

PM recalls Emergency, plays audios of Morarji Desai, Vajpayee during Mann Ki Baat

PM Modi said those who imposed the Emergency not only murdered the Constitution but also made judiciary their puppet.

The Sikh Times New Delhi .

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday played remarks of leading anti-Emergency politicians in his monthly radio broadcast to slam the then-Congress government for atrocities on people, and said they should always be remembered as it inspires people to stay alert to keep the Constitution strong.

Speaking in his Mann Ki Baat programme, Modi said those who imposed the Emergency not only murdered the Constitution but also made the judiciary their puppet.

His condemnation of the Congress for the Emergency-era excesses, without naming the party or the then prime minister Indira Gandhi, came amid an ongoing bitter war of words between the ruling BJP and opposition parties, which have claimed that an undeclared Emergency prevails under the Modi government.

Modi said in his address that with the power of public participation, big crises can be confronted.

He said, "I will play an audio for you. In this audio you will get an idea of the magnitude of that crisis. How grave that crisis was." In the audio, Morarji Desai, the prime minister after the Emergency, said the



➤ Narendra Modi recalled Emergency-era atrocities in Mann Ki Baat
➤ He accused Congress of repression, without naming the party directly
➤ He urged citizens to stay vigilant and protect Constitution against such threats

"oppression" of the Indira Gandhi regime was going on for several years but reached its peak in the last two years after the Emergency was imposed. Desai said, "People's right to freedom was snatched away, newspapers were left without freedom. Courts were

made completely powerless. And the way more than one lakh people were put in jail and then arbitrary rule continued, it is difficult to find its traces in the history of the world." Modi said in the broadcast that people were tortured on a large scale during the Emergency for the 21-month period between 1975 and 1977. There are countless examples of atrocities on people that cannot be forgotten, he added.

He also played bits of speeches of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, and former deputy PM Jagjivan Ram related to the period. George Fernandes was shacked, he noted and recalled that anyone could be arrested under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) at that time.

Students were harassed and freedom of expression throttled, he added. Thousands of people were arrested and subjected to inhuman treatment, but it is the strength of Indians that they did now bow and accept any compromise with democracy, he said.

People finally won, the Emergency was lifted and those who imposed it lost, he said. Noting that the 50th anniversary of the Emergency was commemorated recently as 'Samvidhan Hatya Diwas', he said those who fought against it must always be remembered.

Negligence, mismanagement that led to Puri temple stampede inexcusable: Kharge



➤ At least three persons, including two women, were killed and around 50 others injured in the stampede near Shree Gundicha Temple on Sunday morning.

Agency BHUBANESWAR.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Sunday said he was deeply pained by the stampede near a temple in Odisha's Puri, and asserted that the "negligence and mismanagement" which led to the tragedy are inexcusable. At least three persons, including two women, were killed and around 50 others injured in the stampede near Shree Gundicha Temple on Sunday morning, officials said. "I am deeply pained by the stampede during the Mahaprabhu Jagannath Rath Yatra, which claimed three lives and injured at least 50 people. This tragedy follows reports of 500 devotees being injured on Friday during the yatra. My thoughts and prayers are with the families of the victims. I wish a speedy recovery to all the injured devotees. The negligence and mismanagement that led to this tragedy are inexcusable," Kharge said in a post on X.

The incident took place around 4 am when hundreds of devotees gathered near the temple to witness Rath Yatra festivities, Puri District Collector Siddharth S Swain said. The injured have been admitted to a nearby hospital, and the condition of six people is critical, he said.

"The state government and authorities must conduct a thorough investigation into the grave lapses that caused this incident. Ensuring public safety and effective crowd management is paramount, especially during pre-planned festivities. Those responsible for this tragedy must be held accountable under the law," Kharge said.

The Congress Party stands in solidarity with the devotees and commits to supporting all efforts to provide relief, medical assistance, and aid to the affected families, he added.

'Have started to focus on specific issues rather than on parties as institutions': Tharoor

Agency Ahmedabad .

Have started focusing on specific issues and outcomes rather than on parties as institutions, said Congress MP Shashi Tharoor while refusing to comment on the issues going on within the party regarding his stance on Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Tharoor, who was in Ahmedabad, made these remarks on the sidelines of an event at the Ahmedabad Management Association (AMA) on Saturday. Tharoor, who recently led an all-party delegation on Operation Sindoora against Pakistan and has faced cryptic reactions from his party leaders for his praise of the PM, told ANI: "I am not going to get into political issues here. If there are issues to discuss, they would be discussed privately, and when the time comes, I shall do so." In a conversation on 'Diction, discretion and diplomacy' at AMA, Tharoor said that he had started to focus on specific issues and outcomes "rather than on



parties as institutions or structures of election winning". In a session with AMA's Programme Committee Chairman Jainil Shah, Tharoor said, "The only reason to be in politics is to have a vision of a better society, a better

country and a better future for your land; Otherwise why bother?... I have begun, in my own ways as a politician, to focus on specific issues and outcomes rather than on parties as institutions or structures of election winning and so on; I've fought and won four elections... I'm proud to say but at the same time, that can't be the only purpose". Talking about his recent visit in the aftermath of Operation Sindoora, Tharoor said: "In other places, we actually were able to get some very high-placed people to say not only that they respected and supported India's right of self-defence, but they actually commended the restrained manner of our response, that we could have been much worse... So I would say that, by and large, they were all very understanding." "But I would usually end by conveying that they should not be surprised that if this (terrorist attack) happens again, we too would do this again... And I believe we left everybody.

'Deserves Contempt': India Rejects Pakistan Army's Claim Over Waziristan Attack

Agency New Delhi.

In a strongly-worded statement released on Sunday, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) dismissed allegations made by the Pakistani Army, which sought to hold India responsible for a recent terror attack in Waziristan. "Statement regarding Pakistan- We have seen an official statement by the Pakistan Army seeking to blame India for the attack in Waziristan on 28 June. We reject this statement with the contempt it deserves," MEA said in a released statement.

On Saturday, thirteen security personnel were killed in a suicide bombing in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's North Waziristan district, carried out by Fitrana-al-Khawarij, according to a statement from the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), ANI reported citing Dawn.

A suicide attacker drove an explosive vehicle into a convoy of troops. The explosion killed 13 soldiers, injured 10 troops and 19 civilians," the official said. A police officer in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also said, "The explosion also damaged the roofs of two houses, which collapsed, injuring six children." The recent suicide attack is part of an alarming escalation of militancy attacks in Pakistan, especially in the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan.

Vijender Gupta to Participate in Two-Day Annual Conference of Legislators in Dharamshala

The Sikh Times.

New Delhi, 29th June 2025

The Hon'ble Speaker of the Delhi Legislative Assembly, Shri Vijender Gupta, will participate in the prestigious Annual Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), India Region, Zone-II, scheduled to be held at Tapovan, Dharamshala, on 30th June and 1st July 2025. The two-day event will bring together Presiding Officers and Members of Legislative Assemblies from Delhi, Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir, and Punjab to deliberate on key issues concerning legislative governance, democratic accountability, and inter-state collaboration.

The delegation accompanying the Hon'ble Speaker includes the Deputy Speaker, Shri Mohan Singh Bist; Chief Whip, Shri Abhay Verma; MLAs Smt. Shikha Roy and Shri Jitender Mahajan; as well as the

Secretary of the Delhi Legislative Assembly, Shri Ranjeet Singh, who will also attend the conference.

The conference will be inaugurated by the Hon'ble Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Shri Om Birla, and will witness the participation of constitutional experts, lawmakers, and senior parliamentary functionaries. The event aims to promote dialogue on strengthening parliamentary institutions and improving the functioning of legislatures in a changing socio-political landscape.

A key theme of the conference will be the role of legislatures in managing state resources and ensuring their effective utilisation for the holistic development of states. Discussions will centre around how legislative bodies can contribute to more accountable governance, ensure fiscal responsibility, and align developmental goals with the public interest. [News continue page 02](#)

A unique and historic glimpse of Aam Mahotsav 2025 organized by the Government of Delhi was witnessed today at Thyagaraj Stadium. In a first-of-its-kind initiative, Delhi's Minister of Art, Culture, Language and Tourism, Shri Kapil Mishra, joined mango-producing farmers and traders from across the country to listen to the 123rd edition of the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji's popular radio programme 'Mann Ki Baat'.

This event not only elevated the stature of the Aam Mahotsav but also served as a meaningful step towards engaging and connecting with farmers and traders. Shri Mishra said it was a matter of great pride and joy to sit among those farmers and traders who had travelled from far-flung areas of the country to grace the Mahotsav with their presence and listen to the Prime Minister's thoughts with them. It was indeed a unique experience. He said this was not just a programme, but also a platform to directly connect with farmers and keep them informed. Many farmers are usually busy in their fields and are unable to listen to programmes like 'Mann Ki Baat'. This initiative enabled them to learn what the Hon'ble Prime Minister envisions for them, what schemes the Central Government is introducing, and what new developments related to agriculture are taking place across the nation.



During the programme, Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji touched upon several important themes including the success of International Yoga Day, the spiritual and psychological benefits of religious pilgrimages, India's progress in health services, and historical incidents like the imposition of Emergency on 25 June 1975. Shri Kapil Mishra said that these subjects are not only relevant for every citizen but also immensely useful for farmers. It allows them to understand the direction in which the country is progressing and how their contributions are being acknowledged. [News continue page 02](#)

BJP-RSS deadlock over new party chief drags on, state leadership in limbo

The BJP and RSS remain deadlocked over choosing a new national president, with the decision now likely hinging on key discussions at the upcoming RSS meet in Delhi.

Agency New Delhi.

The deadlock between the BJP's top leadership and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) over the selection of a new national president continues to linger, months after the current chief JP Nadda's extended term technically expired. Nadda's term as BJP chief ended in January 2023, but the party extended his tenure until June 2024 to steer it through the Lok Sabha elections. Party insiders told India Today TV that the leadership could have sent a clear signal by appointing a working president in June, just as it had done in 2019 when Amit Shah was still party chief and JP Nadda was named working president ahead of his formal elevation in January 2020. RSS insiders claimed that they have already communicated

their views on the matter to the party's top brass. The Sangh has laid down its criteria for the next president, insisting that the leader should be organisationally strong, without prioritising political messaging through the appointment. The RSS also wants the organisational changes to be accompanied by an overhaul within the government. A key RSS meeting, its Akhil Bharatiya Prant Pracharak Baithak, will be held in Delhi from July 4 to 6, in the presence of RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat, general secretary Dattatreya Hosabale, and all six joint general secretaries. Sources indicated that the leadership of the BJP may hold discussions with RSS functionaries



during this meet, potentially finalising the next party chief. Senior BJP leaders said the new president will

likely carry out a significant reshuffle within the party. Nearly half of the current national general secretaries could be replaced, making room for younger faces in key organisational roles. The BJP's parliamentary board, the party's apex decision-making body, may also see the inclusion of heavyweight leaders to boost the organisation's strength ahead of key state elections. However, there is still no consensus between the BJP leadership and the RSS on the choice of president, insiders said. The party's constitution requires that elections be conducted in at least 19 states before the national president can be formally elected. So far, only 14 state units have completed the process.

JP Nadda's term extended till June 2024 for Lok Sabha polls
RSS demands organisational strength, not political messaging
Caste dynamics influence state leadership choices in BJP

Frant News continue..

Vijender Gupta to Participate in Two-Day Annual Conference of Legislators in Dharamshala

Another important area of deliberation will focus on the provisions related to the disqualification of legislators on grounds of defection, as laid out under the Tenth Schedule of Articles 102(2) and 191(2) of the Constitution. The session will address current challenges in upholding the sanctity of the anti-defection law and the need for timely and impartial decision-making by Presiding Officers.

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in legislative functioning will also be a focal point of the conference. Participants will explore the potential of AI in enhancing the efficiency of legislative research, streamlining parliamentary procedures, and enabling better public participation through digital platforms. This discussion reflects the growing recognition of the role of technology in modern governance.

Vijender Gupta is expected to highlight the recent democratic and technological initiatives undertaken by the Delhi Legislative Assembly and emphasize the importance of strengthening institutional frameworks to meet the evolving aspirations of the people. His participation will contribute significantly to the shared vision of cooperative federalism and dynamic legislative governance.

This annual conference of the CPA (India Region, Zone-II) offers a vital platform for exchanging ideas, fostering inter-legislative understanding, and reaffirming the commitment of elected representatives to the principles of constitutional democracy and good governance.

Single-window system launched in Delhi : Shri Kapil Mishra

Speaking about the Aam Mahotsav, the Delhi Government has specially invited mango growers from across the country and provided them a platform. The exhibition of various rare and delicious varieties of mangoes and mango-based products has once again painted the city of Delhi in the vibrant colours of the 'king of fruits'. Shri Mishra said the objective of the event was not just exhibition, but also to establish a direct dialogue between farmers and consumers.

Alongside this, Shri Kapil Mishra also shared details of another significant initiative. He announced that this year, under the leadership of Hon'ble Chief Minister Smt Rekha Gupta, the Delhi Government is ensuring unprecedented facilities for Shiv Bhakt Kanwariyas. He said that every year, lakhs of Kanwariyas pass through Delhi and are served through Kanwar Seva Camps.

Shri Mishra said, "Kanwar Committees often face resource constraints. Keeping this in mind, the Delhi Government has decided to provide up to 1200 units of free electricity to all registered camps. Additionally, for electricity meter installation, only 25% of the security deposit will be charged."

The Hon'ble Minister also informed that details related to the registration of Kanwar Committees have been published today through advertisements in various newspapers so that interested committees can apply in time and receive the required facilities.

Furthermore, Kanwar organisers will now receive all necessary permissions from a single location under the single-window system, so that they can serve Shiv Bhakts without facing any administrative hurdles.

This initiative by the Delhi Government is not only a mark of respect for religious sentiments but also reflects an inclusive administrative approach, wherein farmers, traders, the general public, and devotees are all embraced with equal importance.

GVMC water supply wing employees call off strike

VISAKHAPATNAM. Outsourced workers of the Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) Water Supply Department have withdrawn their strike following talks with officials and union representatives, GVMC Commissioner Ketan Garg said in a statement on Saturday.

The workers began the strike on Friday demanding a wage hike, which disrupted the city's drinking water supply. To tackle the situation, GVMC implemented contingency measures by deploying 495 Ward Amenities Secretaries, Ward Special Officers, and Engineering staff. This was done under the supervision of Zonal Commissioners and Ward Corporators. A 24/7 control room was also set up at the Command and Control Centre with helpline 0891-2507225, overseen by the Additional Commissioner.

GVMC Mayor Peela Srinivasa Rao met with the GVMC Contractors Workers Association and Labour Union at his Pendurthi camp office, where union representatives submitted a petition outlining challenges faced by outsourced staff in both water supply and underground drainage operations. The Mayor informed that the council had already passed a resolution recommending a wage hike and that a proposal was pending with the government. He assured further steps to address staff concerns.

With 2,000 hectares of replanted mangroves, TN's Muthupet turns over a new leaf

CHENNAI. In one of the biggest campaigns aimed at fortifying Tamil Nadu's largest mangrove region, the state forest department has restored and planted mangroves across 2,057 hectares in the Muthupet region of Tiruvarur and Thanjavur districts between 2022 and 2025.

Mangrove forests act as ecological buffer against climate change impacts such as storm surges, coastal erosion, and rise in sea level. The three-year campaign was spearheaded by the Tiruvarur Forest Division. The Muthupet wetland complex comprising 12,020 hectares is situated at the confluence of Koraiyar and Pamaniyar rivers. It supports the largest stretch of Avicennia marina (grey or white mangroves), the species that accounts for 95% of the mangrove cover in the state. Other species like Aegiceras corniculatum (black mangroves) and Rhizophora mucronata (red mangroves) have also been reintroduced to enhance biodiversity.

According to official records accessed by , 1,350 hectares has been brought under new plantation and another 707 hectares has undergone restoration through desilting and canal repair. At 1,482 hectares, bulk of the intervention

happened in Thanjavur, while Tiruvarur accounted for 575 hectares.

Tiruvarur DFO L C S Srikanth said the plantations have used both the "Fishbone Design" and "Box Design" canal models to enhance tidal water circulation that's critical for natural seed

Mangrove Councils (VMCs) in six villages, including Veerankoil and Thondiyakadu.

Muthupet mangroves vital habitat for birds

These councils, based on joint forest management principles, ensure community involvement in canal maintenance and seed propagation.

"VMCs cover over 10,000 people across 16 fishing villages whose livelihood depends on the mangrove-rich canals. Their traditional expertise has played a key role in the success of restoration designs and the maintenance of hydrological flows," she said.

Srikanth said a scientific study based on satellite mapping and ground truthing was required to assess the exact extent of the degraded mangrove patches. "Based on our own site visits and inputs from local communities, we have identified 700 hectares of potential planting area and another 800 hectares for restoration. The government is providing all the support needed under the Green Tamil Nadu

Mission." Besides the ecological benefits, the initiative has also boosted rural employment by generating over 86,000 man-days in plantation and canal formation work. In 2022-23 alone, nearly 31,000 man-days were recorded across four projects. The 2023-24 phase saw a further 32,397 man-days, reflecting the labour-intensive nature of eco-restoration.



dispersal and mangrove growth. "Over 1.2 million propagules and saplings were planted, supported by a canal network exceeding 380 km in length," the DFO said.

Supriya Sahu, Additional Chief Secretary, Environment, Forests and Climate Change Department, told that restoration efforts have integrated local knowledge through Village

Universities in Kerala draw more foreign interest

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. Kerala has, it seems, become a revolving door for college students. At a time when an increasing number of Malayali students are moving abroad for their studies, universities in the state are witnessing an influx of applications from foreign countries.

International applicants to Kerala University (KU), MG University (MGU), Cochin University of Science and Technology (Cusat), and Calicut University (CU) have increased manifold in the last four years. Moreover, while students migrating from Kerala prefer to settle abroad, foreign students come here for courses that will help them land better jobs in their home countries.

The number of foreign applicants to KU increased by 138% from 1,100 in 2021-22 to 2,620 in 2025-26, while MGU registered a 95.61% jump, from 502 to 982 over the same period. Cusat witnessed the biggest rise, with

applications rising to 1,700 this academic year from 603 four years ago. However, only around 10% of these applications result in admissions. Though it's primarily students from African



countries, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka who apply, there are applications received from countries such as New Zealand, Thailand, Oman, Egypt, and France, too.

