in their 70s and 80s, left there by their families — have been living in inhuman conditions in the squalid interiors of a privately run old-age home, a surprise inspection on Thursday night by the UP women's commission found.

Running out of Sector 55 since 1989, Anand Niketan Vridh Sewa Ashram is among the city's oldest facilities for the elderly and is operated by a trust. Officials said the home did not have qualified care staff, nor any facilities for timely medical aid, and was run by a handful of caretakers. Women's commission member Meenakshi Bharala told TOI on Friday she decided to visit the old age home after a video of a woman sitting on the floor of the old age home with her hands tied was brought to her notice. "The video was also sent to mahila ayog in Lucknow," said Bharala, who was accompanied by ADCP Manisha and officers from the social welfare and probation departments during the inspection.

"When we reached, we asked about the woman in the video and were directed to her room. She was lying on a bed that had just a bare mattress. She was clad in dirty clothes and was reeking. She could not even speak to us. The people there told us they had done so because the woman misbehaved," Bharala said. Other inmates also said they were tied up and kept confined to rooms, she added.

A man found sitting in just his shorts was asked where his clothes were. He told the inspection team that he was never given any. The woman in the video is a 69-year-old originally from Kerala. She apparently used to be a Reiki healer. TOI is withholding her name to protect her privacy. A prescription with her suggested dated June 4, 2025 showed she was consulting a doctor at a private hospital in Noida. No one from her family had turned up at the centre on Friday. She was among three inmates at Anand Niketan who were shifted to a govt shelter in Dangaur. "We checked the premises and found how they were mistreated, mostly kept in dirty rooms and unsanitary conditions with just a mattress. The staff there told us the inmates would hit them and throw soiled clothes at them."

Ammonium sulfate contributes to one-third of Faridabad's PM2.5 pollution

Gurgaon. Ammonium sulfate is responsible for a staggering one-third of Faridabad's PM2.5 concentration, according to a study by the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA), which underlined the need for National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) to take a closer look at the secondary pollutant. Ammonium sulfate forms insidiously in the atmosphere through chemical reactions between sulfur dioxide (SO₂) and ammonia (NH₃). CREA's analysis reveals that this pollutant, averaging 19.76 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ out of a total PM2.5 level of 58.28 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ of Faridabad mean data, is prevalent across nearly all NCAP cities, irrespective of their proximity to major emission sources, therefore showing the need for a unified national strategy. NCAP primarily targets PM10. However, PM2.5 poses great dangers to human health, its smaller size allowing it to penetrate deep into the lungs and enter the bloodstream. The health impacts are severe, ranging from increased risk of premature death,

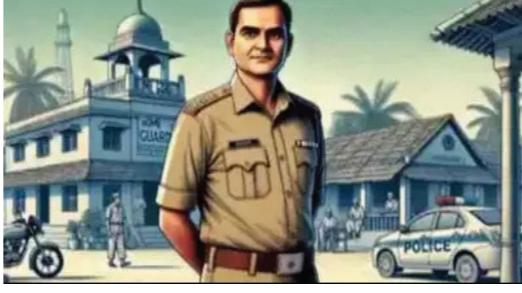
nonfatal heart attacks, irregular heartbeat, aggravated asthma, decreased lung function, and even lung cancer. Faridabad's designation as the sole 'non-attainment' city in Haryana under the NCAP highlights its consistent failure to meet National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). These precursor gases are commonly spewed from coal-fired thermal power plants, agricultural fertiliser use and livestock waste — sources that often extend far beyond city limits. The new study further highlights the complex challenges cities are facing. The transboundary nature of ammonium sulfate pollution means that local emission controls, while necessary, are insufficient on their own. A comprehensive, national approach is imperative to tackle this pervasive and deadly component of India's air pollution crisis, ensuring cleaner air for all its citizens. "To make real progress, NCAP must evolve to include targeted measures for reducing secondary pollutants," said Manoj Kumar, an analyst at CREA,

adding that city and state-level clean air action plans must explicitly tackle major sources of precursor gases. Kumar also emphasised the importance of source-specific strategies, such as installing flue-gas desulphurisation units in coal-fired power plants to reduce sulfur dioxide (SO₂) emissions, promoting efficient fertiliser management to curb ammonia release and ensuring strict compliance with existing emission norms across all polluting sectors. The study serves as a wake-up call for policymakers to recalibrate India's clean air strategy, shifting focus from just visible dust to invisible but deadly chemical reactions that are silently poisoning the air. "In addition to ammonium sulfate, other secondary pollutants like ammonium nitrate also contribute significantly to PM2.5 mass. In fact, secondary particles can account for up to 50% of total PM2.5 mass, according to an IIT study which triggered our analysis. The IIT study found that even beyond 200km of a thermal plant, sulfate concentrations were

RRTS deadlock holds up new metro line's Cyber City station in Gurgaon

Gurgaon. Uncertainty over the exact location of the proposed rapid rail (RRTS) station at Cyber City has derailed integrated planning for the Gurgaon Metro project. The Gurgaon Metro station at Cyber City is to be integrated with RRTS and the existing Rapid Metro network. NCR Transport Corporation, which is building rapid rail, initially planned to construct the RRTS station on the green belt along the expressway near Shankar Chowk. But the industrial authority has shown reluctance in handing over the land, citing concerns over congestion, sources said. The Gurgaon Metro station at Cyber City will be constructed under Phase 2 of the project. GMRL invited bids for geotechnical investigation on the 16km section of Phase 2 between Sector 9 and Cyber City last month. But with the RRTS stations caught in a bind, the location of Gurgaon Metro's station at Cyber City has not been decided. A senior GMRL official told TOI, "Since NCRTC has not frozen its station location, we are unable to finalise ours for Cyber City either. This is a key interchange. Planning for integration between the three systems — RRTS, Gurgaon Metro and Rapid Metro — is affected." NCRTC told TOI on Friday the location of the station at Shankar Chowk is "currently being discussed" in consultation with all key stakeholders. "We are confident that a common ground will be reached soon through mutual understanding," the NCRTC CP said. In Feb, senior officials from NCRTC, GMRL and HSIIDC visited Shankar Chowk to explore options for creating an integrated transport hub. The idea was to allow seamless passenger transfers between RRTS, the new metro corridor from Millennium City Centre to Cyber City and the existing Rapid Metro. Originally approved by Haryana govt in 2019, the alignment of the RRTS corridor, which followed the Old Delhi-Gurgaon Road, was revised in Aug 2023 to run along NH8. This realignment prompted GMRL to shift its metro route from the initial Rao Gajraj Singh Marg to an alternate alignment via Old Delhi-Gurgaon Road and Shankar Chowk Road.

Cop's daughter dies by suicide, family alleges pressure from school principal in Gurgaon



Gurgaon. A Class IX student allegedly died by suicide at her residence in Police Lines in Faridabad on Thursday morning. The family of the girl — whose mother is a police officer — has alleged she was under pressure from the school principal over "non-performance" in classes. The girl studied at a public school located in the same area in Sector 30.

The family has alleged that the girl, who was under "immense mental stress" took the extreme step by hanging herself. According to her parents, the girl was being "mentally harassed" by the school principal, particularly after she failed in three subjects in Class 9. The principal reportedly told her she would have to repeat Class 9. Police spokesperson Yashpal said, "We have received a formal complaint from the family, naming the school principal and a math teacher." A

case has been registered under Section 194 of BNSS. Attempts to contact the school principal for comments were unsuccessful, as she did not respond to phone calls. The mother of the deceased is an assistant sub-inspector in Faridabad Police and is posted at Palla police station. Police said the parents approached the principal to discuss the issue. "The principal refused to listen. The girl pleaded she would work harder and clear her exams this year, but

her appeals were ignored," the complaint said. Police said the incident took place after the 14-year-old girl returned home from school after performing a unit test when parents were at work. Her father Naresh went home to have lunch and asked one of his daughters about her sister. She told him she was in her room studying. When the father tried to enter the room, he found it locked. He broke the door and found the girl hanging from the ceiling fan. The family, originally from Kharupur village in Hisar, has been living in Faridabad for several years. The girl's father works in a private company in Faridabad and her two younger sisters also study in the same school. The police spokesperson said the body was handed over to the family after a post-mortem. She was an accomplished kho-kho player.

