

Threats of bombing the Golden Temple Amritsar

Threat Emails to Blow Up Shri Harmandir Sahib Shake Sikh Community Worldwide

The Sikh Times

Simmi Kaur Babbar

Delhi. July 2025 : In a deeply alarming development, the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) has reportedly received five threatening emails warning of plans to blow up the sacred Shri Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple) using bombs and RDX. These threats have triggered widespread panic and anger not only in Punjab but across the global Sikh diaspora.

According to high-level SGPC sources, the emails began arriving in recent days, each one more threatening than the last. The Punjab Government, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, and multiple intelligence and cyber agencies are now actively investigating the source of these emails. Security agencies, including the Punjab Police, IB, NIA, and RAW, are on high alert. While investigations are underway to determine who is behind these emails, the Sikh community believes this could be a deep-rooted conspiracy aimed at destabilizing peace in Punjab and hurting the sentiments of millions of Sikhs worldwide. The SGPC has already begun taking precautionary

steps to intensify security and surveillance around the premises of the Golden Temple complex.

From Canada to the UK, Australia to the US, Sikh organizations and diaspora groups have reacted strongly, demanding swift and transparent action from the Indian government. The threats have created an atmosphere of fear and emotional unrest, with many expressing concern that this may be part of a larger anti-Sikh agenda. Inside Punjab, all major Sikh groups, religious scholars, and social organizations have called for unity and vigilance. Many have urged the SGPC to adopt modern technology to strengthen the internal and external surveillance of the Golden Temple complex.

The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee has called emergency meetings and is coordinating closely with law enforcement. Security drills and

mock rehearsals are being conducted, and extra deployment of security personnel has been requested. High-definition CCTV systems, metal detectors, and drone surveillance are being ramped up.



Shri Harmandir Sahib, also known as the Golden Temple, located in Amritsar, Punjab, is not just a religious monument—it is the soul of Sikhism. Built in the 16th century by the Fifth Sikh

Guru, Shri Guru Arjan Dev Ji, it stands as a symbol of equality, peace, and universal brotherhood. The shrine is open to all, regardless of caste, creed, or religion, and welcomes over 100,000 visitors daily. It has witnessed many historic challenges, including invasions, internal conflicts, and the tragic Operation Blue Star in 1984, but continues to shine as a beacon of Sikh heritage, resilience, and spiritual devotion.

The Sikh Times appeals to the Punjab Government and the Government of India to treat this matter with the highest urgency. There must be unbreakable security arrangements around Shri Harmandir Sahib. This is not just a temple—it is the heartbeat of a community, the sacred legacy of the Gurus, and a symbol of India's pluralistic heritage.

Any negligence or failure in preventing such a tragedy would not only shake India but outrage the entire global Sikh population. It is a test of the government's sincerity, efficiency, and commitment to protecting minority faiths and national heritage.

Mamata Banerjee Leads Protest Rally Against Detention Of Bengal Migrant Workers

New Delhi. (Agency)

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, TMC MP Abhishek Banerjee, and other party leaders and workers on Wednesday took out a protest march in Kolkata against the detention of migrant workers from West Bengal, allegedly labelled as undocumented Bangladeshi for their deportation. This came after the Trinamool Congress (TMC) on Tuesday claimed that eight migrant workers from Nadia district were forcibly picked up by Chhattisgarh Police this week.

"Eight construction workers from Nadia, employed in Bastar, Chhattisgarh, were forcibly picked up by @vishnudasi's @CG_Police. No information was shared with their families, the GoWB, or even @WBPolice. Their phones were seized. They were thrown behind bars. This is STATE-SPONSORED ABDUCTION. Let BJP be warned: Respect existence or expect resistance. We will not let our people be criminalised, dehumanised, or silenced," TMC posted on X.

As per media reports, all eight people were detained for not being able to produce identity cards even after a month of entering Chhattisgarh's Kondagaon area. They were reportedly released on Monday evening. Earlier, TMC, through its official X handle, has released a video featuring TMC leader Kunal Ghosh, alleging a "witch hunt" against Bengali-speaking people in BJP-ruled states. The party claims that Bengali workers are being harassed, detained, and deported across borders, while legitimate Indian citizens are receiving NRC notices solely for speaking Bangla.

He's running a full-blown circus: Rahul Gandhi slams S Jaishankar after Xi meet

The Congress took aim at S Jaishankar over his meeting with Xi Jinping, pointing out how China provided iron-clad support to Pakistan during Operation Sindoos.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Congress MP Rahul Gandhi pulled no punches as he attacked External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar over his meeting with China's Xi Jinping, claiming that he was running a "full-blown circus" aimed at destroying India's foreign policy. Other Congress leaders also took aim at Jaishankar, pointing out how China provided iron-clad support to Pakistan during Operation Sindoos.

"I guess the Chinese foreign minister will come and apprise (PM) Modi about recent developments in China-India ties. The EAM is now running a full-blown circus aimed at destroying India's foreign policy," Gandhi tweeted. The Congress's broadside came as Jaishankar, who is on his first China visit in five years, met Xi Jinping on Tuesday and

apprised the President of the recent development in bilateral ties. It came as both countries attempt to reset ties following the border standoff in eastern Ladakh despite several irritants, like China's support to Pakistan and the row over the Dalai Lama succession issue.

CONGRESS RAKES UP CHINA'S 'SUPPORT' DURING SINDOOR

Taking a swipe, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said the "recent developments in bilateral ties" include China providing active support to Pakistan during Operation Sindoos.

He pointed out recent remarks by Army deputy chief Lieutenant General Rahul Singh, who claimed that China used the conflict as a "live lab" to test its

weapon systems. The top Army official also said that China gave real-time intelligence to Pakistan on Indian military operations.

"Perhaps we should remind the EAM of recent developments in bilateral ties since the PM's last tete-a-tete with President Xi:

air-to-air missile and assorted drones," Ramesh said in a statement.

The Rajya Sabha MP also questioned the Jaishankar-Xi meeting on the backdrop of China restricting exports of critical materials like rare-earth magnets and tunnel-boring machines to India.

He also highlighted that hundreds of Chinese workers have been pulled from India's Foxconn plant, which manufactures Apple iPhones. "If Parliament could debate the border situation in November 1962, when the Chinese invasion was at its peak, why cannot we discuss now, especially given that both sides appear to want re-normalisation (albeit without necessarily restoring the May 2020 status quo)?" Ramesh said.



China gave total support to Pakistan during Operation Sindoos, turning it into a testing ground for network-centric warfare and weapon systems such as the J-10C fighter and PL-15E

"Start fogging operations early to keep dengue in control" – CM Rekha Gupta

The Sikh Times

Sourabh Sharma

New Delhi. 16 July 2025: Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta yesterday chaired a high-level meeting at the Delhi Secretariat to review and strengthen measures for the prevention and control of vector-borne diseases such as dengue, malaria, and chikungunya. During the meeting, the Chief Minister directed senior officials to issue two warnings before imposing challans at locations where mosquito breeding is detected. She further instructed that fogging operations must begin ahead of the scheduled time to ensure early containment of mosquito-borne diseases. The Chief Minister emphasized that the next two months are crucial and that preparation must begin immediately, focusing on awareness, surveillance, and coordinated action.

Top officials from the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), Delhi Jal Board, and the Health Department were present in the meeting. CM Gupta stated that while there is currently no outbreak, Delhi must remain alert and act swiftly. She urged all officers and field workers to implement comprehensive mosquito control measures and ensure active public participation. The CM also stressed the need to use all available media platforms for awareness drives and to take special steps in schools, parks, hospitals, and open areas to prevent mosquito breeding. Highlighting community participation, CM Gupta said that residents must be given two clear warnings before any challan is imposed, to give them a chance to adopt preventive measures themselves. Officials informed the CM that fogging typically begins in September; however, the CM directed them to advance the schedule to reassure the public that the government is proactively tackling dengue and similar diseases.

She added that there should be no shortage of medicines or equipment, and in case of any issue, it must be reported directly to her office. "Protecting citizens from these diseases is our government's priority," she asserted.



continue news page-2

BRS Urges Poll Body To Delete Certain Symbols Resembling Party's "Car"

Hyderabad. (Agency)

BRS Leaders Boinipally Vinod Kumar and Soma Bharat Kumar met the State Election Commissioner on Tuesday seeking deletion of certain identical symbols from the list of free symbols as they are similar, identical and look alike to the Election Symbol of 'Car' of the Bharat Rashtra Samithi.

They submitted a request to remove symbols resembling the BRS party's "Car" symbol from the list of free symbols for local elections.



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The leaders explained the damage caused to BRS in the 2023 assembly elections by symbols resembling the car, such as the "Chapati Roller," "Camera," and "Ship."

In a letter to the State Election

Commissioner, the BRS stated, "We, the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS), a recognised state Political Party in Telangana, submit this representation regarding the misuse of identical symbols during Elections. Our party has been represented by the symbol 'CAR' for more than the last two decades and has successfully formed the Government in the State of Telangana twice since its formation on June 2, 2014. Over time, our party has earned the confidence and affection of the people through fulfilling promises made to the voters."

Right city, state: Devendra Fadnavis on Tesla's 1st India showroom in Mumbai

Maharashtra Chief

Minister Devendra

Fadnavis praised Elon

Musk's Tesla for

choosing Mumbai to

open its first showroom

in India, saying the city

stands for innovation

and sustainability,

similar to the

automotive company.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has welcomed the entry of Elon Musk's Tesla to India as the automotive company opened its first showroom in the country in Mumbai. Praising Tesla's decision to choose Mumbai, the BJP leader said that the city is synonymous with the company's stand for innovation and sustainability. "I would like to welcome Tesla to India," Fadnavis's remark was met with loud cheers and claps. "This is not just the inauguration of an experience centre, but it is a statement that Tesla has arrived in the right city and the right state, (which is) the state of Maharashtra and the city of Mumbai," he said. The Chief Minister further said that Mumbai is not only the financial and entertainment hub of India, but also an entrepreneurial one.



"Mumbai stands for innovation and sustainability. And I think, Tesla is not just a car or a car company. It is all about design, innovation and sustainability for which Tesla stands and is a testament. And I think, it's the one and only reason that it is loved globally," Fadnavis added.

Devendra Fadnavis also took to X and wrote, "Mumbai is not just the financial, commercial, and entertainment capital of India, it is the entrepreneurial capital that stands for innovation and sustainability. And Tesla represents exactly that! I experienced my first Tesla ride back in 2015 in the US, and knew then that India needed this. It took time, but we are glad to see it finally here!" Fadnavis added, "Isabel Fan, Senior Regional Director at Tesla, shared Tesla's vision for India and offered a glimpse into the company's ongoing efforts in electric mobility and sustainable technology, highlighting its commitment to innovation in this space." Maharashtra Chief Minister added that under the visionary leadership of PM Narendra Modi, India has charted an ambitious

No vendetta, but no pillows to be given to Majithia in jail: CM Mann

Continuing to target Majithia, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann said that as a fact of matter the Akali leader had continued the "dubious legacy" of his family to "backstab" Punjab and its people for their vested interests.

Chandigarh (Agency)

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann Tuesday said that Shiromani Akali Dal leader and former minister Bikram Singh Majithia will not be given any pillow in the jail.

Participating in a debate on the drug menace on the concluding day of the Vidhan Sabha's special session, Mann said, "Pillows will not be provided at all. (This is) No political vendetta. Facilities will be provided as per the jail rules". He said, "Those responsible for laying the pyres of youth in Punjab don't deserve any sort of comfort in jail as they have to pay for their misdeeds. An investigation has revealed how many properties these people made. Strictest punishment will be ensured for these people."

He claimed affluent leaders not only used to patronize drug trade across the state but even supplied the drugs in their official government vehicles.

The Punjab Vigilance Bureau on June 25 arrested Majithia in a disproportionate assets case allegedly involving laundering of Rs 540 crore of "drug money". He is currently in judicial

remand and lodged in Nabha jail. Without naming Majithia and his MLA wife Ganieve Kaur Majithia, who was not present in the House, CM said, "Where did Satta, Pindi, Bhola come from? Why were they taken in the government vehicles?"



"I assure the House that an exemplary punishment will be ensured for these leaders so that no one ever dares to commit this sin again. Nabha Jail has now become the synonym of 'Chitta' as those who had introduced this drug to Punjab are now lodged there. Known for their opulence, acquired through illegal means, these

leaders are now demanding facilities in the jail," he said.

Continuing to target Majithia, Mann said that as a fact of matter the Akali leader had continued the "dubious legacy" of his family to "backstab" Punjab and its people for their vested interests.

He said Majithia's ancestors had "backstabbed" the people by holding a dinner for General Dyer on the same night the Jallianwala Bagh massacre was ordered by the British officer in 1919. Mann said, "Somebody hosting him before the massacre was still understandable. But who hosts a man like him on the night of the massacre. These people are traitors," Mann said, adding later, Majithia's family gave general Dyer a siropa (a sacred cloth) at Golden Temple saying that he had apologised and he was being exonerated of the crime. Mann said Punjab was being defamed over the issue of drugs whereas various other states have this problem. Some forces inimical to the state had unleashed a "malicious" campaign to tarnish our image by labelling the hard working Punjabis as drug addicts, said Mann.

Frant continue news

"Start fogging

operations early to keep dengue in control"
— CM Rekha Gupta

Post-meeting, CM Gupta shared that fogging and anti-mosquito spraying has already been carried out in 5,09,524 homes, while larvae were found and destroyed in 71,086 homes. These actions are critical to breaking the chain of infection, she said.

Under biological control, larvivorous fishes have been released at 279 locations across Delhi, which help in naturally eliminating mosquito larvae. The CM reiterated that preventing dengue and other vector-borne diseases is not just the responsibility of the government but requires active public cooperation. She emphasized the need for a coordinated effort at every level—from raising public awareness to ensuring regular cleaning of public places, and leveraging technology for more effective surveillance—all of which are top priorities for the Delhi Government.

Delhi All Set for Nation's First Net-Zero, Pollution-Free E-Waste Eco Park: Sirsa

The upcoming Green E-Waste Eco Park — spread across 11.4 acres — will process over 51,000 metric tonnes of e-waste annually and is expected to generate over ₹350 crore in economic output while causing substantial reduction in air, water and soil pollution across Delhi. The Eco Park will operate with a zero-leachate target and adhere strictly to CPCB and MoEFCC norms for air, water, soil and noise quality. A green belt covering 33% of the site and 53% allocation to open areas will act as a natural pollution buffer — reaffirming the Delhi Government's focus on nature-positive industrialisation. The facility will recover valuable rare earth elements, formalise informal recyclers, and create thousands of green jobs — fulfilling both economic and environmental objectives.

DSIIDC will soon invite "the world's best green technology partners" to participate in the global bid. It was further decided that the scope of work in the tender shall explicitly include integration of international best practices to develop a facility that is "green, clean, net-zero, and aesthetically built to global standards." "Each step we're taking — from third-party validation to global benchmarking — is part of our commitment to a future-ready Delhi that leads India's ecological and economic transition," Sirsa added.

Woman gives birth on moving bus in Maharashtra, newborn dies after couple throws him out of window

athari-Selu road, and a group of people exercising near the spot found the baby's body. They reported the matter to the Pathari police at around 6.20 am. In their statement, they said they saw someone throw a bag from the bus, following which the bus halted nearly 100 metres from the spot. They rushed to the spot and found the newborn kid. By the time they figured out what happened, the bus had left. A police team also reached the spot and found the baby's body. The locals informed the police that they had noticed a white-coloured bus with 'Sant Prayag Travels' written on it. The police contacted the travel agency and found that the bus was coming from Pune to Parbhani. The police then went to the Parbhani office of the travel agency and found the bus driver.

The driver told the police that he had seen a bag being hurled from the bus and hence stopped the bus for a few minutes. He said he had spoken to the couple who claimed that the woman had vomited as she was feeling unwell, following which he continued.

The Punjab and Haryana High Court slammed the Chandigarh Police for failing to conduct a free and fair investigation into the assault on Colonel Pushpinder Singh Bath and his son in Patiala on March 13.

Chennai may get heavy rain, orange alert for two districts

CHENNAI (Agency)

Parts of Tamil Nadu, including Chennai, may receive heavy rains in the next few days, according to the Regional Meteorological Centre (RMC). An orange alert has been issued for

Coimbatore and Nilgiris districts for three days: July 17, 18 and 19. The RMC has warned of possible heavy to very heavy rain over the ghat areas of Coimbatore and Nilgiris, along with heavy rain over isolated parts of Theni, Dindigul, Tenkasi, Tiruvannamalai, Cuddalore and

Villupuram, on Thursday.