'Mee Seva Babu' held for e-stamp fraud in Andhra Pradesh

ANANTAPUR. MeeSeva Administrator Boya Yarrappa and two others have been arrested for irregularities in e-stamp issuance in Kalyanadurgam town. Disclosing the details to the media, Anantapur Superintendent of Police (SP) P Jagdeesh said that Boya Yarrappa, also known as MeeSeva Babu, along with Mohan Babu and Bhuvaneshwar, were taken into custody. Authorities seized three mobile phones, three computers with printer-cum-scanners, two printers, a laptop, 88 blank e-stamp certificates, and seven used e-stamp certificates from their possession.

The case stems from a complaint filed by G Satish Babu, AGM of SRC Infra Developer Private Limited. He alleged that e-stamps purchased for routine transactions from the Babu MeeSeva Centre in Kalyanadurgam appeared suspicious. Police found that the accused had drawn 15,851 e-stamp certificates from the Stock Holding Corporation of India in Kurnool.

According to police, SRC and its affiliated entities deposited around Rs 32 lakh into MeeSeva Babu's account for stamp duty. However, only about Rs 6.52 lakh was remitted to the government, leaving nearly Rs 25.48 lakh unaccounted for. Further investigation is underway.



Confusion prevails over next State Police Chief as LDF govt mulls options beyond UPSC list

Many states have used the strategy of appointing in-charge DGP now as well as earlier, without following UPSC panels.

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. With incumbent State Police Chief Shaik Darvesh Saheb set to retire on Monday, uncertainty looms over his successor as the state government weighs its choices. Though the UPSC has shortlisted three names for the post, the government is reportedly considering appointing an in-charge DGP from outside this panel. Amid the brewing controversy, the government has reportedly sought legal advice on the feasibility of appointing an acting State Police Chief, bypassing the UPSC recommendations.

Former Director General of Prosecution Asaf Ali termed the move "foolhardy," stressing that the state must adhere to the directives laid down by the Supreme Court. "Nothing is above the Supreme Court verdict which has given proper directions in the Prakash v. Union of India. It clearly states that the state government will go with the three names shortlisted by the UPSC. UPSC selection body chooses the top ranks



with the length of service, very good record and range of experience for heading the department. Nobody can violate it and move forward," he added.

For the states that have in-charge DGP, the tenure is two years. And also, why would any government look at other states when already a Supreme Court verdict is clear. It will not stand if legally challenged. For example, in Sen Kumar's case, the state government was not able to violate the law. As in the

case of Kerala Police Act, it has been diluted for convenience. In a special circumstance like if UPSC list is late, if other states are choosing in-charge DGP, that should not be the norm. There is a Supreme Court verdict and nothing can't be done above that," he said.

However, former DGP Jacob Punnoose pointed out that many states have used the strategy of appointing in-charge DGP now as well as earlier, without following UPSC panels. Law and order being a state subject, state governments do have some constitutional leeway, he said.

"The Kerala Police Act also vests the government with the authority to appoint the State Police Chief. While the Supreme Court had earlier ruled that DGP appointments must be made from a list of officers empanelled by the UPSC, the directive has not been consistently followed across states and so far, such deviations have not been legally challenged or annulled by any authority.

Almirahs as 'walls', 2 shifts: In Mumbai school, Classes 1-8 students are in one hall since 2022

Completed in 2020, the six-floor Maharashtra Nagar BMC School was built under the civic body's new brand name for its schools — Mumbai Public School (MPS). The English-medium school was completed in 2020.

Mumbai. For the students of a civic body-run Marathi-medium school in Mumbai's Mankhurd, the biggest concern since 2022 has been the long walk home. Never mind that nearly 100 of them have been "temporarily" crammed inside one big multipurpose hall — with steel almirahs serving as "walls" instead of partitions — for almost three years now.

A recent video shot by Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) leader Ravi Gawas inside the hall brought the issue to light. Under this makeshift arrangement, the students of Mankhurd Marathi-Medium School No 1 have been studying in shifts inside a 1,000-square-foot hall on the sixth floor of the Maharashtra Nagar BMC (Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation) School, also in Mankhurd. While the morning shift comprises 87 students of Classes 6-8, around 100 students of Classes 1-5 study in the same space in the afternoon.

Completed in 2020, the six-floor Maharashtra Nagar BMC School was built under the civic body's new brand name for its schools — Mumbai Public School (MPS). The English-medium school was completed in 2020. Its top-floor hall, originally designed for school functions and events, has been doubling as a makeshift school space since 2022. Mumbai Public Schools offer free education, along with 27 essential items, including uniforms, textbooks, shoes, raincoats, and a mid-day meal.

Before moving to their new address, the students of the Marathi-medium school and those from four others — Marathi-medium school no 2, Hindi-medium, Urdu-medium and lower primary school — studied in the same BMC school building near Mankhurd railway station. Declared "dilapidated", the building was demolished in 2022. Its reconstruction is yet to start. After the

demolition, students from all five schools were moved to the Maharashtra Nagar School. While the Hindi-medium students were shifted to the Deonar BMC School, around 4 km away, a year later, four schools continue to function out of the Maharashtra Nagar School building. Three of these four schools have been allotted one floor each at their new address, giving them enough space to conduct separate classes. However, the Marathi-medium school, given its relatively

low enrollment, has had to make do with the multipurpose hall, where even the stage serves as a "separate" classroom. Despite attempts, The Indian Express was denied entry inside the school by the administration.

As he exited the premises after the morning shift, a Class 6 student of the Marathi-medium school told The Indian Express, "My class is near the main door of the hall." The Indian Express was denied entry inside the school by the administration. Despite attempts, The Indian Express was denied entry inside the school by the administration. As he exited the premises after the morning shift, a Class 6 student of the Marathi-medium school told The Indian Express, "My class is near the main door of the hall." The Indian Express was denied entry inside the school by the administration. Despite attempts, The Indian Express was denied entry inside the school by the administration. As he exited the premises after the morning shift, a Class 6 student of the Marathi-medium school told The Indian Express, "My class is near the main door of the hall." The Indian Express was denied entry inside the school by the administration. 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CM orders strict ban on mining in catchment zones, stresses ecological balance

The Sikh Times

Lucknow, June 29: Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has emphasized the crucial role of the mining sector in Uttar Pradesh's journey towards achieving a one trillion-dollar economy. He noted that the sector has evolved beyond just mineral extraction to become a key driver of economic growth, investment attraction, and local employment generation. During a comprehensive review meeting of the Department of Geology and Mining held on Sunday, the Chief Minister stated that the state's mining policy has now emerged as a model of transparency and technological efficiency. Highlighting the department's performance, he noted that mineral revenue has recorded an average annual growth rate of 18.14% between FY 2021-22 and FY 2024-25. In FY 2024-25, revenue from major minerals stood at Rs 608.11 crore. Remarkably, in just the first two months of FY 2025-26, the state has already generated Rs 623 crore in revenue—reflecting the sector's consistent growth and the department's operational effectiveness. The Chief Minister was informed that leases for major minerals such as phosphorite, iron ore, and gold have been successfully auctioned in recent years. He directed officials to expedite the composite licensing process further and ensure timely identification of potential mining zones along with the

Minister noted that prominent companies like JSW, Adani Group, Tata Steel, and UltraTech Cement have shown strong



prompt preparation of geological reports. Emphasizing the impact of transparent and investor-friendly policies, the Chief

interest in investing in Uttar Pradesh. The department has undertaken substantial work across more than 70 sub-indicators to

secure Uttar Pradesh a top position in the State Mining Readiness Index (SMRI). A 100% implementation of the Mine Surveillance System has been achieved in all mining districts, leading to significant improvements in the average timeline for environmental clearances and enhancing the overall transparency of regulatory procedures. The Chief Minister instructed that the remaining reforms be completed within the stipulated timeframe to ensure Uttar Pradesh attains 'Category-A' status in SMRI. To effectively curb illegal mining, transportation, and storage, the Chief Minister called for a robust monitoring mechanism in coordination with transport operators. He made it clear that mining activities will not be permitted in river catchment areas, and strict accountability will be enforced against responsible officials if violations occur. Officials reported that 57 technology-enabled check gates have been installed, and 21,477 vehicles have been blacklisted. Systems such as the Vehicle Tracking System (VTS), color coding, and white tagging are functioning efficiently. The Chief Minister directed that only GPS-enabled vehicles meeting the required standards should be authorized for mineral transportation and that their movement must be tracked in real-time.

through the VTS module. Since 2024, the PGRS laboratory and drone surveys have identified 99 potential mining sites, of which 23 have been deemed suitable for operations. Post-monsoon assessments have also been conducted for sand/morang deposits in 52 locations. Appreciating these efforts, the Chief Minister instructed that monitoring of active leases and volumetric analysis for accurate extraction assessment should be further intensified. The meeting was also informed that the regulation fees collected from brick kilns amounted to Rs 258.61 crore in 2024-25 and Rs 70.80 crore as of 2025-26. The Chief Minister directed that the brick kiln sector be modernized through the adoption of technology and innovation, with regular engagement with kiln operators. Additionally, the Chief Minister directed that the process of issuing new leases for minor minerals be completed during the monsoon season, enabling mining activities to commence from October 15. He also emphasized the optimal utilization of the DMF fund, instructing that it be prioritized for public welfare initiatives, such as establishing Anganwadi centres, developing playgrounds, enhancing healthcare and skill training, and promoting water and energy conservation.

Chandigarh residents at receiving end of civic apathy

Chandigarh: After the early morning rain on Saturday, waterlogged roads were a common sight across the city. The civic body had claimed that all road gullies in the city would be cleaned before the monsoon to ensure there was no waterlogging. The first monsoon showers, however, laid bare the ground reality. Rajesh Kumar, a resident of Zirakpur, said it took him half an hour to cross the Tribune Chowk by car as traffic moved at a snail's pace. Vehicles were seen stranded at the Sector 34 round-about. Akhil Kumar, a resident of Sector 35, said it was not the first time that rain had resulted in traffic jams in the area. Every year, the civic body faces the challenge of keeping the city roads from being flooded in the monsoon. Despite claims of full preparedness, waterlogging was witnessed in the low-lying areas, including under-bridges at Sector 15 and the Industrial Area. Other parts of the city where roads were waterlogged included the fruit and vegetable market in Sector 26, Sectors 23, 24, 25, 32, 43 and Sadar Bazar in Sector 19.

Inter-state gang of vehicle thieves busted by Chandigarh police

Chandigarh: The Operations Cell of the UT police has busted an inter-state gang of thieves, called Munna gang, with the arrest of three of its members. Eleven stolen two-wheelers and eight batteries have been recovered from the gang, which was involved in vehicle thefts across Chandigarh, Punjab, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh. A police team arrested Aslam, a resident of Ludhiana, near Sector 26 while he was riding a stolen motorcycle. His questioning led the police to two more gang members, Navneet Pratap Singh of Kanpur and Manoj Thakur, alias Munna, of Muradabad, who were arrested in Manimajra with a stolen bike. Manoj, the kingpin of the gang, is a proclaimed offender and facing over 33 criminal cases in Chandigarh, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh. Aslam, aged 57, also has a long history of criminal activities, while Navneet was earlier booked under the Excise Act. The accused said they parked the stolen vehicles in various parts of Chandigarh before transporting them to Ludhiana, where they dismantled these and sold their parts, particularly batteries.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform you that Mrs. Kusum Raturi, wife of Late Mr. Arvind Prasad Raturi, is the owner of a LIG Flat bearing No. 71-A, on the Ground Floor, in Block A-1B, situated at Paschim Vihar, New Delhi. The original allottee of the property, as per the Allotment and Possession Letter, was Mr. Vinod Kumar Batta. Mr. Vinod Kumar Batta transferred the said property to Mr. Vinay Sethi, Mr. Gagan Sethi, and Mrs. Pushpa Sethi through a Deed, dated 08.07.2014. Unfortunately, Mr. Arvind Prasad Raturi passed away on 08.04.2023, leaving behind the following legal heirs: Mrs. Kusum Raturi (wife), Ms. Tyra Raturi (daughter), and Mr. Ayan Raturi (son). Mr. Ayan Raturi and Ms. Tyra Raturi have relinquished their respective shares in favor of their mother, Mrs. Kusum Raturi, through a Relinquishment Deed, dated 20.06.2024. As a result, Mrs. Kusum Raturi is now the absolute owner of the said property, which is free from all kinds of litigation, encumbrances, liens, charges, and claims. The property is currently being financed by RBL Bank, Piplapur Branch, New Delhi. If any person(s)' objection & regarding subject property, then kindly may submit his/her objection within 07 days from the date of the Notice in writing. The said objection may be kindly sent to the undersigned by way of the Registered Post on the address given below and by E-mail, failing which, the claim as per aforesaid shall be treated as null and void in respect of the subject property.

[ASHWINI KUMAR] Advocate

Chamber No. 122, Tehsil Compound, Ghaziabad, U.P.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, hitherto known as LALIT DAS S/o MANORANJAN DAS R/o B-1/3, Gali no-2, New Ashok Nagar, Vashundhara Enclave, East Delhi, Delhi - 110096 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as BABU SONA DAS

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, ANKUSH YADAV S/o RAJENDRA PRASAD R/o House no- E-212, Dalsi Pur, Puspa Bhawan, South Delhi, Delhi-110062, declare that name of my father has been wrongly mentioned as RAJENDRA PRASAD in my 10th and 12th class education documents. The actual name of my father is RAJENDRA PRASAD.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, RAVI KUMAR S/o RAM KISHAN R/o House no- 274, Hanjan Basti, Haider Pur, Shalimar Bagh PO: Shalimar Bagh DIST: North West Delhi, Delhi- 110088 declare that name of my wife has been wrongly written as SURENDRA in my 10th and 12th Class Certificate issued by CBSE bearing Roll Number 14733943. The actual name of mine is SURENDRA KUMAR, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, SURENDRA KUMAR S/o HARI RAM SINGH, FLAT NO-23, THIRD FLOOR, BALAJI CGHS LTD, PLOT NO-7 SECTOR-3 DWARKA N.S.I.T. South West, Delhi -110078, declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as SURENDRA KUMAR in my minor daughter, namely Tanya Priya, aged 17 years in his 12th Class Certificate issued by CBSE bearing Roll Number 14733943. The actual name of mine is SURENDRA KUMAR, which may be amended accordingly.

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NEWS BOX

US Woman Arrested For Allegedly Hitting Boy Who Called Her "Fat" On Flight From Disney World

world. A woman from Maryland, United States, has been arrested for allegedly assaulting a boy on a flight from Florida after he reportedly insulted her appearance, according to police officials.

The incident took place aboard a flight at Orlando Sanford International Airport on Memorial Day. The accused, 46-year-old Kristy Crampton from Hagerstown, allegedly hit the boy after he called her "fat" and "Miss Piggy", the police report said.

Witnesses on the flight told Sanford Airport Police that Crampton struck the child and slammed his head against the plane window following a heated verbal exchange. One passenger described the incident as "abuse", claiming the woman "was not correcting the child, she was abusing him". Crampton, however, told authorities that the child had been disrespectful throughout their trip. When she took away his phone as a disciplinary measure, the boy allegedly pushed her arm off the armrest, prompting her to strike him, the report added. Police have not clarified the nature of the relationship between the two, according to Fox News. Crampton was arrested and booked into Seminole County Jail on child abuse charges. She was later released on a \$10,000 bond.

Won't Differentiate Between State, Non-State Terrorism: DMK's Kanimozhi In Greece

Athens. DMK MP Kanimozhi Karunanidhi, leading an all-party delegation to Greece, said India has made it clear that it will no longer distinguish between individual acts of terror and state-sponsored terrorism. While interacting with the Indian diaspora on Wednesday (local time), she added that the government's outreach, which includes opposition MPs, reflects a united stance against cross-border terrorism and a firm resolve to say "no more" after years of suffering.

"Our Prime Minister and the Government of India have made a decision to reach out to countries. In our delegation, except Capt Brijesh Chowta, all of us are from the opposition parties. Our Prime Minister and the country have clearly stated that we will no longer differentiate between state-sponsored terrorism and terrorist activities of individuals and groups. India has suffered enough, and the time has come to say no more," Mr. Kanimozhi said. Earlier, an all-party delegation led by Ms Kanimozhi interacted with the Athens-based newspaper Kathimerini in Athens on Wednesday (local time) as part of the government's diplomatic outreach to highlight India's stance on terrorism. "The members of the delegation led by Ms Kanimozhi held a constructive interaction with the editorial board of Kathimerini during which they conveyed India's 'new normal' policy on terrorism. They emphasised India's firm stance against terrorism in all its forms," posted India in Greece on X.

The delegation, led by DMK MP Kanimozhi Karunanidhi, also includes Rajeev Rai (Samajwadi Party), Mian Altaf Ahmad (Jammu and Kashmir National Conference), Brijesh Chowta (BJP), Prem Chand Gupta (Rashtriya Janata Dal), Ashok Kumar Mittal (Aam Aadmi Party), and Former envoys Manjeet S Puri and Jawed Ashraf.

How Indians Stand As Donald Trump's Team Orders Pause On US Student Visas US Student Visa Pause: This means that the US's decision to pause student visa

Washington DC. India has for years been among the top two countries from where students go to the United States of America to pursue their higher education. In the last few years, Indians have outranked China to emerge as the largest contingent of international students in the US. This means that the US's decision to pause student visa interviews globally will impact aspiring Indian students the most. The Donald Trump administration, had on Tuesday, ordered its embassies and consulates worldwide to not schedule any new interviews for student-visa applicants. The reason behind the move is that the Trump administration is in the process of ramping up vetting of social media profiles of all applicants.

WHY THE PAUSE IN US STUDENT VISAS? This new move is likely to result in significantly longer wait times for applications to be scrutinized, thereby delaying the interview schedules and making the visa approval process much lengthier. To tackle the existing backlog of applications, the US government has decided to defer the interview process till existing forms aren't perused and the applicant's background checks, including online activity, is not complete.

There is no deadline set for this, so it is uncertain as to how long the "pause" is likely to remain in effect. This latest development comes amid President Trump's ongoing battle with US universities and colleges, including those which are part of the Ivy league.

Donald Trump also wants to reform the higher education system in the US, while simultaneously initiating a crackdown on student activism and "Left liberal" legislation that promote diversity policies, which the Trump Administration has labeled as "divisive". Students visas are also being revoked and students deported if they are found to indulge in on-campus protests, especially on political issues, such as the war in Gaza. The US government has called such protests "anti-Semitic" and students who participate in it, "terror sympathizers". This is what has led to the enhanced scrutiny and background checks of applicants and their social media activity.

Israel And UN Clash Over Aid To Gaza

United Nations. Israel accused the United Nations Wednesday of seeking to "block" Gaza aid distribution, as the global body said it was doing its utmost to gather the limited assistance greenlighted by Israel's authorities. The humanitarian situation in Gaza, where Israel has imposed a two-month aid blockade, is dire, with food security experts saying starvation is looming for one in five people.

