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Email: sikhtimesindia@gmail.com

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Forces should not be deployed inside or outside Shri Darbar Sahib

The Sikh Times
Gurcharan Singh Babbar

Delhi, 18th July: Who is behind the repeated threats to blow up the Golden Temple? Five separate threat emails have been sent to the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) office, warning of an RDX bomb attack on the holiest Sikh shrine, Shri Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple), in Amritsar. The situation is extremely serious, yet till now, it remains a mystery who is sending these threats and from where.

Why has the cybercrime cell stil the source of these emails? Are they being sent from within the country or by foreign-based anti-Sikh elements? Is there an organized conspiracy at play? These questions are shaking the conscience of the entire Sikh community and raising global concern.

This is not just a threat to a religious site—it is a threat to the spirit, faith, and identity of a brave and deeply spiritual community. Millions of Sikhs around the world are outraged and deeply disturbed by these developments.

At the same time, we wish to caution the government:

Do not deploy military forces, CRPF, BSF, or any paramilitary units inside or around the Golden Temple. The Sikh community and the SGPC will not tolerate such interference. Sikhs around the world will strongly oppose any attempt by the government to militarize the Darbar Sahib precincts. The SGPC and the Sikh community are fully capable of protecting their Gurdwaras. No power in this world can intimidate or terrorize Sikhs. No one can dare touch or damage the Darbar Sahib. The SGPC is actively working to uncover the forces behind these threats. We strongly appeal to the central government and concerned

agencies to:1. Immediately investigate the source of these threatening emails.

2. Let the cybercrime department trace the IP addresses and identify the individuals or organizations involved.3. Expose and punish those trying to create panic, spread fear, and destabilize the atmosphere. At this critical moment, the SGPC has urged Sikhs and all peace-loving people around the globe to continue visiting Darbar Sahib without fear. The management has assured that complete arrangements for the safety and security of all devotees have been made. This issue has sparked concern in every Sikh household worldwide. People are wondering who is behind this deeply dangerous conspiracy. The Sikh community is treating the matter with utmost seriousness.

Any attempt—direct or indirect—to harm the sanctity of the Golden Temple will be crushed by the willpower of the Sikh people.



Ended politics of taking revenge on Bihar: PM's pincer attack on RJD, Congress

Speaking in Motihari, his sixth visit to poll-bound Bihar this year, PM Modi focused on the development plank while targeting the RJD and the Congress for 'looting the poor'.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi accused the RJD of usurping land of the poor before giving them jobs during its regime, referring to the infamous land-for-jobs 'scam' in which Lalu Prasad Yadav and his family members have been named as accused.

Greeting the gathering in Motihari in Bhojpuri during his sixth visit to poll-bound Bihar this year, the Prime Minister focused on the development plank while targeting the RJD and the Congress for "looting the poor". The PM also dedicated multiple development projects worth over Rs 7,200 crore to the state and flagged off four new Amrit Bharat Express trains.

Coining a new slogan, 'Banayenge naya Bihar, phir



► **PM dedicates development projects worth over Rs 7,200 crore**

► **Accuses RJD and the Congress for 'looting the poor'**

► **Greets crowd in Bhojpuri, reaches out to women voters**

ekbaar NDA sarkar', PM Modi said, "The RJD can't think of

providing employment to youths. It usurped the land of poor people

before giving them jobs."

The case pertains to appointments in the Railways during Lalu Prasad's tenure as Railways minister. The CBI has alleged that the appointments were allegedly made in return for land parcels.

Asserting that Bihar was developing fast due to the "double-engine government", the Prime Minister claimed the state received a paltry Rs 2 lakh crore during the 10 years of UPA.

"It was as if they were punishing Nitish Kumar's government. After coming to power at the Centre, I ended that old politics of revenge against Bihar," he said.

"In the past 10 years of NDA, the funds provided for Bihar's development are many times greater than before," PM Modi stressed.

Justice Yashwant Varma approaches Supreme Court over impeachment in cash haul case

New Delhi. (Agency)

Allahabad High Court judge Justice Yashwant Varma, from whose residence a large sum of cash was recovered, has approached the Supreme Court challenging the findings of an enquiry committee that cited "strong inferential evidence" against him and recommended impeachment proceedings.

In his petition, Justice Varma has sought to cancel the three-judge enquiry committee's report, contending that the proceedings violated his rights both as an

individual and as a constitutional functionary.

He has also urged the Supreme Court to set aside the impeachment recommendation made by former Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna, which was based on the committee's findings.

Justice Varma argued that the enquiry committee concluded its proceedings without investigating key facts and had erroneously shifted the burden of proof onto him, requiring him to disprove facts that the committee had merely presumed to be true

“Women's Participation is Crucial in Making Delhi Drug-Free”: Ravinder Indraj

The Sikh Times

New Delhi, 18 July 2025: Social Welfare Minister Ravinder Indraj Singh held a key review meeting on Friday in North Delhi to assess the progress and strategy of the anti-drug campaign. The Cabinet Minister emphasized that prevention is the most effective way to control drug abuse. Women can bring a new direction to awareness at the family and community level by being actively involved in the de-addiction campaign. Awareness must be created among women in JJ colonies, slums, and clusters. By becoming volunteers, women can significantly contribute to making their families and society drug-free.

Ravinder Indraj stated that in addition to strict legal action, societal support is equally essential to curb drug abuse — particularly the active participation of women. Women should be made aware of symptoms of addiction, helpline numbers, and available de-addiction centers so that they can help their families and neighborhoods.