While the orange alert has been issued for till July 19, heavy to very heavy rain in parts of Coimbatore and Nilgiris may continue on till July 21. Parts of Chennai, Chengalpattu, Tiruvallur, Kanchipuram, Theni, Tenkasi and Ranipet may also witness heavy rainfall on Friday. Theni and Tenkasi alone may continue to receive heavy rain for two more days on the weekend, July 19 and 20. As per the local forecast for Chennai, thunderstorms and lightning with moderate rain is said to be likely in some areas on Wednesday.

The rains may be brought on by light to moderate westerlies/southwesterlies in the lower tropospheric levels. The maximum temperature is likely to be above normal by 2°C-3°C in isolated pockets in the state on Wednesday and Thursday, the RMC said.

The southern bench of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) on Tuesday issued a stay order on ongoing development works on the 118-acre land reclaimed from the erstwhile Madras Race Club, until a comprehensive report is submitted by the chief secretary to the state government. The bench observed that the land — proposed to be developed into an ecological park — should not be altered pending final orders.

The bench, comprising judicial member Justice Pushpa Sathyaranayana and expert Satyagopal Korlapati, was hearing two connected applications, including a suo motu case initiated on the basis of a news report highlighting pollution in Velachery Lake. The land in question had earlier been taken over by the revenue department and later handed over to the



department of horticulture and plantation crops. However, it remains unclear as to whether the land was formally transferred to the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC), which has already constructed four ponds on the site for rainwater harvesting.

Till such time a report from the chief secretary to the government of Tamil Nadu is filed as per our earlier directions, no activity

No ISA cert for Yellow Line yet, 10 days after BMRCL MD's assurance



BENGALURU (Agency)

The much-awaited Yellow Line of Namma Metro continues to face uncertainty, as the Independent Safety Assessment (ISA) certificate, a crucial prerequisite for launching the line, is yet to be received by the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL), which was expected in the past week.

On July 5, BMRCL MD Maheshwar Rao had announced that the ISA certificate for the Yellow Line, which connects RV Road to Bommasandra, would be obtained within a week. However, there has been no update from the corporation since then, raising concerns about further delays in the line's commissioning.

The Yellow Line is considered critical as it

runs through Bengaluru's congested IT/BT corridor, including the Silk Board Junction, where commuters face severe traffic congestion daily.

BMRCL Chief Public Relations Officer Yeshwanth Chavan said, "We don't have an update so far regarding it, and when we do have any news about it, we will let you know." The delay in obtaining the ISA certificate also means that BMRCL cannot yet request the mandatory inspection from the Commissioner of Metro Rail Safety (CMRS), further postponing the project.

Pressure continues to mount on BMRCL, especially after recent protests at Lalbagh, where citizens warned of agitations at all metro stations if the Yellow Line is not opened as promised.

CBI to probe Patiala colonel assault case; HC slams Chandigarh Police

Chandigarh (Agency)

The Punjab and Haryana High Court on Wednesday transferred the investigation into the assault on Colonel Pushpinder Singh Bath and his son on March 13 to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

The bench of Justice Rajesh Bhardwaj said the Chandigarh Police had failed to conduct a fair and impartial investigation. A detailed order is awaited.

The court was earlier informed that all five accused, four of them police inspectors, are absconding and no non-bailable warrants have been issued against them.

Earlier on Monday, Justice Bhardwaj had pulled up the Chandigarh Police for failing to arrest any of the accused Punjab Police personnel despite anticipatory bail having been denied nearly two months ago.

Superintendent of Police Manjeet Sheoran

an AGMUT cadre IPS officer who was heading the investigation, was present in the court on Wednesday but failed to convince the court about the fairness of his team's probe.

Justice Bhardwaj asked why no arrests had been made so far. Terming the delay "intentional," the judge said the police's conduct amounted to shielding the accused and was "setting the wrong example".

The court heard sharp arguments from the victim's counsel, P S Ahluwalia,



who accused the authorities of "orchestrating the investigation to dismantle the case" and "betraying the court's trust" by walking back on their previous stand.

"The accused are all serving officers of Punjab Police. This court had transferred the case to the UT precisely because there was no confidence in a fair probe by Punjab Police. But what is happening now is no different. The same influence is operating," submitted the opposing counsel.

At the heart of the hearing was the removal of Section 307 (attempt to

murder) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) from the case, a section that had initially been invoked by the police and cited by the state itself to oppose anticipatory bail.

"My Lords, it's on record — the State had earlier argued that custodial interrogation was necessary to ensure a fair probe and protect witnesses. They relied on Section 307 to oppose bail. And now, they are withdrawing it without explanation," Ahluwalia submitted, reading from previous court orders and the State's affidavits.

Quoting from the affidavit filed by the State to oppose pre-arrest bail, he said: "The petitioner, being a serving Inspector in Punjab Police, holds continued influence and has shown a propensity to misuse his position. If granted bail, there is a real risk of tampering with evidence and intimidating witnesses."

Bengaluru auto union calls fare hike 'unscientific', wants it withdrawn

BENGALURU (Agency)

The Auto Rickshaw Drivers Union (ARDU) has opposed the unilateral decision by Bengaluru Urban DC G Jagadeesha to revise autorickshaw



meter fares, without holding consultations with stakeholders. The fare revision order, issued on Monday, has been criticised by the union as "unscientific" and lacking procedural transparency.

The ARDU said it has been demanding fare revision since 2023. Previous DCs had held meetings with autorickshaw organisations, but the current decision was taken without any such dialogue, they alleged.

Citing Karnataka Motor Vehicle

Rules 53, it stressed that "DCs are not presidents of the regional transport authority, and hence, cannot make unilateral decisions on fare structures". It also noted

being fixed for five years, without a provision for annual revision. The move was disconnected from ground realities, especially considering rising fuel and maintenance costs.

The union has demanded a n i m m e d i a t e withdrawal of the order and urged the government to increase the minimum fare to Rs 40 for the first 2 km, effectively Rs 20 per km.

ARDU general secretary Rudramurthy said, "If they raise meter fare to Rs 40, we are confident that auto drivers riding through apps would reduce and they will start riding with the meter running, and stop asking for higher fares."

NGT stays work on reclaimed MRC land, raises concern over waterbody in Chennai

CHENNAI (Agency)

The southern bench of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) on Tuesday issued a stay order on ongoing development works on the 118-acre land reclaimed from the erstwhile Madras Race Club, until a comprehensive report is submitted by the chief secretary to the state government. The bench observed that the land — proposed to be developed into an ecological park — should not be altered pending final orders.

The bench, comprising judicial member Justice Pushpa Sathyaranayana and expert Satyagopal Korlapati, was hearing two connected applications, including a suo motu case initiated on the basis of a news report highlighting pollution in Velachery Lake. The land in question had earlier been taken over by the revenue department and later handed over to the

department of horticulture and plantation crops. However, it remains unclear as to whether the land was formally transferred to the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC), which has already constructed four ponds on the site for rainwater harvesting.

Till such time a report from the chief secretary to the government of Tamil Nadu is filed as per our earlier directions, no activity

now, with the Tamil Nadu Housing Board, Slum Clearance Board, and highways department involved. The bench emphasised the ecological potential of the reclaimed land, urging the state to justify why it should not be developed as a waterbody. "Conversion of this land into a waterbody w o u l d significant ly enhance groundwat e r percolatio n a n d recharge, contributi ng to meeting the water requireme nts o f Chennai," it stated.

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NEWS BOX

Trump to put tariffs of over 10% on smaller nations, including those in Africa and the Caribbean

WASHINGTON. (Agency)

President Donald Trump told reporters Tuesday that he plans to place tariffs of over 10% on smaller countries, including nations in Africa and the Caribbean. "We'll probably set one tariff for all of them," Trump said, adding that it could be "a little over 10% tariff" on goods from at least 100 nations. Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick interjected that the nations with goods being taxed at these rates would be in Africa and the Caribbean, places that generally do relatively modest levels of trade with the U.S. and would be relatively insignificant for addressing Trump's goals of reducing trade imbalances with the rest of the world. Arifical Inteligence uses Arifical Inteligence uses

The president had this month been posting letters to roughly two dozen countries and the European Union that simply levied a tariff rate to be charged starting Aug. 1. Those countries generally faced tax rates on the goods close to the April 2 rates announced by the U.S. president, whose rollout of historically high import taxes for the U.S. caused financial markets to panic and led to Trump setting a 90-day negotiating period that expired July 9.

Trump also said he would "probably" announce tariffs on pharmaceutical drugs at the "end of the month."

The president said he would start out at a lower tariff rate and give companies a year to build domestic factories before they faced higher import tax rates. Trump said computer chips would face a similar style of tariffs.

"Terrorist Act": US As Israeli Settlers Beat Palestinian-US Citizen To Death

Washington. (Agency)

The Trump administration has strongly condemned the killing of Saif Musallet, a Palestinian-US citizen who was beaten to death by Israeli settlers in the occupied West Bank on Friday. US Ambassador to Israel, Mike Huckabee, has urged Israeli authorities to open an immediate investigation, calling the incident a "criminal and terrorist act." "This is an outrage. We demand a full and transparent investigation into what was clearly a terrorist act. American lives must be protected, no matter where they are," Mr Huckabee said. Musallet, a dual national, was reportedly attacked while traveling near his village. Eyewitnesses said he was dragged from his vehicle and assaulted by a group of settlers. He died on the spot. While Israeli authorities have said they are looking into the incident, no arrests have been made so far. Musallet's death has drawn criticism from human rights groups and triggered renewed calls for action against rising settler violence in the West Bank. The Trump administration's response signals a tougher tone, especially as tensions in the region remain high. With growing pressure from within the US, the incident could become a new flashpoint in US-Israel relations.

China To Hold SCO Summit In Tianjin From Aug 31 To Sept 1: Wang Yi

Beijing. (Agency)

Leaders from more than 20 countries and heads of 10 international organisations will attend the Tianjin Summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and related events next month, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said on Tuesday.

The SCO Tianjin Summit will be held from August 31-September 1, Wang said during a joint press meeting with SCO Secretary-General Nurlan Yermekbayev here, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Russian President Vladimir Putin and other leaders of the SCO member states were expected to attend the summit. Earlier in the day, the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the 10-member grouping was held here with a focus on making political preparations for the summit, official media reported. At Tuesday's meeting, participants exchanged views on cooperation across various SCO sectors and discussed key international and regional issues, state-run CGTN reported. A series of resolutions and official documents were signed, it said. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, Pakistan Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar and his Iranian counterpart Abbas Araghchi were among those who attended the meeting, which was presided by Foreign Minister Wang. The SCO, comprising India, China, Russia, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Iran and Belarus, is an influential economic and security bloc that has emerged as one of the largest transregional international organisations. Ahead of the meeting, the SCO Foreign Ministers met Chinese President Xi Jinping, who called for improving mechanisms to address security threats and challenges. With the SCO Summit set to take place this year in China's Tianjin, Xi expressed hope to meet the leaders of other member states at the event to discuss the future development of the organisation. He stressed that in the face of a turbulent and changing international landscape, the SCO must stay focused, remain confident, act efficiently and play a more proactive role in injecting greater stability and positive energy into the world.

In a veiled dig at the US, President Xi called for joint efforts to firmly oppose hegemony, power politics, and bullying in order to promote a more equal and balanced multipolar world. Speaking on behalf of the SCO ministers at their meeting with Xi, Lavrov said that through its steadfast commitment to the Shanghai Spirit, which is characterised by mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for diversity of civilizations, and pursuit of common development, aligns with member states' shared interests and demonstrates robust vitality, he added.

At least nine abbots and senior monks involved in the scandal have been disrobed and cast out of the monkhood, the Royal Thai Police Central Investigation Bureau said.

BANGKOK. (Agency)

Police in Thailand arrested a woman Tuesday who allegedly enticed a string of Buddhist monks into sexual relationships and then pressured them into making large payments to cover up their intimacy. The possible violation of the celibacy rule for monks has rocked Buddhist institutions and gripped public attention in Thailand in recent weeks. At least nine abbots and senior monks involved in the scandal have been disrobed and cast out of the monkhood, the Royal Thai Police Central Investigation Bureau said. Wilawan

Emsawat, in her mid-30s, was arrested at her home in Nonthaburi province north of the capital Bangkok on charges including extortion, money laundering and receiving stolen goods. Police said they traced money transferred to her by a senior monk from a bank account belonging to his temple in northern Thailand. Wilawan has not made a statement since her arrest and it was unclear if she has legal representation. Speaking to local media before her arrest, she acknowledged one relationship and said she had given money to that monk.

Arifical Inteligence uses Arifical Inteligence uses Scandals involving monks surface a few times a year in Thailand but usually don't involve senior members of the clergy. The case also puts a spotlight on the large sums of money donated to temples controlled by abbots, which is in marked contrast to the abstemious lives they are supposed to lead under their religion's precepts. Wilawan deliberately targeted senior monks for financial gain, police said, noting they found several monks had transferred large amounts of

money after Wilawan initiated romantic relationships with them. Wilawan's bank accounts received around 385 million baht (\$11.9 million) in the past three years, but



Mike Waltz Vows To Make UN "Great Again" At Senate Confirmation Hearing

Washington. (Agency)

Mike Waltz painted an image for lawmakers Tuesday of what the United Nations would look like as the U.S. — its largest donor — reviews its support, opting to go "back to basics" under a Trump administration push to "make the U.N. great again." During his Senate confirmation hearing to be , Waltz echoed the priorities of his bosses — President and Secretary of State Marco Rubio — of pursuing major reforms to the 80-year-old world body. It was the first time senators could grill Waltz since he was in May after he mistakenly added a journalist to a private Signal chat used to discuss sensitive military plans. He denied Tuesday that he was removed from the post, while laying out his plans to bring "America First" to the U.N. "We should have one place in the world where everyone can talk — where China, Russia, Europe and the developing world can come together and resolve conflicts," Waltz told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee about the U.N. "But after 80 years, it's drifted from its core mission of

peacemaking. "The U.N. is pursuing its own reforms while the Republican administration has spent the last six months reshaping American diplomacy and working aggressively



to shrink the size of the federal government, including recent. On the agenda for Waltz would be combating China's influence, reviewing U.S. funding to U.N. agencies with "often duplicative and wasteful mandates," as well as rooting out what Waltz called deep within the U.N. system. The Signal episode — in which Waltz, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and other high-level officials

faced intense criticism — didn't come up at the hearing for more than an hour.

It was revealed in March that Waltz added The Atlantic editor-in-chief Jeffrey Goldberg to a on an unclassified messaging app that was used to discuss planning for strikes on Houthi militants in Yemen. "We both know Signal is not an appropriate and secure means of communicating highly sensitive information," said Democratic Sen. Chris Coons of Delaware, who was first to raise the issue. He added that Waltz shared "demonstrably sensitive information" in an improper manner. Fellow Democratic Sen. Tim Kaine of Virginia called it "an amateurish move." Waltz, a former Florida congressman, said the chat met the administration's cybersecurity standards, "no classified information was shared" and the military was still conducting an ongoing investigation.

Democratic Sen. Cory Booker of New Jersey blasted what he called a "lack of accountability" from Waltz and other administration officials.

Pentagon Ends Deployment Of 2,000 National Guard In Los Angeles

The troops were tasked with protecting federal buildings and guarding immigration agents as they carry out arrests.

WASHINGTON. (Agency)

The Pentagon said Tuesday it is ending the deployment of 2,000 National Guard troops in Los Angeles, accounting for nearly half of the soldiers sent to the city to deal with protests over the Trump administration's immigration crackdown. Roughly 4,000 National Guard soldiers and 700 Marines have been in the city since early June. It wasn't immediately clear what prompted the 60-day deployment to end suddenly, nor was it immediately

clear how long the rest of the troops would stay in the region. "Thanks to our troops who stepped up to answer the call, the lawlessness in Los Angeles is



subsiding," Chief Pentagon Spokesman Sean Parnell said in a statement in announcing the decision. The troops were tasked with protecting federal buildings and guarding immigration agents as they carry out

arrests. President Donald Trump against the wishes of Gov. Gavin Newsom, who sued to stop it. A federal judge initially said Trump acted illegally

when he deployed the Guard over Newsom's opposition. But an appeals court said the administration could keep control of the troops. The case is ongoing. Newsom said in a statement that the National Guard's deployment to Los Angeles County has pulled troops away from their families and civilian work "to serve as political pawns for the President." He added that the remaining troops "continue without a mission, without direction and without any hopes of returning to help their communities." "We call on Trump and the Department of Defense to end this theater and send everyone home now," he said.

'Dialogue' must be at heart of China-Australia ties, PM Albanese tells Xi

China is one of Australia's most important economic partners, accounting for nearly one-third of its total trade.