"While the UN spreads panic and makes declarations detached from reality, the state of Israel is steadily facilitating the entry of aid into Gaza," Israel's United Nations Ambassador Danny Danon told the Security Council. He said the assistance was entering by trucks -- under limited authorization by Israel at the Kerem Shalom crossing since last week following the blockade -- and via a "new distribution mechanism developed in coordination with the US and key international partners."

Danon was referring to the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF), a private, US-backed aid group that has established its own distribution system, one the United Nations considers contrary to its

humanitarian principles. A chaotic distribution of aid at a GHF center Tuesday left 47 people wounded. Israel's ambassador blamed Hamas for the tumult, saying the Palestinian group set up roadblocks and checkpoints to block access to the distribution center. He accused the UN of "trying to block" the aid. The United Nations "is using threats, intimidation and retaliation against NGOs that choose to participate in the new humanitarian mechanism," Danon added.

-'Will not participate'

Danon specifically accused the United Nations of having removed these nongovernmental organizations from a database listing groups working in Gaza, an accusation rejected by the UN. "There are no differences between the current list and the one from before the launch of the GHF," Stephane Dujarric, spokesman for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, told AFP. But the UN reiterated its opposition to coordinating with GHF. We will not



those goods, I can tell you one thing, it is not for lack of trying." Danon had said "more than 400 trucks" full of aid were already on the Gaza side of the crossing and that Israel had provided "safe routes" for the distribution.

"But the UN did not show up," the Israeli envoy said. "Put your ego aside, pick up the aid and do your job." Israeli military operations in Gaza have killed at least 54,804 people, mostly civilians, according to the health ministry there. The UN considers the figures reliable. The punishing offensive has reduced much of the Palestinian territory to rubble -- including hospitals, schools and other basic infrastructure -- and resulted in the displacement of almost all of its roughly two million people. Israel launched its operations in response to the October 7, 2023, attack by Hamas, which killed 1,218 people, according to an AFP tally based on official figures.

Meta AI Bot, Gen AI, Used A Billion Times Monthly': Mark Zuckerberg

world. Meta chief Mark Zuckerberg touted the tech firm's generative artificial intelligence (Gen AI) assistant on Wednesday, telling shareholders it is used by a billion people each month across its platforms. Zuckerberg noted the milestone anew at Meta's annual gathering of shareholders and as the social media behemoth vies with Google, Microsoft, OpenAI and others to be a leader in Gen AI. It was not clear how much Meta AI use involved people seeking out the chatbot versus passive users of Meta AI, as it is built into features in its family of apps. Since Google debuted AI Overviews in search results a year ago, it has grown to more than 1.5 billion users, according to Google chief executive Sundar Pichai. "That means Google Search is bringing Gen AI to more people than any other product in the world," Pichai said.

Google's AI Overviews are automatically provided summaries of search results that appear instead of the previous practice of simply showing pages of blue links to relevant websites. Pichai said last week that Google's dedicated Gemini AI app has more than 400 million monthly users. Tech rivals are rapidly releasing new AI



products despite ongoing challenges with preventing misinformation and establishing clear business models, and little sense of how the tech will affect society.

Meta unveiled its first standalone AI assistant app on April 29, giving users a direct path to its Gen AI models. "A billion people are using Meta AI across our apps now, so we made a new standalone Meta AI app for you to check out," Meta CEO and founder Mark Zuckerberg said in a video posted on Instagram at the time.

Zuckerberg said the app "is designed to be your personal AI" and would be primarily accessed through voice conversations with the interactions personalized to the individual user. Use of Meta AI is growing fastest on WhatsApp, according to chief financial officer Susan Li. "Our focus for this year is deepening the experience and making Meta AI the leading personal AI," Zuckerberg said when Meta announced quarterly earnings at the end of April.

China Urges US To Protect "Academic Exchanges" Amid Trump's Visa Freeze

world. China has called on the United States to avoid "disrupting" education and academic exchanges after the Trump administration froze all student visa interviews and appointments at US embassies and consulates worldwide. "We urge the US to effectively safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of all international students, including Chinese students overseas," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said on Wednesday, as per Newsweek. She added that China "upholds that normal education cooperation and academic exchanges should not be disrupted."

The appeal comes as US Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced plans to "aggressively" revoke visas for Chinese students with alleged links to the Chinese Communist Party or those studying in sensitive fields.

The US will also increase scrutiny of all future visa applications from China and Hong Kong, Rubio said. By



halting the student visa category, which issued over 4 lakh visas in fiscal year 2024, the administration aims to slow international student admissions and reduce immigration. This pause could also slash a key revenue stream for many US universities that rely on foreign students' tuition.

Donald Trump has ramped up efforts to restrict foreign student admissions, citing national security concerns. On Wednesday, he proposed a cap on international enrollment at Harvard University, limiting it to 15 per cent of the student body. Tensions between Washington and Beijing have already led to a 4 per cent decline in Chinese

student enrollment in 2024. The FBI has repeatedly warned that Chinese actors may exploit "America's deeply held and vital culture of collaboration and openness on university campuses." According to US State Department data, 277,398 Chinese students enrolled in American institutions in 2024, making China the second-largest source of foreign students after India. In the 2023-24 academic year, over 1.1 million international students studied in the US, accounting for nearly 6 per cent of total higher education enrollment. Almost half came from India and China, according to the Institute of International Education. Separately, Rubio also announced new visa restrictions on foreign officials and individuals who "censor Americans," particularly those targeting US tech companies. Rubio told lawmakers last week that the government had already revoked thousands of visas. "A visa is not a right."

NASA's Starliner Crew Sunita Williams, Butch Wilmore Finish Recovery On Earth

Washington. Butch Wilmore and Sunita Williams, the US astronauts left on the International Space Station last year by Boeing's troubled Starliner capsule, are on the up after returning to Earth in March, emerging from weeks of physical therapy to ramp up work with Boeing and various NASA programs. "Right now, we're just coming off the rehab portion of our return," Wilmore, 62, told Reuters in an interview on Wednesday. "Gravity stinks for a period, and that period varies for different people, but eventually you get over those neurovestibular balance type of issues." Wilmore and Williams, who last year set off for an eight-day Starliner test flight that swelled into a nine-month stay in space, have had to readapt their muscles, sense of balance and other basics of Earth living in a 45-day period standard for astronauts returning from long-term space missions. The astronaut have spent at least two hours a day with astronaut

strength and reconditioning officials within NASA's medical unit while juggling an increasing workload with Boeing's Starliner program, NASA's space station unit in Houston and agency researchers. "It's been a little bit of a whirlwind," Williams, 59, said in the interview. "Because we also have obligations to all of the folks that we worked with." Williams said some of her post-spaceflight side effects were slower to clear up and she felt tired in late stages of recovery, as dozens of various muscles re-engaged. That made it hard for her to wake up as early in the mornings as she likes, until a little more than a week ago. "Then I'm up at four in the morning, and I'm like, Aha! I'm back," she said. Wilmore had some issues with his back and neck before heading to space, being unable to turn his head all the way to the side, he said. That all went away in space where "you don't have any stress on your body." When he returned in March, gravity greeted him with the neck pain he left

on Earth. "We're still floating in the capsule in the ocean, and my neck starts hurting, while we still hadn't even been extracted yet," he said, laughing. The human body, evolved over millions of years in the gravity of Earth's surface, was not meant for spaceflight. The absence of gravity triggers an array of physical effects over time, such as muscle atrophy or cardiovascular shifts that can cause a chain reaction of other health changes. Confinement in a small space and higher solar radiation in space, without the protection of Earth's atmosphere, have other effects. Starliner problems: Propulsion system issues on Boeing's Starliner forced NASA to bring the capsule back without its crew last year and to fold the two astronauts into its normal, long-duration rotation schedule on the ISS. Boeing, which has taken \$2 billion in charges on its Starliner development, faces a looming decision by NASA to refl y the spacecraft uncrewed before it carries humans again.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Kenyan author and dissident who became a giant of modern literature, dies at 87

NEW YORK. Ngugi wa Thiong'o, the revered Kenyan man of letters and voice of dissent who in dozens of fiction and nonfiction books traced his country's history from British imperialism to home-ruler tyranny and challenged not only the stories told but the language used to tell them, died Wednesday at 87. Derek Warker, publicist for Ngugi's US publisher The New Press, confirmed the death to The Associated Press. Ngugi's son Nduku wa Ngugi said he died in Bedford, Georgia. Further details were not immediately available, though Ngugi was receiving kidney dialysis treatments. Whether through novels such as "The Wizard of the Crow" and "Petals of Blood," memoirs such as "Birth of a Dream Weaver" or the landmark critique "Decolonizing the Mind," Ngugi embodied the very heights of the artist's calling — as a truth teller and explorer of myth, as a breaker of rules and steward of culture. He was a perennial candidate for the Nobel literature prize and

a long-term artist in exile, imprisoned for a year in the 1970s and harassed for decades after. "Resistance is the best way of keeping alive," he told the Guardian in 2018. "It can take even the smallest form of saying no to injustice. If you really think you're right, you stick to your beliefs, and they help you to survive." He was admired worldwide, by authors ranging from John Updike to Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, and by former President Barack Obama, who once praised Ngugi's ability to tell "a compelling story of how the transformative events of history weigh on individual lives and relationships." Ngugi was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize in 2009, was a finalist for a National Book Critics Circle prize in 2012 and, four years later, was the winner of the Pak Kyong-ni Literature Award. Through Ngugi's life, you could dramatize the history of modern Kenya. He grew up on land stolen from his family by British colonists. He was a teenager when the Mau Mau uprising for independence

began, in his mid-20s when Britain ceded control in 1963 and in his late 30s when his disillusion with Kenyan authorities led to his arrest and eventual departure. Beyond his own troubles, his mother was held in solitary confinement by the British, one brother was killed and another brother, deaf and mute, was shot dead when he didn't respond to British soldiers' demands that he stop moving. In a given book, Ngugi might summon anything from ancient fables to contemporary popular culture. His widely translated picture story, "The Upright Revolution," updates Kenyan folklore in explaining why humans walk on two legs. The short story "The Ghost of Michael Jackson" features a priest possessed by the spirit of the late entertainer. Ngugi's tone was often satirical, and he mocked the buffoonery and corruption of government leaders in "The Wizard of the Crow," in which aides to the tyrant of fictional Aburiria indulge his most tedious fantasies.

"Rumor has it that the Ruler talked nonstop for seven nights and days, seven hours, seven minutes, and seven seconds. By then the ministers had clapped so hard, they felt numb and drowsy," he wrote. "When they became too tired to stand, they started kneeling down before the ruler, until the whole scene looked like an assembly in prayer before the eyes of the Lord. But soon they found that even holding their bodies erect while on their knees was equally tiring, and some assumed the cross-legged posture of the Buddhist." Ngugi sided with the oppressed, but his imagination extended to all sides of his country's divides — a British officer who justifies the suffering he inflicts on local activists, or a young Kenyan idealist willing to lose all for his country's liberation. He parsed the conflicts between oral and written culture, between the city and the village, the educated and the illiterate, the foreigner and the native.

NEWS BOX

State-of-the-art caravans usher in a new chapter in AP travel and tourism

VIJAYAWADA. Unveiled by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu at the Tourism Tech AI 2.0 Conclave in Vijayawada on Friday, state-of-the-art caravans usher in a new chapter in travel and tourism in Andhra Pradesh.

In collaboration with Hyderabad Luxe Caravans, the Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation (APTDC) showcased two high-end caravans, a 10 or 12-seater, and a 6-seater at the conclave.

The luxurious vehicles drew widespread attention for their stylish design, and premium amenities. Each caravan is fully equipped with star hotel-grade features, including a bed, a mini-conference area, television, fridge, microwave, kitchen, AC, washroom, sound system, and security cameras.

The State government is set to unveil the new caravan tourism policy by July 30. It is aimed at bridging the shortage of star hotel rooms in popular tourist circuits. By then, the government plans to deploy more caravans across major tourist destinations.

The caravan cost for a family of 12, including two children, will be less than car travel and star hotel accommodation, besides the rich experience.

Explaining the bold new initiative, Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation Managing Director Amrapali Kata, said, "Construction of star hotels is a costly affair. That's why we are introducing luxury caravans to overcome the shortage of rooms. The high-end facilities in the caravans will amaze tourists."

From medals to mentorship: Harathi's archery journey



NELLORE. From a small-town girl with a dream to a national coach shaping future champions — Harathi from Sriharikota stands as a testament to determination and passion for sport. Hailing from Sriharikota, this young woman not only made a mark as a national-level archer but is now training a new generation of athletes. The younger daughter of Mohan, a driver at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC-SHAR), and Raj Sulochanamma, Harathi was inspired by her cousin Kamalakar, a national-level archer, to take up the sport at an early age. She balanced academics with rigorous training and soon made her mark by winning three gold, two silver, and four bronze medals at the State level. Her consistent performance earned her a place in national competitions between 2007 and 2017, where she won medals in team events.

Harathi pursued B.Tech in Kuppam and later secured a software engineer job in Chennai. However, her passion for archery remained undiminished. Later, she applied for a government job through the sports quota and was appointed as a Panchayat Secretary. She now serves at Abaka Village Secretariat in Sullurpetta mandal. Despite the stability of a government job, Harathi's ambitions extended beyond personal success.

Five Tadoba tigers to be relocated to Telangana's Kawal Tiger Reserve

ADILABAD. The Telangana Forest department is planning to bring tigers to Kawal Tiger Reserve by translocating them from Maharashtra's Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve (TATR). According to the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) 2022 report, Kawal currently has no resident tigers, despite being declared a tiger reserve in 2012. Over the years, migrating tigers from neighbouring reserves have failed to settle in the region.

Under the 'Project Tiger' initiative, the Telangana and Maharashtra forest departments have agreed to the translocation plan. NTCA officials are expected to visit Kawal in July to assess the site.

Kawal has dense forests and an abundant prey base, including deer, sambar, and nilgai. Tigers from Tadoba-Andhari, Tipeshwar (Maharashtra), and Indravati (Chhattisgarh) have previously migrated into the area but did not stay, likely due to territorial and ecological disruptions. To improve habitat conditions, Telangana's Forest department has developed sufficient grasslands to support herbivores. Tigers that had earlier migrated from Tipeshwar in search of mates returned, indicating an absence of a stable tiger population. TATR, which currently houses over 40 tigers, lies close to the Pranahita river. Tigers from there often migrate through the Kaggaznagar corridor but are unable to reach Kawal's core zone due to natural and manmade barriers.

An electric bus caught fire near Coimbatore; 26 passengers sustained injuries

COIMBATORE. A private electric bus travelling from Trichy to Coimbatore caught fire after colliding with a road divider near Karumathampatti, on the outskirts of the city, early on Sunday morning. In the incident, 26 passengers sustained injuries and were subsequently admitted to various hospitals, both public and private, in the Coimbatore and Tiruppur districts. The mishap occurred after the driver reportedly fell asleep while at the wheel. Two lorry drivers who happened to be passing by broke the bus windows and rescued all passengers on board. Following the accident, Karumathampatti police registered a case and launched an investigation.

According to police sources, the bus was travelling from Trichy and, after reaching Tiruppur via the Coimbatore-Avinashi Road, was heading towards Coimbatore with 26 passengers on board. The vehicle was driven by A Pasupathi (29) from Tiruvannamalai, accompanied by his attendant B Abishek (21) from Madurai district.

At around 2.30 a.m. on Sunday, near the Senniandavar temple in Karumathampatti, the driver reportedly dozed off at the wheel and lost control of the vehicle. The bus collided with the central divider and continued grinding against it for over 100 metres before halting and bursting into flames. The passengers, who were asleep at the time, woke up in shock and



began shouting as they scrambled to escape through the front door.

Lorry drivers who witnessed the accident stopped their vehicles, alerted the police, and began rescuing passengers by breaking the bus windows. "Apart from the driver and the assistant, all 26 passengers were rescued with minor burn injuries," a police source said.

Following this, fire service vehicles, ambulances, and police personnel reached the spot. The injured were taken to the Avinashi

Government Hospital, a private hospital, and the Government Coimbatore Medical College Hospital for treatment. The bus, being an electric vehicle, was completely gutted in the blaze.

The lorry drivers, identified as C Sabarimalai (29) and M Ramesh (29) of Virudhunagar district, were appreciated by the Karumathampatti police for their timely intervention and heroic rescue of the passengers.

Doctor's FB post on delayed surgeries at Thiruvananthapuram MCH sparks row

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. In an unprecedented move, the head of the urology department at Government Medical College, Thiruvananthapuram, publicly criticised the authorities for their failure to procure essential surgical equipment. Dr Haris Chirakkal, voiced his frustration on social media after multiple surgeries were delayed due to a lack of necessary tools. He expressed disappointment at having repeatedly approached the authorities without success, calling the postponement of surgeries "shameful and regretful" in front of underprivileged patients. While he later deleted his social media posts, he stood by his remarks and stated that he was unconcerned about repercussions. "I have been under tremendous pressure as department head. After taking leave, I posted on social media because I couldn't bear the mental anguish of not fulfilling my commitment to the patients who depend on us for care. I even considered leaving the service; I was simply exhausted," he shared. The professor noted that four scheduled surgeries



had been postponed, forcing patients to return home.

"This problem has been recurring. Despite assurances in the past, nothing has been done to resolve it," he added. Dr Chirakkal made the post on Friday, and both the director of medical education (DME)-in-charge, Dr Vishwanathan K V, and hospital authorities urged him to retract the comments.

Dr Chirakkal agreed to delete the post after receiving an assurance from a relative, a CPM

leader, that the health minister's office would address the matter.

In an attempt to defuse the situation, Dr Vishwanathan termed the urology professor's outburst as emotional and said the claim of equipment shortage was misleading.

"The doctor was highlighting technical issues related to the procurement process. The state government has already purchased all the necessary equipment for the urology department, and in fact, it received the largest allocation for purchases," he stated. The Medical College spent Rs 67 lakh last financial year on equipment for the urology department, including the purchase of a device called Lithoclast, which is used to crush urinary stones. However, the device is now damaged, and the replacement purchase was delayed due to a rise in rates. Despite this, Dr Chirakkal accused Dr Vishwanathan of trying to downplay the issue. "They are attempting to whitewash the problem," he said, emphasising that the challenges were more than just technicalities.