Man cured of rare facial pain with advanced radiosurgery in Gurgaon



Gurgaon. For this 41-year-old native of Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, life became a daily battle against invisible torment. For over a year, he endured sudden, electric shock-like pain on the right side of his face — pain so intense and unpredictable that even brushing his teeth or speaking could trigger a storm of agony. He was suffering from Trigeminal Neuralgia (TN) — a condition so cruel, it is often called the "suicide disease." Trigeminal Neuralgia affects only about 4 to 13 people per 100,000 annually, making it an uncommon neurological disorder. It strikes without warning, causing recurrent facial pain that can last for seconds or minutes, and repeat dozens of times a day. In most cases, the right side of the face is affected. The condition is more prevalent in women and people over 50, though it can occur at any age, even in children, though extremely rarely. To treat the patient, the medical team at Medanta

chose CyberKnife radiosurgery — a non-invasive, high-precision treatment — that uses focused radiation to target the affected nerve without harming surrounding brain tissue. Within 48 hours of the surgery, the patient reported a reduction in pain. A month has passed since, and he lives on with minimal medication. "It is a rare disease and patients suffering from it face severe headaches, inability to swallow even

water, and spasms. The pain is intermittent. It can happen to anyone. After CyberKnife radiosurgery, which helps 60-90% patients, they may not feel any pain for 5 to 8 years. Earlier, just 50% of the patients used to get temporary relief after surgery," said Dr Tejinder Kataria, chairperson, radiation oncology, cancer care, Medanta. Explaining the disease, she said, "The trigeminal nerve, also known as the fifth cranial nerve, is one of the 12 pairs of cranial nerves and plays a vital role in facial sensation and motor functions like chewing. In cases of trigeminal neuralgia, a blood vessel — often an artery — compresses the nerve root near the brainstem, leading to localized, electric shock-like pain. This neurovascular conflict disrupts normal nerve signalling," she said. "Trigeminal neuralgia is primarily diagnosed through a patient's description of pain and its triggers.

Sudden scanner on old age home in Noida reveals harsh realities of twilight years



Noida. His voice is feeble, his gait unsteady. But instead of love, care and support from family, what 80-year-old MG Singh (name changed) has found himself in is an alien, inhospitable environment, a locked room, and biting loneliness. Singh feels like he is a prisoner. But without a house where he is welcome to live, he has lived within the confines of this 'prison' for years. "I often feel dizzy. They give me biscuits and glucose and keep me locked in a room," Singh told TOI on Friday morning as govt officers scanned the premises after an inspection by the UP women's commission revealed a sordid state of affairs at the privately run home. "When I first came here, they used to give eggs and butter. Now they don't give such things. That has caused my dizziness and made me weak," he added.

Singh, who prefixed a 'Dr' to his name and identified himself as a former general practitioner at a medical college in Gujarat, was taken away by his niece, who is based in Gurgaon. "They cannot uproot somebody from their home where they're staying without letting

their local guardian know," the niece told TOI. "He was throwing water on electric equipment. He once set this old-age home on fire. I thank the home for keeping him here," she said. Staff at the centre didn't deny using restraints, saying he sometimes tried to set things on fire. A caretaker of the home said inmates were tied "on instructions from their family

members". Several of the inmates have mental health conditions that require regular medical supervision and support. But at Anand Niketan, there's none. The centre is run by 10 severely underpaid caretakers, five each in the morning and evening shifts. They have no medical training. Some of them have only completed school. But not every inmate was complaining, perhaps

because the reality beyond the perimeters of Anand Niketan was more daunting. "We are fine here. We get food on time. In fact, I haven't been able to sleep because of all this chaos since Thursday night," an elderly woman told this correspondent, clearly cross with questions about her wellbeing. A woman from Kerala was among the three inmates who were moved out of Anand Niketan to a govt shelter in Dangaur because of failing health. She could give no information about herself other than her name. Her prescriptions from a private hospital in Noida revealed her full name and age (69). The prescription mentioned hyperthyroidism and said she is prone to delusions. An octogenarian inmate who was shifted out could not communicate with anyone because he cannot hear.

A caretaker told TOI they were instructed to restrain the inmates as it was "the only option to keep them sane" because of the mental health problems they have. "If we didn't do this, things would get out of hand," the caretakers said, admitting the old age home is crippled by severe understaffing. "We work 12-hour shifts, seven days a week, earning just Rs 6,000 monthly," said the caretaker.

In first meeting of MCD's Standing Committee, 25 proposals get nod

The delay caused due to a tussle between AAP and BJP had ended with the appointment of BJP councillor Satya Sharma as chairperson on June 12

Agency New Delhi.
Poor sanitation, dog menace, monsoon preparedness, and status of desilting were among the few issues discussed on Friday at the first meeting of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi's (MCD) Standing Committee, a body set up after a delay of two-and-a-half years.

The delay caused due to a tussle between AAP and BJP had ended with the appointment of BJP councillor Satya Sharma as chairperson on June 12. Every project worth over Rs 5 crore needs to be passed by this committee.

At the meeting on Friday, Sharma announced that the deadline for availing a 10% rebate on property tax has been extended till July 31. Over 25 items on the agenda were passed at the meeting, including the purchase of Disflubenzuron

25% WP, used to kill mosquito larvae in its initial stage. This is in line with the initiative taken up by MCD's Public Health department to prevent and control of vector-borne diseases ahead of the monsoon.

Also passed were items related to the revision of the layout plan of DDU Marg, as well as Delhi University colleges, including Shri Ram College of Commerce (SRCC) and St Stephen's College. The proposal for SRCC included the construction of a new academic block and the addition of two floors for a girls' hostel. The approval for this proposal had been pending since 2012. For St Stephen's College, the approved proposal included the addition of a new academic block, a hostel



block, staff quarters, and an auditorium block. A proposal in this regard had been pending for the last 10 years.

The meeting also approved the extension of contract for private security services, sanitation workers, and housekeeping staff at MCD-run hospitals such as Kasturba Hospital, Rajan Babu Institute of Pulmonary Medicine and Tuberculosis and Mahatma Valmiki Infectious Diseases

Hospital. Leader of Opposition, AAP councillor Ankush Narang, meanwhile, raised the issue of poor sanitation in Central, West, and South zones, questioning the budget sanctioned to each councillor.

At the meeting, councillors sought status and data on drains desilted ahead of monsoon, open drains, JJ Colony clusters, encroachments, illegal parking, and vacant posts of sanitation workers, among others. A civic body official said, "Authorities have hastened the process of desilting. Till now, 1.56 lakh metric tonne of silt has been removed, while 37,000 small drains have been desilted against the 40,000 target."

Delhi bans fuel for old vehicles from July 1: How will defaulters be tracked?



Agency New Delhi.

Starting July 1, Delhi will stop supplying fuel to all overage vehicles. As part of this effort, the Transport Department, the Traffic Police, and the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) will work together to identify hotspots that see a high number of such vehicles attempting to pass through the city. These vehicles will be identified by ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) cameras that have been installed at 498 fuel stations, officials said Friday.

According to directions issued earlier this year by the Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas (CAQM), all end-of-life vehicles (ELVs) — 10 years for diesel vehicles and 15 years for petrol ones — will be denied fuel starting Tuesday. From October 31, the plan comes into effect in five high-vehicle-density districts of Gurgaon, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, Gautam Buddha Nagar, and Sonipat.

Niharika Rai, Secretary-Cum-Commissioner, Transport Department, said the number of ELVs arriving at a fuel station will be noted, as it could be a proxy for vehicle owners residing in nearby areas. Targeted action will be taken at such fuel stations, Rai said. "Joint teams of the transport department, traffic police and MCD will be deployed at all identified fuel stations reporting a high number of such vehicles."

Ajay Chaudhary, Special Commissioner (Traffic), Delhi Police, said, "The departments are still assessing how the teams should be deployed as a few fuel stations work around the clock, but others work for a few hours." He emphasised that there will be no loopholes and the plan will be implemented stringently, as all staff at fuel stations have also been trained.

Delhi: Man on scooter dies after throat slit by Chinese manja

Agency New Delhi.

A 22-year-old man died after his throat was slit by a banned Chinese manja — a sharp string used for flying kites — while he was riding his scooter near Bara Hindu Rao Hospital in North Delhi on Friday evening. Chinese manja, which is coated with glass, metal, or other sharp materials, has been banned in the Capital since 2017.

Police said the victim, Yash Goswami, a resident of Karawal Nagar, was on his way home when he came in contact with the sharp thread near the Rani Jhansi flyover. "Goswami suffered a deep cut on his neck, causing him to collapse on the spot. He was rushed to the hospital by passersby, where he was declared dead on arrival," a police officer said.