WASHINGTON. (Agency)

Seventeen immigration court judges have been fired in recent days, according to the union that represents them, as the Trump administration pushes forward with its mass deportations of immigrants in the country. The International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers, which represents immigration court judges as well as other professionals, said in a news release that 15 judges were fired "without cause" on Friday and another two on Monday. The union said they were working in courts in 10 different states across the country: California, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, Ohio, Texas, Utah and Virginia.

"It's outrageous and against the public

interest that at the same time Congress has authorized 800 immigration judges, we are firing large numbers of immigration judges without cause," said the union's President Matt Biggs. "This is nonsensical. The answer is to stop firing and start hiring."

Arifical Inteligence uses Arifical Inteligence uses Firings come with courts at the center of administration efforts

The firings come as the courts have been increasingly at the center of the Trump administration's hardline immigration enforcement efforts with Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers arresting immigrants as they appear at court for proceedings. A spokeswoman for the Executive Office of Immigration Review, which is the part of the Justice Department that oversees the courts, said in an email that the office would not comment on the firings. The large-scale arrests began in May and have unleashed fear among asylum-seekers and immigrants appearing in court. In what has become a familiar scene, a judge will grant a government lawyer's request to dismiss deportation proceedings against an

immigrant. Meanwhile, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers are waiting in the hallway to arrest the person and put them on a fast track to deportation as soon as he or she leaves the courtroom. Immigration court judges are



also dealing with a massive backlog of roughly 3.5 million cases that ballooned in recent years. Cases can take years to weave their way to a final determination, with judges and lawyers frequently scheduling final hearings on the merits of a case over a year out. Unlike criminal courts, the government isn't required to provide

lawyers to everyone going through immigration courts; immigrants can hire their own lawyer but if they can't afford one they represent themselves often using an interpreter to make their case. Senator alleges one firing is punishment Democratic U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin of Illinois alleged that one of the judges fired was essentially being punished for talking to him during a visit the senator made a few weeks ago to the Chicago Immigration Court. In a news release Tuesday, Durbin said the judge "took time to show me the court and explain its functions."

He said after the visit, the judge received an email from the Justice Department telling her that all communications with congressional offices should be routed through headquarters and that immigration judges shouldn't be talking directly with members of Congress.

"Her abrupt termination is an abuse of power by the administration to punish a non-political judge simply for doing her job," said Durbin, who's the ranking member of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Rare Oil Painting Of Mahatma Gandhi Sells For Rs 1.7 Crore In London

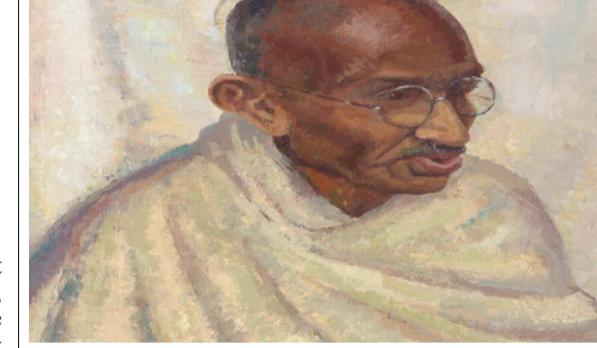
WORLD. (Agency)

A rare oil painting of Mahatma Gandhi, considered to be the only one he personally sat for, has sold for an astounding 152,800 pounds, approximately Rs 1.7 crore, at an auction hosted by Bonhams in London.

British artist Clare Leighton's "Portrait of Mahatma Gandhi" sold for three times its estimated value of 50,000-70,000 pounds, approximately Rs 58 lakh to Rs 81 lakh. The portrait was the best-selling item in the Travel and Exploration online sale.

Rhyanon Demery, Bonhams Head of Sale, said the special artwork had never before been offered at auction, adding it was a testament to Gandhi's power to connect with people far and wide, and presented a lasting document of an important moment in history.

"With the portrait having remained in the artist's collection until her death in 1989, after which it was passed down through her family, it is no wonder that this work sparked such interest across the globe," Ms Demery said in a statement. In 1974, when it was on public exhibition, the portrait was attacked with a knife. According to the artist's family, a Hindu right-wing



extremist allegedly used a knife to damage the artwork. The image shows signs of repair in several places. Glimpse of History The portrait is the only oil painting in which Gandhi was directly involved. Clare Leighton, a British-American artist, created it in 1931 while Gandhi was attending the Second Round Table Conference in London.

Ms Leighton was introduced to Gandhi by political journalist Henry Noel Brailsford, and she spent several mornings painting him in his office. In a statement, Bonhams said, "She was given the opportunity to sit with him on several occasions to sketch and paint his likeness." Ms Leighton's portraits of Gandhi were on display at the Albany Galleries on Sackville Street in London in November 1931. The artist's friend and journalist Winifred Holtby attended the opening and chronicled it in her weekly piece for the trade union publication 'The Schoolmistress.'

Bombay HC dismisses PIL by lawyers against 'unauthorised use' of Kolhapuri chappal by Prada, says affected parties can file suit

Mumbai .(Agency)

The Bombay High Court Wednesday dismissed a public interest litigation (PIL) by six Pune-based lawyers seeking action against Italian luxury brand Prada for allegedly showcasing footwear resembling Kolhapuri chappal in its spring-summer 2026 menswear collection.

A division bench of Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and Justice Sandeep V Marne was hearing a PIL which claimed that the Kolhapuri chappal was already protected as a Geographical Indication (GI) under the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act and is a 'cultural symbol' of Maharashtra.

The court asked the petitioners what their "locus standi" was, and what the "public interest" was. It also asked them why the Leather Industries Development Corporation of Maharashtra (LIDCOM), which was made a respondent, could not file the suit.

The petitioners, among other prayers, sought direction restraining Prada from commercialising and using the 'toe ring sandals,' claiming that the same was originally 'Kolhapuri chappal' and they cannot use the same without any authorisation availed from the registered proprietor or authorised users.

The PIL further sought a public apology from Prada, acknowledging the alleged unauthorised use of the 'Kolhapuri chappal', and ensuring that no such use would occur in the future, and to expressly recognise the rights of the Indian artisans' community. The plea also sought compensation to the artisans' community for "reputational and economic damages".

The bench orally questioned petitioners, "You want an injunction in PIL? Let (the) affected parties file a suit. Why can't the proprietors of GI file it? You will have to tell us two things. What is your locus standi and public interest? Every person, whosoever is aggrieved by infringement of GI can take action in accordance with law. If you are an aggrieved person, do so. Infringement action cannot be decided in PIL. It will require evidence."

The petitioners responded that, although they were not owners or proprietors of GI, they had worked for the community to protect their intellectual property rights. The proprietor of GI or artisans, they argued, could not come to court due to social and economic constraints, and as a result, the community was deprived of its intellectual property rights.

19-year-old woman dies by suicide in Surat; was being harassed by college student for months, alleges father

The woman had been working as an assistant teacher at a private tuition centre in Katargam for the last few years

Surat .(Agency)

A 19-year-old woman, who worked as a tuition teacher in Surat, died by suicide following five months of harassment by a college student, police said. The woman's father has lodged a complaint against the accused, Neel (20), and his father Vishnu Desai at Singhanpore police station.

Police said the woman's family members were away when the incident took place in the Nani Ved area on Sunday. Her body was discovered by her father and brother when they returned home.

The woman had been working as an assistant teacher at a private tuition centre in Katargam for the last few years.

The last rites of the teenager were performed on Monday and a number of people from the Patidar community participated in her funeral procession.

On Tuesday, following a complaint by the victim's father, police booked the accused and his father under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) sections 108 (if any person commits suicide, whoever

Principals of two tribal schools in Banaskantha suspended after teenager dies of 'food poisoning' that landed over 40 in hospital

Ahmedabad .(Agency)

The principals of two tribal residential schools (ashramshala) in Gujarat's Banaskantha district were suspended on Tuesday for "dereliction in duty and serious negligence" after a 15-year-old boy died early on Monday, a day after taking ill due to alleged food poisoning that landed 40 other students and three teachers in the hospital.

Disciplinary proceedings have also been initiated against the principals of the two ashramshala that run out of the same premises in the Vekri village of Danta taluka. "Bharatkumar P Chauhan, principal of Shri Adivasi Ashramshala, Vekri, and Govindji P Thakor, principal of Shri Secondary and Higher Secondary Ashramshala, Vekri, were suspended for dereliction in duty and serious negligence," Commissioner, Tribal Department, Ashish Kumar told.

A team from the Tribal Development Department is conducting a detailed investigation to ascertain if the food poisoning stemmed from food contamination or was a case of waterborne infection.

Kumar said the deceased, Nathabhai

Shankarhai Bubadiya, was not a student of the school and was only visiting the campus seeking admission.

The school, Shri Adivasi Ashramshala Vekri, is run by Shri Ravi Pragati Mandal.

"He had arrived on July 12. As he required a few more documents for his admission application, he was asked to return after two days but he had requested to stay on the campus," the Commissioner said.

Speaking about the circumstances surrounding the death of the student, Dr Bharmal Patel, Additional District Health Officer (ADHO) of Banaskantha, said, "Once he was discharged from the Primary Health Centre (PHC), Mankadi, he went back to the school hostel and fell asleep. When school officials tried to wake him up on Tuesday morning, he was found dead." The student was among the first to be admitted to the PHC early on July 13. Eventually, a total of 40 students and three teachers were admitted to the PHC.

According to reports, several students

complained of severe vomiting, stomach ache and diarrhoea around 3am on July 13.

Samples of all items used in the food have been taken by the Food and Drugs Office,



Palanpur. A total of 500 students study in three schools, namely Shri Adivasi Ashramshala (Class I to VIII), Shri Madhyamik Ashramshala (Class IX to X), and Shri Uchchatar Madhyamik Ashramshala (Class XI to XII), at Shri Adivasi Ashramshala Vekri within the same campus. The initial report submitted by the tribal department stated that "On July 13, all the children present in the school had Kadhi

Khichdi for dinner around 7 pm. After that, between 9pm and 10 pm, about 15 children who were suffering from diarrhoea and vomiting were given ORS powder and tablets provided by the PHC, Mankadi, due to which the health of the children improved and the children went to sleep..."

It further said, "But on July 14, around 2.30 am, one child...was found to be more serious and was taken to the PHC for further treatment... As his health improved, the medical officer allowed him to be taken back to the ashram. At around 7.30 am, his health deteriorated further and he was rushed to the PHC. The medical officer declared him dead."

Officials of the health department along with a team of doctors from Banas Medical College and Research Institute (BMCRI) in Palanpur arrived at the school, collected blood, food and water samples, and sent them to the Microbiology department of the medical college. Results are awaited, said Dr Patel.

FSSAI 'voluntary' rule prompts Pune sweet shops to stop displaying expiry dates on items, poses health risks

Pune.(Agency)

Many sweet shops in Pune have stopped displaying information such as manufacturing date, best-before date, and even price tags on their mithai, leaving consumers unable to judge the freshness and quality of the product. This shift comes after the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) made date labelling voluntary for loose sweets in November 2023, reversing a 2020 mandate that required such information.

The lack of transparency has raised health concerns, especially after Pune's iconic Good Luck Cafe's licence was suspended temporarily last Sunday over hygiene issues following the detection of a glass piece in a bun maska.

Sweets, especially milk-based ones, have limited shelf life and are prone to microbial growth. Consuming expired or stale sweets can lead to food poisoning, headaches, vomiting, gastrointestinal problems, and other digestive issues," says Dr Neha Patil, a medical practitioner residing at Akurdi.

"Earlier in 2020, after the FSSAI mandate, it became easy to choose mithai based on its freshness. Now, except for a few, in the majority of the sweet shops, the 'best-before date' information is not mentioned. Moreover, even the price tags are missing in many places. This deprives consumers of the ability to make informed choices about the freshness and quality of the sweets they are purchasing," said Rohan Jadhav, a resident of Dange Chowk.

The Food Safety and Standards (Packaging and Labelling of Food Businesses) Regulations, 2011, introduced the provision of the 'best-before date'. The 2011 regulations were replaced by the Food Safety and Standards (Labelling and Display) Regulations in 2020. But the mandate was made 'voluntary' from November 2023 after the FSSAI decided that the scientific panel needs to deliberate further on the declarations of dates on non-packaged or loose products. Since then, the sweet shop owners are rarely seen displaying the said information, affecting transparency and health risk.

IIM-C's academic council to take call on student arrested for rape

Kolkata .(Agency)

The Indian Institute of Management-Calcutta (IIM-C) has called a meeting of its academic council this week over the arrest of a second-year student in a rape case.

Parhamanand Mahaveer Toppannawar, 26, was arrested last Saturday for allegedly raping a young woman in a hostel room on the Joka campus of the institute. He is in police custody till July 19. According to an official of the premier institute, the academic council will take a call on whether to allow Toppannawar to attend classes if the court grants him bail. "Attendance is mandatory in the two-year MBA programme. Since Toppannawar is in police custody, he has missed some classes. So, the academic council of the institute has to take a legal opinion regarding whether to allow him to attend classes if he gets bail. If he is found guilty, his degree will be cancelled," said an

official. Following the arrest of the student in the rape case, the IIM-C, in a statement, had said: "The institute has zero tolerance for such incidents and remains steadfast in upholding a



safe and respectful campus environment. We are also taking all necessary steps to support the process of ongoing investigation and ensure that institutional protocols are adhered to."

The IIM-C had also sent an email to students, asking them to reach out to the institute's Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) and student council with any concerns or questions. A standard operating protocol (SOP) was also circulated for the students and professors living on the campus.

Meanwhile, the SIT of Kolkata Police, which is probing the rape case, is screening through the call data records (CDR) of the accused and the woman to ascertain how long they knew each other. "The accused is giving contradictory statements. Sometimes he says he met the woman on a dating app, sometimes he claims to know her through a counselling app. This

needs to be investigated. We are also trying to know whether the accused used sleeping pills to spike the food and water offered to the woman," a senior police officer involved in the probe said.

Gujarat begins registrations for 5th edition of ROBOFEST

One of the highlights this year for participants is that provisional patents will be filed for students' innovations

Ahmedabad .(Agency)

The Gujarat Council on Science and Technology (GUJCOST) has opened registrations for the competition



ROBOFEST – Gujarat 5.0, Empowering Young Minds.

Organised under the Department of Science and Technology, Government of Gujarat, ROBOFEST aims to spark innovation

among young minds through hands-on experience in robotics, engineering, and design. Now in its fifth edition, the competition is divided into two categories

— Junior and Senior, and invites participants with the aim of empowering the next generation of STEM innovators.

The program will guide students through stages of ideation, proof of concept, and prototype development, allowing them to gain exposure to real-world applications. One of the highlights this year for participants is to file provisional patents for students' innovations, a first-of-its-kind initiative for nurturing intellectual property at a young age. The competition offers

Rs 5 crore for prizes, incentives, and expert mentorship.

Registrations are now open at <http://www.robofest.gujarat.gov.in> and will close on August 25.

No interim relief to plea challenging Kabootar khanas closure: 'Human health paramount'

Mumbai.(Agency)

Observing that the BMC's recent crackdown on pigeon feeding at Kabootar khanas (feeding areas) took "human health to be paramount" into consideration, the Bombay High Court on Tuesday refused to grant interim relief to the petitioners challenging the closure of such areas.

The HC, while noting that rights of humans and animals should be balanced, refused to pass an interim order permitting feeding pigeons twice a day pending hearing of the plea. The Court however directed that no old heritage Kabootar khanas can be demolished till further orders.

Earlier this month, the Maharashtra government had directed BMC to close Kabootar khanas in the city citing serious health hazards due to pigeon droppings and feathers.

A division bench of Justices Girish S Kulkarni and Arif S Doctor was hearing a writ plea filed

by animal rights activist Pallavi Sachin Patil along with Sneha Deepak Visaria and Savita Mahajan, who sought direction to restrain BMC from demolishing Kabootar khanas/feeding areas for pigeons and to ensure that the petitioners and other citizens are not prevented from feeding pigeons.

The plea also sought direction to BMC to restore the "status quo" with respect to demolished or damaged kabootar khanas. Pending the plea's hearing, the petitioner sought a stay on BMC's "illegal actions" with respect to the demolition of such feeding areas.

"BMC has material that citizens are affected. Medical science has progressed and there are evidence... It has happened in England, where some old people have died. We don't know what kind of lungs we have now. There are children and senior citizens. Why not adhere to the policy?" the HC orally questioned the petitioner's lawyer.

Advocate Harish Pandya for the petitioner argued that even birds have the right to life and are required to be fed. Justice Kulkarni responded, "There is an issue of concern all over... particularly at such a place (kabootar khana). It is becoming some kind of pandemic as a number of such places come up. KEM Hospital and other Municipal Hospitals have material as they deal with regular visits of persons affected with such diseases."