The Minister informed that he has written to the Commissioner of Police to assign responsibility to beat officers in drug hotspot areas. He also instructed the police to identify and share a list of dark spots and ensure close surveillance to facilitate effective awareness campaigns in those locations.

He stressed the need for strict monitoring of the sale of intoxicating products at medical stores and other outlets and asked for concrete action to prevent drug abuse at public spaces like parks and toilets.

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The Enforcement Directorate has filed its first chargesheet naming Robert Vadra in a money laundering case linked to a Gurugram land deal, drawing sharp accusations of a "witch hunt" from Congress.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday launched a scathing attack on the Centre, accusing it of carrying out a decade-long "witch hunt" against his brother-in-law Robert Vadra, after the Enforcement Directorate filed its latest chargesheet against him.

"My brother-in-law has been hounded by this government for the last ten years. This latest chargesheet is a continuation of that witch hunt. I stand with Robert, Priyanka and their children as they face yet another onslaught of malicious, politically motivated slander and harassment," Rahul Gandhi said in a post on X. "I know that they are all brave enough to withstand any kind of persecution and they will continue to do so with dignity. The truth will eventually prevail," he added. The Leader of Opposition's remarks came a day after the

ED filed a charge sheet against Vadra, who is married to Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, in connection with a money laundering case linked to alleged



irregularities in a land deal in Haryana. This is the first time any investigative agency has named the 56-year-old businessman in a criminal prosecution complaint. The ED has attached 43 immovable

properties across Rajasthan, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Gujarat worth over Rs 37 crore, allegedly linked to Vadra and his companies, including Sky Light Hospitality Pvt. Ltd, sources told news agency.

The case stems from a 2018 FIR registered by Gurugram Police, which accused Vadra's firm of fraudulently purchasing 3.53 acres of land in Shikohpur village, Sector 83, Gurugram, in February 2008 through what investigators claim was a false declaration. The land was reportedly bought for Rs 7.5 crore from Onkareshwar Properties Pvt. Ltd. Vadra, who was questioned by the ED for three consecutive days in April, has repeatedly denied any wrongdoing, maintaining that the case is part of a "political vendetta" targeting him and his family, which includes Congress matriarch Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi.

Environmental protection is a shared duty: CM Rekha Gupta

The Sikh Times
Simmi Kaur Babbar

New Delhi, 18 July 2025: The Delhi Government has taken a significant step towards making the national capital greener, more sustainable, and pollution-free. At the special event 'Van Mahotsav 2025' held at Rashtrapati Bhavan yesterday, dignitaries from across the country praised the initiative, saying such efforts and public awareness drives are what will truly make Delhi a capital to be proud of.

A special tree plantation drive was conducted at 11 Willingdon Crescent, Rashtrapati Bhavan. Embracing the spirit of 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam', launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta along with all distinguished guests planted saplings.

Among those present were Chief Justice of Delhi High Court DK Upadhyaya, Chairperson of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) Justice Prakash

Shrivastava, Justice Naveen Chawla, Justice Jyoti Singh, Justice Anup Bhambhani, Justice Arun Tyagi, NGT Expert Committee members Dr. Senthil Vel, Dr. Afroz Ahmed, Delhi's Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa, senior justices, forest department



officials, and other. On this occasion, she urged residents of Delhi to take part in the movement by planting more trees in their homes, neighborhoods, schools, workplaces, and community spaces. She announced that under Van Mahotsav 2025, the Delhi Government has set an ambitious target of planting over 70 lakh saplings this year across the city.

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Punjab LoP Pratap Bajwa condemns threats to Golden Temple, slams AAP govt’s ‘inaction’

Chandigarh .(Agency)
Punjab Leader of the Opposition Partap Singh Bajwa has condemned the recent bomb threat e-mails to the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), threatening to blow up the Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple) in Amritsar, and expressed disappointment over the “inaction” by the



Punjab government. Between July 14 and 16, the SGPC reportedly received five separate threat e-mails. Calling these threats “cowardly attempts to destabilise Punjab’s hard-won peace,” Bajwa demanded that central and state

agencies act swiftly to identify and bring the culprits to justice. “The Golden Temple is not merely a religious structure. It is the spiritual heartbeat of Sikhism, revered worldwide for its message of equality, service and universal brotherhood. It welcomes devotees of all faiths and stands as a powerful symbol of Punjab’s inclusive



culture,” the LoP said. Calling Punjab a land of shared heritage and harmony, Bajwa said, “From the teachings of the Sikh Gurus to the melodies of Sufi saints, from temples and gurdwaras to mosques and churches, this soil has always

breathed unity. Any effort to inject fear and hatred into this spiritual landscape must be confronted with resolve and clarity.”

Bajwa, however, expressed disappointment over the “inaction” by the Punjab government. “Despite the seriousness of the threats, neither Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann nor the Director General of Police (DGP) have visited Amritsar to assess the situation and reassure the public. Even four days after the initial threats, the absence of top officials on the ground is alarming,” Bajwa said.

He said, “In today’s age of instant communication and rapid response, such silence and absence of leadership raise serious concerns. The chief minister, the chief secretary and the DGP should have personally visited Amritsar, demonstrated sensitivity and stood by the people during this critical time. This was a moment to show leadership. Unfortunately, the government appears disengaged and indifferent.”

Taking strong exception to the “double standards” of the AAP, Bajwa noted, “On the one hand, Arvind Kejriwal and Bhagwant Mann are pushing a sacrilege prevention Bill in the Assembly to claim religious sensitivity, while on the other, they are completely absent during a moment of actual crisis.”