Goswami used to run an auto parts shop in Karol Bagh. He was alone at the time of the incident but was wearing a helmet, the officer added.

Police said a case under Section 106(1) (causing death by negligence) of the BNS has been registered against unknown persons at Bara Hindu Rao police station. "The crime scene was inspected by the forensics team, and strands of Chinese manja were recovered from the body as well as from the scooter," another officer said.

This is not the first incident of Chinese manja claiming lives in the Capital. In July 2023, in West Delhi's Paschim Vihar, a seven-year-old girl lost her life after the thread slit her neck while she was travelling with her parents on a scooter.

Last year, in August, a 47-year-old Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) of the Delhi Traffic Police and a 34-year-old businessman were injured by the abrasive string in two separate but similar incidents in Northeast Delhi. Cracking down on the illegal stocking of Chinese manja, the Delhi Police Crime Branch had conducted a raid in Rohini in August 2024. During the raid, they recovered around 12,000 reels of illegal Chinese manja and arrested three people for stocking it.

Delhi BJP chief accuses ILBS of labour & PF law violations

In his letter, Sachdeva wrote, "The specific issue relates to PF contributions being made by the institute, which, as per information received, are not in compliance with statutory requirements."

Agency New Delhi.

Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva has written to Central Provident Fund Commissioner Ramesh Krishnamurti alleging serious violations of labour laws and provident fund regulations at the Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (ILBS), an autonomous institution under the Delhi government.

In a letter dated May 15, Sachdeva alleged that the employer's contribution towards provident fund (PF) at the super-speciality hospital for liver and biliary diseases is reportedly limited to only 8% of the employees' salaries, in contravention of the statutory requirement of 12%. He alleged that an equivalent amount is deducted from employees' salaries. When asked, ILBS Director Dr S K Sarin said, "So far, I have not received any complaint from anyone." Sarin further

said that he will look into the details as soon as he receives any official intimation.

In his letter, Sachdeva wrote, "The specific issue relates to PF

Organisation (EPFO) are shown to be lower than the actual amounts, thereby misrepresenting the contribution as compliant," he added. This manipulation not only violates the Employees' Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952, but also undermines the financial security of the employees, he further said.

Moreover, it is alleged that these actions are taking place with the full knowledge and complicity of senior officials at the institute. Employees, most of whom are on contractual appointments, reportedly refrain from raising these issues formally due to fear of termination and other reprisals. I am also informed that these irregularities have been going on for a few years now and largely unchecked," he said in his complaint. Despite attempts, Sachdeva could not be contacted for a response.



contributions being made by the institute, which, as per information received, are not in compliance with statutory requirements."

"The salary figures submitted to the Employees' Provident Fund

This park in Delhi could soon be 'pollution-free'. Here are the details

The previous AAP Delhi government had explored various measures to control air pollution, including the installation of two smog towers at Connaught Place and Anand Vihar

Agency New Delhi.

The Delhi government has an ambitious plan up its sleeve to turn the famed Nehru Park in the diplomatic enclave of Lutyens' Delhi into a 'pollution-free zone' — by installing 'modern air purifiers' equipped with a unique system to capture and store polluting particles, said officials.

According to Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sisra, the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) first installed the air purifiers on a trial basis at four locations — Anand Vihar ISBT in 2023, Ambassador hotel in Khan Market, and New Moti Bagh in 2024, and Jangpura in January 2025 — which were successful. "The government is planning to extend this

initiative on a large-scale basis, starting with Nehru Park... The premises has a good green cover. But



when the air-quality level deteriorates overall, it also affects this space — even if the AQI is better than other locations. So, with these machines, we want to make this park pollution-free," he said. Officials said the locations for

the trial run were selected based on whether they saw a large influx of vehicles or where pedestrian footfall was high.

"For instance, Anand Vihar-ISBT sees buses passing through, it has a high footfall, and there is construction work going on. So, this spot was suggested by the Commission for Air Quality Management. In Jangpura, the machines were installed at a petrol pump, which also sees vehicles passing through. As for the two other locations, one is a residential area and the other a hotel. Thus, the key aim is to reduce harmful exposure to people in outdoor spaces that see a high footfall," said an official.

Delhi govt schools directed to set up Special Admission Cells for children out of school

The cells have been tasked with ensuring smooth and time-bound admission of identified out-of-school children, including those with special needs, in Delhi.

Agency New Delhi.

Delhi's Samagra Shiksha Department has directed the heads of all government schools, including that of the Directorate of Education (DoE), Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) and the Delhi Cantonment Board (DCB), to set up Special Admission Cells (SAC) for children who were never enrolled.

According to a circular issued on Thursday, the department aims to "strengthen and streamline the admission process of never-enrolled Out-of-School children (OOSC), including Children with Special Needs (CWSN)" as well as students who dropped out of the school system due to any reason. These cells need to comprise the school head, admission in-charge and an educational and vocational guidance counsellor (EVGC) or a representative of similar expertise from the management belonging to MCD, DCB or NDMC authorities. There also has to be a Cluster

Resource Centre Coordinator (CRCC) to give data to the cell.

The SAC has been tasked with ensuring smooth and time-bound admission of identified out-of-school children, including Children with Special Needs. It is also expected to guide and counsel parents and children during the admission process. According to the circular, the SAC should ensure minimal documentation and coordinate with the school head and Special Training Centre (STC) teachers for enrolment support. Other responsibilities listed include:

To monitor retention, attendance

Follow up on absenteeism and academic progress of the admitted out-of-school children. These need to be done by maintaining their records.

Review the progress of out-of-school children by holding periodic meetings



Coordinate with the Cluster Resource Centre Coordinator to update the Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE+) data from time to time. Identify and address dropout cases. Identify issues and counsel parents, resolve difficulties. Ensure timely re-enrolment of affected children. Prepare fortnightly reports on identified out-of-school children.

The reports should include the admission status of the children, their attendance in schools and Special Training Centres, status of textbook supply, uniform, writing material, assessment status and mainstreaming plan, among others which should be provided to the Samagra Shiksha headquarters through district project offices.

According to the department's standard operating procedure for out-of-school children, their identification is done "to admit them in regular class/STC at the earliest." They should be given admission in a regular government school immediately in the age-appropriate class where learning assessment of the child is done. This is to mainstream the child as after the assessment, the child may be recommended schooling in regular class or STC for a bridge course, as per the stage of learning.



Ideas for perfect home Decoration

Rearrange the furniture: Pull your furniture away from the walls. Try positioning it at intriguing angles. Arranging the sofa diagonally across the narrow living room will make the room look wider and provide a warm, inviting layout.

-

Paint, paint, and clean: You will be surprised by what a coat of new paint or cleaning your existing mouldings and doors will do to any room, or to your entire house. Don't forget baseboards, mouldings and doors. Find new colours and useful utensils at your local home improvement store.

-

Paint a wall: Paint one wall with your

favourite colour and make it the focal point. Hang interesting art on that wall and move a nice piece of furniture there.

Bring in plants: Greenery always adds a breath of fresh air to a room. If you don't have a green thumb, try silk plants and trees. The quality is so good that it's hard to distinguish them from the real thing.

Toss in colour: Bright colours and good lighting work together produces instant cheerfulness.

Ladle on the light: One of the most important things is to have all the natural light you possibly can. People respond very well to

light.

Dress up: Creative use of mouldings, fabrics, even paint will do magic around your doors and windows. You will find them in wood or synthetic at your home improvement store.

Hang pictures or a mirror: Hang pictures that reflect your personality. Try frames that are more ornate. When hanging a mirror, try and position it so that it reflects and nice view or an interesting architectural element.

Do not clutter: Clutter always works against you. Keep it simple. Add vertical space with shelves or bookcases in closets or other areas to minimise cluttering as much as possible.

Lay an area rug: An area rug is a wonderful way of defining a conversation area. Try one that complements the room. Lay it at an angle beneath your coffee table.

Group figurines: Pull out your favourite collectibles. Show off your personality. Find a display area and group related objects together, in sets of three or five. Try and vary the shapes.

Add throw or Afghan: Similar to decorative pillows, throws and Afghans add texture to your furniture. They come in all kinds of natural and man made fabrics. Find a pattern and style that you like.

Replace lamps: Lamps are probably the one thing in your home that will give others a clue that your room is outdated. Seek out new and fresh lamps that make a statement.