The judge went on to remark, "While we recognise animal rights, we also have to put human rights on a high pedestal... You cannot put animal rights over human rights... rights of animals and humans are required to be balanced... We will have to examine whether it (balancing) is not done in the present decision. The corporation had not taken such a decision so far and now they had to because

a lot of thought went into it. The whole idea is not to get these pigeons at one place." Pandya argued that BMC acted in a "highhanded and arbitrary manner," and sought interim relief to feed the pigeons at designated places twice a day so that "they shall not die of thirst and hunger."

"This is not a correct stand... that all pigeons in

Mumbai go to Kabootar khana. You will find them everywhere... even in the HC corridor... Do you want us to say that pigeons will die if they do not visit Kabootar khana? They are surviving by themselves but you want to feed them because they gather at one place in Dadar area and are only concerned with them," Justice Kulkarni orally remarked.

"There has to be a logic to your argument... Are you going to feed thousands and lakhs of pigeons? Who said pigeons depend only on your feeding? This is the rainy season so there is no shortage of water... We are conscious of animal rights and they should be balanced... How can they (animal rights) be overwhelming when public health is concerned? Their congregation should be stopped is what they (authorities) are saying," the judges added.



Seven steps to rebuild bridge to Kabul

India has always enjoyed immense goodwill in Afghanistan, our civilisational neighbour. This is true even now, when Kabul has again come under Taliban rule. Sadly, many Indians, influenced by the western media narrative, view the Taliban as jihadi terrorists. When a defeated America withdrew its troops from Afghanistan in August 2021, paving the way for a quick takeover of power by the Taliban, they saw it as a catastrophe for India. Having convinced themselves that the Taliban were a mere puppet created and controlled by Pakistan, they anticipated a spurt in joint Pakistan-Taliban terror offensives against India.

The four-year-old Taliban rule in Kabul has belied these fears. If anything, relations between Kabul and Islamabad have been tense. When I met Suhail Shaheen, a senior Taliban leader who headed the Doha political office of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, in February 2024, he said, "India should shed the suspicion that the Taliban is 'close to Pakistan' and 'against India'. Our government is firmly committed to the principle that we shall not allow anybody to use our soil against India or any other country." I have met several Taliban officials since then, and all of them have expressed the same view. There is a belated realisation in New Delhi that the current government in Kabul should not be treated as an adversary and that it can even be an important ally. This has resulted in a flurry of diplomatic contacts over the past year. When External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar phoned his Afghan counterpart Amir Khan Muttaqi on May 15, and "deeply appreciated his condemnation of the Pahalgam terrorist attack," it marked the highest-level communication between Delhi and Kabul. Yet, New Delhi is tardy in elevating the ties with Kabul. On July 3, Russia became the first country to formally recognise the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. China, the UAE and Uzbekistan have designated ambassadors to Kabul. Beijing hosted a trilateral meeting of the foreign ministers of China, Afghanistan and Pakistan in May; the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor will now be extended to Afghanistan. India, too, should establish normal ambassadorial relations with Afghanistan without any delay.

Arifical Intelligence uses Arifical Intelligence uses Afghanistan is changing, and will change even more. After suffering deaths and destruction on an unimaginable scale in four decades of war—first by the Soviet Union and later by the USA—it is now focused on peace and national reconstruction. Recognising that the country's diaspora is a precious resource, the Taliban want to create conditions for the return of over one million highly-talented Afghan professionals who left the country due to the disturbed conditions of the past. Some Taliban leaders are themselves demanding an end to the ban on female education. Against this backdrop, India must hurry to expand all-round engagement with this strategically located member of our South Asian family. Here are eight ideas on how India can help in Afghanistan's national rebirth. 'Saudi Arabia of lithium': Prime Minister Narendra Modi should ask both our state-run and private companies to participate in Afghanistan's infrastructure development and rapid industrialisation. Alleviating its acute power shortage should be a priority. Afghanistan, known as the 'Saudi Arabia of lithium', is ready to invite Indian businesses to harness its fabulous mineral wealth of copper and rare earths worth several trillion dollars.

This should be done in non-exploitative and win-win ways, in partnership with Afghan entrepreneurs. Livelihoods: India should share its expertise in revitalising Afghanistan's agriculture, horticulture and small industries. These have the highest potential to create local livelihoods. The Taliban government has taken stern measures to stop poppy cultivation in a crackdown on the opium and heroin trade.

Just as the NAM was focused on the creation of a more fair and equitable global order, so is the Global South. That should be the basis for renewed solidarity.

THIS comment has been triggered by the outcome—or the lack of it—of the recent BRICS+ summit in Brazil. BRICS+ is important as it is seen as the premier forum representing the Global South. India was represented by PM Narendra Modi, but China's Xi Jinping and Russia's Vladimir Putin were absent. This led to some commentators pointing to its diminishing relevance in a world of raging conflicts, breakdown of multilateral trading rules and recourse to blatant unilateralism and protectionism, and the retreat from universal collaborative action to tackle global challenges such as climate change, pandemics and the ungoverned fields of cyberspace and artificial intelligence (AI). Is BRICS+ the manifestation of multipolarity and leadership of the Global South? Or have recent geopolitical developments shown up its lack of capacity to exercise meaningful influence? More controversially, how does the Global South rate in terms of its role and influence with the now dormant and largely orphaned Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)? Members of the NAM had neither economic nor military capacities during the movement's heyday between 1965 and 1990, when the Cold War ended. In the shifting geopolitical equations of the post-Cold War era, the NAM has been reduced to a lingering relic of the past. One of its founding members and acknowledged leaders, India, today seems to regard it as an embarrassing interlude in its post-Independence history. Aspiring to the leadership of the newly minted Global South is more inviting. And yet it is a paradox that the countries of the Global South, enjoying far greater economic, military and technological capabilities than their non-aligned forebears, seem less effectual in influencing issues of international peace and security, trade and commerce and global governance of new domains such as climate change, cyber security, AI and public health than the NAM in the past. An objective recounting of NAM's role in the Cold War years uncovers a more substantive geopolitical role and greater impact on international norm-setting than the Global South has been able to achieve. I recall that as an Indian representative to the then Committee on Disarmament in Geneva, the Group of Non-Aligned and Neutral Nations (Group of 21) played a key role in the conclusion of the chemical weapons treaty, kept up the pressure for the conclusion of a Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and ensured that nuclear disarmament remained high on the international agenda. It is thanks to the initiative of the NAM that the UN was able to convene, successively, three Special Sessions on Disarmament (1978, 1982 and 1988), which focused international attention on the vital issues of peace and security. Is the Global South capable of mobilising the large constituency of developing countries to convene such an international gathering to address the dangerous and even reckless recourse to aggression and coercive



violence that threatens humanity itself? An argument is advanced that while the non-aligned countries had a solidarity born from their common experience of colonialism and imperialism, that has long faded; that today there is far greater political and economic diversity among nations of the Global South than among NAM countries; that their interests are more divergent. This is not a tenable argument. Just as the NAM was focused on the creation of a more fair and equitable global order, so is the Global South. That should be the basis for renewed solidarity. It is said that during the Cold War, there was a convergence of interests in opposing Western dominance, that more recently there is a complex web of interdependencies binding developing and advanced countries together. During the Cold War, most post-colonial countries were even more tied economically to their erstwhile metropolitan masters than they are today. And yet they banded together to demand a more equitable economic and trading system and managed to achieve some success. The WTO multilateral regime owes greatly to the collective negotiating effort of the non-aligned countries. I saw this in action during my assignment in Geneva (1980-83). Today, the Global South is powerless against the unilateralism of Trump's America. Each trading partner is being picked off one by one. The situation cries out for a collective rebuff from the Global South countries who have created a multipolar economic order but are unable to leverage this into a powerful rejection of selfish unilateralism. Trump threatens the BRICS+ against pursuing financial and monetary independence; and the BRICS+ get suitably intimidated. If one compares such behaviour to the NAM's willingness to confront overwhelming power, then the Global South

and its representatives seem unusually timid. The NAM was too quick to declare itself irrelevant once the Cold War ended. The US was never comfortable with the NAM, even if it was like a nagging aunt rather than a threat. A country which liked to clothe its cynical pursuit of power and influence in high moral rhetoric did not appreciate that there was a group of nations led by charismatic leaders who articulated a compelling vision of a more peaceful, equitable and just international order and a global economic regime which supported their efforts towards achieving the economic and social development of their peoples. The end of the Cold War was not only presented as a victory for American exceptionalism, but a validation of the US-led global order. This had no place for any competing narrative, including the vision driving non-alignment. The NAM was not relevant only in the context of the Cold War. It was a search for strategic autonomy in an unequal world dominated by just a few powerful countries. That search did not end with the Cold War. If the countries of the Global South boast of more economic, military and technological capabilities today than they did as developing countries in the pre-Cold War era, why are they unable to come together to resist the reassertion of US and Western dominance? Why does their word not count in tackling global issues like climate change, where their contribution is indispensable? The lesson from the NAM is that there is no overarching vision which unites them today; that their policies are driven by transactional imperatives, without being anchored in some larger vision of the future. Nehru spoke of the pursuit of "enlightened self-interest" as the guiding principle of India's foreign policy and its role in the NAM. Its leadership of the Global South needs to learn this lesson from the past.

Nipah reality: Vigilance must outlast outbreak

As many as 499 people have been identified as contacts of those who have been infected. Seventeen people had died in the most severe outbreak in 2018, and since then, Kerala has reported Nipah infections every year, except in 2020 and 2022

Recurring outbreaks of the Nipah virus pose an unsettling challenge to Kerala's healthcare system. More than the scale, the frequency is worrying. In the eighth outbreak since 2018, a teen girl from Malappuram died on July 1, and a woman from Palakkad is battling for life. Earlier in May, a Malappuram woman tested positive. As many as 499 people have been identified as contacts of those who have been infected. Seventeen people had died in the most severe outbreak in 2018, and since then, Kerala has reported Nipah infections every year, except in 2020 and 2022. Alarmingly, there were two outbreaks in 2024, and two again this year so far. This increased frequency could be the new normal in Kerala's battle against Nipah.

The question that remains unanswered is why only Kerala appears so vulnerable to Nipah. One hypothesis is that the virus may have become endemic to the state. While the exact mechanism that leads to human infections and localised outbreaks remains poorly understood, experts say that deforestation has deprived fruit bats, said to be the natural reservoir of the virus, of their traditional habitats,



leading to their shift to urban areas. A similar situation played out in Malaysia in 1998 when bats migrated to orchards following El Niño and deforestation in Kalimantan and Sumatra, leading to an outbreak. Factors like food scarcity, overcrowding, and the stress of habitat

loss can also increase viral shedding, experts contend. It could also be a case of improved detection due to heightened surveillance and awareness; in Kerala, all acute encephalitis cases are also checked for Nipah. Infectious diseases such as H1N1, Hepatitis A, and leptospirosis already infect thousands, killing dozens every year in Kerala. This underscores the need to strengthen disease monitoring systems, invest in early-warning infrastructure, and promote behavioural changes at the community level. Eradicating Nipah may not be realistic, but minimising its transmission is. Nipah cannot be seen as a consequence of man-animal conflict, but it does emphasise the need for a better understanding of the human-animal-environment relationship. The WHO's 'One Health' approach, which links human, animal, and environmental health, offers a roadmap for long-term preparedness. Kerala must integrate this approach more systematically into its health governance. Nipah is here to stay. Kerala needs to learn to live with the virus safely.

Risks and realities of killer robots

Several countries are developing lethal autonomous weapon systems that function without moral reasoning and situational awareness. Current international legal frameworks can't address the deep ethical dilemmas they pose. Work towards a global treaty on their use is hobbled by geopolitical divisions

In his sci-fi novel, *Runaround*, Isaac Asimov introduced the three laws of robotics to explore the moral boundaries of machine intelligence. His robots were programmed to preserve human life, obey ethical constraints, and act only within a tightly defined moral architecture. These laws forced readers to grapple with the limits of delegation and the necessity of conscience in decision-making. This insight is especially relevant today, as warfare increasingly incorporates unmanned systems. In recent conflicts—India's Operation Sindoora, Azerbaijan's use of Turkish drones against Armenian forces, and Ukraine's deep drone strikes into Russian territory—all offensive systems remained human-operated. Humans directed target selection, authorisation and engagement. But now, as the global defence landscape shifts toward lethal autonomous weapon systems (LAWS), Asimov's warning grows more relevant. Unlike the author's fictional robot Speedy, these systems will not hesitate when ethical ambiguities arise. They will not wait for human correction. They will act without the possibility of a moral pause. LAWS are weapons that can select, track, and engage targets without real-time human control. LAWS rely on AI, sensor fusion, and machine learning algorithms to make independent targeting decisions. This autonomy dramatically accelerates response time and expands operational reach, but at significant ethical and legal cost. The development of LAWS is already underway in multiple countries. The US,

China, Russia, Israel and South Korea have invested heavily in autonomous platforms ranging from loitering munitions to swarming drones and autonomous ground systems. The US military has demonstrated autonomous swarms in exercises like Project Convergence; China is integrating AI into hypersonic systems and naval platforms; and Russia has tested autonomous tanks like Uran-9. Although fully autonomous systems capable of making unsupervised kill decisions are not yet officially deployed, the technological threshold is narrowing. Arifical Intelligence uses Arifical Intelligence uses

These systems come with six kinds of risk. First, LAWS rely on AI for target recognition; however, these models are vulnerable to adversarial attacks, such as infrared decoys or altered clothing patterns, which can lead to civilian misidentification and thereby violate the principle of distinction under international humanitarian law. Second, as reaction times shrink to milliseconds, human oversight becomes impractical. Decisions will be driven by opaque AI models like deep neural networks, undermining transparency and making post-strike accountability nearly impossible. Third, when deployed in swarms or decentralised formations, LAWS may exhibit emergent behaviour, actions not explicitly programmed, leading to unpredictable escalation. In high-stakes conflicts, such as those involving missile defence or critical infrastructure, unintended escalation could have strategic consequences. Fourth, delegating lethal

decisions to non-sentient machines erodes the ethical core of warfare, as LAWS cannot interpret surrender, intent, or moral nuance, thus violating



principles like proportionality and humanity. Fifth, the 'simulation-to-real' gap remains a persistent risk, as AI systems trained in constrained simulations may fail amid real-world battlefield complexity, sensor noise, or unexpected tactics. Sixth, the global spread of LAWS will lower the threshold for autonomous warfare. Cheap, dual-use AI components will empower both states and non-state actors, while the absence of verification norms will make it easy to embed autonomy covertly, destabilising arms control.

Thus, there is a need for a regulatory framework on LAWS. While the existing international legal regimes (including international humanitarian law, criminal laws, and Article 36 of Additional Protocol I of the Geneva Conventions) may

formally apply, they are technically inadequate for regulating their unique risks. These frameworks presuppose predictable and human-controllable weapons, whereas LAWS make both ex ante legal review and ex post accountability nearly impossible. Core principles such as distinction, proportionality and precaution require moral reasoning and situational awareness.

Critically, current law offers no enforceable technical metrics, audit standards, or verification protocols. Ethical safeguards such as the Martens Clause are too abstract to effectively constrain systems that are incapable of recognising intent or emotions. In effect, the existing legal architecture, while symbolically comprehensive, is practically obsolete in the face of adaptive autonomy in warfare. In 2023, the US came up with the Political Declaration on Responsible Military Use of Artificial Intelligence and Autonomy, which 50 countries had endorsed until November 2024. While the effort marks a welcome attempt at global norm-building, it remains non-binding and lacks any enforcement or verification mechanisms. Thus, there is a need for a legally binding instrument on LAWS, just like the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. While momentum is building for a treaty, its adoption remains stalled due to persistent geopolitical divisions and procedural gridlock within the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. A meaningful treaty must go even beyond this proposal and impose a categorical ban on fully autonomous weapons.

Boy loses hands, FIR against discom engineers

Noida. (Agency)

An FIR was registered against officials of UP Power Corporation Limited (UPPCL) after a seven-year-old boy lost both hands after coming in contact with a high-voltage wire hanging dangerously close to the roof of a house in Dankaur. The case comes days after another FIR was registered against discom officials for a farmer's electrocution in Maicha Ki Madhya village. Naushad Ali, a private firm worker and father of four, filed the complaint against UPPCL's junior engineer, sub-divisional officer, executive engineer, and other officials at the Dankaur police station on Monday. His youngest son, Taimur, had suffered grievous injuries on May 22 when he came in contact with a 11,000-volt power line while playing on a neighbour's roof.