Surat robbery-cum-murder: 2 more accused held in Bihar, hunt on for fourth

Surat .(Agency)
Two gang members of Bihar’s Paswan gang, involved in a recent robbery-cum-murder of a jeweller from Surat, were arrested in Bihar by the Surat Crime Branch. One of the gang members, who was caught and thrashed by the public on the day of the incident, is currently in remand of the Surat police.

The arrested individuals have been identified as Sanjay Chandradev Paswan (45) and Avinash alias Rakesh Paswan (21), both residents of Bihar’s Vaishali. As per the Surat police, a gang of four entered Shrinathji Jewellers at C V market in Sachin on July 7 and held its owner Vishal Rajpara, his friend Rajesh Soni, and two saleswomen at gunpoint. The accused carried looted gold jewellery worth around Rs 10 lakh. Vishal’s brother Ashish rushed to his help and tried to stop the robbers from fleeing. One of the robbers shot three rounds from his pistol and Ashish sustained injuries. The robbers also shot at Rajesh and vegetable vendor Azim Shaikh. However, people caught hold of one of the robbers, later identified as Dipak Paswan, and thrashed him before handing him over to the police.

Ashish was rushed to a hospital where he was declared dead, while Rajesh and Azim survived. A complaint of robbery and murder was lodged against the gang at Sachin police

station. Dipak was admitted to a hospital and was discharged after recovery.

The police, who were looking for the absconding accused, sent three teams to Bihar after receiving information about them. The teams, led by Surat Crime Branch officer J N Gosami and V A Jograna, caught two robbers from different villages in Vaishali district. They were produced in a district in Vaishali court, which granted the Surat police a four-day transit remand of the accused. On Thursday, Surat Crime Branch teams returned to Surat.

Talking to the Indian Express, Police Inspector Goswami said, “Three accused have been arrested so far. The fourth accused, identified as Pinto alias Ravindra Paswan, is still at large. All of them have criminal

history. All had been lodged in jails in Bihar. While three of them were released on bail in 2024, Pinto was released this year.” “The gang was operated by Dipak and Sanjay. It was Dipak who came down to Surat and started working first at a factory in Kadodara, and later in Sachin. Dipak had his eyes on Shrinathji Jewellers. He talked to his friends in Bihar and asked them to come to Surat . They conducted a reece for three days before committing the crime. Dipak made arrangements for their (other accused’s) stay at a rented house in Sachin. We are trying to dig out more information from these accused.”



Frant continue news

“Women's Participation is Crucial in Making Delhi Drug-Free”: Shri Ravinder Indraj

To protect students, the Minister directed enforcement of a strict ban on the sale of tobacco products within 100 meters of school and college campuses.

Ravinder Indraj emphasized that under the leadership of Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, Delhi will be made drug-free through coordinated efforts between the Police, Health and Social Welfare Departments. He also called for the efficient use of the experience, resources, and manpower of private organizations in strengthening rehabilitation services.

The Minister stated that all universities have been requested to establish “Nasha Mukti Clubs” and declare their campuses as “Drug-Free Campuses”. Ravinder Indraj urged all departments to work in coordination to achieve the goal of “Drug-Free Delhi – Drug-Free Bharat” under the Nasha Mukti Bharat Abhiyan. All present departments and organizations pledged joint efforts to achieve the vision of a developed and drug-free Delhi.

Environmental protection is a shared duty: CM Rekha Gupta

Commending the government’s efforts, Chief Justice DK Upadhyaya called upon all Delhiites to transform this initiative into a mass movement and turn it into a long-lasting and impactful environmental drive. Justice Prakash Shrivastava, praised the ‘Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam’ initiative, calling it a deeply meaningful step towards environmental conservation. He emphasized that every citizen has a responsibility to contribute to the protection of our environment. She expressed joy at seeing so many environmentally conscious individuals come together for this cause. She said ‘Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam’ is not just a campaign—it’s an emotional and heartfelt initiative that strengthens the bond between society and nature while promoting greenery across the city.

The Chief Minister added that trees are not only vital for keeping our environment clean, but they also serve as living guardians of clean air for our future generations. She urged the citizens of Delhi to treat tree planting as a shared responsibility and to join the movement with commitment and pride. Delhi’s Environment Minister, Manjinder Singh Sirsa, expressed deep gratitude to the Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court, the NGT Chairperson, and other esteemed judges for joining hands with CM Rekha Gupta and the people of Delhi in this plantation drive. He said their presence sent a powerful message of unity and collective responsibility in building a greener Delhi. Citizens from across the city are enthusiastically participating and contributing to tree plantation efforts in large numbers.

FIRs should be filed without delay, says Bengaluru police chief

BENGALURU. (Agency)
City Police Commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh said that action will be taken against those policemen who make victims run from pillar to post to get their FIR registered. The Commissioner while answering to questions during a media interaction at the Bangalore Press Club said that FIRs must be registered without fail.

Will go on indefinite strike if our demands are not met soon, says sanitation workers in Mumbai

Mumbai . (Agency)
Essential activities in Mumbai like picking up solid waste from households and commercial establishments and keeping the city clean may suffer a major setback as nearly 31,000 municipal workers have announced to go on an indefinite strike starting July 23. The workers have called for the strike in order to oppose the civic body’s Rs 4,000-crore project under which it aims to rope in private contractors to carry out cleaning and collection of waste through a fleet of new waste collection trucks across all the wards in Mumbai.