Add decorative pillows: The good news about decorative pillows is that they are an easy way to add textures and patterns to a room. Still better, they can be changed to jazz up a sofa or chair before your room is ready for a major makeover.

Add candles/candle holders: This is

always a winner. If you have some intriguing candle holders, try those. Use at least two candle holders for balance.

Display a figurine or sculpture: Any eye-catching sculpture or figurine will make a wonderful statement as well as a conversation piece.

Display books: Display a few hardcover books that are interesting and have covers which tie into your decor colour scheme. Preferably, the books should be the larger versions, but should not be too thick.

Display pottery: Earthy and warm, pottery makes a great addition to your interior decor.

Display straw baskets: Similar to pottery, straw baskets add charm and warmth to your home.

Use a decorative screen: A decorative screen makes an excellent backdrop in any room. It adds dimension and texture.

If your room is decoratively challenged, try some of these ideas to add life to your interiors.

How to style your old lampshade

You love your lampshade but it's been in your room for too long. You don't want to part with it or replace it. But you also want something new. What do you do? Change the colour of the shade into striking neon. Print your favourite quote or song lyrics on a cloth and make it into a shade. Reinventing the lampshade is the quickest way to preserve the old, yet get a new look. Be it shape, colour, texture - lamps can add aesthetics to any room. These days, people are joining lampshade-making classes, where they are encouraged to create pieces of artwork on paper, and then convert it into a shade. Making a lampshade requires a suitable fabric, a wire frame and panels. Says lamp designer Natasha Wadhwa, "Look for unusual Japanese or Chinese silk patterns, paisleys, funky tassels, new material to give your shades your signature style. I use buttons, vintage zari, and floral pins on my lamps. If you want to be eco-friendly, go for paper lanterns, or edgy bamboo lamps."



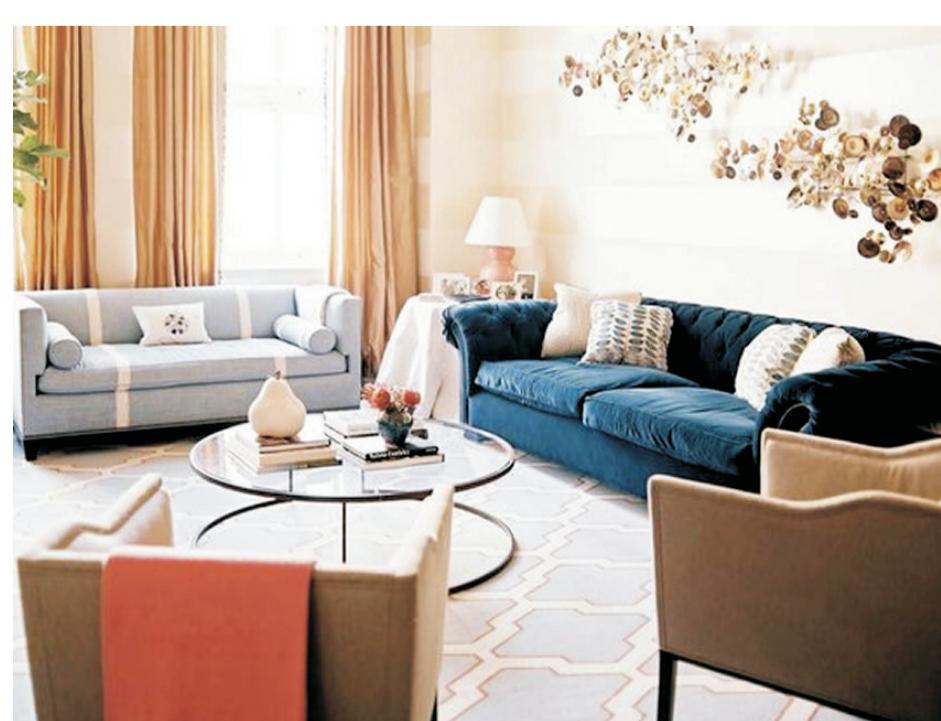
Use old scrap for chic Interiors

There's more you can do with your interiors; use old scrap to make pretty home decor items.
ashok kumar mudetiya tells you how...

We have moved into an era where all people can think is about going green. Recycling is passe. The trend that has made a buzz now is upcycling, that is, reusing vintage products such that you can make it into something of a higher value.

Basically, it is about using products for a little more time before there is place in the landfill so it can be discarded. Though greentailing is not all that hyped up in India as it is abroad, it sure has grabbed many an eyeball. Gone are the days, when all that youth could think of is draining their brains. A lot of our youngsters are making a business out of recycling and well, what's better when you can both make money and tell mother nature that you care.

Upcycling, like mentioned earlier, is quite a rage in the West, especially when it comes to home decor. But fret not! For all of you who like trying out and customising goods at home, here are some fun ideas for you to try out



5. Take small boxes, glue up your favourite magazine articles on them, and also sequence the edges to use it as a showpiece for your desk. 6. Another upcycler, Suren Vikash U says, "You can use tetra pack containers to make pen stands by cutting them partially in the middle. This is a good and easy way to upcycle." 7. Use your old cartons and boxes, paint them or cover them up with colourful paper, place sequins on them, and use the end-product as a magazine or newspaper holder. These are just some simple methods you can use to make your home decor look both classy and eco-friendly. Well, there are a lot more ways to do the same and customise your home decor according to your personal style. After all, your home should reflect your personality and what better way to do up your interiors your way.

Sensex ends 300 points higher, Nifty above 25,600; Jio Financial shares jump 4%

New Delhi. Benchmark indices closed higher for the fourth straight session on Thursday, buoyed by easing global concerns and renewed foreign inflows.

The S&P BSE Sensex rose 303.03 points to end at 84,058.90, while the NSE Nifty50 gained 88.80 points, settling at 25,637.80. All broader market indices also finished in positive territory as volatility eased, bringing both key benchmarks within striking distance of new record highs. Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said recent global developments have lifted market sentiment. "Key catalysts like the ceasefire in the Middle East and optimism around easing trade tensions have cleared investor concerns. After several sessions of selling, FIIIs have turned net buyers, which is helping stabilise the market," he said.

"Benign oil prices, a stronger rupee, and steady macroeconomic indicators are driving interest in domestic growth themes. Expectations of stronger earnings, supported by resilient consumption, are further boosting optimism."

Pump and dump scam: Sebi says has raided many shell companies

MUMBAI. Markets watchdog Sebi has confirmed reports in a section of the media that it had carried out raids in multiple locations and on multiple shell companies for what it considers to be cases of pump and dump scams. "Sebi has conducted search and seizure operations at multiple locations in June in connection with pump and dump in certain scrips and has seized incriminating evidence," Sebi said in a statement Friday, confirming various news reports regarding its raids in the pump and dump scam. "Further investigation in the matter is under progress," the regulator added in the statement without offering any more details such as the number of companies raided or the value of the alleged scam etc. Some section of the media has been reporting since last week that Sebi raided around two dozen shell companies involved in the Rs 300-crore pump and dump scheme across Ahmedabad, Mumbai and Gurugram. These raids are one of the biggest in Sebi's history in terms of monetary value.

The raids primarily involved 15-20 shell companies which were allegedly created by promoters of some listed companies to pump and dump their own shares. At least two listed agro-tech companies along with their promoters are said to be at the helm of the alleged network, sources had said. "Sebi has seized several documents including company documents, rubber stamps. Preliminary assessment suggests the scam was at least Rs 300 crore, however more details would emerge once the seized documents are analysed," a source was quoted by one such report.

Generally, in cases of pump and dump schemes, Sebi issues an order against the entities. In very few cases, Sebi also uses its search and seizure powers against the entities like in the current case. The pump and dump scam works in the following manner: promoters create shell companies and register them as proprietary traders which will buy and sell the company stocks later. In the past, there have many instances where Sebi has gone after promoters of small and mid-cap companies for manipulating their stocks. In a pump and dump scheme, entities related to the scammers first start buying shares of own companies in large numbers to drive up the stock price and once the price has gone up significantly, it catches the attention of retail investors and the manipulators then exit the stock at a profit by selling the shares to gullible retail investors.