NIMHANS Northern campus in Bengaluru gets Centre's nod

BENGALURU. The Union Government has granted in-principle approval for the construction of a 300-bed Post-Graduate Polytrauma Centre under the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) at Kyalasanahalli near Kempegowda International Airport (KIA), Bengaluru. The facility, estimated to cost Rs 498 crore, is aimed at providing advanced emergency and trauma care to accident victims in and around the Bengaluru region.

The approval was issued by the Department of Expenditure under the Union Ministry of Finance, following a proposal submitted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW). The land for the project, measuring 39 acres, had been allotted to NIMHANS in 2012-13, during the tenure of the BJP-led state government in Karnataka.

The proposed facility will serve as NIMHANS' Northern Campus and will include not just the trauma hospital, but also residential quarters for staff, hostels, guest

Key junctions in Coimbatore set for upgrade to ease traffic congestion

COIMBATORE. In an effort to tackle the increasing traffic congestion, the Coimbatore City Municipal Corporation (CCMC), in collaboration with traffic experts and private agencies, has launched a study to improve several key junctions. The initiative aims to ease vehicular movement and ensure smoother commutes for residents. With the city witnessing a rapid rise in the number of vehicles, traffic snarls have become a daily ordeal. Motorists are often forced to travel at a snail's pace, especially during peak hours. Responding to this challenge, the district road safety committee, comprising officials from the CCMC, district administration, police, highways, and other departments, has come up with a series of measures to address the issue.

The CCMC has identified 15 vital junctions for improvement. On Saturday, CCMC Commissioner M Sivaguru Prabakaran personally inspected four of these junctions. The study will guide future works, including the construction of traffic islands, U-turns, roundabouts, the removal of encroachments, and the widening of roads wherever feasible.

The Commissioner also conducted spot inspections in several other areas affected by traffic congestion. These include Sathy Road and Vilankurichi Main Road near Ramakrishnapuram (under North Zone, Ward 20), the Thudiyalur Bus Stand area (Ward 1), and Thadagam Road near Kumara Samayam Kulam (under West Zone, Ward 74). Plans for road development and new infrastructure projects are being considered in these locations to further ease traffic flow.

"The corporation is committed to making travel safer and more efficient for all road users. Once the expert team submits its final report, we will begin the necessary infrastructure work as soon as possible," said the Commissioner. The project has raised hopes among commuters and residents alike, who are optimistic that the planned improvements will bring lasting relief to Coimbatore's ever-growing traffic issues. Previously, the removal of traffic signals and the introduction of U-turns and roundabouts at certain locations brought some temporary relief.



the celebrations, the CM said Gajapayana, the ceremonial journey of Dasara elephants from their forest camps to Mysuru, which marks the beginning of the festivities, will start on August 4 and the Dasara festival will be

Mysuru Palace. Last year, Rs 40 crore was given for the celebrations. This year too, funds required for grand celebrations will be provided, the CM said.

The officials were directed to plan the programmes to highlight the government's guarantee schemes and other welfare programmes. Vijayadashami is on October 2 and the officials have been directed to make provisions for a tableau that highlights Mahatma Gandhi's principles.

The CM directed officials to reduce the number of seats in front of the Palace to reduce crowding, ensure illumination in Mysuru like it was done last year, gold cards should be distributed without scope for any confusion, and create basic facilities like parking and toilets for those coming to Mysuru to witness Dasara. A drone show will also be organised on a big scale during Dasara.

Grand Mysuru Dasara festivities from September 22

BENGALURU. The state festival Mysuru Dasara will be celebrated in a grand manner in Mysuru from September 22 to October 2, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said on Saturday. This year, it is celebrated over 11 days, rather than the usual 10, due to a rare astronomical occurrence. Speaking to media persons after the high-powered committee meeting in Bengaluru, the CM said that over 10 lakh people are expected to attend the celebrations.

The high-powered committee has authorised the CM to decide on the chief guest to inaugurate

the celebrations. Siddaramaiah said there were suggestions on inviting a woman or a Gandhian as chief guest, and he would decide on it within a week or 15 days. Terming it a world-famous festival, the CM said it should be a festival of the people. Giving details about

the celebrations, the CM said Gajapayana, the ceremonial journey of Dasara elephants from their forest camps to Mysuru, which marks the beginning of the festivities, will start on August 4 and the Dasara festival will be

NIMHANS Northern campus in Bengaluru gets Centre's nod

houses, administrative blocks, and other support infrastructure.

The Finance Ministry has laid down several conditions for the project. These include optimising manpower and infrastructure as

recommended by NITI Aayog in its 2021 report, ensuring the trauma centre also caters to regular patients, and monitoring outputs and outcomes regularly for mid-course corrections. The ministry has also asked the Health Ministry to frame a long-term national policy for emergency and serious injury care.

Under the 'Project Tiger' initiative, the Telangana and Maharashtra forest departments have agreed to the translocation plan. NTCA officials are expected to visit Kawal in July to assess the site.

Kawal has dense forests and an abundant prey base, including deer, sambar, and nilgai. Tigers from Tadoba-Andhari, Tipeshwar (Maharashtra), and Indravati (Chhattisgarh) have previously migrated into the area but did not stay, likely due to territorial and ecological disruptions. To improve habitat conditions, Telangana's Forest department has developed sufficient grasslands to support herbivores. Tigers that had earlier migrated from Tipeshwar in search of mates returned, indicating an absence of a stable tiger population. TATR, which currently houses over 40 tigers, lies close to the Pranahita river. Tigers from there often migrate through the Kaggaznagar corridor but are unable to reach Kawal's core zone due to natural and manmade barriers.

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THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. The National Centre for Disease Informatics and Research (NCDIR) projects that by 2030, every year cancer will affect 45,813 women and 43,930 men in Kerala. This forecast, shared at the Kerala Cancer Conclave organised by the Association of Medical and Pediatric Oncologists of Kerala (AMPOK), reflects growing concerns among medical experts regarding the increasing cancer burden in the state. In 2024, 43,110 men and 45,008 women were diagnosed with cancer, making the projected rise seem relatively modest. However, Dr. Prashant Mathur, Director of ICMR-NCDIR, which oversees the country's cancer registries, emphasised that the growth in Kerala, which is already burdened with a cancer incidence more than double the national average, is alarming. The incidence of cancer in Kerala is above the national average for both men and women, highlighting the urgent need for

stronger preventive measures," he said. On a positive note, Dr. Mathur acknowledged that Kerala's cancer survival rates are comparatively favorable. Dr. Suresh H. Advani, considered the father of cancer treatment in India, noted a concerning increase in breast and thyroid cancer among women in Kerala in recent years. "Thyroid cancer is so prevalent that even in smaller cities, there are 3-4 surgeries every week," he remarked. Dr. Narayanan Kurian, Medical Director of the MVR Cancer Centre and Research Institute, pointed to a 300% increase in breast cancer cases over the last 25 years. He noted that the high prevalence of diabetes in the population is a major driver of lifestyle-related diseases. Dr. Aleyamma Mathew, Professor and Head of the Division of Cancer Epidemiology and



Biostatistics at the Regional Cancer Centre, shared that 30% of cancers in Kerala are breast cancers. She also noted that while the incidence of breast and colorectal cancers has increased, the rates of cervical cancer have decreased. Dr. V. Ramakutty, Research Director of the Amala Cancer

Research Centre, explained that while Kerala's cancer rates are high compared to other states, they remain lower than those in countries like the USA. "The cardiovascular diseases kill more people than cancer. There is also a misinformation with many people attributing cancer to 'toxins in vegetables' while ignoring significant risk factors like alcohol consumption and lack of exercise," he said. He emphasised the need for a comprehensive early detection program that should be integrated at the primary care level," he said. During the conclave's inauguration, Speaker AN Shamseer emphasised the importance of making cancer treatment more affordable and ensuring standardised treatment protocols across the state.

Dr. M.R. Rajagopal, Founder of Pallium India, stressed the need to balance quality of life with treatment.

Election Commission must justify need for Bihar voter roll revision

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has announced a special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar just weeks before the likely notification of assembly elections. Such revisions, when conducted this close to polling, are extraordinary and must meet a high bar of justification. Yet no explanation, let alone evidence, has been offered for why this exercise is necessary now. Instead, the justification has taken a familiar and troubling shape: vague and unsubstantiated claims about "illegal voters" and "cross-border infiltration". If this is not a damning indictment of the ministry of home affairs' failure in protecting our borders, then it is definitely dog-whistling to create a pretext for the possibility of large-scale manipulation. The pattern is unmistakable and, to the opposition parties, the objective seems transparent: to manipulate voter rolls in a manner that systematically excludes minorities and the poor. This is not the first time such tactics have been deployed. In the run-up to the 2024 Lok Sabha elections and subsequent state elections in Maharashtra, lakhs of names were added to the electoral rolls in a short period. Opposition parties have raised valid concerns about the sudden spike and the unusually high late-evening turnout surges. The ECI has refused to release digital, machine-readable electoral rolls or polling-day CCTV footage. Also, ahead of the elections, right-wing commentators and academics belted out dubious 'studies' raising unfounded alarms about "illegal voters". The exercise was repeated in Delhi right before the 2025 assembly elections. No other official data supported these claims. The fear-mongering in the name of "illegal migrants" or "bogus voters" used to be an ideological fringe position—it has become a tool of institutionalised disenfranchisement. This framing is used to justify aggressive and opaque revisions of electoral rolls that disproportionately target Muslim, Dalit and poor migrant communities. Now the ECI is echoing this language without any evidence and without accountability. There is a conspicuous absence of data and a deliberate invocation of public anxiety around border security and demographic change. The shift from dog-whistle politics to executive action—particularly by a constitutional body like the ECI—is a dangerous point.

The ECI must conduct a thorough and honest investigation into these allegations if India's reputation as a democracy is to survive. The Constitution of India, under Article 324, entrusts the ECI with the conduct of free and fair elections. This does not just mean ballot secrecy or smooth polling logistics, it means ECI is constitutionally bound to protect the integrity of the electorate. This integrity is compromised when entire communities are asked to prove their right to vote without a shred of evidence against them.

These allegations are not speculation of losers. Research by Sabyasachi Das has demonstrated that in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, BJP candidates won a disproportionate number of tightly contested seats, especially in BJP-ruled states. His analysis points to patterns consistent with the possibility of 'manipulated' rolls and irregularities in voter turnout data, not campaign strength. Economist Abusaleh Shariff, who was a member of the Sachar Committee, conducted voter roll audits in Karnataka that revealed nearly 20 percent of adult Muslims were missing from the electoral list, while 30-35 percent of Muslim households had only one listed voter. These patterns are not random—they are engineered exclusions.

Why India's tailpipe pollution regime needs urgent reform

The air quality discourse appears to have increasingly turned punitive over the years. From banning older vehicles to restricting fuel access for "over-aged" vehicles, Delhi appears to be shifting all its environmental responsibility onto vehicle owners

The Commission for Air Quality Management recently directed that all end-of-life vehicles (ELV) will not be given fuel in Delhi starting July 1, 2025. While the move reflects an intent to curb vehicular pollution to address the Delhi-NCR's chronic air quality crisis, it distracts from the deeper malaise: the failure to strictly enforce emission compliance on all vehicles on the road, not just the old ones. The air quality discourse appears to have increasingly turned punitive over the years. From banning older vehicles to restricting fuel access for "over-aged" vehicles, Delhi appears to be shifting all its environmental responsibility onto vehicle owners. Using vehicle age as a proxy for pollution, it overlooks the complex relationship between fuel, engine maintenance, and usage. A closer look into the systemic architecture such as unrenewed emission verification norms, regulatory gaps in testing frameworks, and poor enforcement of fuel efficiency standards reveals a troubling reality: India's policy focus is targeting the tailpipe without reforming the pipeline. Age vs. Emissions: A Scientific Disjunct India's air pollution control framework, influenced by European emission regulations and early 2000s Supreme Court rulings, has evolved into the Bharat Standards (BS). Judicial decisions force diesel vehicles off the roads after 10 years and petrol after 15, regardless of compliance with the set emission standards. This approach that prioritises age over actual emissions creates a disjunct: a well-maintained BS-IV vehicle running on petrol or diesel and regularly passing pollution tests must be

scrapped, while newer, but poorly maintained vehicles can continue to operate. Originally a thumb rule to compensate for limited available enforcement facilities, this blanket age-based criterion needs replacement by more granular, real-time metrics using emission data, owing to the changes in the air pollution index in Delhi-NCR. While in 2000s, studies attributed vehicular contributions to PM2.5 emissions at around 25 per cent, today, other denser sources such as construction dust, industrial emissions, and seasonal fires also contribute significantly to Delhi's pollution.

Systemic Gaps in Enforcement A 2022 CAG report also highlighted systemic deficiencies in Delhi's vehicle fitness testing regime. As of 2021, automated testing centres comprised just 12 pc of testing capacity and were used at only 5 pc of their capacity. Manual centres, which rely on visual checks and cannot assess pollutants like NOx and PM2.5, handled 95 pc of tests. This opacity allows manipulation and undermines vehicle fitness declarations, rendering the PUC regime toothless. Furthermore, Delhi's vehicle scrapping ecosystem is also ineffective with most ELVs ending up with unauthorised scrap dealers or are resold in states with laxer rules, merely shifting pollution elsewhere. Instead of modernising outdated frameworks using data-driven,



performance-based criteria, the government is forcing people to scrap or replace functional vehicles that may still meet existing testing norms. The approach also overlooks circular economy principles, and the embedded emissions associated with manufacturing new vehicles.

This blanket approach also unfairly affects senior citizens, who may be maintaining their vehicles well, drive sparingly, and use them for essential mobility. Additionally, it may be putting significant financial strain and inequitably penalises all those who have vehicles but prefer to use public transport. The Overlooked Efficiency Gap Each year, Delhi-NCR faces severe air pollution, yet responses such as the Graded Response Action

There's something about Zohran K Mamdani

THE GREAT GAME: The Indian American New York mayoral candidate is perhaps reminding us of the idea of India, a sort of One Nation, Many Melting Pots



Some of Zohran's comments are, clearly, more hearsay than fact—and, yes, he should be far more careful, even if he's 33. For example, he said last month that so many Muslims were killed in the 2002 riots in Gujarat that "people don't even believe we exist anymore." (In fact, there are 5.8 million Muslims in Gujarat.) He has likened PM Modi to Benjamin Netanyahu, who he described as a "war criminal." (In 2022, the Supreme Court upheld the SIT's clean chit and cleared the PM of any connection with the 2002 riots.) Notwithstanding the blood-letting in states like Mizoram—when the Indian Air Force in 1966 strafed Mizos seeking to secede from India—and later in Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab and Chhattisgarh, the Indian state has largely stayed away from carrying out mass violence against its own people; even in Chhattisgarh, Congress rulers gave up the 'Salwa Judum' vigilante movement it had orchestrated in 2005 to contain Left-wing extremism, which meant that tribals were killing tribals, as a bad idea. Manipur, in the last two years, remains a continuing exception.

And yet there's something about Zohran. In 2023, as a

member of the New York state Assembly, he read from the notes of jailed student Umar Khalid about "the stillness in Tihar jail"—where he remains jailed, under several sections of the UAPA, for his alleged role in the 2020 Delhi riots. It will be 1,749 days, today, of Khalid's incarceration, nearly five years of living in a cell, but charges have still not been framed against the young man.

Perhaps some of Zohran's incredible popularity is simply a reminder of what we once were—less cynical, braver, and determined to rearrange our societies so as to make them more egalitarian. He clearly likes to break down the walls, as Robert Frost once wrote, wondering what the functions of walls were—what were they walling in, or walling out. He likes to open the windows and let the air come in, as Gandhi once said was the function of windows. In an interview with *Vogue India* in 2020, soon after he became a member of the NY Assembly, Zohran talked about the run-up to his campaign when he was advised to be "less desi." Instead, he spoke of his own

immigrant experience and called it "Roti and Roses."

There was a video called 'Nani,' a "woke granny," featuring the star Madhur Jaffrey. As he walked across the city, he said, he listened to Meesha Shafi, Ali Sethi and Dr Zeus. Perhaps the fact that he's simply not embarrassed to be a bit of this and a bit of that, is what's so charming about Zohran. He reminds us of the ceaseless ebb and flow that is the dharma of the Indian subcontinent—aham brahmasmi, I am brahman, the idea of a philosophy that incorporates the spurning of hierarchy, the inclination to pray to a multitude of gods or none, the refusal to be defined by inherited caste, class, gender.

Zohran's father told *The New York Times* this week that when they lived in South Africa when he was a child and all the children in Zohran's class were asked to identify themselves as White, Black or Coloured, Zohran described himself as "mustard." Yellow. The colour of haldi in a khichri.

Dumping threat looms elsewhere as India nears U.S. deal

While the contours of the proposed deal are unknown, it's likely that it would enhance economic partnership, transform bilateral trade and lower tariffs, making products competitive across sectors



Donald Trump has dropped a big hint about signing a "very big" trade deal with India. The remarks, coming ahead of his July 9 deadline for striking deals or resuming 'reciprocal' tariffs, offer a significant relief for markets, policy makers and industry. Tariff-related uncertainties have triggered a massive sell-off in global and domestic equity markets, with foreign portfolio investments remaining volatile. While the contours of the proposed deal are unknown, it's likely that it would enhance economic partnership, transform bilateral trade and lower tariffs, making products competitive across sectors such as energy, agriculture, defence and aviation. It's also possible that India would gain market share in some American sectors owing to lower tariffs; although the gains would depend on India's comparative advantage against other countries. The anticipated direct export loss is pegged at \$14 billion, amounting to 0.38 percent of India's GDP, according to a working paper published by the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy.

The export basket might change, too. Some of India's top 10 exports to the US—including electronic goods and gems & jewellery—may lose market share as competing

countries are subject to lower tariffs on these products. On the other hand, we may gain in the footwear, apparel, electrical machinery and toy markets. For instance, according to the NIPFP paper, China, Vietnam, Indonesia, Italy and Cambodia account for 45.5 percent of the total in footwear exports to the US. Even if China is excluded, India can potentially corner a bigger share from Vietnam and Indonesia, which are subject to much higher tariffs of 46 percent and 32 percent, respectively. Similar opportunities exist in the furniture and sports equipment markets, too. At the same time, a multi-product, multi-country dumping threat looms over India. We should be watchful as China, Vietnam, Taiwan and others facing higher tariffs look to flood us with cheaper goods. While India reduces the tariff deficit with the US, it needs to offer calibrated concessions on select US goods like aerospace components. We should secure sector-specific exemptions, negotiate duty waivers for auto components and electronics, and diversify export markets away from the US, pursuing opportunities in the EU, the UK and ASEAN. Above all, India should strengthen domestic manufacturing, boost Make in India initiatives in key areas such as semiconductors, renewable energy and electronics to reduce import reliance and attract investments.