On Thursday, hundreds of sanitation workers gathered at Azad Maidan to protest the civic body’s new waste collection policy, voicing concerns over job security and living conditions. The protest, organised by the Municipal Workers Action Committee, also saw BJP leader and cabinet minister Girish

Mahajan extending support to the agitating workers. Following the gathering, a delegation of municipal workers along with Mahajan also met Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis.

“We have held a discussion with the CM who assured us that all our demands will be met and we will have an agreement with municipal commissioner by July 23. If this doesn’t happen, then we will go on an indefinite strike,” Ramakant Bane, general secretary of municipal union said. Bane said their demands included that no existing employee of the solid waste department should lose their job, there shall be no change in the service condition and no scheduled post should be dissolved or nullified in the wake of this tender. Meanwhile, civic officials maintained that the tender of the Rs 4,000 crore project is



still live and there has been no instruction from the administration to revoke it.

Thursday’s protest also comes amid growing anger among workers against the civic body’s plan to bring in private agencies for garbage

quarters they have lived in for over three generations. “Our demand for ownership is repeatedly denied, and now we face the risk of losing our jobs too,” he said.

65 per cent of petitions at ‘Ungaludan Stalin’ camps in Chennai are for KMUT

CHENNAI . (Agency)
Over 65% of petitions received at the ‘Ungaludan Stalin’ camps held in the city on Thursday were for inclusion in the Kalaingar Magalir Urimai Thogai



(KMUT) scheme, according to the Greater Chennai Corporation.

According to a report, 12,891 petitions were received at the camps, which included inclusion in KMUT scheme (8,614), patta transfers (1,002),

pensions (657), and address change in ration cards (600), among others.

A visit to these camps showed that while thousands were visiting the camps, poor crowd management resulted in many of them waiting there for a large part of their day.

On Thursday, Ungaludan Stalin camps were held in six zones - Madhavaram, Royapuram, Ambattur, Kodambakkam, Perungudi, and Sholinganallur. When visited the Sholinganallur camp, a large crowd was seen at the registration desk after which people were directed to the counters of the respective departments, where they had to submit their application with proofs.

Many people stated that the process was taking hours. At noon, Ambika Devi, who arrived to get a correction done on her Aadhaar, said, “After this, I have to also apply for KMUT and for patta. My husband is in the hospital and I have to rush there after this.”

45 birds, including herons, killed during tree pruning at Thane housing society, forest dept launches probe

Thane Municipal Corporation has issued a notice to the housing society management seeking an explanation. It has also lodged a police complaint against the society's management.

Mumbai . (Agency)
As many as 45 birds died, and many unhatched eggs were destroyed during a tree trimming exercise that was carried out in a housing society in Thane on Thursday. However, 27 were rescued by the Maharashtra forest department from the housing society’s compound on Ghodbunder Road. Most of the birds that died were egrets belonging to the heron family, apart from sparrows and mynas, forest officers said, adding that their nests were also destroyed in the incident reported at 2 pm.

The forest department has launched an investigation into the incident, and action will be taken based on the report, said an officer.

“The trees were being trimmed after securing permission from the Thane Municipal Corporation (TMC). According to norms, a maximum of 20 per cent of the branches could be trimmed during a pruning operation, and we found out that more than 50 per cent of the



branches got affected,” said a forest officer.

The forest department said that when their team arrived at the spot, they found the dead birds lying in the drains of the society, while the contractors immediately fled the spot on seeing them. The officer said that birds, mostly fledglings, died by getting crushed underneath the branches. “The rescued birds have sustained injuries and have been transferred for treatment. Some eggs are also rescued, and we

are examining the possibility of whether it could be artificially hatched,” the officer added. Meanwhile, the TMC administration has issued a notice to the society management seeking an explanation of the incident. The civic administration has also lodged a police complaint against the society’s management and the contractors. “The tree was being pruned by a third-party contractor appointed by the society. The rules clearly state that one should be

category, 12 cities across the country were selected and divided into five categories based on population.

In the category of towns with a population of over 10 lakh, Surat has secured the highest position in the Super Swachh League, said SMC sources.

With a significant presence of migrants, Surat has an estimated population of over 82.32 lakh. The work of SMC was assessed by the teams of Swachh Survekshan over the job done in different segments such as Source Segregation, door-to-door waste collection, waste-to-compost plant, RDF plant, plastic-waste processing unit, biomedical waste processing units, sanitary landfill, tertiary treatment plant etc.

Surat . (Agency)
Under the guidelines of Swachh Survekshan 2024, this new category was introduced to inspire other cities and holds a greater significance than the traditional ranking system.

In Swachh Survekshan 2023, Surat



had jointly secured the first position along with Indore. In the 2021 and 2022 editions, Surat had achieved second place.

The Super Swachh League includes cities that have been ranked in the top three slots at least twice in the last three surveys. In this

careful about bird nests and hatchlings while carrying out a tree trimming operation.

We have issued a notice to them and given them time to respond to us, and a complaint has been filed with the

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Press Area, ITO, New Delhi
Editor-in-Chief
Gurcharan Singh Babbbar
Mob : 9654077232, 9971359517
Website : www.thesikhetimes.in
Email : sikhetimesindia@gmail.com

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NEWS BOX

Five US immigrants deported to Eswatini in Africa are being held in solitary confinement

BAGHDAD . (Agency)

CAPE TOWN, South Africa: Five immigrants deported by the United States to the small southern African nation of Eswatini under the Trump administration's third-country program are in prison, where they will be held in solitary confinement for an undetermined time, a government spokesperson said.