According to Ali, despite multiple complaints to authorities, including the district magistrate's office, no action was taken to remove unsecured high-voltage wires dangerously close to residential



buildings. "There was no electricity after rains on May 20. On May 22, there was some fluctuation," Ali told TOI, explaining the circumstances around the incident. The severity of Taimur's injuries necessitated three surgeries at Safdarjung Hospital in Delhi. Doctors initially tried to

save his left arm, but were ultimately forced to amputate both hands below the elbow because of spreading infection. "This is not the first time this has happened here. Our village has seen many such incidents in the past. Another boy had to be amputated earlier," Ali said. The

case against discom officials was registered under sections 289 (negligent conduct with respect to machinery) and 125B (act endangering life or personal safety of others) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. "My child's life is ruined," Ali wrote in his complaint, demanding strict action against the accused officials for their negligence. Sanjay Jain, chief engineer at PVVNL, said an internal inquiry was underway. "Preliminary inquiry found that the child came in contact with a broken cable wire. We have rectified the fault and will submit our report to police," he said. The incident follows a recent case where a 38-year-old farmer was electrocuted while working in his field, and his two daughters were grievously injured while trying to rescue him in Maicha Ki Madhya village. The farmer had touched an iron fence partially submerged in water that had been electrified by a leaking transformer, which was installed despite the family's objections.

Councillors press for early drain desilting to avert flooding on Gurgaon roads

Gurgaon. (Agency)

MCG councillors have pushed for sewage and stormwater drains desilting in Feb-March next year. Councillors brought it up during a meeting with mayor Raj Rani Malhotra and MCG commissioner Deepak Dahiya on Tuesday. They said prompt action would prevent the city from experiencing traffic disruptions during the monsoon next year. "We need to be prepared for monsoons every year instead of waiting for the June 30 deadline that is set every year for desilting operations," said Anup Singh, councillor of ward 25.

Singh emphasised the importance of community involvement in resolving Gurgaon's civic issues.

He gave reference to the Urban Local Bodies (ULB) national conference in Manesar, noting that cities such as Indore and Vishakhapatnam achieved excellence in civic services through active public participation. He advocated for functional water harvesting systems in all households, and recommended schools and private companies to install sewage treatment plants (STPs) and harvesting systems on their premises. Councillor Dinesh Dahiya said, "Waterlogging is a common concern for all the ward councillors. We raised the issue in the meeting on Tuesday. The commissioner assured us that the problem will be resolved soon. He directed the officials present in the meeting to work on waterlogging hotspots and sewerage complaints raised by us. He has also sought a list of waterlogging-prone points in our respective wards." Earlier this month, key stretches such as Golf Course Extension Road, Sohna Road and Subhash Chowk were flooded after a downpour. A vehicle stalled at Rajeev Chowk, triggering a three-hour jam there. Motorists following behind tried to re-route to avoid driving through the waterlogged stretch and few abandoned their vehicles.

Take permanent licence to serve liquor, excise department to tell restaurants

Noida. (Agency)

Excise officials in Noida and Ghaziabad have been directed to encourage restaurants and venues using occasional bar licences to shift to permanent licences. Noida issues around 400-500 occasional bar licences every month, while Ghaziabad sees 200-300 of these in the same duration. At a review meeting on Monday, chaired by UP excise commissioner Aradh Singh at Shakti Sadan Guest House in Noida, officials were directed to encourage eatery owners to make this shift for better revenue collection. "These FL-11 category licences are typically availed by restaurants that do not have the required NOCs from other departments like the local authority or the fire department and hence do not have a permanent bar licence, but want to serve liquor to customers on specific days. Under the new UP excise policy, each occasional licence now costs Rs 33,000 for restaurants and can be issued only for a period of three consecutive days," said GB Nagar district excise officer Subodh Kumar. The excise commissioner asked officials to monitor such licences closely and make efforts to



convert them into permanent ones, citing regulatory efficiency and better revenue collection. "All excise inspectors must ensure area-wise monitoring of FL-11 licences and encourage eligible establishments to apply for permanent bar licences as per the rules," he said during the meeting. The cost of a permanent bar licence is Rs 15 lakh per annum. "In cases where there are such restaurants which have NOCs from other departments and still are running on occasional licences to serve liquor, they have been asked to apply for a permanent bar licence," said Rakesh Tripathi, excise inspector in Ghaziabad. Others in attendance at the meeting include the joint excise commissioner of Meerut zone, deputy

excise commissioner of Meerut division, district excise officers from GB Nagar and Ghaziabad, assistant excise commissioners posted at distilleries and breweries in Ghaziabad, and excise inspectors from both districts. The commissioner also ordered strict checking of farmhouses located along the Haryana border and directed officials to intensify operations to curb the inflow of illegal liquor from neighbouring states. Officers were told to remain vigilant in border areas and take prompt action against violations. To meet revenue targets, the Commissioner directed officials to maximise liquor supply indents through wholesale licences and district bonds. Enforcement activities are also to be strengthened. Later in the day, the excise commissioner and the GB Nagar district excise officer inspected two new licensed establishments in Sector 43 – the LAB (Low Alcoholic Beverage) Premium Retail Liquor Boulevard (FL-4D) and the MISS NORA restaurant bar (FL-7(1)) in Rcube Monad Mall. In Ghaziabad, the Excise Commissioner visited the Mohan Makin distillery in Mohan Nagar.

Kalindi Kunj sees heavy snarls as kanwar yatra curbs kick in

Noida. (Agency)

Commuters travelling from Delhi to Noida were caught in a gridlock at Kalindi Kunj crossing on Tuesday morning, after traffic police shut two of the four lanes of the Noida-bound carriageway between the Okhla Barrage and Okhla Bird Sanctuary to facilitate the movement of kanwar pilgrims. Tailbacks stretched all the way to Shaheen Bagh during peak rush hour, with many officegoers reporting delays of over 30 minutes. Rajeev Sharma, a private firm employee who commutes from Sarita Vihar to Noida Sector 63, said the journey took him double the usual time. "I was stuck near Kalindi Kunj for 30 minutes. Closing lanes during peak hours without

proper diversion plans is just poor planning," he said. Another commuter, Nitin Kumar, said the authorities must find a balance. "Religious processions are important, but what about the needs of daily commuters? For a week, we'll all suffer," he said. Delhi traffic police officials said the restrictions, which will remain in place till Mahashivratri on July 23, are aimed at ensuring safe passage of pilgrims headed towards Delhi, Gurgaon and Faridabad. Pilgrims returning from Haridwar typically travel from Mayur Vihar to Kalindi Kunj via Shani Temple and the bird sanctuary. "We have deployed additional personnel to regulate traffic

movement. Commuters are advised to use the DND Flyway or the metro instead for commuting during the period to avoid snarls," a traffic officer in Noida told TOI. Kalindi Kunj is one of the busiest routes linking southeast Delhi and Noida. With two lanes towards Noida barricaded, traffic has been squeezed onto the remaining two lanes in the opposite direction, leading to bottlenecks at the Kalindi Kunj intersection and Okhla Bird Sanctuary stretch. DCP (traffic), Noida, Lakhman Singh Yadav said that traffic police personnel have been stationed at all key junctions along the kanwar route. "The number of pilgrims using this stretch is expected to rise from Wednesday.

Negligence Uncovered: Rain Reveals Infra Gaps in Gurgaon

Gurgaon. (Agency)

Gurgaon: Critical stretches along MG Road and Old Delhi-Gurgaon Road are turning into deathtraps for commuters and pedestrians. Exposed wires, uncovered manholes, missing drain covers and haphazard construction zones have become a nightmare for commuters and pedestrians — all thanks to glaring negligence by civic agencies. The city's first heavy rainfall of the season last week only worsened the situation and claimed four lives. In fact, on Old Delhi-Gurgaon Road, multiple drain covers are missing, leaving gaping holes right along the carriageway. Pedestrians walking on the footpath or edge of the road face a constant risk of falling into these drains, which are at least six feet deep. The danger is compounded by exposed electrical wires dangling dangerously low and unprotected transformer installations, with no warning signs or fencing. "The wires are right next to the footpath — anyone brushing against them could get electrocuted. I saw people narrowly avoid falling into the drain while trying to dodge the waterlogged road," Manoj



sewer in Sector 49 near Sispal Vihar during intense flooding. Pawan Kumar (26), a food delivery executive, was fatally electrocuted near Sector 18 after contact with a pole in ankle-deep water. Akshat Jain (25), a graphic designer, was electrocuted after touching a submerged live wire near Ghasola village while riding through knee-deep water. Prashant Mishra (23), an auto-rickshaw driver, was electrocuted in New Colony area when his foot touched an electrified shop shutter. The lack of safe pedestrian

infrastructure is a persistent problem across the city. "Old Delhi-Gurgaon Road is known for waterlogging during rains, but pedestrians are left with no secure pathway. Drain covers are missing at multiple locations. Even in dry weather, the situation is unsafe because the footpaths are either encroached upon or strewn with debris and waste," RWA president of Sector 21 Prakash Lamba said. Just a few kilometres away, on the service lane along MG Road near JMD Mall, ongoing drainage construction work has added to the civic mess. Portions of the service road have been

excavated for laying stormwater drains-cum-footpath, but there are no barricades, reflective signs, or even caution tape to alert road users. Meanwhile, a senior GMDA official claimed that ground teams have been directed to identify and cover all open drains and manholes. The barricading will be done along the site to cordon off the area for commuters and pedestrians, the official said. "Wherever complaints are received — including on social media — action is being taken

News box

Delhi Metro staffer returning home crushed by train near Old Faridabad railway station

Faridabad. (Agency)

A 21-year-old man was crushed by a train while returning from work on Saturday night near Badhka flyover, just two kilometres from Old Faridabad railway station. The deceased, Vivek Rathour from Palwal, worked at the smart card counter of the Govindpuri Metro station in Delhi. A relative of the deceased, Rajender Bhati, said that Vivek last spoke to his father around 7pm and told him it was raining heavily and he might not be able to make it home. "After some time, we received a call, and the person on the call informed us that Vivek met with an accident," he said. Around 8pm, the railway police received a call, reporting that the Kerala Express near Badhka Pul had hit a man. Police said they are trying to reach the pilot of the Kerala Express locomotive to piece together the sequence of events. However, he remains unreachable for now. "We reached the spot, and upon reaching there, we were told that he was taken to Civil Hospital, where we received information that Vivek succumbed to injuries," Bhati said. Govt railway police (GRP) officer Sanjay Kumar, who was assigned as the investigating officer in the case, said that they received a call from the railways that a person came in front of the Kerala Express train, Kumar said.

New ESIC scheme offers legal immunity to unregistered companies

Gurgaon. (Agency)

For the ease of doing business and to increase the registration of workers with the govt, ESIC has done away with the provision of legal action and the demand for backdated dues from firms that are not registered with the department. The employees' state insurance corporation has started the scheme for the promotion of registration of employers and employees (SPREE) 2025. This special initiative aimed at expanding social security coverage under the ESI Act will be active from July 1 to Dec 31, 2025, and provides a one-time opportunity for unregistered employers and employees — including contractual and temporary workers — to enrol without facing inspections or demands for past dues. Under the scheme, employers can register their units and employees digitally through the ESIC portal, Shram Suvidha, and MCA portal. Registration will be considered valid from the date declared by the employer.

GM of NFR conducts Extensive Inspection of Key Stations and Infrastructure . . .

Contd.....Front page

specialized training and modernized classrooms and workshop facilities. Shrivastava, also inspected the development of the new Gati-Shakti Cargo Terminal (GCT) at Baihata, which is going to be commissioned soon. This modern terminal features three dedicated goods lines, an electronic in-motion weighbridge, double goods platforms, high-mast lighting for 24x7 operations, and a special ramp for automobile handling, with the capacity to handle over 25 freight rakes per month. The GM also reviewed the ongoing station enhancement works and inspected the adjacent railway colonies, emphasising the importance of staff housing and amenities in supporting frontline employees.

22-year-old Gurgaon youth kidnapped by former schoolmates, thrashed, dies in hospital

Gurgaon. (Agency)

Two days after a youth was allegedly kidnapped from the Sector 7/8 intersection in Faridabad and was assaulted with sticks by a group of his former schoolmates, he succumbed to his injuries in AIIMS, Delhi. The victim was identified as Akash Patel (22) of Prem Nagar, Sector 8, who worked as a helper in a private company in Sector 6. Police registered a murder case against multiple persons and arrested the key accused, Sohil, a resident of Uncha Village, who filmed the assault and posted it on his Instagram account. Police also arrested Aarif Khan and Altaf of Eidgah Colony, Vikas of Sector 4, and Suraj of Sector 8, in addition to a juvenile. The car used in the crime was also recovered by the police. According to the police, the accused held a long-standing grudge against the victim dating back to their school days. Police spokesperson SI Yashpal reported that the mother of the victim alleged that on July 12, her son was assaulted while returning from work. "Upon reaching the Sector 7/8 intersection, his school friends, Arif Khan, Altaf, Suraj, Vikas, and Sohil took him in a car towards Uncha Gaon. There, they threw him onto the roadside and assaulted him with rods and sticks, and dropped him outside his house after the assault.

Lapses in registrations at tehsils lead to Rs 5,000 crore tax evasion a year in Haryana

Gurgaon. (Agency)

The income tax (I-T) department has estimated tax evasion amounting to over Rs 5,000 crore each year after it has discovered that permanent account numbers (PAN) of buyers and sellers are not being entered into the software during registrations at the tehsil offices of the state. In 93 tehsils across 22 districts, PAN is not being fed into the software during registrations.

According to norms, details of all registries for properties that cost over Rs 30 lakh have to be shared with the I-T department. The tehsil office has to provide the names, PAN and Aadhaar card details of the buyers and sellers. "Even if 1% of people evade taxes, the amount would be at least Rs 5,000 crore in a year," an I-T official told TOI, adding, "Instructions have been given to the concerned officials regarding this issue."

Over 5K cops deployed in Delhi for Kanwar Yatra

Special security arrangements have been made for temple areas and designated Kanwar camps, where pilgrims rest and perform rituals, the official added

Agency New Delhi. Security across the national capital has been intensified for the Kanwar Yatra, with over 5,000 police personnel and around 50 paramilitary companies deployed to ensure a smooth and safe pilgrimage, an official said on Tuesday.

Special security arrangements have been made for temple areas and designated Kanwar camps, where pilgrims rest and perform rituals, the official added. According to a senior police officer, drones are also being used for surveillance.

City government officials said 265 camps have been registered so far—more than double last year's number—following the implementation of a Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) scheme to support all Kanwar committees, regardless of size.

"We have made adequate security arrangements, especially along the Kanwar Yatra route," said a senior officer, adding, "Our main focus is on

maintaining law and order. Traffic management is also a major concern. We aim to ensure smooth vehicular movement while facilitating the pilgrims."

"PCR vans, quick reaction teams (QRTs) and

SHOs have been directed to stay in regular contact with local camp organisers to ensure adherence to safety protocols and guidelines.

Due to the movement of Kanwaris and the setup of roadside camps, traffic congestion is expected in several areas including NH-8 (Dhauka Kuan to Rajokri Border), Najafgarh Firmi, Rohtak Road, Pankha Road, Dev Prakash Shastri Marg, Nangloi-Najafgarh Road and Outer Ring Road.

Delhi Traffic Police has implemented special measures to segregate the movement of Kanwaris and general traffic. Devotees and commuters are urged to follow traffic rules and police instructions. Traffic violations will be monitored through on-spot prosecution and video surveillance. As per a

Delhi Police advisory, heavy transport vehicles will be diverted by UP Police from Mohan Nagar towards NH-24 and will not be allowed to move via Bhopura or Apsra Border.



ambulances have been strategically stationed. Separate police teams have been tasked with addressing potential threats and monitoring suspicious activities throughout the week-long religious gathering," the officer added. All

Tech-driven overhaul of surface parking by MCD, 82 sites up for bidding

Agency New Delhi.

The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) is rolling out a tech-driven overhaul of the city's surface parking system, mandating digital billing, real-time monitoring, and stricter enforcement, backed by a fresh e-tender for allotting 82 authorised parking lots across the capital, an official said.

The civic body has mandated that all parking sites, spread across busy markets, residential zones and commercial hubs, be managed through the 'MyParkings' mobile application, in order to curb overcharging, eliminate manual slips and boost transparency. The app is now compulsory for all contractors issuing parking slips through handheld digital devices synced in real time.

Any attempt to bypass the digital system will attract penalties of up to Rs 2 lakh and termination of the contract, according to the tender. The tender outlines 82 parking sites, including three cluster sites, which will be auctioned to private operators on a monthly licence fee basis.

Areas such as Defence Colony Market, Vasant Kunj, Lodhi Road Institutional Area, Shaheen Bagh, Stadium Road (Chhatrasal Stadium), and Shastri Nagar are among the locations included. Each site carries a reserve fee. The contract will be awarded to the highest (H1) qualified bidder.

The licence for each parking site will be allotted for an initial term of three years, extendable by another two years based on performance. The last date to submit bids is August 1, and technical bids will be opened on August 5. A pre-bid meeting will be held at the Civic Centre on July 21.