Output of farm sector rises to Rs 29.49 lakh crore in FY24: Govt data

New Delhi. The Gross Value of Output (GVO) from the agriculture and allied sector increased 54.6 percent from FY12 to FY24 to Rs 29.49 lakh crore at constant prices, the National Statistics Office (NSO) said on Friday. The NSO, part of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), has released the annual publication of 'Statistical Report on Value of Output from Agriculture and Allied Sectors (2011-12 to 2023-24)'. "Gross Value of Output (GVO) from the agriculture and allied sector at constant prices has shown steady growth from Rs 1,908 thousand crore in 2011-12 to Rs 2,949 thousand crore in 2023-24, marking an overall increase of approximately 54.6 percent," NSO said. It further said the Gross Value Added (GVA) of agriculture and allied sectors at current prices registered a growth of about 225 percent, increasing from Rs 1,502 thousand crore in 2011-12 to Rs 4,878 thousand crore in 2023-24.

The publication is a comprehensive document that provides detailed tables on values of output of crop, livestock, forestry and logging, and fishing and aquaculture sectors of agriculture and allied activities from 2011-12 to 2023-24 at both current and constant (2011-12) prices. The detailed publication comes after the major aggregates at the all-India level have been released in the form of National Accounts Statistics on 28th February 2025, NSO said. According to the data, the crop sector with GVO at Rs 15.95 lakh crore remains the largest contributor to total GVO (at constant prices) of agriculture and allied sectors with a share of 54.1 percent in 2023-24. Cereals and fruits and vegetables together accounted for 52.5 percent of total crop GVO in 2023-24. Among the cereals, only paddy and wheat constituted approximately 85 percent of GVO (at constant prices) of all cereals in 2023-24. Five states—Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Telangana, and Haryana—contributed nearly 53 percent of GVO (at constant prices) of cereals in 2023-24. With a reduced share (18.6 percent in 2011-12 to 17.2 percent in 2023-24), Uttar Pradesh maintained the top position, according to the NSO data. In the fruit group in 2023-24, the constant price GVO of bananas (Rs 47,000 crore) has surpassed that of mangoes (Rs 46,100 crore). Mango was the top-most contributor in GVO (at constant prices) in the fruit group consistently from 2011-12 to 2021-22.

IndusInd Bank shortlists 3 names for top job ahead of RBI deadline

The bank is run by an RBI-approved executive committee comprising its consumer banking head Soumitra Sen and the chief administrative officer Anil Rao.

MUMBAI. The troubled IndusInd Bank, which has been headless since late April when the scam-tainted chief executive Suman Kathpalia and his deputy Arun Khurana resigned, is owned by an RBI-approved executive committee comprising its consumer banking head Soumitra Sen and the chief administrative officer Anil Rao. According to a source in the know of the development, the board of the Hinduja group-promoted bank is expected to clear

Bank-to man the top deck. While Rajiv Anand is currently the deputy managing director of Axis Bank, Anup Saha is the managing director of Bajaj Finance, and Rahul Shukla is the group head of commercial and rural banking at HDFC Bank and is on a sabbatical from the largest private sector bank.

While Suman Kathpalia resigned on April 29, his deputy Arun Khurana did so a day before. Both had cited moral responsibility for the scam for the decisions to leave, which came in well after seven weeks since the crisis came out. Both have also been banned by the market regulator from the market for insider trading—they had pocketed over Rs 157 crore from selling bank's shares in 2023-24. Since their resignations, the bank is run by an RBI-approved executive committee comprising its consumer banking head Soumitra Sen and the chief administrative officer Anil Rao. According to a source in the know of the development, the board of the Hinduja group-promoted bank is expected to clear

these names and submit the list to the Reserve Bank for approval any day now before the regulatory deadline of June 30. The regulator has also asked the board to suggest probable names only from



outside IndusInd Bank. During a recent analyst call, IndusInd chairman Sunil Mehta had assured stakeholders that the names would be submitted well before the deadline. The upcoming leadership change is seen as a crucial development for the bank, which has been in focus since early March when it was forced by the RBI to inform all stakeholders that it

HDFC Bank slashes FD and savings rates again in June. Details here

HDFC Bank's latest changes signal that deposit rates could remain soft if the RBI continues its rate-cutting cycle. Depositors should review their plans, stay updated with rate changes, and make informed decisions before booking new FDs or Rds.

New Delhi HDFC Bank has again cut its fixed deposit (FD) interest rates this month. This is the second rate cut in June 2025 for India's largest private bank. From June 25, 2025, the bank has lowered the interest rate on single FD tenures by 25 basis points (bps) for deposits below Rs 3 crore. This follows a similar cut made earlier on June 10, 2025, after the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) reduced the repo rate by 50 bps, from 6% to 5.5%.

WHICH FD TENURE IS AFFECTED? HDFC Bank has reduced the interest rate on FDs with a tenure of 15 months to less than 18 months. Earlier, this rate was 6.60% for general customers and 7.10% for senior citizens. Now, it is 6.35% for general customers and 6.85% for seniors. The bank offers FD rates from 2.75% to 6.60% for the general public (for 18 months to less than 21 months) and 3.25% to 7.10%

for senior citizens for amounts under Rs 3 crore. **PENALTY FOR PREMATURE WITHDRAWAL** If you need to break your FD early, remember that the bank charges a penalty. According to HDFC Bank's rules, if you withdraw your FD before maturity, you will get 1% less than the rate applicable for the period your money stayed with the bank, and not the original contracted rate.

SAVINGS ACCOUNT RATES ALSO REDUCED Along with the FD rate cut, HDFC Bank has also lowered the interest rate on all savings accounts. From June 24, 2025, the savings rate is down by 25 bps, i.e., from 2.75% to 2.50% per annum for all balances. The savings account interest is calculated daily and paid every three months.

WHAT ABOUT RECURRING DEPOSITS? The bank's recurring deposit (RD) interest rates remain between 4.25% and 6.60% for general customers and 4.75% to 7.10% for senior citizens, depending on the deposit period. These rates have been in effect since June 10, 2025.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR CUSTOMERS With two rate cuts in a single month, HDFC Bank customers will now see slightly lower returns on fresh FDs and savings accounts.

28—a fall of roughly Rs. 335.

Similarly, 24-carat gold fell from Rs. 10,108 to Rs. 9,742—a Rs. 366 decline.



This downward trend reflects a broader global correction, driven by easing geopolitical tensions (such as the Israel-Iran ceasefire), a stronger dollar, and rising U.S. Treasury yields reducing the appeal of non-yielding

assets like gold. In MCX futures, domestic prices dropped about Rs. 1,630 per 10g this week amid reduced safe-haven demand. For buyers, this dip may be a good chance to purchase jewelry or invest—but it's wise to monitor global trends, interest rates, and inflation data for future movements.

Spot gold dropped by approximately 1.2% to around \$3,288 per ounce, while US August futures fell by 1.7%, closing the week with a nearly 3% decline. This drop reflects investor preference for higher-yielding or growth-oriented assets, with the Nasdaq hitting fresh record highs—signaling a strong risk-on sentiment in the market. Gold's earlier rally, which saw prices touching historic highs earlier this year, has also prompted technical profit-taking, accelerating the recent sell-off.

EPFO may soon allow direct EPF withdrawals via ATMs and UPI

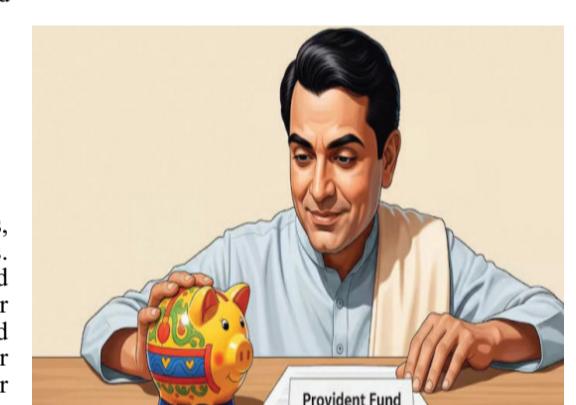
New Delhi EPFO members may soon get the option to withdraw their Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) money directly using ATMs or UPI, once their bank accounts are linked with their EPF.

NEW SYSTEM IN WORKS

A senior official has shared that the labour ministry is working on this new plan. To make this work, EPF accounts will be linked with members' bank accounts. A part of the EPF amount may be kept frozen, but a large portion will be available to withdraw using debit cards or UPI. CURRENT WITHDRAWAL PROCESS

Right now, if you want to withdraw your EPF money, you have to file a claim online or offline. This process can take time. Even though the EPFO does have an auto-settlement system where claims are cleared within three days, you still have to submit a claim.