Plan and the odd-even scheme remain short-term measures. A robust fuel and emissions control strategy is now critical—one that allows even older, well-maintained vehicles to remain compliant. Tailpipe emission verification is key and must be enforced rigorously along with tightening of the emission norms. Regular checks can identify high emitters and ensure compliance, addressing real-world emissions. With the planned installation of ANPR cameras, Delhi can create an automated system to restrict entry for high-emitting vehicles based on real-time data. Vehicle profiles (linked to VAHAN data) could include fuel type, age, emissions and PUC compliance status, and past testing history, supplemented by remote sensing devices. Such a system, free of human tampering, would allow well-maintained vehicles to continue while restricting true polluters—irrespective of the vehicle age. Furthermore, authorities can consider transferable scrapping credits linked to Aadhaar and vehicle registration, which can reward owners scrapping vehicles with incentives or offset allowances for new purchases or public transport usage. Such market-based mechanisms have a better chance of nudging behavioural change more efficiently than blanket bans.

RTI activist & YouTuber held for extortion in Gurgaon

Gurgaon. An RTI activist and a YouTuber were arrested for allegedly attempting to extort Rs 5 lakh from GAV International School's chairman, Pradeep Kaushik.

In his complaint, Kaushik said that after RTI activist Sukhbir Tanwar filed multiple applications and a court case against his 10 school branches, he paid Rs 2.5 lakh to protect the school's reputation in Dec last year. The complainant also named YouTuber MK Maurya in the case. Though Tanwar withdrew the court case on April 8, he allegedly filed fresh RTI applications a week later and lodged complaints with various departments, including the income tax, and this time he demanded Rs 5 lakh, involving Maurya. "After he filed an RTI with the education department against my schools, he tried to blackmail me. On Aug 1, 2023, he approached court against my schools and pressured me to give him money. After that, we both met in a park opposite my Sector 10 school, where he sought Rs 10 lakh from me to withdraw the petition. After he forced me for money, I paid him Rs 2.5 lakh advance in the Gurgaon court complex on Dec 5 last year, following which Tanwar withdrew the court case on April 8," Kaushik said. Following the alleged blackmail and monetary demands, Kaushik paid Rs 25,000 to them at his Sector 37 school. Tanwar, however, was captured on CCTV within the school premises accepting the money. Kaushik provided the footage to the Gurgaon police and filed a complaint with the police commissioner, who ordered an immediate investigation.

After a probe, Sector 10 police registered a case against Tanwar on June 25 under section 308(2) (extortion) of BNS. Police later arrested both accused in relation to the case. Inspector Sandeep, Station House Officer of Sector 10 police station, confirmed that both individuals were arrested on Friday and that the investigation is ongoing. Meanwhile, both the accused were brought before a local court, following which Tanwar was released on bail. Maurya, however, failed to furnish the bail bond.

In Gurgaon, FIR registered against school owner for breaking MCG seal

Gurgaon. An FIR has been registered against Nirmala Sharma, owner of International Delhi Public School, Basai Enclave, for allegedly tampering with an MCG seal placed due to illegal construction. The corporation had sealed the school on June 18, but subsequent inspections revealed the seal had been damaged. A case was registered against Sharma under section 223(a) of the BNS on Thursday. According to the police, the school operated on residential property. Varun, an MCG official who lodged the complaint, stated that the school's illegal construction on Feb 19 and were served the sealing orders on March 20.

Meanwhile, Sharma said that the seal was mistakenly broken by cleaning staff. She told TOI, "As the school was closed, the cleaning staff returned after a few days, and they did not know that it was a seal placed by MCG



officials and removed the same, thinking it was a prank by some student. I was not aware of the same." A report by the district elementary education officer (DEEO), Gurgaon, indicated that the school lacked the required permanent affiliation from the education department and recommended action to the director, elementary education, Haryana, on March 10.

Speeding, broken roads or strays Haryana govt to study causes of accidents

Gurgaon. As the number of people dying in road accidents in the state remains uncomfortably high, Haryana govt has mandated a scientific study to identify accidents' root causes. The initiative aims at analysing each accident, considering factors such as road conditions, speeding, traffic management, stray animals and other potential contributors, to implement effective preventive measures. The findings will be used to identify patterns and trends, which will inform the development of comprehensive safety measures.

In 2022, Haryana recorded 11,105 accidents and 5,596 deaths. In 2023, the figures stood at 10,438 accidents and 5,195 deaths, followed by 9,759 accidents and 4,828 deaths in 2024. In 2025, up to May 25, the numbers further decreased to 6,770 accidents and 1,942 deaths.

Highlighting the importance of this initiative, Union transport minister Anil Vij said, "Our primary goal is to safeguard the lives of citizens. By understanding why road accidents are taking place, we can take informed actions to improve road safety across the state."

In addition to the study, the govt plans to launch awareness campaigns to educate the public about safe driving practices and the importance of adhering to traffic rules. Earlier this month, a budget of Rs 74.5 crore was approved by Haryana fund management committee (FMC) on road safety for the current year to reduce road accident fatalities and enhance the emergency response system across the state. Moreover, as part of its commitment to ensuring safe travel for all, the state govt also adheres to the Haryana road safety policy (2016). According to the official, these efforts have helped in gradually reducing the number of fatalities in accidents. Zeroing in on vehicles transporting children to and from school, Vij said, "All school buses must undergo regular inspections, and attention should be paid to their condition."

Rain brings mercury down in Gurgaon, but it's not monsoon yet

Gurgaon. After days of witnessing hot and humid conditions, parts of the city saw a brief but intense spell of rainfall on Saturday, offering some relief and setting the mood for monsoon. The day started on a bright note with clear skies, but clouds gathered around by afternoon. The maximum temperature settled at 35.7 degrees Celsius—down from 36.6 degrees Celsius on Friday—while the minimum dipped marginally from 29.3 degrees Celsius on the previous day to 28.2 degrees Celsius on Saturday. The downpour, which began around 1.30pm, was scattered, with areas surrounding Dwarka Expressway, Gwal Pahar, Udyog Vihar, DLF-3, and parts of old Gurgaon receiving around 40 to 50 minutes of rain. Till 4pm, 11mm of rainfall was recorded, said India Meteorological Department (IMD). Despite the brief and intense spell of rain, traffic remained largely unaffected, and no major incidents of waterlogging were seen. The spell was

caused by "intense to very intense convection" over west Punjab, southeast Haryana, and Delhi, IMD said, adding that the city is expected to experience rainfall over the next 3-4 days, with thundershowers and lightning likely through Sunday. The forecast predicts peak showers for July 2. Moreover, according to an IMD official, conditions are turning favourable for the further advancement of the southwest monsoon, which has already covered most parts of the country. "Most of Haryana is now under the monsoon's influence, barring a few pockets in the southern region," he said. While an orange alert has been issued for heavy rain in northern and eastern districts of Haryana, a yellow alert is in place for southern areas, including Gurgaon, where light to moderate rain is expected over the next two days. Sonam Wadhwa, a resident of Imperial Gardens, said that the rainfall brought about a quick relief from the heat. "The temperature had

become unbearable over the past few days. It poured heavily for about 30 minutes, and you could instantly feel the



drop in temperature. Let's hope monsoon arrives soon," she said. However, Aanchal Sharma, a resident of Ardee City, said her area did not get any rain. "Dark clouds hovered over the area for most of the afternoon, but rain remained elusive. While other parts of the city saw showers, it was warm and humid here," she said. The highly anticipated monsoon

knocked on the city's door on Saturday but didn't enter. While parts of the capital, especially southwest and south Delhi and those adjoining western UP, and the NCR cities of Noida, Gurgaon and Faridabad enjoyed showers on Saturday, the India Meteorological Department did not declare this the arrival of the seasonal rain-bearing winds. It only said the conditions were now favourable for the advancement of the southwest monsoon. Weather experts pointed out that a large portion of Delhi was yet to receive rains. "A trough currently in the south of Delhi is yet to move northward and bring the monsoon," explained an IMD official. "The weather system on Saturday entered the city via western UP. Several parts of the city, including the base weather station at Safdarjung, did not record rain." Mayur Vihar, Palam, Ayanagar and Zafarpur were among the areas where it rained, though the sky over the entire city remained overcast.

Cell to screen: 70% of court hearings done online in Haryana jails

Gurgaon: In the past 16 months, inmates at Bhondsi Jail have participated in 93,671 court appearances, with only 29,038 requiring physical presence in court and 69% being conducted through video conferencing. The jail, which has around 3,075 prisoners, out of which 2,585 are undertrials, is equipped with 50 video conference facilities. These handle around 250 virtual appearances daily. Similarly, Faridabad reported 84,704 court appearances, with 69% conducted virtually. Faridabad has 2,990 inmates, out of which 2,558 are undertrials. Across Haryana's 20 prisons, housing 25,000 prisoners, out of which 19,920



are undertrials, 71.5% of the total 7.6 lakh court appearances were conducted through the 448 video conferencing facilities. Rohtak jail topped the list with 91.05% of appearances through video conferencing, followed by Yamunanagar at 84.54%, Kaithal at 80.05%, Sirsa at 76.07%, Karnal at 70.44%, Panipat at 70.61%, Nuh at 70.81%, Faridabad at 69.49%, and Gurgaon at 69.49%. Rewari is at the bottom of the table with just 40.28% of video conferencing appearances, followed by Palwal at 49.21%. Out of the total 448 video conferencing facilities that the Haryana prisons have, Bhondsi jail has the maximum, followed by Faridabad at 47 and the central jail of Ambala at 35. Rewari and Palwal have 2 and 3 such facilities.

Virtual appearances of undertrials is preferred as it reduces the security risks associated with physically transporting inmates to and from court, officials said. However, for bigger cases, physical appearance is required. "This system is particularly beneficial in cases where gangsters and notorious criminals are involved."

Become job creators, not just seekers, Haryana CM Nayab Singh Saini tells youths

Gurgaon. Chief minister Nayab Singh Saini urged youth to transition from "job seekers" to "job creators" while addressing a youth and women's mock parliament in the city on Saturday. He emphasised the youth's crucial role in shaping India's future, highlighting the country's evolution into a self-reliant nation. "Today's India has become a self-reliant, capable, and solution-providing nation," Saini said. He also encouraged democratic values and constructive dialogue, warning against shortcuts, nepotism, and corruption in politics. He advocated for a political culture that values integrity and transparency.

Calling Gurgaon the sacred land of Guru Dronacharya, Saini said the city is also known as the Millennium City for upholding the spirit of innovation and aspiration. He expressed confidence that the youth, in the era of Amrit Kaal, will lead India toward becoming a developed nation by 2047. He highlighted the youth mock parliament as a milestone in this journey and urged them to deeply study



pressing national issues, raise awareness, and seek solutions. Advising against shortcuts, he called on the youth of the state to reject the politics of nepotism and corruption while strengthening the spirit of Ek Bharat – Shreshtha Bharat. He also emphasized the importance of fact-based discussions, constructive criticism over blind opposition, and solutions-driven democracy. He also praised the national education policy for empowering youth to pursue their talents and interests, fostering innovation and entrepreneurship.

Saini criticized the then Congress govt for

imposing the emergency, stating there was no instability or natural disaster to justify it. "Fifty years ago, during the Emergency, not only were political rights violated, but there was also a brutal attack on women's freedom, dignity, and rights. It was a time when both democracy and women's dignity were strangled. Women were imprisoned, their voices were suppressed, and they were confined to their homes," said the CM. He added that it reminds him of a time when efforts were made to suppress the voice of the entire nation. "It was an era when, disregarding the constitution, the country was turned into a prison to save the power of one family," he said. He also expressed confidence that India's democratic spirit can never be crushed again. "Today, with so many aware mothers and sisters present, I am confident that no one can crush the democratic consciousness of this country again," he said, adding that emergency was imposed on the night of June 25, 1975, by misusing the constitution, which curtailed the rights of every individual in the country.

SHO denied anticipatory bail by Hisar court after affair with accused

Gurgaon: In a case that saw professional codes breached and lines between sleuth and suspect blur, an SHO who had an affair with the man she was tasked with investigating now faces arrest. The 50-year-old inspector was rapped for conduct "unbecoming of a police officer" as a sessions court in Hisar denied her anticipatory bail in an FIR filed against her at Azad Nagar police station on June 9 under provisions of Prevention of Corruption Act, Immoral Traffic Prevention Act, IT Act and relevant sections of BNS. The court, however, also rapped police for adding irrelevant charges to the FIR. The complainant in the case is the wife of Aman Siwach, the man the SHO was investigating in a property encroachment case. Siwach's wife alleged the cop "deliberately" kept her husband under the influence of alcohol and forced him to spend Rs 1 lakh a month on her. She also claimed the SHO threatened to frame

Aman in a rape case. Siwach and the SHO's paths crossed in Aug 2023 when a complaint was filed against him under the Huda Act. But what this led to was a relationship between the two. Siwach's wife alleged he stopped coming home and travelled to various locations with the cop, including Sirsa, Pinjore, Shimla and Kasauli. She also alleged the cop pretended to be Siwach's wife at various places and used his credit card to buy expensive gifts and clothes. The FIR was registered against the SHO after Siwach's wife furnished WhatsApp chats and audio recordings as evidence. The cop moved court, seeking protection from arrest. But additional sessions judge Mangesh Kumar Choubey, while denying bail, observed that while intimate relationships between consenting adults are protected under Article 21 of the Constitution, they become "immoral" when the parties are already married (the SHO is married, too).

The court was also critical of an investigating officer getting into a relationship with an accused, describing it as "moral turpitude". The court insisted on the need for the SHO's custodial interrogation to investigate the money trail and prevent interference with witnesses. "This was not a one-time affair, it continued. This relationship was not confined to personal intimacy but encompassed within its ambit every possible attempt of interference in the working of the police force. Such acts and conduct are not expected from any public servant, but it was unbecoming of a police officer heading a police station. Her custodial interrogation is absolutely essential for proper investigation, to confront her with all the transactions on the records, to investigate the money trail, and to stop her from interfering with the investigation and influencing the complainant and witnesses."

STP not functional, FIR filed against AOA

Noida. Noida Authority has filed a police complaint against the apartment welfare association (AOA) of Supertech Cape Town in Sector 74 for dumping untreated sewage in the drain running through the sector.

According to National Green Tribunal (NGT) guidelines, highrise societies must have functional sewage treatment plants (STPs) on the premises. RP Singh, general manager (Jal), Noida Authority, said that inspections were conducted at the society on Friday, and it was found that the STP was not working as per the prescribed standard. "We found that untreated sewage was directly dumped in the drain. This is affecting the underground water and also the public health of local residents. This is also affecting the structure of the condominium," Singh said. Dumping untreated water like this is a violation of NGT orders, and the pollution department has imposed around Rs 35.8 crore in fines for various



violations on the society in the past, the official added. Following the Authority's complaint, an FIR was registered against the AOA under BNS Section 272 (malignant acts likely to spread infection of a

AOA was formed in 2019. However, the developer handed over the society's management with an incomplete STP," he said. Previously, the AOA has written to the developer urging them to complete the project, and have also informed the Noida Authority of this issue. Meanwhile, a Supertech spokesperson said that the company handed over the project to the AOA as per the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT).

In 2022, the NGT found that only 76 of the 95 highrise societies in the city had STPs installed on the premises. However, many of those were not working as per prescribed standards. A recent RTI reply revealed that 43 group housing societies in the city lack the mandatory consent to operate (CTO) for their STPs. Previously, the Noida Authority has filed police complaints against nine other condominiums for STP norm violations.

Sister-in-law nabbed for woman's murder in Faridabad



Faridabad. Three days after police arrested the victim's mother-in-law (45) in connection with the discovery of a woman's body buried in a sealed pit in front of the family home on June 20, authorities arrested the victim's sister-in-law on Saturday. The police have arrested three family members, including the father-in-law and mother-in-law, while the victim's husband remains at large. According to police spokesperson Yashpal, the sister-in-law was present when her father and brother buried the body in the pit outside their residence. Authorities identified the victim's father-in-law (54) as the main conspirator, with the mother-in-law and husband also implicated. On April 15, the family sent the mother-in-law to a relative's wedding. Prior to the incident, the father-in-law had arranged for a ten-foot-deep pit to be dug along a road outside his home.

Monsoon arrives early in India as Delhi sees light rains, floods in Uttarakhand

Scattered rain and thunderstorms kept Delhi-NCR on alert as the monsoon tightened its grip on North India.

AAIB probing sabotage angle too in Air India plane crash case: Union minister

Agency Faridabad.
Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol has said that the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) is investigating all possible angles, including sabotage, in its probe into June 12 Air India plane crash in Ahmedabad, which killed 274 people. The minister added that the black box of the crashed Air India flight, which has been recovered, is currently in the custody of the AAIB and will remain within the country for a complete analysis. He made these remarks during a conclave held by.

He said that the AAIB had started a full probe into the unfortunate incident. "It is being probed from all angles, including any possible sabotage. The CCTV footage are being reviewed and all angles are being assessed... several agencies are working on it," the minister pointed out. The Ahmedabad-London AI 171, belonging to Boeing Dreamliner 787-8 fleet, crashed seconds after taking off from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport. Out of the 242 passengers and crew members on board, only one survived the crash.

The minister said that the crash was a "rare case". "It has never happened that both engines have shut down together," he pointed out.

His comments came amid claims by veteran pilots and aviation experts suggesting that a dual engine failure may have caused the plane to go down and burst into flames. He added that once the (probe) report is out, it will be possible to establish whether it was an engine problem or fuel supply issue or why both the engines had stopped functioning.

"There is a CVR (cockpit voice recorder) in the black box which has stored the conversation between the two pilots. It is too early to say anything but whatever it is, it will come out. The report will come in three months," he pointed out.

They've dumped us here, how will we survive?: What Delhi's bulldozers left behind — broken lives, bitter politics



Agency New Delhi.
Perima stands outside the gate of a building in Sector G7, Narela's Pocket 4, packing sambar and chutney and arranging them on a plastic plate atop her pushcart. She wants to have everything ready — in case a customer shows up — so she doesn't waste time packing the order later. She stays in the flats behind her, provided by the Delhi Development Authority (DDA).

But the home where she's lived since she was a child is 50-odd km away, at Madras Camp in Jangpura — now a mass of rubble. The colony was razed on June 1 after the Delhi High Court ordered the demolition of over 300 houses to clear the blocked Barapullah drain ahead of the monsoon.