Thabile Mdluli, the spokesperson, declined to identify the correctional facility or facilities where the five men are, citing security concerns. She said Eswatini planned to ultimately repatriate the five to their home countries with the help of a United Nations agency.

In cell phone messages to The Associated Press on Thursday, Mdluli said it wasn't clear how long that would take. The men, who the US says were convicted of serious crimes and were in the US illegally, are citizens of Vietnam, Jamaica, Cuba, Yemen and Laos. Their convictions included murder and child rape, the US Department of Homeland Security said, describing them as "uniquely barbaric." Their deportations were announced by Homeland Security on Tuesday and mark the continuation of President Donald Trump's plan to send deportees to third countries they have no ties with after it was stalled by a legal challenge in the United States. A new country for deportees

Eswatini, a country of 1.2 million people bordering South Africa, is the latest nation to accept third-country deportees from the US. The Trump administration has sent hundreds of Venezuelans and others to Costa Rica, El Salvador and Panama, and deported eight men earlier this month to South Sudan, also an African country.

US House Republicans grasp for response to demands for transparency in Epstein case

WASHINGTON . (Agency)

US House Republicans were grasping late Thursday to formulate a response to the Trump administration's handling of records in the Jeffrey Epstein sex trafficking case, ultimately putting forward a resolution that carries no legal weight but nodded to the growing demand for greater transparency.

The House resolution, which could potentially be voted on next week, will do practically nothing to force the Justice Department to release more records in the case. Still, it showed how backlash from the Republican base is putting pressure on the Trump administration and roiling GOP lawmakers. The House was held up for hours Thursday from final consideration of President Donald Trump's request for about \$9 billion in government funding cuts because GOP leaders were trying to respond to demands from their own ranks that they weigh in on the Epstein files.

In the late evening they settled on the resolution as an attempt to simultaneously placate calls from the far-right for greater transparency and satisfy Trump, who has called the issue a "hoax" that his supporters should forget about. Yet the House resolution was the latest demonstration of how practically no one is moving on from Attorney General Pam Bondi's promises to publicly release documents related to Epstein. Since he was found dead in his New York jail cell in August 2019 following his arrest on sex trafficking charges, the well-connected financier has loomed large among conservatives and conspiracy theorists who have now lashed out at Trump and Bondi for declining to release more files in the case.

"The House Republicans are for transparency, and they're looking for a way to say that they agree with the White House. We agree with the president. Everything he said about that, all the credible evidence should come out," House Speaker Mike Johnson said Thursday afternoon.

Misbehaving monks: Sex scandal shakes Thailand's Buddhist faithful

BANGKOK. (Agency)

Reverence for the saffron-robed Buddhist monkhood is deeply woven into Thai society, but a sex extortion scandal has besmirched the clergy and left the devout questioning their faith.

Thai police this week arrested a woman accused of bedding at least 11 monks in violation of their vows of celibacy, before blackmailing them with thousands of secretly taken photos of their trysts. The monks are said to have paid nearly \$12 million, funnelled out of their monasteries funded by donations from laypeople hoping to increase their merit and prospects for reincarnation. The scandal provoked outrage over hypocrisy in the monkhood, concern their status shields them from scrutiny, and soul-searching across society about the role of religion. "I'm not involved in the religion like I used to be," 33-year-old motorbike taxi driver Mongkol Sudathip told AFP. "I don't have full respect for it anymore." King Maha Vajiralongkorn has cancelled invitations to more than 80 monks who had been due to attend his upcoming 73rd birthday celebrations, citing "inappropriate behaviour that caused mental distress among the Thai people". While the 11 monks have been stripped of their robes, the kingdom's National Office of Buddhism has vowed to "restore public trust" with a sweeping police probe into the grubby affair. Splurging attitude'

Theravada Buddhism has been the spiritual backbone of Thai identity for more than two millennia, and still shapes national laws banning alcohol on religious holidays and protecting sacred objects. Thai men are traditionally expected to ordain as monks at least once in their lives for a period lasting as short as a few weeks or as long as decades. The clergy are bound by 227 strict rules, including a ban on masturbation, touching women and even handling objects directly from them. Monks traditionally survive on alms, food offerings and a modest \$170 monthly stipend, but some pocket fees for lectures, blessings and ceremonies -- blurring the line between faith and fortune.

Chinese university expels female student over relationship with foreigner

Expulsion sparked debate on Chinese**social media about privacy and****nationalism****Student accused of improper interactions****with foreign gamer, videos circulated****State media question legality of publishing****student's name****Beijing.. (Agency)**

A Chinese university announced the expulsion of a female student for "damaging national dignity" after she was accused of "improper interactions" with a foreign man, generating heated discussions across Chinese social media about whether the university had gone too far. Over the last several days, the expulsion has drawn thousands of comments on platforms such as Xiaohongshu and Douyin, the Chinese version of TikTok, many of which question whether the school has the right to judge her personal life and elevate it to a matter of

national import. In an announcement posted last week, Dalian Polytechnic University in the country's northeast declared that the student would be "expelled" in 60 days, saying she violated the university rule against "having improper interactions with foreigners that damage national dignity." "Your misbehaviours on December 16, 2024, caused a terrible negative impact," the announcement said, without giving details on what constituted the "misbehaviours."