Recently, complaints of overcharging were received in the MCD against nearly half dozen parking contractors in various parts of the city. The civic agency took cognizance of the complaints and got these complaints verified through the team of RP Cell. During verification, MCD found that parking contractors are violating other terms of conditions of the contract as well. Therefore, the corporation imposed penalties for overcharging and other violations nearly Rs 24.5 lakh on them.

Drone survey of smaller drains to tackle waste flow into Yamuna

Agency New Delhi.

As part of its efforts to clean the Yamuna river, the Delhi government has started a drone survey of smaller drains that discharge untreated waste into larger drainage systems. Delhi Water Minister Parvesh Verma said on Tuesday said that there are around 300 sub-drains that end up in these large drains, adding to the overall pollution load. Notably, the city has 22 big drains, including the biggest Najafgarh drain, the Shahdara drain and the Supplementary drain, which empties into the Yamuna. "We are doing drone surveys of all the sub-drains that are adding waste to larger drains.

It is important for us to know the origin, entire map and outflow of each of these drains for a comprehensive policy. After we identify the source and the full length

of these drains, further steps like installation of D-STPs (decentralised sewage treatment plants) will be taken up," the PWD minister said.

The Irrigation and Flood Control Department and the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) are working on desilting the big drains and treating the waste flowing in them. In areas where large STPs (sewage treatment plants) cannot be built due to space constraints, the DJB plans to install 40 D-STPs, ensuring localised waste management. Tenders have already been floated for this. The Delhi government's 45-point action plan to clean the Yamuna, announced earlier, includes completing the Interceptor Sewer Project (ISP) by the end of this year. The project involves connecting all drains to sewage treatment plants. According to officials, interconnections between stormwater drains and sewerage systems affect the carrying capacity of stormwater drains, causing waterlogging.

"The survey will also help in delinking of sewerage lines and storm water drains, as well as the repair of faulty interconnections, which is crucial to the overall reduction in pollution," an official said.

Delhi govt begins public transport system overhaul, main focus on DTC revamp

Gupta also announced a special Pink Card for women and transgender residents, which will allow them free travel in DTC buses.

Agency New Delhi.

The Delhi government on Tuesday initiated an overhaul of the Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) to provide the citizens of the national capital a modern and integrated public transport system. Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, while reviewing the city's transport system in a high-level meeting, announced introduction of a unified smart card system for all modes of public transport in Delhi, which is going to enable seamless travel across DTC buses, Delhi Metro, and the upcoming Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS).

Gupta also announced a special Pink Card for women and transgender residents, which will allow them free travel in DTC buses. Discussions are currently underway with banks to ensure a smooth and foolproof rollout of these cards, aimed at making public transportation more accessible and hassle-free. She added that the number

of both small (DEVI) and large buses is being increased, and the new routes are being strategically planned to enhance accessibility for commuters. "Our

Yamuna Vihar, following which the model will be implemented citywide," Gupta said.

Meanwhile, another key area of focus in the meeting was the modernization of Bus Queue Shelters (BQS) across the capital. The government plans to upgrade all BQS with real-time arrival displays, LED lighting, digital boards, solar power support, and weather-resistant designs. These upgrades will be executed through the Public-Private Partnership model.

Currently, out of the 4,627 shelters in Delhi, only 2,021 are functional. "The new shelter designs are inspired by global standards and tailored to Delhi's local needs," Gupta said. The CM also informed that Kashmere Gate, Sarai Kale Khan and Anand Vihar ISBTs will be redeveloped into world-class passenger terminals. These terminals will feature airport-like infrastructure and offer all modern amenities.



government envisions DTC as a symbol of excellent transport service," she said.

The government also announced that IIT Delhi would design a comprehensive new route plan. "This plan is intended to improve bus connectivity in underserved localities and ensure better integration with Metro services. A pilot project will be initiated in

Delhi court reserves order on bail plea of MP Abdul Rashid

Special Judge Chander Jit Singh reserved the order after hearing arguments from the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and Rashid's legal team.

Agency New Delhi.

A Special NIA Court in Delhi has reserved its order on Baramulla MP Abdul Rashid Sheikh's plea seeking interim bail or custody parole to attend the Monsoon Session of Parliament, beginning July 21.

Special Judge Chander Jit Singh



reserved the order after hearing arguments from the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and Rashid's legal team. Rashid, also known as Engineer Rashid, is in judicial custody in a terror funding case linked to banned terrorist Hafiz

Saeed. His plea seeks either interim bail or permission to attend the session in custody, without bearing travel costs.

Represented by Advocates Aditya Wadhwa, Vikhyat Oberoi, and Nishita Gupta, his counsel argued that Rashid was previously granted interim bail in September 2024 to campaign for the J&K elections, which was extended thrice, showing no security risk.

The defence cited earlier HC orders allowing his attendance in Parliament while in custody, which he complied with responsibly. The NIA opposed bail but requested the accused bear travel expenses if custody parole is granted. The court will pronounce its order on July 21.

DU UG applications cross 3 Lakh, highest since CUET rollout

According to the university, it is expecting over 5.75 crore programme-college preferences across 1,549 unique programme-college combinations.

Agency New Delhi.

Delhi University has recorded its highest-ever number of undergraduate applications since the introduction of the Common University Entrance Test (CUET), with more than 3.05 lakh registrations for the academic year 2025-26. In a notification issued Tuesday, the university said, "The University has received the highest number of applications this year. Based on the received preferences, the university has announced simulated ranks on the dashboard of the candidates. Applicants can reorder, add or delete preferences till July 16, 2025."

According to the university, it is expecting over 5.75 crore programme-college preferences across 1,549 unique programme-college combinations. The B.A. (History + Political Science)



programme has emerged as the most preferred course, receiving 7,60,233 applications, followed by B.A. (Economics + Political Science) with 3,88,407 applications, and B.A. (English

+ Economics) with 3,49,367 applications. In terms of gender distribution, 53.06% of applications (1,27,284) were submitted by female candidates, while 46.93% (1,12,603)

Delhi HC directs schools to disclose pay commission compliance

Agency New Delhi.

NEW DELHI. The Delhi HC has directed several private schools in the capital to file affidavits disclosing their compliance with the Sixth and Seventh Central Pay Commission (CPC) salary recommendations for both teaching and non-teaching staff.

A Division Bench of Justice Navin Chawla and Justice Renu Bhatnagar issued the direction while hearing a series of appeals filed by teachers from schools including DAV Public School, GD Goenka Public School, ASN Senior Secondary School, and St. Margaret Senior Secondary School, among others. The appeals challenge a previous Single Judge ruling that acknowledged the teachers' entitlement to revised CPC pay scales but also appointed a committee to examine the schools' financial capacity to pay and the validity of staff appointments. The teachers' counsel opposed the committee's formation, arguing that the original petitions only sought implementation of CPC-based salaries and did not call for re-evaluation of employment credentials or financial feasibility.

In response, the schools submitted that they were not permitted by regulatory authorities to raise tuition fees, which had hindered full implementation of CPC scales. Some schools claimed partial implementation from varying dates and partial payment of arrears.

To address the divergent claims, the Court has directed each school to file a consolidated affidavit within four weeks. The affidavit must specify whether the Seventh CPC has been implemented, the date of its implementation (if applicable), the extent of arrears paid under both CPCs, and any pending dues.

The affidavits are to be shared with the teachers' counsel, who may file replies within two weeks thereafter. The Court emphasised that a factual determination was essential before issuing further legal rulings in the salary dispute. The matter will be heard next on September 17, 2025.

Four Delhi schools get bomb threat; city witnesses nine such incidents in three days



Agency New Delhi.

A bomb threat received through email triggered panic across four private schools in Delhi on Wednesday morning, prompting authorities to immediately evacuate the premises for a thorough check, a Delhi Fire Services official said.

This was the third consecutive day that education institutes in the national capital were targeted with bomb threats, which, in the past two days, turned out to be hoaxes.

A call regarding the email threatening to blow up St Thomas School in Dwarka was received at 5.26 am by the fire control, Vasant Valley School in Vasant Kunj at 6.30 am, Mother International in Hauz Khas at 8.12 am and Richmond Global School in Paschim Vihar at 8.11 am, the fire services officer said.

For St Thomas School, this was a second bomb threat in less than 24 hours. In total, nine bomb threats have been received by eight schools in the city. Staff staying in these schools overnight were immediately taken to safety as a precautionary measure, as teams of Delhi Police, bomb disposal squad, dog squad and cyber experts rushed in for a thorough search. Nothing suspicious has been found so far, the officer said.

came from male aspirants. Three candidates registered as transgender. The university also received 512 applications under the Orphan Quota (221 females, 291 males) and 7,243 applications under the Single Girl Child Quota. The notification stated that following the declaration of simulated ranks, students can revise their preferences until 11:59 pm on July 16. Candidates have been advised to regularly save their preferences while making changes as only the saved preferences will be used for allocation.

The first CSAS allocation list is scheduled to be released at 5 pm on July 19. Meanwhile, trials for Extra Curricular Activities (ECA) under the supernumerary quota will begin on July 18, while sports quota trials slated to start from July 25.

NEWS BOX

The Hundred: Andrew Flintoff drafts son Rocky as wildcard for Northern Superchargers

New Delhi. (Agency)

It's a proud moment for the Flintoff family as 17-year-old Rocky Flintoff has been picked by his father Andrew Flintoff's team, Northern Superchargers, for The Hundred 2025. The teenager joins the Leeds-based franchise as a wildcard pick after some impressive performances for England U-19 and the England Lions.

Rocky recently smashed a 91-ball 107 against India U-19 and has been turning heads with his steady rise through the ranks. He also scored a red-ball century in Australia with the Lions earlier this year. Although he's yet to play a professional T20 match, his form and potential have earned him a 30,000 wildcard slot. Andrew Flintoff, who has been head coach of the Superchargers for two seasons, made his return to cricket after a serious crash while filming Top Gear. Since then, he's taken on coaching roles with England and the Lions, where he's also worked closely with Rocky. Now, father and son will be part of the same squad — a rare and special moment in



English cricket. Meanwhile, another familiar name has made a return. James Anderson, 42, has been picked as a wildcard by Manchester Originals. After being overlooked in the original draft, Anderson earned his place following a standout Vitality Blast season with Lancashire, where he picked up 14 wickets in his first white-ball campaign in nearly ten years. From Rocky's big break to Anderson's late comeback, The Hundred 2025 is already shaping up to be a season full of stories worth following.

Stuart MacGill breaks silence on life after cocaine case: Jobless, worried for my kids

New Delhi. (Agency)

Former Australian spinner Stuart MacGill has spoken about the toll his recent legal troubles have taken on his life, admitting he has struggled to find work and is deeply concerned about how his legal ordeal has affected his children. The 54-year-old, once known for his clever and sharp leg spin, says his life has changed drastically since the case came to light. In May, MacGill was found guilty of supplying an indelible quantity of cocaine, though he was cleared of involvement in a large commercial drug deal. Since then, he has remained isolated and unable to return to continued work. He described how the situation has affected his daily routine and mental health: "I don't open the curtains too much," he told the Howie Games podcast. "I am very lucky because depression has never been a big thing for me. I get anxious. I won't lie about that. I get very anxious." The veteran leg spinner, who has scalped 208 Test wickets for his nation, reflected on how he's trying to stay strong by leaning on coping methods from his playing days. "If anything particularly bothers me, I just don't think



about it, I learned that through playing Test cricket," he said. The Australian star cricketer admitted the hardest part has been seeing the impact on his family, especially his children. "My kids have had to put up with it. I can just turn the media off but it is very difficult for kids to turn social media off." "I don't care what people are saying about me, but I do care what was happening to the kids and I know it has been very difficult for them." While he has managed to stay involved with cricket through coaching, MacGill admits he's found it tough being mostly unemployed. "I'm doing my coaching but other than that I'm not really working much, which is a pain. I have a pretty active mind and trying to shut that off is hard work," he said. The former New South Wales player added that he often feels lonely and has scaled back his social circle in recent years. "My network used to be a big part of who I was," he said. "I knew a lot of people and I have closed that right down since I have needed to manage my own environment a little bit more carefully."

India could have been 3-0 up with a bit of luck in England series: Ravi Shastri

India have lost the Edgbaston and Lord's Test vs England

- **The third Test at Lord's proved to be a fiercely contested battle**
- **India have consistently faltered during critical phases**

New Delhi. (Agency)

Former India head coach Ravi Shastri believes that, with a little more luck, India could have taken a commanding 3-0 lead in the ongoing five-match Test series against England. According to Shastri, India were well-placed to win both the Edgbaston and Lord's Tests but missed crucial opportunities at key moments. The Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy has, so far, been a story of missed opportunities for Team India. Had they capitalised on key moments at Headingly or avoided chasing personal milestones just before lunch on Day 3 at Lord's, they might

already have sealed the series 3-0. Even setting aside the "ifs and buts", India have consistently faltered during critical phases—most notably by losing wickets in the final overs before session breaks, repeatedly surrendering momentum to the hosts. The third Test at Lord's proved to be a fiercely contested battle, with both teams exchanging blows throughout. Despite a spirited fight from the visitors, it was England who emerged victorious, edging past India in a tense finish to level the series. Shastri, speaking on The ICC Review with Sanjana Ganesan, expressed frustration over missed chances and poor decision-making that turned the tide in England's favour. "With a little bit of luck, India could have been 3-0 up," Shastri said. "The turning point for me in this Test match was, first of all, Rishabh Pant's dismissal [in the first innings]. Ben Stokes—simply outstanding presence of mind—to hit the right end and pull it off on the stroke of lunch. Because India were in the driver's seat." Pant was cruising on 74 before a moment of brilliance in the field from Ben Stokes caught him short of his ground just before lunch on Day 3, swinging the

momentum back to the hosts. In the second innings, India were 40 for 1 and seemingly in control while chasing a modest target of 193. However, a moment of misjudgement from Karun Nair, who shouldered arms to a straight delivery,



opened the door for England's bowlers.

"That was a huge lapse in concentration," said Shastri. "It turned things around. Because once the ball got older, you saw how solid Siraj, Bumrah and Jadeja were in defence. If the top order had just been a bit tougher and mentally stronger towards the end of Day 4, this game would have been India's." India eventually folded for 170, falling short by just 22 runs despite a late fightback led by

Ravindra Jadeja, the ICC's No. 1 ranked Test all-rounder. England's attack, spearheaded by Jofra Archer and Ben Stokes, orchestrated a dramatic collapse across the final two sessions. Shastri admitted England deserved credit for capitalising on key moments.

"You have to compliment England," he said.

"When the going got tough, they seized the moments. When they saw a crack in the door, they kicked it wide open. There was hardly anything in that surface. If India had lost two wickets fewer the previous day, they would have chased it down." Reflecting on the match, Shastri drew parallels to India's iconic win at Lord's in 2021, when he was head coach. "It reminded me of the 2021 Test here," he recalled. "On that occasion, India batted first, similar scorelines, and a collapse in the second innings. Back then, India won. This time, it was England." He also touched on other missed opportunities earlier in the series, including at Headingly and tactical errors at Lord's, such as chasing personal milestones before lunch on Day 3. Despite the setback, Shastri remains optimistic about India's chances in the remainder of the series.

Zak Crawley has learned nothing in 57 Tests: Boycott wants England to drop opener

New Delhi. (Agency)

Former England cricketer Sir Geoffrey Boycott has called for Zak Crawley to be dropped from the national side following a string of disappointing performances. Boycott, known for his sharp cricketing insights, voiced his concerns after the young opener's struggles continued in the third Test against India at Lord's. Crawley, 27, has been a regular in the England team since his debut in 2019. Despite a promising start to his international career, his form has remained inconsistent, with recent displays raising serious doubts about his place in the squad. After a composed 65 in the opening Test at Headingley, Crawley has since recorded scores of just 19, 0, 18, and 22. His latest dismissal in the second innings at Lord's—a loose front-foot drive to a wide delivery—was particularly frustrating, once again exposing his technical weaknesses. In his column for The Telegraph, Boycott was especially critical of Crawley's failure to learn from repeated mistakes after 57 Tests. He pointed out that Crawley has been prone to similar types of dismissals, with his loose shots often leading to his downfall. Boycott wrote: "How many more chances is Crawley going to get? He has learned nothing in his 57 Tests. A waft in the



PV Sindhu lost 15-21, 14-21 to Sim Yu Jin in the opening round

- **Sindhu made several unforced errors affecting her performance**
- **Lakshya Sen defeated Wang Zheng Xing in straight games**

New Delhi. (Agency)

Two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu suffered yet another disappointing early exit as she bowed out in the opening round of the Japan Open 2025 Super 750 tournament. The former world champion fell in straight games to South Korea's Sim Yu Jin, continuing a troubling run of form this season. Sindhu, 30, looked out of sorts and was plagued by errors, particularly in judging the length of her shots. She lost 15-21, 14-21 in just over half an hour, marking her fifth first-round defeat of the year. Despite showing glimpses of fight in the

first game, Sim proved too steady and sharp, notching up her first career win over the Indian star. In the second game, Sindhu trailed early at 1-6 but managed to level the score at 11-all. However, the Korean quickly pulled away again, closing out the match with confidence. In contrast, India found success elsewhere on the opening day as



Lakshya Sen and the men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty registered commanding straight-game victories to reach the second round. Lakshya, currently ranked world No. 18, produced one of his best performances of the season to

defeat China's Wang Zheng Xing 21-11, 21-18. The 23-year-old looked sharp from the outset, racing to an 11-2 lead in the opening game and finishing it off with ease. Although Wang offered more resistance in the second, Lakshya held his nerve to wrap up the match without dropping a game. He now faces a challenging clash in the round of 16 against seventh seed and home favourite Kodai Naraoka. Meanwhile, Satwik and Chirag, the former world No. 1 pair, overcame a competitive opening phase to see off Korea's Kang Min Hyuk and Kim Dong Ju 21-18, 21-10 in just 42 minutes. Currently ranked 15th in the world, the Indian duo were slow to settle but found their rhythm midway through the first game and dominated proceedings thereafter. Their aggressive play at the net and clinical execution in the second game underlined their intent to go deep in the tournament.