Like this slum cluster, several of the Capital's densely populated informal settlements — Bhoomiheen Camp, Taimoor Nagar, and Jailerwala Bagh — have been razed over the last two months. While the courts and authorities cite encroachment on government land, those displaced — many of them work as daily-wage workers or house help — say they are being uprooted not just from their homes, but also from their livelihoods. Perima says she arrived at the flats in the Northwest Delhi suburb on the night of the demolition and set up the cart just three days ago. "Yesterday, it took me six hours to make the chutney because I had to travel to Jangpura to get the right chana dal. Here, there are no provision stores," she says.

At Jangpura, she used to work as a domestic house help in four homes. "Yahan par laake daal diya, ab kaise guzaara karein, samajh hi nahi aa raha hai, har cheez mehengi hai yahan. (They have brought us here, how we will survive, we don't know. Everything is expensive here.) I used to earn Rs 20,000, but now I hardly earn anything."

Agency New Delhi.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Sunday announced the arrival of the Monsoon over the entire country, including Delhi, nine days ahead of schedule. According to the IMD, the monsoon has now covered the remaining parts of Rajasthan, West Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and all of Delhi as of June 29, beating its usual timeline of July 8. The early onset brought light to moderate rain across Delhi-NCR on Saturday and Sunday, with showers and gusty winds reported in Rohini, Pitampura, Karawal Nagar, Rajouri Garden, Dwarka, IGI Airport and several other parts of the capital.

Neighboring areas in Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh, including Noida, also saw scattered rain and thunderstorms, with wind speeds

reaching up to 50 km/h in some places. Meanwhile, in Uttarakhand, the Char Dham Yatra has been suspended for the next 24 hours following a red alert for heavy rainfall. Garhwali Commissioner Vinay Shankar Pandey confirmed that pilgrims heading to Badrinath and Kedarnath are being stopped at Srinagar or Rudraprayag, while those bound for Yamunotri and Gangotri are being halted at Vikasnagar and Barkot. Pilgrims already at the shrines are being brought back under strict safety measures.

The IMD has issued a red alert for today and tomorrow for Uttarkashi, Rudraprayag, Dehradun, Tehri, Pauri, Champawat, Bageshwar, Udham

Singh Nagar and Haridwar, warning of extremely heavy rainfall. An orange alert has also been declared across Uttarakhand for July 1 and 2, with the weather office cautioning that people

According to District Magistrate Prashant Arya, nine labourers are missing after debris hit their shelter.

Rescue operations by the State Disaster Response Force, National Disaster Response Force, police and local administration are underway despite continuous rain. Landslides have also blocked stretches of the Yamunotri and Gangotri highways.

Himachal Pradesh is also on alert, with the weather department's Hydromet Division warning of moderate to high flash flood risk in parts of Bilaspur, Chamba, Hamirpur, Kangra, Kullu, Mandi, Shimla, Sirmour, Solan and Una districts over the next 24 hours. Heavy rainfall could trigger surface runoff and flooding in low-lying areas.



living in sensitive or low-lying areas face risks of waterlogging and landslides.

In Uttarkashi, a cloudburst near Silvani Bandi in Barkot triggered a landslide at a hotel construction site early Saturday morning.

3 dead, 50 injured in stampede during Puri Rath Yatra; Chief Minister apologises

Puri stampede: The incident took place near Saradhabali, in front of the temple, where Lord Jagannath was seated on the chariot.

Agency New Delhi.

At least three people died and 50 others were injured in a stampede near Sri Gundicha Temple in Odisha's Puri during Lord Jagannath Rath Yatra. The incident occurred early Sunday morning, around 4:45 am amid heavy crowd. According to Puri District Collector Siddharth S Swain, the incident happened when hundreds of devotees had gathered near the Shree Gundicha Temple for darshan. The crowd suddenly surged and created a stampede-like situation.

Emergency services responded quickly and the injured were taken to Puri District Hospital. Six of them are in critical condition.

The victims have been identified as Prativa Das Female (52), Premakanta Mohanty (78) and Basanti Sahu (42), all residents of Khurda district. Their bodies have been sent for postmortem.



The incident took place near Saradhabali, in front of the temple, where Lord Jagannath was seated on the chariot. The crowd became uncontrollable during the darshan and in the chaos several people fell and

NEGLIGENCE UNFORGIVABLE: CHIEF MINISTER

Hours after the incident, Odisha Chief Minister expressed deep sorrow and said, "Due to the intense eagerness among devotees to have a glimpse of Mahaprabhu at Sharadhabali, an unfortunate incident occurred because of the resulting jostling and chaos. Personally, I and my government seek forgiveness from all Jagannath devotees."

"We express our condolences to the families of those devotees whose lives were extinguished at Sharadhabali and pray to Mahaprabhu Jagannath to grant them the strength to bear this profound sorrow," he added. Calling the incident a result of serious negligence, the Chief Minister declared it "unforgivable" and ordered a prompt investigation into the security lapses. "Strict and exemplary action will be taken against those found responsible," he added.

were trampled. Authorities have launched an investigation into the cause of the incident. "We are looking into what triggered the rush and whether there were any lapses in crowd control," said

the Rath Yatra fair in Dandu village with friends. While returning in the evening, a dispute reportedly led

his anger.

Jaynath filmed the attack, took selfies with the girl's body and the blood-stained knife and posted the footage online before fleeing to the jungle. Villagers attempted to apprehend him, but he escaped and later hanged himself from a tree. The father of the victim, Ramdayal Kherwar, said his daughter, a student at Dundur school, had gone to the fair with friends, including Jaynath. Bystanders tried to intervene during the attack but could not save

Jaynath to stab the girl multiple times, resulting in her death. Sources suggest the girlfriend had recently distanced herself from Jaynath, possibly fueling his anger.

Police recovered both bodies and sent them for post-mortem examination while continuing their investigation.



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his anger.

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India makes huge strides in QS 2026 Rankings, but has a long way to go

Agency New Delhi.

India has scripted a huge achievement of late in the education field, which largely went unnoticed. This is because, unfortunately, education receives scarce attention in a country obsessed with politics, cricket, Bollywood and wars. New reforms and fresh initiatives in the education sector are rudimentary, but sadly, these are often given a short shrift. At a time when education in India is facing challenges galore comes a good news — which offers a ray of hope. The QS World University Rankings 2026, released on June 19, underscores India's strongest showing yet. Out of 8,000 educational institutions and universities from 106 countries, 1,501 were ranked this year, including 112 which made their entry for the first time.

Amassive leap
What is heartening is that a record 54 institutions from India found place in this coveted list — the highest number to date for the country. This feat puts India ahead of countries like Germany (48) and Japan (47). It makes India the fourth most represented country in the rankings,

behind only the US, the UK, and China. It is to be noted that in 2014, merely 11 educational institutions from India made it in the prestigious rankings.

So, it's a huge leap indeed — from 11 to 54. In other words, India has seen a massive 390 percent growth — nearly five times more — over the past 10 years. This amazing progress has come not just from top public institutions like the 12 IITs, Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bengaluru, Delhi University, Anna University, and Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University, but also from several private universities that have made a huge impact.

This is not just about numbers — it also shows that despite the prevailing challenges, the quality of Indian higher education is getting better and more competitive around the world. This year, almost 48 percent of Indian institutions in the QS rankings went up, while only 20 percent dropped. Undoubtedly, the implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) — 2020

has gone a long way in bringing about this steady improvement. However, still more needs to be done.

Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has rightly said that NEP 2020 is not just

Ten years, just two projects: Where does Delhi's slum rehabilitation policy stand?

Agency New Delhi.

In 2015, Delhi introduced a rehabilitation policy that prioritised in-situ housing for slum dwellers, with relocation permitted only in "exceptional circumstances." However, a recent surge in demolitions has run contrary to the policy's intent, with many residents being shifted to far-flung locations.

Major demolitions that have taken place after the BJP came to power are in Madras Camp (340 structures demolished), Bhoomiheen Camp (344 structures demolished), Jailerwala Bagh Camp (300 structures demolished) and Taimoor Nagar (100 structures demolished). Eligible residents of Madras Camp have been offered housing in Narela, 50-odd km away.

According to a list compiled by Basti Suraksha Manch, an organisation advocating for housing rights of slum dwellers in Delhi, many more demolitions have been taking place at an accelerated pace in recent months. "Since coming to power, the BJP government demolished around 30-40 slums. Currently, there are 5-10 settlements under threat of demolition. The government had given a slogan of 'Jahaan Jhuggi Wahin Makaan', but, instead, the poor are being removed from their homes," said Neelesh Kumar, a social activist and member of the group.

What does the policy entail?

The rehabilitation of slums is governed by the Delhi Slum & Jhuggi Jhupri Rehabilitation and Relocation Policy, 2015, which was approved by the Cabinet in 2016. It prioritises in-situ rehabilitation — alternate accommodation has to be provided to a slum dweller on the same land or within a radius of 5 km.

But under exceptional circumstances, in-situ rehabilitation need not be undertaken and relocation is considered. Such circumstances include a court order; if the slum encroaches on a street, road, footpath, railway safety zone, or a park; and if the encroached land is required by the land-owning agency for a public project that is urgent.

Madhya Pradesh: Seven engineers suspended over 'faulty design' of over bridge in Bhopal

Agency New Delhi.

The Madhya Pradesh government suspended seven engineers, including two chief engineers of the Public Works Department (PWD) for constructing a bridge with faulty design in Bhopal. Additionally, an inquiry has been launched against a retired superintendent engineer, as the said bridge has an unusual 90-degree turn. Apart from this, a construction company and a design consultant have been blacklisted by the government. A committee has been set up to make improvements in the bridge, Chief Minister Mohan Yadav said.

Odd design of bridge a laughing stock

The newly built over bridge has been ridiculed by netizens, for its odd design. However, the engineers in the initial stages justified the flawed alignment to limited land availability near a metro station.

The officials against whom action has been taken include chief engineers Sanjay Khande and G P Verma, in-charge executive engineer Javed Shakeel, in-charge sub-divisional officer Ravi Shukla, sub-engineer Umashankar Mishra, assistant engineer Shanul Saxena, in-charge executive engineer Shabana Rajiq and retired superintendent engineer M P Singh, said PWD additional chief secretary Neeraj Mandloi. The firms which was blacklisted is M/s Puneet Chaddha and design consultant M/s Dynamic Consultant.

Justification of 'faulty design'

The primary objective of the 18 crore ROB was improving the connectivity between Mahamai Ka Bagh, Pushpa Nagar and the station area with New Bhopal, aiding almost 3 lakh people.

The officials involved in the construction process of the over bridge justified their act by claiming that they had no alternative but to construct the bridge in that way, due to the scarcity of land and the presence of a metro rail station nearby.



and innovation for the benefit of India's youth."

Brilliant showing, but long road ahead

India's brilliant showing in the QS World University Rankings 2026 is laudable, and the steps taken to better the education system are truly praiseworthy. However, we can't deny the fact that this success is still mostly restricted to IITs, central universities, and a few other prime institutions. A large number of universities nationwide are still reeling under fund crunch, dearth of qualified teachers, outdated labs, low research work, negligible focus on new ideas, and hardly any ties with foreign universities. It is also a matter of great concern that approximately 1.8 million Indian students are at presently studying at foreign universities, with an estimated Rs 5 lakh crore spent each year on their education. The pertinent question is: Can we prevent this trend of large-scale student migration by strengthening our higher education system and offering world-class opportunities within the country?

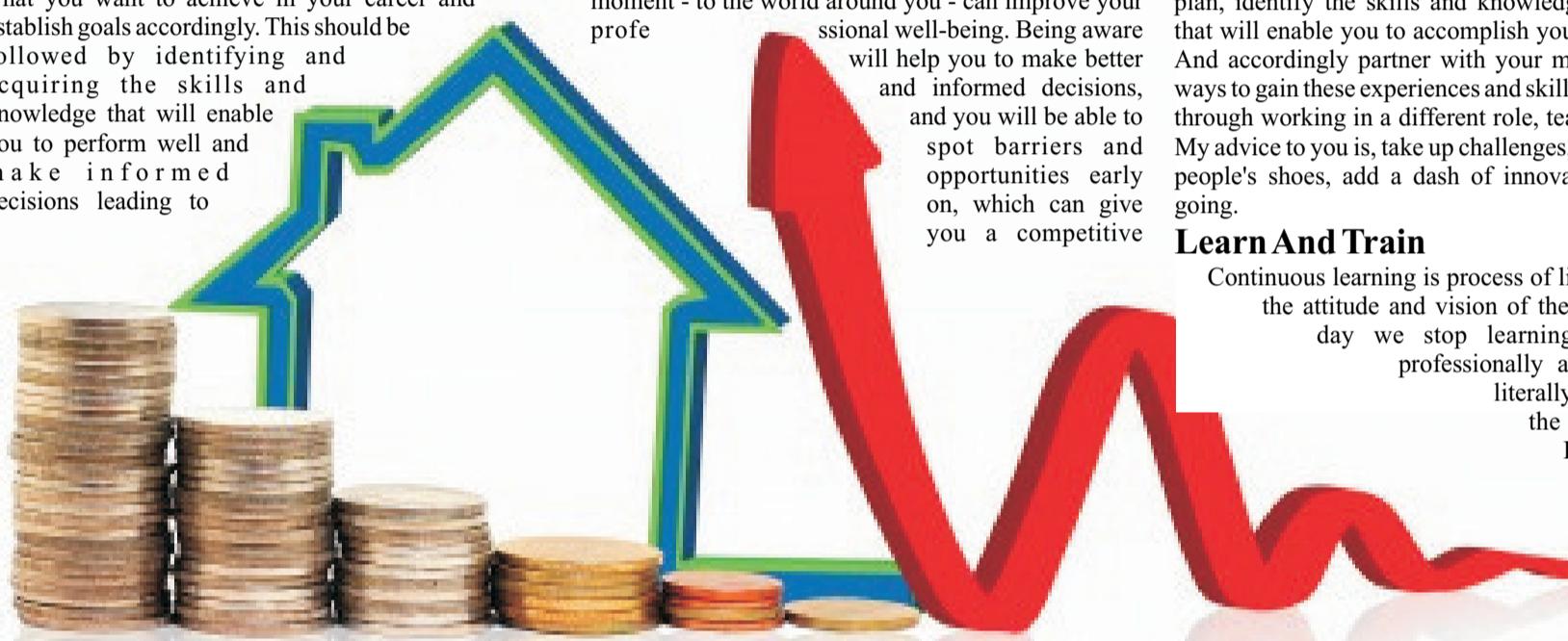
How to navigate your way to

Success



How do you ensure that your career is always in good health?

Building a successful career is a continuous process of managing your life, learning and work. A person's career success depends on several factors, but essentially, you need to have the vision, passion and commitment to succeed. 'My day at work was great' and not 'thank God it's over' should be the thought at the end of your workday. If it is not so, there is one thing that you are not doing at work and that is, enjoying it! It all begins with creating the right career plan, ascertain what you want to achieve in your career and establish goals accordingly. This should be followed by identifying and acquiring the skills and knowledge that will enable you to perform well and make informed decisions leading to



accomplishment of your goals.

How to navigate your way to success: Realise The Power Of 'Now'

Most professionals think they have to change jobs every now and then to get ahead, but that's not true! The prime focus should be on performing well in your current role, and you will recognise that your current job can offer you challenges and opportunities you haven't yet tapped. You can even look at taking on new assignments in your current position; this will expand your skill set and develop your leadership capabilities, and thus, your marketability.

Be Self-Aware

Knowing what you want begins with knowing yourself. An honest assessment is key to figuring out your ultimate goals. Each of us has unique strengths and areas of improvement. You are most likely to succeed in life if you use your talents to the fullest extent. Similarly, by understanding your improvement areas, you can eliminate barriers that might impact your ability to move forward.

Be Aware

It can be easy to rush through life without stopping to notice much. Paying more attention to the present moment - to the world around you - can improve your professional well-being. Being aware

will help you to make better and informed decisions, and you will be able to spot barriers and opportunities early on, which can give you a competitive



edge. This is especially important if you contribute to shaping your organisation's strategy. Also, keeping up-to-date with your industry is key for building that "expert power". By developing expertise in your job and your industry, you'll earn the trust and respect of the people around you. From a leadership perspective, this is invaluable!

Diversify Your Experience In line with your career plan, identify the skills and knowledge experiences that will enable you to accomplish your career goals. And accordingly partner with your manager to find ways to gain these experiences and skills, which can be through working in a different role, team or location. My advice to you is, take up challenges, step into other people's shoes, add a dash of innovation and keep going.

Learn And Train

Continuous learning is process of life, pinnacle of the attitude and vision of the universe. The day we stop learning new things professionally and personally, literally, it would be

the end of life. Regardless of the industry you're in, training

is very important to propel yourself up the career ladder. Training helps learn new skills and brush up on concepts you've already learned. Today, internet has dramatically revolutionised the corporate scene, now you can attend virtual sessions anywhere, anytime and that too free of cost. All you need is determination to learn and understanding of your training requirements.

Network

Life is all about perspectives and experiences, and networking provides an opportunity to interact with people and learn from their experiences. After all, it can be a refreshing and enlightening experience to have a conversation with those in or outside your industry.

Share Knowledge

Knowledge is like a treasure, the more you share the more it grows. So never hesitate to share your knowledge and experiences. If somebody needs to know something, explain them, and it would definitely give you a benefit. This will also help you in building a positive reputation within the organisation.

Take Criticism Positively

Believe me, no one is born with the capacity to accept criticism constructively. All of us have to work towards developing that attitude and learn not be defensive. This is a quality that comes with time and experience. All you have to remember is to handle such situations (and there will be many) with tact and grace and you will sail through.

24x7 work culture might not exactly be what you are looking for. Remember that a lot of your motivation and happiness will come from the company you join.

- Rejection is part of the game: For all the work that you put in and the advice we can provide, interviewing is still a process loaded with unknowns. If an opportunity does not open up, take it in your stride. Maybe you didn't fit the bill, maybe the position was already spoken for, or the budget disappeared. The truth will never come out. Don't let a rejection bring you down, but learn what you can and keep going.

Think about these tips, take your time and prepare how you will convey your message. Right through your professional journey, whether you are in the final days of your notice period or in the first weeks of your new job, nurture your personal brand. How do you want people to talk about you in your absence, what would you like them to say? Careers are marathons; the interview is just an intermediate step.

7 secrets to ace your Job interview

Most advice on acing a job interview is about memorising answers to an endless number of possible questions. And there, we've got a fundamental problem. Because the interview is not an exam; it's a discussion to establish if you are competent, motivated and trustworthy. Do you want to win your dream job? We have some radically different advice for you. Are they secrets? Well, we don't know, but, for sure, they are tips based on our experience and research:

- Prepare, don't just show up: Interviews are not walk-ins. Always know the role you are applying for and the company you will be interviewing with. What business are they in, how do they make money, and how will hiring you



make a difference to them?