The university released her name, but AP is not publishing it out of privacy concerns. The incident taps into multiple issues in China. The university's actions illustrate a number of issues percolating into modern Chinese society, including discussions about gender bias and a full-on push toward nationalism. Chinese internet users have connected the accused university student to videos posted by Danylo Teslenko, also known as Zeus, a professional Ukrainian gamer, showing



him being intimate with an Asian-looking young woman in a hotel room. AP cannot independently verify if the woman in the video is a student.

Some on social media called the school's decision to expel the student a sign of the "Taliban style," by which a particular nation or group claims ownership over a woman's body. Others call it misogyny, asking if a Chinese man would be considered a "national pride" if he had sex

with a foreign woman. The Paper, a state-run newspaper in Shanghai, said it was not just "inappropriate" to publish the student's full name but also "may even violate the Personal Information Protection Law."

"It is improper to graft private affairs onto the public domain for public disposal," said The Paper. Teslenko, the gamer, confirmed on Sunday that he posted "a few videos on Telegram with a girl I met in Shanghai" but later deleted

them "as soon as I understood the seriousness of the situation," according to his post on X, formerly known as Twitter.

"Our faces were visible, but there was no explicit content or anything disrespectful in those videos," the post said, "I have never said that Chinese girls are easy."

Media reports said Teslenko and the student met at the final of the Perfect World Shanghai Major, a gaming competition held in December 2024.

Newsom vows legal fight as Trump admin pulls \$4 billion from high-speed rail project

World. (Agency)

California Governor Gavin Newsom on Thursday vowed to fight an "illegal" move by President Donald Trump's administration to cancel USD 4 billion in federal grants for the state's ambitious but much-delayed high-speed rail project. Trump's announcement on Wednesday added yet another hurdle to the 16-year effort to link Los Angeles and San Francisco by a three-hour train ride, a project that would deliver the fastest passenger rail service in the United States. Newsom said the move by Trump's Transportation Department came as the high-speed rail project was on the verge of laying track, with "active construction" under way on the initial 171-mile segment between Bakersfield and Merced in California's politically conservative Central Valley. The rail system, whose first USD 10 billion bond issue was approved by California voters in 2008, has built more than 50 major railway structures, including bridges,

overpasses and viaducts, and completed more than 60 miles (97 km) of guideway. State Attorney General Rob Bonta told reporters on Thursday he was "poised to take imminent action" on the issue, indicating the dispute would end up in



court. "California is putting all options on the table to fight this illegal action," Newsom said in a statement.

The funding cancellation marked the latest confrontation between the Republican president and a

Democratic governor widely viewed as a leading contender for his party's 2028 White House nomination. The two men have clashed over issues from transgender athletes and electric car rules to the use of National Guard troops during Los Angeles protests and even egg prices.

'LEGALLY BINDING AGREEMENTS'

Ian Choudri, chief executive officer of the California High Speed Rail Authority, said that canceling the federal rail grants "without cause isn't just wrong, it's illegal." "These are legally binding agreements, and the authority has met every obligation, as confirmed by repeated federal reviews, as recently as February 2025," Choudri said, adding that the program has created some 15,500 jobs. The Federal Railroad Administration issued a 315-page report last month finding the project was plagued by missed deadlines, budget shortfalls and questionable ridership projections.

Greatest injustices of our time': One billion Africans being harmed by cooking pollution

IEA estimates 815,000**premature deaths occur each****year in Africa alone due to****poor indoor air quality,****largely resulting from a lack****of access to clean cooking****methods.****PARIS. (Agency)**

One billion Africans have to cook on open fires or with fuel that is hazardous to their health and the environment, the International Energy Agency said Friday. The problem, which its report says can be easily solved, causes as much greenhouse gas emissions every year as the aviation industry. Two billion people across the world still cook on open fires or with rudimentary stoves fed by wood, charcoal, agricultural waste or manure, the IEA report found. "It is one of the greatest

injustices of our time, especially in Africa," IEA head Fatih Birol told AFP, where four out of five households rely on open fires and burning wood. These fuels pollute the air both indoors and outdoors with fine particles that



penetrate the lungs and cause multiple respiratory and cardiovascular problems, the report said. It also adds to the destruction of forests, natural sinks that trap carbon and help fight global warming. The IEA estimates that 815,000 premature deaths occur each year in Africa alone due to poor indoor air quality, largely resulting from a lack of access to clean cooking methods.

Resume nuclear talks or face UN sanctions: European powers warn Iran

E3 ministers spoke with Iran's**foreign minister after recent****air strikes.****They urge Iran to return for a****verifiable and lasting nuclear****deal.****UN sanctions may snap back****if no deal by October 18****DHAKA. (Agency)**

France, Britain, and Germany have warned Iran that they expect concrete progress on nuclear talks soon. If Iran does not take clear steps by the end of summer, these European countries said they will push to bring back United Nations sanctions against Tehran.



The foreign ministers of these three nations, known as the E3, spoke on Thursday with Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi. This was their first conversation since recent air strikes by Israel and the US targeted Iran's nuclear program in June. A French diplomatic source said the ministers urged Iran to immediately return to the negotiating table to reach a "verifiable and

lasting" deal on its nuclear activities. The E3 countries are part of a group, along with China and Russia, that signed the 2015 nuclear agreement with Iran. That deal eased sanctions on Iran in exchange for limits on its nuclear program.

SNAPPING BACK SANCTIONS IF NO PROGRESS

The current UN Security Council resolution

supporting the nuclear deal will expire on October 18. After that, the UN can reinstate sanctions if Iran is found to have broken the terms of the agreement. The process to restore sanctions would take about 30 days.