With Sindhu's campaign cut short, all eyes will now be on Lakshya and the experienced Satwik-Chirag partnership to lead India's charge at the Japan Open 2025.

Atletico Madrid agree deal to sign Argentina's Thiago Almada from Botafogo

New Delhi. (Agency)

Atletico Madrid have confirmed they have reached an agreement to sign Argentina midfielder Thiago Almada from Brazilian club Botafogo, subject to a medical and the formal signing of his contract. The LaLiga side announced on Tuesday that a deal is in place for the 24-year-old attacking midfielder, who was most recently on loan at French side Olympique Lyonnais. While Atletico did not disclose the transfer fee or contract duration, Spanish media report the deal to be worth approximately 25 million (21 million), with Botafogo set to receive a percentage of any future transfer. A 2022 FIFA World Cup winner with Argentina, Almada began his professional career with Vlez Sarsfield in 2018 before moving to Major League Soccer with Atlanta United. In 2024, he played a pivotal role in



Botafogo's triumphs in both the Brazilian Serie A and the Copa Libertadores, prior to his temporary switch to Ligue 1. The move follows the recent departure of Atletico's Argentine forward ngel Correa, who joined Tigres UANL in Mexico's Liga MX.

Almada is expected to sign a contract running until 2030 and will add to an Atletico attacking line-up that includes compatriot Julian lvarez, as well as Antoine Griezmann and Alexander Sorloth. During his time in MLS, Almada, 22, became the first active player in the league to win a FIFA World Cup, having been part of Argentina's victorious squad in Qatar in 2022. He enjoyed a standout second season in 2023, earning MLS Best XI honours, being named MLS Young Player of the Year, and finishing third in the MLS MVP voting. Almada topped the league charts with 19 assists and added 11 goals, contributing 30 goal involvements—the second-highest total in the league that season. His 19 assists also broke the Atlanta United single-season record, previously shared by Miguel Almiron and Julian Gressel (14 each).

Satwik-Chirag, Lakshya Sen cruise into second round of Japan Open 2025

- **Satwik-Chirag defeated Korean duo in straight games with authority**

- **Lakshya Sen beat China's Wang Zheng Xing in straight games**

- **Both matches ended in straight sets, boosting India's early confidence**

New Delhi. (Agency)

India enjoyed a solid opening day at the Japan Open Super 750 with both its top men's doubles pair and a key singles player advancing to the second round with straight-game wins. Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, one of India's most dependable doubles duos, got their campaign



off to a smooth start. The pair, ranked 15th in the world, defeated South Korea's Kang Min Hyuk and Kim Dong Ju 21-18, 21-10 in a match that lasted 42 minutes. Though the opening game saw some stiff resistance, the Indians quickly found their groove and took

control. By the second game, they looked firmly in command, executing a clinical performance to close out the match without much fuss. The win is a timely boost for Satwik and Chirag, who are aiming to regain top form heading into a packed calendar

filled with Olympic qualification events and high-stakes tournaments. In men's singles, Lakshya Sen gave Indian fans something to cheer about with a convincing win over China's Wang Zheng Xing. The 22-year-old, who has endured a run of early-round exits this season, looked sharp and composed as he won 21-11, 21-18. Lakshya dominated the opening game, building a big lead early on. Although the second game proved to be more competitive, the Indian shuttler maintained his lead with controlled shot-making and steady nerves in the key moments. The victory offers a glimmer of renewed confidence for Lakshya, who has been searching for consistency over the past few months. His next opponent is seventh seed and home favourite Kodai Naraoka—a tough matchup that will test both his form and mental strength. India's early results in Tokyo suggest a positive start, but sterner tests lie ahead as the Super 750 event gathers momentum.

Good news soon for HDFC Bank shareholders Here's all you need to know

New Delhi. (Agency)

HDFC Bank may be gearing up to reward its shareholders in a big way. The country's largest private sector lender has announced that its Board will meet on Friday, July 19, to consider two major proposals: a bonus share issue and a special interim dividend for the financial year 2025-26.

If the bonus issue is approved, it will be the first-ever bonus share issuance in the bank's history. The move would still require shareholder approval, and the bank has not yet disclosed the bonus share ratio.

In addition to the bonus proposal, the Board will also deliberate on a special interim dividend for the current financial year. These discussions will take place alongside the scheduled review of HDFC Bank's unaudited financial results for the June 2025 quarter. As per regulatory guidelines, the trading window for the bank's securities remains closed for designated employees and their immediate relatives until Monday, July 21. HDFC Bank shares have delivered a 24% gain over the past year, with a year-to-date rise of nearly 13%. The stock has climbed more than 21% in the last six months and posted gains of 7% over three months and 4% in the last one month. In the past year, the bank has paid a total equity dividend of Rs 22 per share. At the current share price of Rs 1,995.50, this translates to a dividend yield of approximately 1.10 percent. If both the bonus and interim dividend proposals are cleared, it could offer a fresh reason for optimism among the bank's investors.

Sensex opens 69 points lower, Nifty below 25,200; HDFC Bank up 1%

New Delhi(Agency)

Benchmark stock market indices opened lower on Wednesday, dragged by auto and metal sector stocks as caution prevailed in the market despite seeing an uptick in the last session. The S&P BSE Sensex was down by 197.64 points to 82,373.27, while the NSE Nifty50 lost 61.80 points to 25,134.00 as of 9:28 am. Dr. VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Limited, said that the market has been oscillating in a narrow range during the last two months. "A breakout above the upper band of the range, well beyond Nifty 25500, needs positive triggers. Such a trigger may come from an India-US trade deal with tariffs on India pegged at around 20 percent. If this happens, can it trigger a sustained rally in the market? Unlikely," he added.

Among the top gainers in early trade, Trent led with a rise of 1.15%, followed by Adani Ports at 1.11%. Tech Mahindra gained 0.97%, State Bank of India rose 0.66%, and Infosys climbed 0.58%. Tata Steel dropped 1.23%, Mahindra & Mahindra fell 1.00%, and Tata Motors declined 0.91%. Eternal Health lost 0.83% and ICICI Bank went down 0.73%. The Nifty Midcap100 gained 0.01% while Nifty Smallcap100 fell 0.09%, and India VIX dropped 0.34%.

Among the sectoral indices, Nifty Media led the gainers with a jump of 1.18%, followed by Nifty Realty at 0.06% and Nifty IT at 0.05%.

Several sectors faced selling pressure with Nifty Auto declining 0.90%, Nifty Metal falling 0.57%, Nifty Consumer Durables dropping 0.22%, Nifty Financial Services down 0.12%, Nifty Pharma losing 0.12%, Nifty Oil & Gas falling 0.13%, Nifty FMCG declining 0.06%, Nifty Healthcare dropping 0.04%, and Nifty Private Bank slipping 0.02%. Nifty PSU Bank remained flat with no change. "A sustained rally in the market needs earnings support. There are no signs of a strong earnings support and earnings growth visibility. Two big segments of the market - IT services and consumption, particularly FMCG - are struggling with tepid earnings," said Vijayakumar.

"There are green shoots of earnings recovery in FMCG but IT services continue to struggle.

Festive hiring expected to generate 2.16 lakh seasonal jobs in India: Report

MUMBAI. (Agency)

India's festive season is expected to generate over 2.16 lakh seasonal jobs in the second half of 2025, marking a 15-20 per cent year-on-year increase in gig and temporary employment, a report said on Wednesday. The rise in festive hiring is being driven by sectors, including retail, e-commerce, BFSI, logistics, hospitality, travel, and FMCG, workforce solutions firm Adecco India said in the report. Hiring activity has gained momentum in anticipation of upcoming festivals like Raksha Bandhan, Dussehra, Diwali, seasonal sales and the wedding season. Many companies are advancing their hiring cycles to stay ahead of demand and ensure operational readiness for what is expected to be a stronger-than-usual festive period. This year's hiring uptick is being driven by improved consumer sentiment, a favourable monsoon boosting rural demand, post-election economic optimism, and aggressive seasonal promotions, the report stated. This report on hiring in seasonal jobs is based on data of Adecco India's client base, opening positions on various platforms and industry reports.

"This year's festive season is seeing a sharper and more structured demand curve, and we have proactively prepared to meet it well in advance. Unlike previous years where hiring was largely volume-driven, employers today are equally focused on deployment speed, workforce readiness, and regional agility," Adecco India Director and Head of General Staffing Deepesh Gupta said. The report further revealed that metro cities such as Delhi NCR, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, and Pune continue to lead in seasonal hiring demand, with 19 per cent more opportunities from last year. At the same time, Tier II cities like Lucknow, Jaipur, Coimbatore, Nagpur, Bhubaneswar, Mysuru, and Varanasi are witnessing a 42 per cent increase in demand, it said, adding that there is also a growing traction in emerging hubs such as Kanpur, Kochi, and Vijayawada, indicating a broader geographic spread of festive hiring.

Tesla is finally in India. But can it go the distance

Tesla finally opens first showroom in Mumbai and begins bookings for Model Y Model Y starts at Rs 60 lakh, making it among the most expensive globally High import duties could limit Tesla to a luxury niche in India

New Delhi. (Agency)

After years of speculation, lobbying and negotiation, Elon Musk's Tesla has formally entered the Indian market. The company has opened its first showroom in Mumbai's upscale Bandra Kurla Complex and started bookings for the Model Y SUV. A second experience centre in Delhi is expected to follow soon,

according to Reuters. This long-anticipated debut, however, brings with it more questions than answers about Tesla's long-term ambitions in the country. The Model Y will be sold as a completely built import, with the base rear-wheel-drive variant priced at Rs 60 lakh and the long-range version at Rs 68 lakh.

These vehicles are being shipped from Tesla's Gigafactory in Shanghai, its main export hub for Asia and Europe. The Indian price tag makes the Model Y one of the most expensive Teslas in the world, substantially higher than the \$44,990 starting price in the United States or the 263,500 yuan cost in China. The primary reason is India's steep import duties, which can exceed 100% for fully assembled vehicles. India recently overtook Japan to become the world's third-largest auto market. But Tesla's entry comes in the luxury EV segment, which remains a sliver of the overall landscape. Luxury electric vehicles currently account for just 4-5% of total car sales in India. Tesla's strategy, for now, seems cautious. The company has

imported only six Model Y units along with Supercharger equipment and accessories valued at about \$1 million, according to import data reviewed by Reuters. Ross Maxwell, Global Strategy Lead at VT Markets, believes the initial



splash may be underwhelming. "Tesla is currently too expensive for most of the Indian consumers, despite a strong brand presence already existing within the country," he said. "The immediate impact of the launch of Tesla's Model Y may be limited, but the longer-term strategic benefits may boost its growth trajectory in the years to come."

PRICING CHALLENGE

The pricing challenge is only one part of the

equation. Tesla also faces a complex policy environment. India's import tariffs on fully built EVs are among the highest globally, posing a major obstacle to competitive pricing. A trade deal between India and the United States is currently under discussion. Reports in Business Standard say Washington is pushing for lower tariffs on American electric vehicles as part of a broader plan to double bilateral trade by 2030. However, geopolitical uncertainty looms large.

With the possibility of Donald Trump returning to the White House—and his well-documented skepticism toward EVs and climate policy—the likelihood of aggressive US lobbying on Tesla's behalf could be limited. Musk's own uneasy relationship with Trump adds another layer of unpredictability to the equation. This puts Tesla at a strategic crossroads. The company can wait for a breakthrough in tariff negotiations or make a bold move to manufacture locally. India's new EV policy offers a compromise. It promises reduced import duties of just 15% for companies that invest \$500 million and set up a domestic factory.

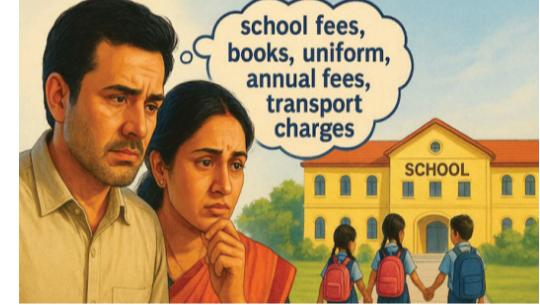
Are private school fees draining India's middle class CA shares eye-opening figures

New Delhi(Agency)

In the current educational climate in India, the rising costs of private schooling are prompting many to reconsider the value they offer. "Stop sending your kids to private school," urges CA Meenal Goel, highlighting a growing sentiment among parents burdened by exorbitant fees.

School education in India is no longer just about learning, it has quietly turned into a heavy expense that eats up a huge chunk of a family's income. WHAT DO SCHOOL FEES REALLY LOOK LIKE?

If you are a parent, you probably know the numbers, but seeing them together is still shocking. She further writes on LinkedIn, "Here's what school fees really look like: Admission charges: Rs 35,000, Tuition fee: Rs 1.4L, Annual charges: Rs 38,000, Transport: Rs 44-73K, Books and uniform: Rs 20-30K." Add it all together, and the yearly cost for one child easily comes to Rs 2.5 to Rs 3.5 lakh. In bigger cities, reputed schools can charge over Rs 4 lakh a year per child, while even



mid-level schools now cost around Rs 1 lakh to Rs 1.5 lakh, says Goel.

EDUCATION COSTS VS AVERAGE INCOME This financial strain is further amplified when compared to India's average annual income of Rs 4.4 lakh. Private school fees, averaging between Rs 2 lakh and Rs 4 lakh a year, represent 40% to 80% of a single parent's income. We talk about healthcare inflation, but education inflation is the silent middle-class killer," Goel says. Many families silently cut down on other expenses, dip into savings, take loans or sacrifice comforts, all to pay school fees. For many, good schooling has become a luxury that they feel they cannot skip. IS IT TIME TO RETHINK?

More parents are now asking, 'Is private school really worth it?' Should they explore affordable schools, government schools or alternative learning options? As fees keep rising every year, the pressure on parents will only increase. Maybe it is time to pause, calculate.

Fewer slabs, simpler rules Next GST Council meet may trigger overhaul

The upcoming GST Council meeting, likely to be held in August 2025 after the monsoon session of Parliament, could bring key reforms in the way GST is structured and collected.

New Delhi. (Agency)

From simplification to slab cuts: What to expect from upcoming GST Council meet? India may be heading for changes in its goods and services tax (GST) system since it was introduced eight years ago. The upcoming GST Council meeting, likely to be held in August 2025 after the monsoon



session of Parliament, could bring key reforms in the way GST is structured and collected. According to a report by The Economic Times, the Prime Minister's Office has given an in-principle nod for a complete review of the GST system. The finance ministry has already started internal consultations and will soon begin discussions with state governments to build support for the proposed changes.

FOCUS ON RATE

RATIONALISATION AND SIMPLIFICATION

The Centre is working on a plan that includes changes in tax rates, fewer slabs, and simpler rules. These changes aim to reduce confusion, make tax compliance easier, and give relief to businesses and consumers. Karthik Mani, Partner, Indirect Tax at BDO India, said one of the key expectations from the 56th GST Council meeting is the long-pending decision on GST rate rationalisation. "Important items that could be discussed include GST on health and term life insurance premiums, charges by food delivery platforms, GST on drones, and charges collected by municipalities for granting extra floor space index (FSI)," he said.