- First impressions count: From the time you keep to the clothes you wear, from your composure on arrival to the way you greet security in the lobby, it's best to assume that all of this is being observed. Don't let yourself down. Start on a professional note.

- Tell your story, furnish evidence: The interview is your opportunity to show why you should be hired. So, come prepared to talk about your biggest achievements and highlights of your professional journey. How are they relevant to the new job? How do they put you above what the rest of the herd can do?

- Even freshers have experience: If you are fresh out of university with no job experience, talk about what worked well for you in coursework and internships, the experiences that have shaped you this far and the lessons learned. Forget the myth that you have no experience worth talking about.

- Leadership skills matter: Companies are looking for a good match and for people who have the potential for bigger things. If the role they are trying to fill today does not exist tomorrow, will they still have a need for you? Can today's junior analyst be the leader of the business unit in eight years' time? What you know doesn't matter as much as how you work. Be ready to discuss teamwork, your ability to influence and inspire, and what keeps you going each and every day.

- An interview is not a one way: Use the interview to get to know the company better. Is their work culture aligned with what matters to you? Is this the right organisation for you at the stage of life you find yourself in? If you are a young parent, a



Market Outlook: PMI, Auto Sales, FII Activity, Key Economic Data To Drive Stock Market This Week

Mumbai. Major factors, including auto sales figures, PMI data, Foreign Institutional Investor (FII) activity, and international economic updates, are expected to drive the Indian stock market this week. According to Bajaj Broking Research, several important economic data releases are scheduled between June 30 and July 4 in both India and the United States.

India's industrial production data for the month of May will be released on June 30, which will offer insights into the country's manufacturing output. The current account data for the first quarter is also expected to be announced on the same day. On July 1, S&P Global will publish India's Manufacturing PMI for June, while auto companies will release their monthly sales numbers. Later, on July 3, S&P Global will also release the Services PMI, providing a broader picture of the country's economic activity. Globally, key data from the US, such as Manufacturing PMI, jobless claims, non-farm payrolls, and unemployment figures, are expected next week. These indicators could significantly impact global markets. Meanwhile, Indian stock markets ended the week on a strong note. During the week, the 50-share index Nifty rose 525.40 points, or 2.09 per cent, to close at 25,637.80, while the 30-share index Sensex climbed 1,650.73 points, or 2 per cent, ending at 84,058.90.

The broader market also followed suit as the Nifty Midcap 100 index rose 2.40 per cent and the Nifty Smallcap 100 jumped 4.30 per cent. Sectorally, the Nifty Metal index surged 4.81 per cent, followed by Nifty Commodities (4.03 per cent) and Nifty Infra (3.37 per cent) as top performers. Analysts attribute the recent rally to easing geopolitical tensions between Iran and Israel and improving global stability. FIIs returned as net buyers last week, investing over Rs 4,423 crore in Indian equities. This was supported by falling crude oil prices, a stable rupee, and improving global risk appetite. Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) also remained net buyers, purchasing nearly Rs 12,390 crore worth of Indian equities.

AI's Power Problem: Satya Nadella Warns Tech World to Use Energy Wisely as Microsoft Plans More Layoffs

New Delhi. Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella is urging the tech industry to think hard about how much energy artificial intelligence (AI) uses and whether it truly benefits people. Speaking at Y Combinator's AI Startup School, Nadella said, "If you're going to use a lot of energy, you need to have a good reason. We can't just burn energy unless we are doing something useful with it." He stressed that AI should make real improvements in daily life, like making healthcare, education, or paperwork easier and faster.

Nadella pointed out that Microsoft, one of the world's biggest AI companies, used about 24 terawatt-hours of electricity in 2023—about as much as a small country. He said AI's true test is whether it solves real problems, such as helping hospitals discharge patients faster, saving both time and money. While Microsoft is betting big on AI, it's also cutting jobs. Over the past year, the company has laid off more than 6,000 employees as it reorganizes to focus on AI and cloud computing. More layoffs are expected soon, especially in the Xbox gaming division and sales teams, as Microsoft tries to boost profits after spending billions to buy Activision Blizzard. Nadella's message is clear: AI should not just be about new technology or profits—it must prove its worth by genuinely helping society, especially given its massive energy appetite. As Microsoft leads the AI race, it's also facing tough choices about jobs and the true cost of innovation.

Digital Payments at Indian Post Offices: UPI Payments from August 2025

New Delhi. Post offices across India will begin accepting digital payments at their counters starting August 2025, following the completion of a new IT system rollout, as per the official sources. The proposed move is expected to provide streamlined services to the customers, as per the PTI report.

Currently, post offices are unable to process digital payments as their accounts are not yet integrated with the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) system. National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI) provides the unified payment interface (UPI) services for better financial services and promotes the digital payment ecosystem in India. The Department of Posts is upgrading its IT infrastructure with new applications capable of handling transactions using dynamic QR codes. This rollout is expected to be completed across all post offices by August 2025," a government official told. As part of the IT 2.0 initiative, a pilot implementation of the system has already begun in the Karnataka circle. QR code-based booking for mail services has been successfully tested at the Mysore Head Office (HO), Bagalkot HO, and associated branch offices. Earlier, the department had introduced static QR codes at post office counters to facilitate digital payments. However, persistent technical issues and frequent customer complaints led to the discontinuation of that method. In India, post offices offer a wide spectrum of services, including mail delivery, speed post delivery, financial services like Post Office Savings Account, Recurring Deposit, Time Deposit, Monthly Income Scheme, Public Provident Fund, Senior Citizen Savings Scheme, Sukanya Samriddhi Account, and Kisan Vikas Patra, etc. Additionally, post offices facilitate money transfer services and act as agents for government services.

Big Relief For NRIs: US Senate Cuts Proposed Remittance Tax From 3.5% To 1%

The revised proposal is expected to benefit around 2.9 million Indians living in the U.S.—the second-largest immigrant group in the country, according to the Migration Policy Institute.

New Delhi. Indian expats in the U.S. may soon get some relief on money transfers back home. The final draft of the 'One Big Beautiful Bill Act', backed by former President Donald Trump, now proposes slashing the remittance tax to just 1 per cent. This is a major reduction from earlier versions which suggested a 5 per cent levy, later brought down to 3.5 per



cent in the House proposal. The revised proposal is expected to benefit around 2.9 million Indians living in the U.S.—the second-largest immigrant group in the country, according to the Migration Policy Institute. As per The Economic Times, the Senate's latest draft, released on Friday, limits the 1 per cent remittance tax only to physical transfers

like cash, money orders, or cashier's cheques. Transfers made through bank accounts, credit or debit cards, and official financial channels will remain tax-free. Lloyd Pinto, Partner—US Tax at Grant Thornton Bharat, shared that Senate Republicans have released an updated draft of the proposed 'One Big Beautiful Bill Act' and are aiming to get it

FPIs On Course To Become Net Buyers In India For Third Month

FPIs have fueled the recent bull run in the stock market following a sharp slump. By definition, Foreign Portfolio Investment involves investors buying foreign financial assets.

New Delhi. Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) are on course to become net buyers in Indian stock markets for the third straight month in June. In January, February, and March, they were net sellers throughout. Since April, however, they have turned net buyers in Indian equities. The latest data from the National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL) shows that FPIs have bought stocks worth 78,915 crore in June so far. In April and May, FPIs accumulated stocks worth 74,223 crore and 719,860 crore, respectively. FPIs have fueled the recent bull run in the stock market following a sharp

slump. By definition, Foreign Portfolio Investment involves investors buying foreign financial assets. A declining dollar is always positive for emerging market equities; this encouraged FIIs to invest in India. The FII buying figure for June, including purchases through the exchange, primary market, and



other categories, stood at 78,915 crore through the 27th," said VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services. "FII were buyers in financials, capital

bonds. Ample liquidity and investor optimism have the potential to sustain the rally, though high valuations remain a limiting factor and could trigger profit booking," Vijayakumar added.

The benchmark Sensex is now about 2,000 points below its all-time high of 85,978 points. At one point, the Sensex had fallen nearly 13,000 points from its peak. Recent FPI buying has helped support the indices.

Indian stock markets have outperformed global markets in recent weeks, even as volatility persisted globally due to concerns over potential upcoming US reciprocal tariffs as the July 9 deadline approaches. A favorable inflation figure in India has also provided some support to domestic equity indices.

In 2024, both the Sensex and Nifty have posted gains of around 9–10%. In 2023, they rose by 16–17% cumulatively, while in 2022, the gains were a modest 3% each.

Indian Cement Sector Reaches 39.6 Million Metric Tonnes In May, Up 9%

New Delhi. The Indian cement sector reached 39.6 million metric tonnes (MT) in May, recorded a strong 9 per cent year-on-year (YoY) growth in volumes, according to a new report. The positive trend continued in the first two months of FY26, with volumes rising 8 per cent YoY to 78.7 million MT, according to the report by ICRA.

For FY2025, cement volumes grew by 6.3 per cent YoY, totalling 453.0 million MT. ICRA projects a further 6-7 per cent growth in FY2026, with volumes expected to reach 480-485 million MT, driven by sustained demand from the housing and infrastructure sectors. Average cement prices saw an 8 per cent YoY increase in May 2025, reaching Rs 360 per bag, while prices for the first two months of FY2026 were up 7 per cent YoY. ICRA

anticipates an 80-150 basis points (bps) improvement in operating margins for its sample set of cement companies, rising to 16.3-17.0 per cent in



FY2026. The rating agency maintains a 'Stable' outlook for the Indian cement sector, reflecting confidence in continued demand and favourable cost conditions. The sector's resilience underscores its critical role in

supporting India's infrastructure and housing development.

The combined Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI) increased by 0.7 per cent in May compared to the same month last year, according to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry data. The production of cement, steel, coal, and refinery products recorded positive growth last month. The final growth rate of the Index of Eight Core Industries for February, March and April was observed at 3.4, 4.5 and 1.0 per cent, respectively, said the ministry.

Cement production rose by 9.2 per cent in May. Its cumulative index increased by 7.8 per cent during April to May, 2025-26 over the corresponding period of the previous year.

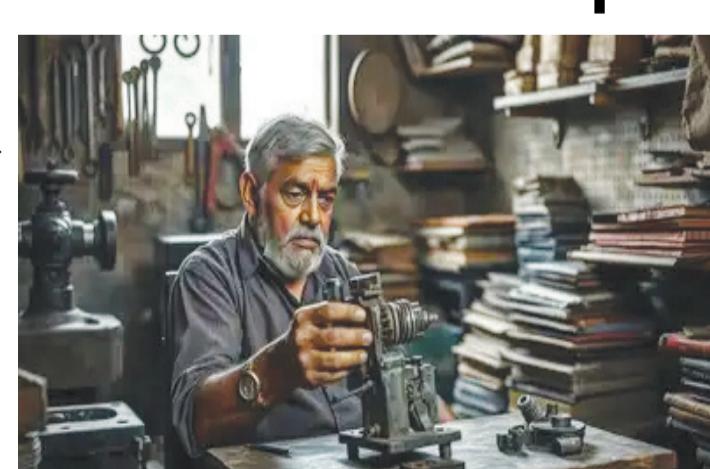
Policy miss: 71% of small manufacturers say government skill schemes haven't helped - Report

New Delhi A majority of small manufacturing enterprises in India say government-run skill-training initiatives are failing to reach them effectively, with 71 per cent reporting no benefits from such programmes, according to a report by Cushman & Wakefield. The survey, part of the firm's report 'Elevating India's Manufacturing Resilience: Charting the Path to Self-Reliance', highlights major gaps in talent support to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

According to news agency ANI, around 61 per cent of MSMEs overall said they had not received any support from government skill and talent programmes, while just 39 per cent confirmed any benefit. The disconnect is sharpest among smaller firms, those employing fewer than 500 people. The report notes that MSMEs employ four out of every five workers in the manufacturing sector and contribute to 40 per cent of the output. Yet, productivity remains low. A worker in an MSME generates only 14 per cent of the output compared to one in a large enterprise. Comparable firms in other emerging economies are already nearing

30 per cent output per worker, while the gap is even narrower in developed nations. Cushman & Wakefield's executive managing director Gautam Saraf said bridging capacity and cost gaps in areas like logistics, integrated facilities, and MSME productivity is vital.

"Plug-and-play industrial parks, multimodal logistics networks, and improved land aggregation frameworks are not just enablers—they are essential levers for converting policy momentum into production-ready outcomes," he said, as quoted by ANI. Interestingly, while skill initiatives lag, infrastructure spending is having a strong impact. About 88 per cent of respondents said projects like Bharatmala, Sagarmala, Dedicated Freight Corridors, and the National Industrial Corridor Development had influenced their capital expenditure plans. In fact, 93 per cent reported better operating efficiency and profitability where modern industrial parks and



corridors are present, and 94 per cent of large enterprises credited infrastructure upgrades as key to their growth. However, long-term competitiveness is still threatened by high logistics costs, limited warehousing (0.2 sq. ft. per urban resident in India compared to 47.3 sq. ft. in the US), low domestic value addition (17 per cent vs China's 25 per cent), and skill shortages, especially in MSMEs. These challenges compound existing regulatory

passed by their self-imposed deadline of July 4. "The updated Senate version significantly changes the remittance transfer provisions that was passed by the House Republicans. In the latest Senate draft, the remittance transfer tax has been reduced to 1 per cent from the erstwhile proposal of 3.5 per cent," he said. Interestingly, the Senate's proposal does not include transfers made through bank accounts or using debit and credit cards issued in the U.S. The 1 per cent remittance tax will apply only to transfers where the sender uses cash, money orders, cashier's checks, or similar physical payment methods. This new rule is set to take effect from January 1, 2026. "This should come as a huge relief for the NRI community in the U.S.," said Pinto, "as they won't have to pay the remittance tax if they send money through accounts with designated U.S. banks or use debit or credit cards issued in the country."

India's Forex Reserves Dip By USD 1.02 Billion To USD 697.93 Billion

New Delhi. India's foreign exchange reserves (forex) declined by USD 1.02 billion this week after extending gains in the previous week stabilising at USD 697.93 billion, official data released by the Reserve Bank of India showed. The Forex extended their gains, jumping USD 2,294 billion to USD 698,950 billion in the week ending June 13. As on June 20, the data shows that the foreign currency assets declined USD 0.36 billion to USD 589.07 billion. Gold reserves were down by USD 5.73 million to stand at USD 85.74 billion during the week, the apex bank's data shows while the The special drawing rights were down USD 85 million to USD 18.67 billion. Central banks worldwide increasingly accumulating safe-haven gold in their foreign exchange reserves kitty, and India is no exception. The share of gold maintained by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in its foreign exchange reserves has almost doubled since 2021, till recently. In 2023, India added around USD 58 billion to its foreign exchange reserves,



contrasting with a cumulative decline of USD 71 billion in 2022. In 2024, the reserves rose by a little over USD 20 billion. India's foreign exchange reserves (Forex) are sufficient to meet 11 months of the country's imports and about 96 per cent of external debt, said Governor Sanjay Malhotra while announcing the outcome of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) decisions. The RBI governor expressed confidence, stating that India's external sector is resilient and key external sector vulnerability indicators are improving. Foreign exchange reserves, or FX reserves, are assets held by a nation's central bank or monetary authority, primarily in reserve currencies such as the US Dollar, with smaller portions in the Euro, Japanese Yen, and Pound Sterling. The RBI often intervenes by managing liquidity, including selling dollars, to prevent steep Rupee depreciation. The RBI strategically buys dollars when the Rupee is strong and sells when it weakens.

burdens. In a separate study by TeamLease RegTech, a typical manufacturing MSME deals with over 1,450 compliance obligations annually, costing Rs 13-17 lakh per year. These span seven legal categories and involve 486 imprisonment clauses, many for procedural lapses. Rishi Agrawal, CEO of TeamLease RegTech, stressed that India must urgently reduce its "deeply entrenched hostility and inspector raj" to unshackle MSME growth. "We need to add compliance to India's DPI (Digital Public Infrastructure) stack," he added, as cited by ANI. The latest findings reinforce calls for a more holistic and MSME-centric policy approach—one that combines skill development with regulatory relief and infrastructure support to truly empower India's 6.45 crore MSMEs.

Rashami Desai

BACKS Parag Tyagi As He Takes His Dog For A Walk: 'Her Sudden Passing...'

Rashami Desai was in the same season as late Shefali Jariwala in Bigg Boss 13. After expressing grief over Shefali's death on social media, she defended Parag Tyagi and criticised social media users for 'judging him' for walking their dog while holding his late wife's photo in one hand. She urged everyone to show empathy and not spread "sensationalism". Rashami posted a screenshot of Parag walking their dog Simba, whom Shefali was extremely close to. Taking to her Instagram story, she wrote, "Arreec bhaiya, let's spread kindness and compassion instead of judgment! Simba was more than just a pet – he was Shefali's beloved son. Her sudden passing leaves a huge void, and I urge the media to respect the family's grief and give them space during this difficult time. Let's show empathy and understanding, not sensationalism (sic)." Take a look:

Earlier today, Rashami shared a picture of Shefali and wrote, "I am still trying to process the news, you were an incredible person and I am struggling to find the words to express... You will be deeply missed, gone too soon." Meanwhile, Himanshi Khurana shared a throwback selfie with Shefali, and wrote, "Bigg Boss that place is cursed I think" along with heartbreak emoji.

What did Shefali's residential security say?

Shatrujan, the watchman of Shefali Jariwala's residential society, recounted the events that unfolded on the night of her death. He shared that Shefali was taken to the hospital around 10:30 PM on Friday. Still in shock, he remembered seeing Shefali and her husband Parag Tyagi just the evening before, casually walking their dog in the compound. "It was just like any other day," he said, adding, "I couldn't believe it when I heard on Friday night that she had passed away."

Shatrujan, the security guard on duty, recounted the events of Friday night. While speaking with , he mentioned, "Around 10:30 at night, Shefali ji was taken to the hospital. Before that, at around 9 PM, her husband Parag Tyagi came to the society on a motorcycle. I was the one who opened the gate." Shortly after Shefali was taken to the hospital, police teams and forensic units arrived at the scene, said Shatrujan. "The police have been inside since last night. There were two mobile forensic unit vehicles – one has left, one is still here," he added.

As for the latest update, police officials and forensic experts are still probing the case of her death. Her body was sent to Cooper Hospital for postmortem on Friday night.