Europe has made it clear that without a new nuclear deal, it will trigger the so-called "snapback" mechanism. This would bring back all previous UN sanctions on Iran. "The ministers also reiterated their determination to use the so-called 'snapback' mechanism in the absence of concrete progress toward such an agreement by the end of the summer," the French source said. However, the officials did not specify what kind of progress Iran must show.

Since the recent air strikes, UN inspectors have pulled out of Iran, complicating efforts to oversee the country's nuclear activities. Although Iran claims it is willing to engage in diplomacy, there are currently no signs that talks between Washington and Tehran will restart in the near future.

‘Kanakakunnu Palace unfit for protected monument status’



THIRUVANANTHAPURAM .(Agency)

: In a significant development in the ongoing legal battle over the conservation of the historic Kanakakunnu Palace and its heritage grounds, the archaeology department has reported that extensive unscientific renovation using modern materials has eroded the palace’s historical and archaeological authenticity.

A detailed inspection report by the department painted a grim picture of the palace’s current condition. Once a stately residence built during the reign of Sree Moolam Thirunal, and later modified by Sree Chithira Thirunal, the palace has undergone multiple structural alterations that have significantly changed its interior architecture. Vitrified tiles have replaced the original Italian flooring, traditional wall paintings have been repainted with acrylics, and partition walls and false ceilings have been installed using gypsum boards to accommodate a proposed Digital Museum.

The affidavit filed by Additional Chief Secretary Rajan Khobragade before the High Court made it clear that the archaeology department has ruled out the possibility of declaring Kanakakunnu Palace an ancient monument. However, recognising its cultural significance and historical value to the city of Thiruvananthapuram, the government has decided to preserve the structure as a heritage building rather than as an archaeological monument.

The tourism department had launched extensive development activities at the Kanakakunnu Palace and the attached grounds, triggering widespread protest among green activists. Subsequently, green activists approached the High Court, stalling the construction activities. The High Court recently disposed of the case, giving liberty to challenge the state government decision.

Eugene Pandala, member of the Art and Heritage Commission, said that tourism in Kerala is turning into an enemy of tourism itself. “Both tangible and intangible heritage needs to be protected and such destruction of heritage is happening because of a lack of awareness. Tourists come here to enjoy our cities’ cultural heritage and the government should be more careful while taking up renovation of heritage structures that need to be protected for posterity,” Eugene said.

Green activists are gearing up to challenge the decision of the government not to protect Kanakakunnu Palace as an ancient monument.

12 injured as 3-storey chawl in Mumbai collapses, many feared trapped under debris

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

At least 12 people, including an eight-year-old boy and two senior citizens, were injured, and several others are feared trapped under the debris after a portion of a ground-plus-three-storey structure in Mumbai’s Bandra (East) collapsed early on Friday. No casualties have been reported so far, the police said, adding that the senior citizens have sustained serious burn injuries.

According to the police, the chawl in the Bharat Nagar area collapsed around 6 am and rescue operations are currently underway.

“Based on eyewitness accounts, we suspect a cylinder blast could have triggered the overall collapse incident,” Ravindra Ambulgekar, chief fire officer of the Mumbai Fire Brigade (MFB) told. He said around 15 people were suspected to be trapped underneath the debris of the residential structure, and some of the victims have sustained burn injuries. “We have rescued 12 of them till now, and the work of rescuing two more people is underway,” he added.

Two senior citizens – Rehana Ansari, 65, and



Punjab govt setting up 22 committees to advise it on new industrial policy: Minister Sanjeev Arora

Chandigarh .(Agency)

Punjab Industries Minister Sanjeev Arora Thursday said the state government was in the process of setting up industry-specific committees to advise it on shaping up a new industrial policy.

A total of 22 committees comprising industrialists will be formed, he said, adding each committee will comprise 8 to 10 members with its chairman. The tenure of these committees will be for two years.

“These committees will advise the government for any requirement they need in their respective sectors. They will advise the government about what changes they require in the policy,” said Arora.

Arora said the committees will be asked to give their first report within 45 days. “We will seek their comments to make new industrial policy a reality. We want to come out with the new policy as soon as possible,” said Arora.

These committees will be constituted for the textile sector, IT, sports goods, , bicycle industry, auto and auto components, heavy machinery, electric vehicles, renewable



energy, food processing, steel, chemical industry, tourism and hospitality, film and media, pharmaceuticals, retail and manufacturing among others, he said.

Replying to a question on some textile industrialists from Punjab investing in Madhya Pradesh, Arora said no industry is

Maharashtra to amend Animal Preservation Act to make it more stringent, launch crackdown on illegal abattoirs

Mumbai .(Agency)

In a move aimed at curbing illegal cow slaughter across Maharashtra, the state government will amend the Maharashtra Animal Preservation Act to make it more stringent, with plans to double the sentence for repeat cow slaughter offenders from five years to 10, minister of State for Home (urban) Yogesh Kadam informed the Legislative Assembly on Thursday.

Kadam said the bill for the proposed changes is likely to be introduced in the upcoming winter session of the Legislative Assembly.

Stating that cow slaughter will not be tolerated anywhere in the state, Kadam said the government is committed to ensuring that violations are met with swift and stringent action. “We will strengthen the law so that repeat offenders cannot exploit the current legal framework. The amendments, when passed, will make provisions for harsher sentences and penalties,” he said.