Why this IITian took up a guard's job to build MyGate, valued at Rs 1,600 crore

Abhishek Kumar worked as a security guard to build MyGate MyGate app mimics traditional intercom for easy guard use Startup valued at Rs 1,670 crore after \$83.3 million funding

New Delhi. (Agency)

Most founders talk about user research and the importance of it. This IITian lived it, in a guard's uniform. Before building MyGate, now a Rs 1,670 crore startup, Abhishek Kumar did what very few founders think of: he became his end user. Instead of relying on surveys or second-hand insights, he spent weeks working as a security guard to understand their daily grind, pain points, and habits. The result? A product designed not just for housing societies, but for the people who run them on the ground. In the early days of MyGate, a security and community management app used by over 4 million

residents across 25,000+ housing societies in India, Kumar dressed as a security guard and worked full shifts.

A DIFFERENT KIND OF USER RESEARCH

Back in 2016, the idea for MyGate was taking shape. Vijay Arisetti, a former Indian Air Force pilot, had predicted the rise of smart and secure residential communities in India. He joined hands with Abhishek Kumar and Shreyans Daga (an IIT Guwahati and ISB graduate) to build a solution. The trio went on to form the founding team of MyGate, now based in Bengaluru. While most startups would rely on feedback forms and market research, Kumar believed in going to the source. He put on a guard's uniform and observed and performed all their duties.

WHY DID HE WORK AS A GUARD?

In a podcast with Prime Venture Partners, Kumar said, "We all have great ideas but the proof of the pudding really comes when you hit the ground." For MyGate, that meant designing a system that guards, often the least tech-savvy in the ecosystem, could easily operate. "For us,

we knew that if this product has to be successful, probably the weakest point and maybe the strongest point would be the security guards who have to operate



the product in a way. They are key stakeholders. And so we went in with that idea of let's just shadow the guards, work as guards and be behind them and sit with them for an entire day, and we did this for about maybe a month. And I think that was an eye opener from many, many fronts," said Abhishek Kumar, co-founder & CEO of MyGate. Kumar noticed that guards were used to pressing buttons 0 to 9 on a landline intercom. Based on this behaviour, the team designed MyGate's interface to closely resemble a phone dial, allowing for a smoother transition. "We

really wanted the guard just to make the seamless transition from a traditional intercom to use our mobile application and only use numbers. So that was a very key insight," he added.

A DIVERSE CAREER BEFORE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Before co-founding MyGate, Abhishek Kumar gained wide-ranging experience across global corporations in roles that covered supply chain management, planning, and financial leadership. His career began in July 2000 at i2 Technologies in Dallas-Fort Worth, where he worked for three years as a senior supply chain consultant. He helped clients like AMI Semiconductors (Idaho), Toshiba Semiconductors (Tokyo), and 3M (Minneapolis) with end-to-end supply chain solutions. He then moved to ON Semiconductor, where he spent over five years in the U.S. He started as a Senior SCM Analyst in 2003 and quickly rose through the ranks. Between 2005 and 2008, he served as Business Planning Manager, managing multiple business lines with revenues ranging from USD 60 million to USD 200 million.

Manisha Rani

Shares A Warm Moment With Father Ahead Of Vacation

Manisha Rani has currently been winning hearts with her performance in the romantic show, Haale Dil, co-starring Harshad Arora. Backed by Ravie Dubey and Sargun Mehta, the show premieres on Dreamiyata Drama's official YouTube channel. After wrapping up her work commitments, on Monday, Manisha jetted off for a vacation to Malaysia along with her friends. She was snapped at the Mumbai airport late at night and her appearance was quick to capture the hearts of the viewers. In a video shared on Instagram, she was seen at the airport arrival taking blessings from her father by touching his feet before boarding the flight. As for her look, Manisha was dressed in a black top, a matching jacket and blue jeans.

As soon as the video was shared online, the comment section was flooded with reactions from fans and admirers. An Instagram user commented, "Purest Soul." Another one wrote, "Papa Ki Queen." One of them shared,



"Touchwood she is looking so gorgeous #manisharani."

Taking to Instagram, Manisha shared a picture from the Malaysia airport, giving her fans a brief glimpse of her latest vacation. Coming back to Haale Dil, the show also features Nishant Verma, Jenifer Emmanuel, Sanjana Solanki and Manoj Bhatia in the leads. The show's official description reads, "Haale Dil is the story of Indu, a woman whose infectious joy illuminates every space. Married and deeply in love, her world appears to be complete until an awful truth shatters it all. Indu finds her husband's infidelity, which throws her into an identity crisis she never expected. For so long, he defined her life. Faced with betrayal, she must address the hard question: Who is she, genuinely, now that her world is no longer about "them"?" Besides this, Manisha has also been a part of several reality shows, including Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa 11, in which she emerged as the winner. She even secured the second runner-up position on the popular reality show Bigg Boss OTT 2. In addition, the social media influencer appeared in a number of music videos, including Bairan Begani, Baarish Ke Aane Se, Bolero, Nazar Na Lage, and many more.



Avneet Kaur

Flaunts Toned Curves In Red Athleisure, Hot Photos Go Viral

Avneet Kaur is raising temperatures yet again. The actress set the internet on fire as she shared a fresh set of photos flaunting her curves in a bold red athleisure outfit. Known for her fashion sense, Avneet once again proved why she's a youth icon when it comes to fitness and style. Taking to her Instagram handle, Avneet shared photos in which she was seen flaunting curves in front of a mirror. The actress is seen sweating in

dresses and florals often seen in the Wimbledon crowd, Avneet brought her A-game with a breezy, powder-blue ensemble. The co-ord set featured a structured crop top paired with pleated skirt. She styled the outfit with minimal accessories, a sleek hairdo, and just the right amount of glam to let the outfit do the talking.

Avneet, who's known for making bold fashion choices both

on and off the red carpet, is no stranger to stealing

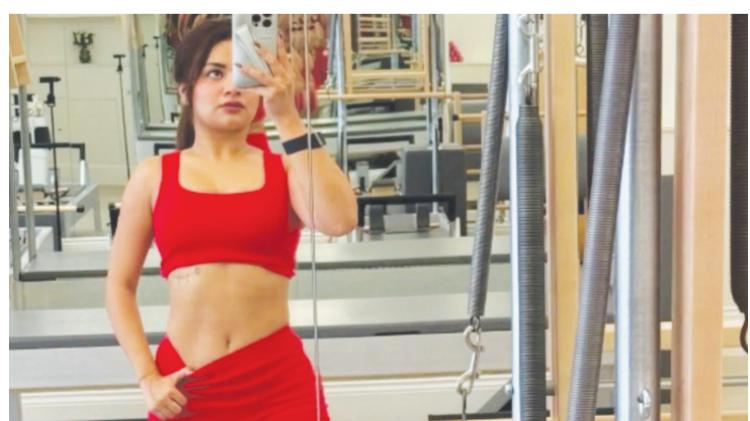
the spotlight. She was earlier seen dressed in a sleek white dress with metallic heels and a floral scarf. The actress-influencer posed against the iconic Wimbledon floral wall.

Needless to say, she looked breathtakingly gorgeous as ever.

Avneet Kaur also made headlines earlier this year after Virat Kohli liked one of her pictures on Instagram. As soon as fans noticed Virat's like on Avneet's post, the post

went viral, gaining thousands of likes and comments.

Later, Virat clarified the incident by posting on his Instagram story, calling it an algorithm glitch and saying he had not liked anyone's photo. Avneet, on the other hand, refrained from commenting on this matter.



gym. In no time it went viral and fans are giving love. One of the fans wrote, "DIFFERENT LEGS SIZE OF BOTH SIDE." Another wrote, "When I see you I remember a line by Akshay Kumar: kya maal hai yaar."

Recently, the young diva turned heads at Wimbledon 2025 as she stepped out in a sexy yet sophisticated blue co-ord set, proving once again that when it comes to fashion, she's playing in her own league. Ditching the typical



Hrithik Roshan, Triptii Dimri Burn The Dance Floor In Viral Video, Collab On The Cards?



Hrithik Roshan and Triptii Dimri are on a roll! Both popular actors are gearing up for the theatrical release of their upcoming films, War 2 and Dhadak 2, respectively. Recently, they have sparked curiosity among fans with a viral video showcasing their impressive dance moves. The video has gone viral on social media, and it quickly created a frenzy among fans eager to learn more about their potential collaboration.

In addition to giving a peek into their electrifying moves, the viral video also exudes crackling chemistry between them, indicating that the two might surely set the screens on fire if and when they collaborate for a big-screen project! In the video, both Hrithik and Triptii are seen wearing street-style casual outfits, suggesting that they might be filming a free-form dance video. However, details about the shoot remain unclear, with fans wondering whether it is for a film or an advertisement. Check out the video below!

Hrithik Roshan is gearing up for the release of War 2 on 14th August. The Ayan Mukerji directorial also stars Jr NTR and Kiara Advani. The movie is the sequel to the 2019 action thriller, War and marks the return of Hrithik as Agent Kabir. This time, he is fighting another Indian agent, Vikram (played by Jr NTR), who is the new addition to the franchise. It will be released in Hindi and Telugu. As per reports, director Ayan Mukerji and YRF have finalised the trailer for this action-packed thriller and plan to release it by mid-next week.

Besides this, Hrithik will also be seen in Krrish 4 and a Pan-India project with KGF makers Hombale Films.

Meanwhile Triptii Dimri's Dhadak 2 will premiere on 1st August. In Dhadak 2, Triptii will share screen space with Siddhant Chaturvedi for the first time in a film that explores themes of love, identity, and casteism.

Additionally, Triptii has several upcoming projects, including Spirit, Arjun Ustara, Animal Park, and an untitled film with director Imtiaz Ali.

Anita Hassanandani On Joining Chhoriyaan Chali Gaon: 'You'll See My Real Side'



Popular television star Anita Hassanandani is all set to return to the screen in a never-seen-before avatar. The actress is one of the contestants on the upcoming TV reality show Chhoriyaan Chali Gaon. The show, which features 11 celebrity women ditching the glitz to live the rural life, promises raw emotions, real tasks, and a slice of India that's often far removed from city lights. Speaking to News18 Showsha exclusively, Anita opened up about what drew her to the concept. "In the show, you will see the real side of me. I will be in no make-up and less decked up. We will be doing what village people do, we'll be interacting with them. It's going to be a different show. It's more real," she said.

When asked what made her say yes to this new venture, she shared, "I took it up mostly because it's a different concept. It has all the flavours you need in a successful show. It has fun, it has comic elements, it has the cuteness, it has emotions, it has, you know, task-like, competitive nature. I think all the qualities that are needed in a successful show, I think are there in this show, and I just hope that the show does really well."

Anita is entering this journey with a refreshingly grounded mindset. "My strategy is simple – go in with an open heart and mind, give 100 per cent, and try to win as many tasks as possible. I'm not overthinking, just diving into every stunt and learning everything I can. I want to come back saying, 'I did this!' It's a whole new adventure for me at this stage in life, and I'm really excited."

And if you're wondering whether the show is scripted like many other reality formats, Anita clears the air: "Not at all! We were clearly told there's no script, no pre-planned interactions. It's as real and candid as it gets—less drama, more tasks, bonding with villagers, and just staying true to the experience."

With 11 strong-willed women under one roof, does she foresee clashes? "I doubt it. I think it's going to be more competitive. Yes, catfights might happen, but during a task. It will never happen, I don't think it will ever happen, off the task. If something happens in the passion of the task, then it will happen. But apart from that, nothing will happen." On whether the stylish, well-known faces might feel out of place in the rural setting, Anita had a beautiful take. "I think that is the beauty of it. They are taking us from our comfort zone and putting us there. So, it's not going to look entirely comfortable. But it's going to look very pleasing to watch. How these people are doing it."

Asking yourself 'why' very important

To question yourself will provide you a clear picture because you will know why you do these things and what changes are needed in your life.



Fear stops a lot of people from asking 'why', because people just don't want to be in that uncomfortable state of knowing the answer. And there are some who probably know the answer but live in denial. Remember, acceptance is the ultimate freedom. Getting a reality check is so very important in life.

Essential to your happiness:

Have you asked yourself recently if you are doing the things you love? Do you think that you are on the right track and following your passion? Are you where you always wanted to be? Are you just letting life to control you? Are you making a conscious decision to follow your dreams? Are you living life king/queen size? Are you pushing your creative boundaries? It's so important to ask yourself these fundamental questions. These questions will give you a ring side view of life. It might be a good time to make some changes, take a new direction, or have an open discussion with someone who matters in your life. What's most important is that you are following your own bliss.

Life is a journey:

Asking yourself 'why' is part of that journey, as it helps you to understand yourself, those around you. When you ask why, you are looking at your life as an outsider and this gives a perspective. To question yourself will provide you a clear picture because you will know why you do these things and what changes are needed in your life. So, don't feel scared and be open about asking questions.

Say bye to fear:

Men should seek Work-life balance

Flexible work arrangements are often sought to maintain work-life balance. If we believe a study, these arrangements may exacerbate discrimination based on parental status and gender. Researchers analysed the reactions both men and women received while making flexible work requests - meaning that they either asked to work from home or to work non-traditional hours. They found that among those who made flexible work requests, men who asked to work from home two days a week in order to care for a child were significantly advantaged compared to women who made the same request. "These results demonstrate how cultural notions of parenting influence perceptions of people who request flexible work," said author Christina Munsch, an assistant professor of

sociology at Furman University in South Carolina.

Today, we think of women's responsibilities as including paid labour and domestic obligations, but "we still regard breadwinning as men's primary responsibility and we feel grateful if men contribute in the realm of childcare or to other household tasks," she added.

For her study, Munsch used a sample of 646 people in the age group of 18 to 65.

Participants were shown a transcript and told it was an actual conversation between a human resources representative and an employee.

After reading the transcript, participants were asked how likely they would be to grant the request and also to evaluate the employee on several measures, including how likeable, committed, dependable, and dedicated they found him or her.

Among those who read the scenario in which a man requested to work from home for childcare related reasons, 69.7 percent said they would be "likely" or "very likely" to approve the request, compared to 56.7 percent of those who read the scenario in which a woman made the request.

Almost a quarter - 24.3 percent - found the man to be "extremely likeable", compared to only three percent who found the woman to be "extremely likeable".

Munsch also found that both men and women who made flexible work requests for childcare related reasons were advantaged compared to those who made the same requests for other reasons.



Is your kid travelling to school safely?

When your child turns rowdy

Do you feel your kid is picking up bad habits from the school bus? Discipline your kid and firmly explain that inappropriate language will not be tolerated. Also, impress upon him/her that there is no greatness in being like the older children and doing wrong



Ground for unruly behaviour

After hours of being cooped up in classrooms, the bus ride provides a perfect ground for the child to let out all that pent-up energy. Says consulting psychiatrist Dr Pavan Sonar, "Unlike classrooms, there is more freedom in buses, as there is an absence of parent/teacher supervision. So, children feel the liberty to do some mischief."

Adds clinical psychologist Saloni Sawani, "Kids of all ages travel together in the bus. If the older kids are using foul language or behaving badly, younger kids follow suit to fit in. That leads to more cases of rowdy behaviour."

More often than not, these buses are understaffed with only one attendant taking care of around 40-50 children. Moreover, the attendant is only equipped to ensure that the children are not physically injured. "They are not responsible towards children's behaviour, so there is no supervision at all," she adds.

things. "Often, when a child gets into a fight in the bus and it comes to the parents' attention, they confront the driver or school authorities. This is not the way to tackle the situation as you would be setting a wrong example," says Sawani.

Instead, get to know both the versions and if you feel that your kid is at fault, act with concern rather than harshness. "Make your child understand that bullying another person is wrong. Often, children don't report instances of bullying. So, teach him/her to understand and report such instances to you, the teachers or the supervisor of the bus," says Dr Sonar.

School authorities' role

With safety and discipline in buses being a concern, school authorities are now taking strict measures. While a few city schools have student monitors in every bus - they not only maintain discipline, but also keep an eye on the bus staff - some even have plans of

installing CCTV cameras in the vehicles. Interestingly, at an international school at Chembur, a text message is sent to the parent when the child swipes his I-card and boards the bus.

Most schools have also hired a lady attendant to comply with the guidelines issued by the RTA (Roads and Transport Authority). "Having trained staff in buses is important. If younger and older kids are travelling together, the attendant should ensure that the younger ones are seated behind and the younger ones in front. Any kind of intermingling between the two should be avoided," says Sawani.

Measures school authorities can take

- Provide instructions about school bus safety in classrooms.
- Send students on time, so that they don't have to run to catch the buses.
- Get the bus inspected for technical snags and ensure safety measures.

- Ensure that the bus has adequate staff and that a lady attendant is always present.

- Install CCTVs in buses for monitoring the behaviour of kids.

Things parents should remember

- Check the background of the agency from where the buses are hired.
- Teach your child the importance of safety, how to wait for the school bus and how to board it.
- Any misbehaviour, on the part of a student or the bus staff, should be brought to notice immediately.
- Teach your child to maintain cleanliness in the bus.