Recently, the EPFO increased the auto-settlement limit from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 5 lakh. This means members can get up to Rs 5 lakh cleared automatically within three days for things like medical expenses, education, housing, or



marriage. WHY IS THE CHANGE NEEDED

The EPFO, which serves over 7 crore people, first brought in online auto-settlement for advance claims during COVID-19 to help members in financial need. Yet, people still need to file claims to get their EPF. The new plan hopes to cut out this step and lighten the EPFO's load, as it deals with over 5 crore withdrawal requests annually. The official added that this new plan aims to cut down on paperwork and save time for both the EPFO and its members. However, the EPFO cannot directly allow cash withdrawals like a bank because it does not have a banking licence. So, the government is trying to upgrade EPFO's services so they work more like regular bank services.

Wall Street rallies to record highs as AI stocks soar, recession fears ease

US stock markets hit all-time highs on Friday thanks to an AI boom and Fed hints at looser policy ahead. Trade deals with the UK and China have also fuelled market hopes that a global recession could be avoided.

New Delhi. The S&P 500 and Nasdaq Composite hit all-time highs on Friday as megacap stocks surged on renewed AI enthusiasm and the prospect of a looser monetary policy, powering a recovery in US stocks from months-long rout. The benchmark index rose 0.2% to 6,154.81 points, surpassing the previous peak of 6,147.43 on February 19, while the tech-heavy Nasdaq gained 0.3% to 20,229.31 points, exceeding its record high of 20,204.58 on December 16. Markets



rallied this week as an upbeat forecast from chipmaker Micron brought back investor confidence around artificial intelligence, while AI bellwether Nvidia hit a record high to reclaim its position as the world's most valuable company. Risk appetite also benefited from a US-brokered ceasefire to a 12-day air battle between Israel and Iran that sparked a

jump in crude prices and raised worries of higher inflation. Dovish remarks from Federal Reserve policymakers have also aided sentiment. Trump's April 2 "reciprocal tariffs" on major trading partners and their chaotic rollout had put the S&P 500 within a striking distance of confirming a bear market when it ended down 19% from its February 19 record

closing high. The Nasdaq had tumbled 26.7% from its previous peak, marking a bear market days after Trump's "Liberation Day" on April 2. Since then, US trade deals with the UK and China have firmed up market expectations for more such agreements on the hopes that a global recession could be avoided. The S&P 500 has surged more than 23.5% and the Nasdaq about 32% since their recent lowest close on April 8, largely powered by a handful of megacap stocks such as Microsoft, Nvidia, Meta Platforms and Amazon. If the Nasdaq closes above the December 16 record close at 20,173.89, it would be the end of the bear market and start of a new bull market, according to common definitions. A bear market is defined as a 20% decline from a record high close, on a closing basis. Both the Nasdaq and S&P 500 have gained 4.4% this year as of Thursday's close. The blue-chip Dow has risen about 2% this year and remains about 3.7% below its all-time peak.

Shraddha Kapoor's

Cryptic Emotional Note Leaves Fans Concerned: 'She Is Silently Struggling'

Shraddha Kapoor took to Instagram to pen a heartfelt poem about comforting someone in their sad times. The poem resurfaced on Reddit and left fans divided. While some believe that the poem is a cry for help and that the actress is expressing her loneliness, others said that it's a romantic poem that she wrote for her rumoured boyfriend Rahul Mody. The poem read, "Jab tum akele ho, Main tumhare paas baith jaungi. Jab tum udaas ho, Main tumhe baahon main bhar loongi. Mujhe pata hai tum kho jaate ho. Mujhe pata hai tum bhaag jaate ho. Lekin main tumhe dhond loongi, aur tumhe thahe loongi."

One person wrote, "Life's complicated-even and especially for those in the public eye. They have the same insecurities as we do, but they live in a bubble, so they don't always get to touch grass. The least we can do is practice kindness towards everyone." Another added, "Life is

hard, and 2025 has particularly been hard for a lot of people. Wishing her strength." One person wrote, "I feel like Shraddha Kapoor is silently struggling. Lately, I've been noticing something different about Shraddha Kapoor. In her recent photos, her smile doesn't feel the same—it's like it's missing the spark we all used to see."

Someone else wrote, "Why do I feel like this is a romantic story, not a sad one, & she is so much in love!" Another wrote, "I feel this is a message for her boyfriend." One comment read, "This feels like something her boyfriend wrote for her and not a call for help." Another added, "Idk this seems dedicated to Rahul Mody, not her being sad or anything." Someone else wrote, "Is this for her boyfriend?"

Meanwhile, Shraddha Kapoor's recent spotting outside Maddock Films' office in Mumbai stirred quite the buzz, leading to fan speculation about a possible new project with the production house. And now, reports are rife that the actress was at the office for a creative meeting with producer Dinesh Vijan, and the conversation points to an exciting reunion. The upcoming project is believed to be based on a popular Marathi novel and will showcase Shraddha in a culturally rooted role.

Shraddha Kapoor was last seen in *Stree 2*. The horror-comedy, released in 2024, starred her alongside Rajkummar Rao, Abhishek Banerjee, Aparshakti Khurana and Pankaj Tripathi. The Amar Kaushik's directorial took the box office by storm.



Tarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah: Dilip Joshi

Munmun Dutta

Quit Asit Modi's Show?

Who does not know Jethalal and Babita ji? The iconic characters, played by Dilip Joshi and Munmun Dutta respectively in *Tarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah*, are widely loved by the audience. However, the current plot in the show doesn't feature the favourite pair of characters. And therefore, their absence has left everyone wondering if Dilip Joshi and Munmun Dutta have left the popular sitcom. The rumours of Dilip Joshi and Munmun Dutta's exit from

been missing in action. This has left everyone wondering if Dilip Joshi and Munmun Dutta are planning to quit the show.

As reported by ABP News, the show's production house has confirmed that Munmun Dutta and Dilip Joshi are still part of the show. While the current plotline indicates that 'Jethalal' is on a business trip with his associates, 'Babita' and 'Iyer' are said to be vacationing in Mahabaleshwar. It should be noted that both

Munmun Dutta and Dilip Joshi have been a part of TMKOC ever since its beginning. The former plays the role of Babita ji in the popular sitcom, and her chemistry with Jethalal (essayed by Dilip Joshi) is widely loved by all.

Tarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah has been running successfully for 17 years now. However, in these years, several actors have also left the show. Among others, Disha Vakani, Jheel Mehta, Bhavya Gandhi, Raj Anadkat, Palak Sindhwani, Gurucharan Singh Sodhi and Neha Mehta are no longer a part of TMKOC.

In a previous interview with the SCREEN, Asit Modi talked about actors leaving the show and then making allegations against him. "I have never detached myself from the actors. If there is any issue, they can always contact me. I have always been very honest and kept the show first. I have never thought of any personal gains, so with incidents like these, I do get upset, but it's a part of life," he said.



TMKOC started after fans noticed that Jethalal and Babita Ji have been missing from the current 'Bhootni' plot for a long time now. All the members of the Gokuldham society are on vacation in a haunted bungalow. While other characters like Bapu ji, Popat, Sodhi and others have joined *Tarak Mehta* and Anjali on this vacation, Jethalal and Babita Ji have



Ranveer Brar Attends Cannes Lions, Calls Experience 'Truly Magical'
The event is a global gathering of creative minds determining the future of marketing and advertising.



Chef Ranveer Brar recently graced the red carpet at the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity 2025, a prestigious global event that celebrates innovation in marketing and advertising. The festival gathers creative minds from across the world, recognising how imagination and storytelling can spark change, forge connections and drive progress.

Taking to Instagram, Ranveer shared a carousel capturing memorable moments from his trip to the stunning French Riviera. The first photo shows him descending a red-carpeted staircase with poise, followed by a quirky shot in front of a hotel featuring a giant Mickey Mouse installation. Another frame shows him striking a stylish pose by the beach, while the final image features him near a staircase, exuding calm confidence.

Captioning the post, Ranveer wrote, "They said Cannes is magical... turns out, it really is!"—perfectly summing up his experience at this remarkable celebration of creativity.

For the event, Ranveer opted for a white and teal deconstructed suit that combined sharp tailoring with playful, avant-garde elements including quirky prints and a feathery shoulder detail. The ensemble was from the shelves of the fashion designer Anurag Gupta.

In no time, the comment section was flooded with reactions from fans and admirers. An Instagram user wrote, "Chef with style." Another one shared, "Wonderful chef looks awesome." One of them commented, "Love the looks."