Falaq Naaz

Takes Dig At Khushi Mukherjee's Revealing Dress?; Asks Govt 'Why No Penalty'

Television actress Khushi Mukherjee has been the talk of the internet recently, and not for her acting projects. The former Splitsville contestant and social media personality has found herself in the spotlight for her bold fashion choices, frequently making appearances in extremely revealing outfits that have gone viral across platforms. While the internet remains divided over her clothing, actress Falaq Naaz—known for her role in Sasural Simar Ka—has now weighed in on the matter, without naming Khushi directly. In a strongly-worded Instagram video, Falaq referred to Khushi only as "didi" and expressed her frustration with the government's double standards when it comes to public decency and civic penalties. "Hi everyone," Falaq begins in the video. "Toh piche baar aap sabko yaad hogा maine ek didi ke upar video banayi thi. Yaha pe na baat bahot zyada didi se aage jaa chuki hai. It is not about any XYZ person. It is something jo main government se puchna chahti hoon—ke stray dogs ke upar itna udham mach jata hai, penalties, hum log khaana nahi khila sakte, log objection lete hai."

The actress then draws a direct comparison between penalties for feeding stray animals and the lack of regulation over provocative public attire. "Iss tarah ka kuch pehenke agar sadak par nikal rahe hai toh uspe objection kyu nahi utha rahi hai government? Media jo inko cover

kar rahe hai, aur aise logon pe jo cover ho rahe hai, aise logon pe penalty kyu nahi hai? Mujhe yeh janna hai."

Falaq also made an emotional appeal to the public to raise this question with the authorities. "So, jitne log yaha pe baite hue hai, help me out, tag authorities, and I want the answer now ke yeh sahi hai. Aur agar yeh sahi hai toh stray dogs ko



khaana khilane pe koi aawaz naa uthaaye. Agar nang pane mein aawaz nahi uthrahi, toh bachcho ko khaane khilane mein aawaz naa uthana."

Khushi Mukherjee, on the other hand, remains unfazed as paparazzi videos of her continue to rack up views. While she has yet to respond directly to Falaq's comments, her wardrobe choices have certainly kept social media buzzing—and now, they've sparked a wider debate around societal norms, personal freedom, and public decency.

Sonakshi Sinha Pregnant? Actress Finally Breaks Silence, Says, 'I Have Found a Way...'



Sonakshi Sinha's personal life has often been under the media microscope — from whispers about her relationship with Zaheer Iqbal to public curiosity around her inter-faith wedding and now pregnancy rumours. The Heeramandi star, who tied the knot with longtime boyfriend Zaheer in a quiet civil ceremony last year, recently celebrated their first wedding anniversary on June 23, 2025. The couple, who appeared together in Double XL (2022), kept their relationship under wraps for several years before making it official. But even after going public, the scrutiny didn't stop. Their interfaith relationship, with Sonakshi being Hindu and Zaheer Muslim, sparked even more curiosity. Many even questioned, "Is Sonakshi Sinha pregnant?" as she quietly got married without much fanfare.

Sonakshi, however, has chosen calm over chaos. In a recent interview, she reacted to the relentless noise surrounding her private life. "I have found a way of shutting out the noise," she said. "I live a very happy life off screen when I am not at work, and I am okay and peaceful, so when I am at work and I have to deal with such things, I just end up dealing with it better," the actress added.

The actress, who dated Zaheer Iqbal for seven years before they got married, shared how time and experience have helped her build emotional resilience. "You realise that people will say what they want to say, no matter what you do. If I say I am wearing white, someone will say no, it's black. Someone will always be there to challenge what you say, so you just move on with your life. You cannot pay attention to every little thing."

Sonakshi Sinha and Zaheer Iqbal Marriage

Sonakshi Sinha and Zaheer Iqbal got married in a quiet civil ceremony at her Bandra home on June 23, 2024. The wedding was attended by close family and a few friends, including her parents, Shatrujan and Poonam Sinha. Later that evening, the couple hosted a grand reception at Bastian restaurant in Mumbai.

The celebration was a star-studded affair with guests like Salman Khan, Rekha, Kajol, Anil Kapoor, Tabu, Raveena Tandon, Vidya Balan with Siddharth Roy Kapur, and many more.

Shweta Tiwari's Ex-Husband Says He Gave Up Meeting Daughter Palak Tiwari: 'Beti Bhi Na Mil, Tu Bhi Na Mil'



Television actress Shweta Tiwari's ex-husband Raja Chaudhary is once again in the spotlight, shedding light on his past with her. Speaking in a candid interview, he shared details about their whirlwind romance, the family resistance they faced, and how their relationship deteriorated over time—allegedly after Shweta's rising success on TV. They crossed paths during a shoot and quickly grew close. "We dated only for 2-3 months, then we got married. She said that she was 19 but I always felt she was older, maybe 20-21. I was also 24-25 years old at the time. We got married in a rush. And then, shortly afterwards, our daughter was born. And soon after our daughter was born, she started getting those Ekta Kapoor serials," he said, in a chat with Hindi Rush.

While their relationship began with love, it didn't take long for differences to surface. Raja admitted that the cracks were visible quite early, even though they officially separated several years later. "We broke up some 6-7 years later and all this while, she would be on set and I would be at home, taking care of the daughter and taking care of the house," he said and added, "Awara dost bhi bana raha hu, usme kya hai? Gharwale kehte hain jo log sharab peete hain woh log awara hote hain. Toh kuch aise sharabi log maine dost bana liye," he said.

Their marriage had opposition from both sides, but they went ahead with it regardless. Raja shared how both families warned them against rushing things. "My family said, 'wait, let us see what's up' but I didn't listen to them. I said I will get married the next day. It was a mutual decision. Even her family members said, 'don't get married' but she snuck out of the house with her brother and came to the court to get married," he said. Shweta eventually became a well-known face in every Indian household after landing the lead role in Kasautii Zindagi Kay. According to Raja, this shift brought more tension into their personal life. "Life changed after her show became a huge hit. Then she started charging money by the hour."



NEWS BOX

WI vs AUS: ICC punishes Darren Sammy for criticising umpire Adrian Holdstock

West Indies head coach Darren Sammy has been fined by the ICC (International Cricket Council) for his disparaging remarks against third umpire Adrian Holdstock during the first Test against Australia in Barbados. Sammy had expressed his concerns over two contentious calls during Day 2 of the Test match, which went against the West Indies. He has been fined 15% of his match fee for a Level 1 breach of the ICC Code of Conduct. The former West Indies captain was found to have violated Article 2.7 of the Code, which pertains to "public criticism of, or inappropriate comment in relation to an incident occurring in an International Match or any Player, Player Support Personnel, Match Official or team participating in any International Match." One demerit point has also been added to Sammy's disciplinary record, with this being his first offence in a 24-month period. The West Indies head coach has accepted his sanction proposed by Match Referee Javagal Srinath for the charge levelled by on-field umpires Richard Kettleborough and Nitin Menon, third umpire Adrian Holdstock, and fourth umpire Gregory Brathwaite. 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 a 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. Darren Sammy even met with match referee Javagal Srinath after Day 2 to express his concerns over the controversial decisions.

"You don't want to get yourself in a situation where you're wondering about certain umpires. Is there something against this team? But when you see decision after decision, then it raises the question," said Sammy at the end of the day's play.

Carlos Alcaraz targets rare Wimbledon three-peat: Really want to win the title

New Delhi. Carlos Alcaraz said that he desperately wants to get his hands on the Wimbledon 2025 title. The young Spaniard is on the cusp of a major landmark with a chance to become only the fourth man after Bjorn Borg, Pete Sampras, Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic to complete a three-peat in the grass-court major. Last year, Alcaraz successfully defended his title after beating 24-time Grand Slam champion Djokovic in the final. The 22-year-old is in good stead, having recently won the HSBC Championships after beating Jiri Lehecka in the final.

"I'm coming here thinking that I really want to win the title, I really want to lift the trophy, not thinking about how many players have won three Wimbledons in a row," Alcaraz



told the reporters on Saturday. "I just want to be ready, to prepare myself in the best way possible to start the tournament with a lot of confidence. Obviously I feel a lot of confidence right now," he said. "Two weeks could be really long in a Grand Slam but right now I'm not thinking about who I could join if I win three Wimbledons in a row," Alcaraz added. Since missing the Madrid Open due to injury, Alcaraz has won two titles on the trot. Earlier this month, he won his maiden French Open title after beating Jannik Sinner in the final, following which he won the HSBC Championships. "The style that the people bring to the court when they play on grass, I think is so beautiful. The sound of the ball, the movement is really tough -- but when you get it, it's like you're flying." "It's just pretty to me because I really want to hit slices, dropshots, go to the net all the time and play aggressively. I think on grass it's the style that you have to play, so that's what I like the most," Alcaraz added. At Wimbledon, Alcaraz will kick off proceedings with his first-round match against Fabio Fognini of Italy on Monday, June 30.

Djokovic has won seven championships at the grass-court major and come oh-so-close to making his total eight — the number Roger Federer won — but lost in the 2023 and 2024 finals to Carlos Alcaraz.

LONDON. It's become part of Novak Djokovic's routine now, particularly at Grand Slam tournaments: He shows up and gets asked — at the start of the event, during the event, after the event or sometimes all three — whether this will be his final appearance there. Happened again Saturday at Wimbledon, and his response was the same it tends to be, which essentially amounts to: Who can tell? "Whether it could be my 'last dance,'" the 24-time major champion began, repeating the phrase used by the reporter who posed the question, "I'm not sure — as I'm not sure about Roland Garros or any other Slam that I play next." And then Djokovic continued,

offering something of a mix of seemingly trying to quiet any talk about whether he truly is pondering retirement at age 38 while also being realistic about where things stand.

"My wish is to play for several more years. I would love to be healthy physically and also mentally motivated to keep on playing at the highest level," he said. "That's the goal. But you never know at this stage." What Djokovic did concede is that the All England Club might offer the likeliest spot for him to gather one more Grand Slam singles title, which would allow him to raise his career haul to 25 — a number that no tennis player ever has reached. "I would probably agree that Wimbledon could be the best chance, because of the results I had, because of how I feel, how I play in Wimbledon," said Djokovic, who faces Alexandre Muller in the first round Tuesday. "Just getting that extra push mentally and motivation to perform the best tennis at the highest level." Djokovic has won seven championships at the grass-court major and come oh-so-close to making his total eight — the number Roger Federer won, and one behind Martina Navratilova's record nine women's trophies — but lost in



the 2023 and 2024 finals to Carlos Alcaraz. All told, Djokovic has appeared in the title match each of the past six times the tournament was held (it was canceled in 2020 amid the COVID-19 pandemic), winning it in 2018, 2019, 2021 and 2022. His most recent Wimbledon loss came all the way back in 2017, when he was defeated in the quarterfinals by 2010 runner-up Tomas Berdych. As for the persistent questions about Djokovic's future, it's the same type of topic that was presented to Federer, Rafael Nadal and Serena Williams as those greats of the game neared their farewells. Now it's just Djokovic's turn. But just because he hasn't won a Grand Slam

trophy in more than 1 1/2 years — he collected three in 2023, capped by the U.S. Open that September — don't think that Djokovic isn't capable of grabbing another.

As he reminded anyone listening Saturday, he made it to the semifinals at the Australian Open this January before stopping after one set because of a hamstring injury, and got to the final four at the French Open this month before losing to No. 1 Jannik Sinner. After that one, Djokovic took time as he left the court to kiss his hand and lean down to touch the clay, then said it could have been his last match at Roland-Garros. There also was the not-so-small achievement of claiming a gold medal for Serbia at the Paris Olympics less than a year ago by beating Alcaraz, no less.

"These tournaments give me the biggest drive, still," Djokovic said. "I like the way I feel right now, physically. Tennis-wise, I've been playing good on the practice sessions. Obviously completely different when you start a tournament. I'll try to have a very good tournament and go as far as I can."

Club World Cup: Chelsea's late goals take down Benfica, 10-man Palmeiras beat Botafogo

The first two round of 16 matches in the Club World Cup went to extra time, with Chelsea taking the win over Benfica while Palmeiras edged past the in-form Botafogo despite having one player sent off.

NEW DELHI. Chelsea's extra-time goals ensured they got the better of Benfica, while a 10-man Palmeiras dug deep to squeeze out a win over Botafogo in the first two round of 16 games at the FIFA Club World Cup on Sunday, 29 June. Chelsea's clash against Benfica saw at least a two-hour delay due to a lightning storm in the Charlotte area, which triggered safety protocols and led to players and spectators being moved away from exposed areas. Once the game resumed, it was a fairly even contest until the second half, when a brilliant set-piece by captain Reece James gave Chelsea the lead. To make matters worse for Benfica,



Prestianni was sent off. However, the Portuguese side managed to equalise through a penalty converted by veteran Angel di Maria. Very proud. The performance, for me, was top until 85 minutes when they stopped the game and it started a completely different game," Chelsea manager Enzo Maresca commented. "When you are inside for more than one hour, it's not easy. But 1-1, and then we continued to play, and the reward was the one that we deserved," he added. Once the match entered extra time, Chelsea completely outclassed their opponents, with Christopher Nkunku, Pedro Neto, and Kiernan Dewsbury-Hall all getting on the

scoresheet to seal their place in the next round. Meanwhile, in the battle between the Brazilian sides, Palmeiras came out on top with an extra-time winner to beat the in-form Botafogo 1-0. Paulinho scored the decisive goal in the 110th minute, although there was late drama as Gustavo Gmez was sent off in the 126th minute. "We played an incredible game," Palmeiras manager Abel Ferreira told reporters. "We did very well in the 90 minutes and in extra time. We suffered together with one player less, but we deserved it," he added.

The Brazilian sides have continued to impress in this competition and will be looking to go deep in the tournament, hoping to challenge the top European teams and prove they are also quality opposition. The next set of fixtures will see Lionel Messi's Inter Miami take on PSG — a highly anticipated encounter, with the Argentine going up against his former club. It promises to be a contest to watch, especially as the reigning Champions League winners are set to be in action.

India pacer Khaleel Ahmed set to make county debut, signs deal with Essex

Khaleel Ahmed played for CSK in IPL 2025 He picked 4 wickets vs England Lions He last played for India in 2024 in Sri Lanka

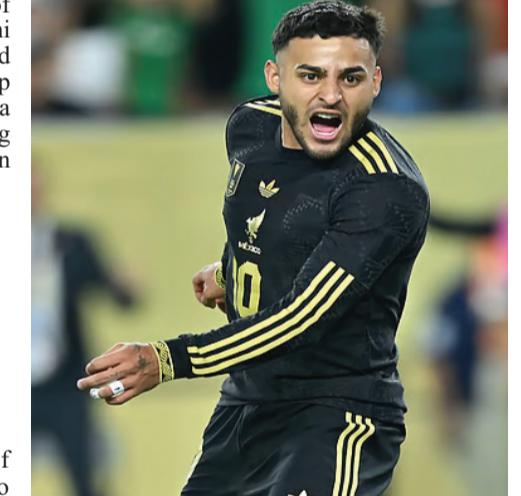
New Delhi. India seamer Khaleel Ahmed is all set to make his debut in County Cricket as he's signed a deal with Essex. The left-arm seamer will be seen playing the remainder of the English County Championship and the entirety of the One-Day Cup. Ahmed recently had a good season with Chennai Super Kings (CSK) in the Indian Premier League 2025 (IPL 2025) as



he scalped 15 wickets in the tournament. The 27-year-old expressed excitement on his signing and is eyeing to make an immediate impact for the team. "I am thrilled to sign for Essex. I have heard a lot about the rich history of the Club, and I'm excited to be part of it and will look to make an immediate impact. I'm looking forward to playing at Chelmsford, meeting the loyal Essex Members and fans, and delivering performances they can be proud of," Ahmed

told Essex Cricket. Essex's Director of Cricket, Chris Silverwood, was also delighted with Ahmed's signing after his stellar performance against India A against the England Lions.

"We are really pleased to be bringing Khaleel into the Club. We were impressed with his performances for India A and firmly believe he can strengthen our already very strong seam attack. As a left-arm seamer, he offers something different and will add a new dynamic to the squad in both the One Day Cup and the County Championship," Silverwood said. Ahmed scalped four wickets in the first innings of the second unofficial Test between India A and England Lions as he helped his team take a slender first innings lead. He will be expected to continue his good form for Essex, who are currently in eighth place in Division One of the County Championship with one win in eight games.



direction going into the semifinals. "It was an A-plus," the coach said. Vega's goal snapped a scoreless streak in international play that dates back to 2022. It also ended a dry spell for Mexico, which scored for the first time in 166 minutes of play. El Tri's final match in group play ended with a scoreless draw against Costa Rica. Mexico pushed ahead 2-0 in the 81st minute on an own goal by Saudi Arabia's Abdullah Madu. Mexico's Mateo Chavez sent a crossing pass to Roberto Alvarado, who never made contact with the ball. Instead, it caromed off a defending Madu and into the net. Saudi Arabia stifled Mexico's offense for much of a scoreless, physical first half. The tension escalated just before the halftime break — Saudi Arabia's Ali Majrashi and Mexico's Jesus Gallardo were both being shown yellow cards after the two exchanged shoves.

Let Shubman Gill captain for 3 years, even if we lose in England: Ravi Shastri

Former India head coach Ravi Shastri has urged the team management to retain Shubman Gill as the captain of the Test team for three years, irrespective of what happens in the ongoing series against England.

New Delhi. Former India head coach Ravi Shastri has urged the team management to retain Shubman Gill as captain, even if India lose the ongoing series against England. Gill has been appointed as India's new skipper following the retirement of Rohit Sharma from the longest format of the game. The 25-year-old began his tenure in style as he became the fifth India captain to score a century on captaincy debut. However, his innings ended in vain as England beat India by five wickets as they chased down the target of 371 in the fourth innings. Despite India's loss, Gill earned praise from Ravi Shastri, who extolled him for his maturity and urged the team management to let him continue as captain for three years. "He's matured a lot. The way he handles the media, the way he talks at press conferences, at tosses — he's matured a lot. Let him be there for three years. Don't



chop and change irrespective of what happens in the series. Stick with him for three years, and I think he will deliver for you," Shastri told Wisden. Furthermore, he also mentioned that the youngster has all the ingredients to be one of

the greats of the game and needs to adapt to the conditions with time. "I'll be disappointed if Gill doesn't go places. Languid, lazy elegance, and he's got a regal element of being regal out there when he's batting. If he can learn with exposure and adapt to conditions, I think that's the one name I can see," he added. Meanwhile, following India's loss, several experts have been after Gill for his on-field tactics during the match. Hence, he has a major task at hand to regroup his men and prepare them for the second Test, set to begin from July 2 at Edgbaston, Birmingham. India have never won a Test match at the venue, having lost seven out of eight matches played. The Shubman Gill-led side will be up against history as they aim to level the series in the upcoming encounter.