Known for his culinary art and his sense of styling, the Chef recently bagged the Most Stylish Culinary Artist of the Year 2025 award. Being one of India's most acclaimed chefs, his journey began from the backstreets of Lucknow to become one of the youngest executive chefs at a five-star hotel, before wowing viewers as a host on *MasterChef India*, *Raja Rasoi Aur Andaaz Anokha* and *Station Master's Tiffin*. His culinary style is based on culture, nostalgia and a great appreciation for ingredients—every dish is a tribute and each plate is a story. Recently, he appeared as a judge on the cooking-based reality show *Celebrity MasterChef* along with Chef Vikas Khanna and Farah Khan.

Disha Parmar's Mom Life Moment With Rahul Vaidya On Phone Is Relatable



Disha Parmar is melting hearts once again, this time with a slice-of-life moment that perfectly captures the sweet chaos of parenthood. The *Bade Achhe Lagte Hain 2* actress, who welcomed her baby girl Navu (fondly called Navu) in 2023 with husband Rahul Vaidya, has been sharing glimpses of their joyful family life ever since. In her latest Instagram story, Disha dropped an adorable photo featuring the trio in full-on cozy mode. While she's seen snuggling Navu on the sofa, Rahul is blissfully engrossed in his phone, offering a hilariously relatable snapshot of everyday family life. Adding the perfect soundtrack, Disha paired the image with the viral audio "If it's cute, that's it," and captioned it cheekily: "Life every day (sin) Navu & mummy clinging to each other whilst Baba is on phone (sin)."

Since becoming a mother, Disha has been open about her journey, sharing both the joys and challenges of parenting. From sweet milestones with Navu to her unwavering dedication to fitness, she continues to balance her personal and professional life with grace. Fans admire her authenticity, as she keeps them updated with heartwarming glimpses into her world.

A few weeks ago, Disha revealed how her life has been lately while throwing light on the struggles of her motherhood phase. "It's been over 2 years since I last slept well! That uninterrupted 8-9 hrs of sleep... I don't remember what that was or waking up fresh without the cries! Urgh... waiting for that to come back."

"Hopefully soon!" she wrote in an Instagram post. Disha Parmar and her husband Rahul Vaidya welcomed their princess in September 2023 after being in marital bliss for almost two years. As the couple navigate this new chapter, their adorable family moments serve as a reminder of the beauty of togetherness. With Navu at the centre, this trio is undoubtedly winning hearts, one post at a time!

NEWS BOX

Arshdeep Singh, tailenders' batting in focus at India's practice session in Birmingham: Report

NEW DELHI. Fast bowler Arshdeep Singh had a long practice session in India's first training session in Birmingham, reported Times of India on Friday, June 27. The left-arm fast bowler, who is yet to make his Test debut, worked closely with bowling coach Morne Morkel. In case Jasprit Bumrah does not play the second Test match at Edgbaston, Arshdeep could be in the running to make his Test debut. The fast bowler is well established in the white-ball format with the Indian team and would love to get a chance with the red ball, in conditions where he has played County Cricket before. According to the report, star fast bowlers Jasprit Bumrah and Prasidh Krishna did not train with the side, despite being at the stadium premises. Bumrah has already mentioned that he would play 3 Test matches and would take a call on more if his body responds better to the workload. The fast bowler captained India at Edgbaston back in 2022, a Test match where Ben Stokes' England chased down 378 runs to script an incredible win. The second Test of the 5-match series



begins on July 2. India are already 0-1 down in the series after the hosts chased down 371 runs in little more than a day at Headingley, Leeds. Ben Duckett was instrumental in neutralising Jasprit Bumrah in the final innings of the Test match. Bumrah went wicketless in the final innings as India failed to defend a big total.

INDIA'S FRONTLINE PACERS WITHOUT BUMRAH. In case Bumrah does not play the 2nd Test, this is how India's potential pace attack might look like.

Mohammed Siraj - 37 Tests

Akash Deep - 7 Tests

Prasidh Krishna - 4 Tests

Arshdeep Singh - Yet to debut

It is expected that the Indian team will make changes to their combination. India might play two spinners in the 2nd Test match in case the hosts once again offer a dry and flat pitch like Headingley. Apart from Arshdeep's training, focus was also put on Mohammed Siraj's batting, as Sitanu Kotak spent an extended amount of time fixing the technique of the fast bowler.

Prabath Jayasuriya spins Sri Lanka to innings victory over Bangladesh in 2nd Test

New Delhi. Sri Lanka completed a massive win by an innings and 78 runs over Bangladesh in the 2nd and the final Test of the two-match series on Saturday, June 28 at Sinhalese Sports Club, Colombo. Prabath Jayasuriya's 12th five-wicket haul helped the hosts win the series by 1-0 as Bangladesh capitulated for 133 in the second innings. The Dhananjaya de Silva-led side could smell victory late on Day 3 as they left Bangladesh reeling at 115/6 at stumps after Tharindu Ratnayake got Mehidy Hasan Miraz (11 off 16) lbw in the last over of the day. It didn't take long for Jayasuriya to get into the act on Day 4 as he added to his overnight tally of two wickets by getting Litton Das (14) caught behind the stumps by wicketkeeper



Kusal Mendis. The left-arm spinner struck again in the next over as he outfoxed Nayem Hasan, who was made to drag his foot outside the batting crease and Mendis wasted no time in dislodging the bails to pounce on the misery on Bangladesh. There was no stopping Jayasuriya as he further got rid of Taijul Islam in his third over the day and completed his five-wicket haul. Ratnayake (2/19) hit the final nail in the coffin by dismissing Ebadot Hossain lbw for 6 (7) as Bangladesh got all out for 133 in 42.4 overs. Captain De Silva (2/13) and Asitha Fernando (1/22) were also amongst the wickets as Sri Lanka began the World Test Championship (WTC) cycle 2025-27 with a series win. Pathum Nissanka was adjudged Player of the Match for his magnificent innings of 158 in the first innings, laced with 19 fours. He was also adjudged Player of the Series, for finishing as the highest run scorer of the two-match rubber with 369 runs from three innings at an average of 123 with two centuries to his name. He earlier scored 187 in the first innings of the drawn first Test in Galle. Meanwhile, after losing the series, Bangladesh captain Najmul Hossain Shanto stepped down from his position.

Raphinha praises Nico Williams amid possible Barcelona move: Player of highest quality

- Raphinha is unbothered by the club's likely new signing, Nico Williams
- He feels as long as the team is willing to work hard for all the available titles
- He said some of his national teammates from PSG have yet to celebrate their Champions League victory

NEW DELHI. Barcelona's attacking star, Raphinha, is not surprised that the club is linked to the signing of Spanish forward Nico Williams, as he deems the winger to be a player of the highest quality. Since the start of the 2024-25 season, the Spanish giants have been linked with the transfer, and reports suggest that the move could finally happen soon. Many will also be keen on seeing how the side will line up, considering that Raphinha had taken the left-wing role, albeit playing with more freedom, while Lamine Yamal tends to stick to the right



side. "It's no coincidence that he's being considered to play with us at Barcelona and for the Spanish national team. He's a player of the highest quality. He has a very high level, a lot of quality," Raphinha was quoted as saying by Mundo Deportivo. Should the Spaniard make the switch, Raphinha

remains unfazed and would welcome his arrival. Instead, he wants to nurture a culture within the team where everyone is willing to put in the work and not play for their self-interest. "There's no room for sadness or depression about anything, with the arrival of one or another. As I said, any teammate

Roston Chase demands penalty for umpires after contentious calls in 1st Test

- Australia beat West Indies by 159 runs in 1st Test
- Several decisions went against West Indies during match
- TV umpire Adrian Holdstock faced flak for his calls

NEW DELHI. West Indies captain Roston Chase demanded a penalty for the umpires after several controversial decisions went against them during the first Test against Australia in Kensington Oval, Bridgetown, Barbados. Australia beat West Indies by 159 runs as Josh Hazlewood ran through the hosts on Day 3 with his five-wicket haul. Following their loss, Chase called out the contentious decisions during the match and said that the umpires should face penalties for their wrong calls as one bad



decision can make or break a player's career. He mentioned how players face harsh penalties when they're found breaching the code of conduct and asked for similar treatment of umpires. "But the officials, nothing ever happens to them. They just have a wrong decision or questionable decision, and life just goes on. You're talking about guys' careers. One bad decision could make or break a guy's career. I just think that it should be an even playground in terms of when players step out of line, they're penalised. I think that there should be some penalty put in place when you have blatant

decisions going against you," said Chase in the post-match press conference. Three decisions became the talking point of the Test match as on Day 1, Australia batter Travis Head was given a reprieve by TV umpire Adrian Holdstock after he ruled him not out on 53, citing lack of evidence on a clear catch by Shai Hope behind the stumps. Later on Day 2, Roston Chase was given out lbw against Pat Cummins, despite the cameras showing an inside edge onto the pads on replays.

To add to West Indies' woes, Shai Hope was given out against Beau Webster as a low take from wicketkeeper Alex Carey was ruled in Australia's favour. West Indies head coach Darren Sammy even met with match referee Javagal Srinath after Day 2 to express his concerns over the controversial decisions. Meanwhile, after losing the first Test, West Indies will be eager to make a comeback in the second Test of the series, beginning from July 3 in Grenada.

MLC 2025: Heinrich Klaasen quits Seattle Orcas captaincy, coach Matthew Mott sacked

- Heinrich Klaasen stepped down as captain of the Seattle Orcas
- Sikandar Raza will take over as captain for the rest of the season
- Coach Matthew Mott has also been sacked from his role

New Delhi. The Seattle Orcas are undergoing major changes in their setup midway through MLC 2025. Heinrich Klaasen has stepped down as the captain, while head coach Matthew Mott has been sacked from his role with the franchise. The decision was made after the franchise was unable to bring up their first points of the season after playing five games in the 2025 season. Klaasen decided to step away from the captaincy to focus more on his batting, and the leadership duties have been passed down to Zimbabwe's Sikandar Raza for the



rest of the season. This is a moment of reflection and renewal for the Seattle Orcas. This has been a tough run for the team, and with it, some difficult decisions had to be made. We are grateful to Matthew for his commitment and professionalism during his time with us, and we wish him the very best in his future endeavours," Hemant Dua, the CEO of the Seattle Orcas, shared in a statement. "We respect Heinrich's decision to step down voluntarily as captain to focus on his batting. This reflects his character and team-first mindset. Sikandar was our

unanimous choice once we heard from Klassen about his decision. We believe these changes set the stage for a strong second half of the season," he added.

ORCAS BREAK OUT OF LOSING RUT

The changes to the side have resulted in the side finally picking up its first win of the season. They beat MI New York in a last-over thriller to win by three wickets in Dallas. Shimron Hetmyer stole the show as he went on to score 97 runs in just 40 balls to take the Orcas over the line. MI New York had set a whopping 238-run target thanks to the skipper, Nicholas Pooran, hitting a blistering 60-ball 108 while Tajinder Dhillon played a masterful 95 in 35 balls. But the Orcas put up a collective batting display with cameos from Kyle Mayers, Raza and Klaasen while Hetmyer did the heavy lifting despite coming in at six in the batting order. The southpaw's knock was laced with five boundaries and nine sixes, which saw his side go over the line for their first win of the season.

who arrives intending to work hard to help the team will be very welcome, both by me and by the other players. That's the most important thing," he shared. The star attacker also opened up about how players have not had the chance to celebrate their major victories properly due to the hectic scheduling with the addition of the FIFA Club World Cup. He mentioned how some of his national teammates from PSG have yet to celebrate their Champions League victory as well. "Giving up vacations out of obligation is complicated. For example, PSG's Marquinhos and Beraldo played in the Champions League final; they didn't even get to celebrate properly, and they travelled here to South America to play for their national team. The second game ended, and they came back straight to represent their club and play in the World Cup. They haven't stopped yet," he said. For now, Raphinha and the club are enjoying some time away from the pitch as they are not participating in the FIFA Club World Cup. With some time off, Raphinha hopes that he can get back to his best form at the start of the new season and once again show why he is amongst the best in the world, regardless of whether the club sign Nico Williams or not.

The KL Rahul comeback: Are India reaping rewards of Rohit Sharma and Abhishek Nayar's work

NEW DELHI. India batter KL Rahul has been enjoying some sensational form since the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. A gritty outing in Australia and then two fantastic performances in the Champions Trophy 2025 and Indian Premier League, KL Rahul is enjoying one of the best patches of his career. In the absence of Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma in the Test series against England, Rahul has started strongly as well, hitting a century in the second innings of the opening Test match. Former India batting coach Abhishek Nayar has revealed that Rahul's revival of form was one of the main projects he undertook during his tenure with the Indian team. "When I first picked up that role, I remember I had a conversation with Rohit, and he said that one of the things he was really keen on me doing was working with KL and bringing out a more aggressive outlook to how KL played the game, and bringing the best



out of him because he believed strongly that KL would play a major role in the Champions Trophy, World Cup and everything going forward including the BGT [Border-Gavaskar Trophy] and the Tests in England," Abhishek Nayar told ESPNcricinfo in an interview. KL Rahul's Comeback in 2024. The current KL Rahul is vastly different from the KL Rahul of 2023, who was heavily criticised for his outing in the ODI World Cup 2023 final. In that match, Rahul got stuck between gears and failed under the pressure of the big occasion against Pat Cummins' Australia team. Subsequently, Rahul was dropped from the T20 World Cup team in 2024 and was also let go by his Indian Premier League franchise, Lucknow Super Giants. Nayar revealed that drastic changes needed to be made in KL Rahul's technique and mentality, and the duo got to work during India's ill-fated Test series against New Zealand. "Australia was going to be critical for him because it was almost like what if you didn't get runs there, then where is his career going? Because he was out of the T20 [squad].

Josh Hazlewood 5-for leads Australia to three-day win over West Indies in Barbados test

BRIDGETOWN. Australia blew away the West Indies for 141 and won the first test by 159 runs at Kensington Oval on day three Friday. The West Indies was set a stressful 301 target to win on a tricky pitch and folded in 33.4 overs. The chief destroyer was seamer Josh Hazlewood with 5-43 from 12 overs. The West Indies collapsed to 86-8 inside 27 overs but the Australians didn't mop up the last resistance until the day's last over in an extra 75 minutes. Despite the inevitable, allrounder Justin Greaves, 38 not out, and No. 10 batter Shamar Joseph, a career-best 44 with four sixes, went for broke in a team-best ninth-wicket stand of 55 runs. Australia started the day in some bother at 92-4 in its second innings, but half-centuries from Travis Head, Beau Webster and Alex Carey hoisted them to an impressive 310 all out and a 300-run lead. "We wanted to get 200 but felt lot more comfortable (with 300)," captain Pat Cummins said. "We're lucky to have

Josh, he presents a good seam and hits good areas. He bowled beautifully." West Indies start chase badly. West Indies' attempt at its eighth highest successful run chase and highest in eight years was in trouble from the outset. Mitchell Starc claimed opening batter Kraigg Brathwaite in the first over, caught at backward square by a diving Sam Konstas. "We lost our most experienced batsman in the first over and never got a foot back in the game," West Indies captain Roston Chase said. "The result was heartbreaking. We did well to get a (10-run first-innings) lead but couldn't put a batting innings together." Starc also should have bagged Keacy Carte on 1 but Cameron Green spilled the catch at gully. That was the 10th dropped catch in the match and Australia's third. Hazlewood changed ends and suddenly had success by dismissing John Campbell, scooping badly and gloving to wicketkeeper Carey, and Brandon King, caught above the 1.98-meter Green's head, in

successive balls. When Chase gave Konstas another catch at short leg, West Indies were 49-4 in 13 overs. Carte used his one life to reach 20 when he tried defending Hazlewood and lost his off stump. Shai Hope, the leading West Indies run-scorer in the first innings, faced 21 balls for 2 until his off stump was hit by a low shooter from Head. Alzarri Joseph was then slow coming from the non-striker's end and run out by a throw from substitute fielder Marnus Labuschagne. Jomel Warriican's edge behind gave Hazlewood his 13th test five-for and second in the Caribbean, 10 years after the first. Greaves and Shamar Joseph frustrated Australia with lusty strokes but Nathan Lyon ended the joyride in his second over of the innings. On day one, 14 wickets fell, and on day two 10 wickets. Before Friday's play, Lyon said, "Every run is gold." But Australia enjoyed a gold rush from Head, who made 61, Webster 63, and Carey 65. Australia, starting on 92-4 and a lead of 82, amassed a bonus 310 total. After taking cover late Thursday, Head came out firing in the morning but should have gone on 21 and it be 107-5. Greaves spilled the catch at second slip off the bowling of Alzarri Joseph. It was West Indies' seventh dropped catch in the match.