The announcement comes days after a police raid in Badlapur (West), where 510kg of beef and a live calf were seized from an unauthorised slaughterhouse in the Dargah

Mohalla area on June 9. Raising the issue in the Assembly, BJP MLA Sanjay Upadhyay sought to know the government’s stand on repeated violations of cow slaughter laws. The discussion saw participation from



members across parties, including Amol Khatal, Atul Bhatkalkar, Aslam Shaikh and Praveen Datke, who demanded stricter enforcement and legal deterrents.

Responding to the concerns, Kadam said that the government will initiate a state-wide campaign targeting unauthorised slaughterhouses. Police officials and municipal bodies have been instructed to

collect intelligence and take action against those operating such establishments illegally. The government is also examining the possibility of prosecuting habitual offenders under the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA).

Kadam acknowledged the role played by cow protection groups and certain voluntary organisations in alerting police about such incidents. He said that in several cases, information shared by these groups has led to successful operations.

The government is now planning to formalise this coordination by issuing official identity cards to verified cow protection volunteers, after proper background checks. “A structured channel of communication between police, gau rakshaks and NGOs will ensure quicker response and accountability,” said Kadam.

The minister also addressed concerns raised about cattle welfare. He said that the state government would continue supporting gaushalas, especially for housing abandoned, old or non-milking animals rescued during raids.

Haryana clerk issues birth certificate for dead person, faces Rs 6,000 fine

Chandigarh . (Agency)

The Right to Service Commission has imposed a Rs 6,000 penalty each on two Haryana government officials for issuing a birth certificate to a man whose father died and delaying over four months in issuing a marriage certificate to a couple. The penalties will be deducted from the officials’ salaries, of which a certain amount will be paid to the complainants as compensation.

Rs 6,000 to be deducted from tehsildar’s salary

Taking serious note of a four-month delay in issuing the marriage certificate, the Commission, invoking Section 17(1)(h) of the Right to Service Act, imposed a symbolic penalty of Rs 1,000 on the tehsildar-cum-marriage registrar of Hansi. The Commission further directed that a compensation of Rs 5,000 would be paid by the tehsildar from his pocket to the complainant.

On March 10, a Hisar resident applied for the registration of his wedding that took place on November 28, 2023, with the consent of his and his wife’s parents in the delayed marriage registration category. The couple is domiciled in Haryana and has valid Family IDs, confirming their age and addresses. The

marriage registrar, however, raised an objection, citing the absence of birth certificates, and allegedly refused to issue the marriage registration certificate.

According to the complainant, “The tehsil office demanded hard copies of birth certificates and additional documents. Despite, as per the Haryana government guidelines, dated July 19, 2024, age and address can also be verified by Family ID. Therefore, no separate documents were required for verification.”

“During the hearing before the Right to Service commission on July 15, the marriage registrar admitted that he relied on the statements of the marriage clerk and did not review the instructions. He acknowledged his mistake, expressed regret and assured the Commission that the certificate would be issued as early as possible. The Commission, however, viewed this as a case of serious negligence. Marriage registration is a service that the government offers with a set timeline of 5 to 7 days, and it should not have been delayed for four months. Had the officer followed the instructions on time, the certificate could have been issued much earlier,” a Commission spokesperson said.

moving out of the state. “They have future expansion plans. If any industry has future expansion plans, these can be for going there where raw material is available, and a port is near for import and exports.” “Nobody is shutting here. They are expanding here as well,” he said.

On July 7, MP Chief Minister Mohan Yadav had met local industrialists in Ludhiana and had then said that his state received investment proposals worth Rs 15,606 crore from Punjab industrialists.

To a question on industry complaining about unscheduled power cuts, Arora said they regularly take up this issue with the state-owned power utility — Punjab State Power Corporation Ltd. “We do not have a shortage of power. Rather the PSPCL is looking for customers for sale of electricity. But somewhere there are transmission problems. Sometimes grids get overloaded. All these are issues being taken care of. In the last 6-8 months, new grids have been set up and upgraded. “We assure that this problem will be solved,” he said.

Cabinet takes decisions on waiving interest, penalties on KSRTC’s loans



THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. (Agency)

In a significant move, the cabinet on Thursday approved the complete waiver of interest and penalties amounting to Rs436.49 crore on KSRTC’s outstanding short-term and long-term loans from the Kerala Transport Development Finance Corporation (KTDFC). This comes as a major relief to the cash-strapped state-run transport corporation.

Taking into account the ongoing monsoon and related challenges, the cabinet also sanctioned Rs 43.65 crore for coastal erosion prevention works in Pozhiyur (Thiruvananthapuram) and Kollamkode. The project will cover around 1.2 km of vulnerable shoreline, with technical assistance from the National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR). A dedicated Project Management Unit will be formed to monitor the initiative, and the Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board (KIIFB) has been designated as the special purpose vehicle (SPV) to execute the work.

Another major decision was the lease extension of 2.09 hectares of land in Cheruthuruthy village, in Thrissur, to the National Research Institute. The lease will now be valid for 25 years from May 25, 2021. The extension is aimed at supporting the institute’s continued role in providing affordable healthcare services.

The cabinet also approved the electrification of 1,137 Scheduled Caste houses across Kerala. Of these, 1,097 houses will be electrified under the Central government’s Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DA-JGUA) and the remaining 40 under the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS). Further, the government has decided to establish a new model residential school for Scheduled Caste students at Thonnamakkal in Thiruvananthapuram.

Haryana gets govt staff to vacate 34 houses, 24 others in Panchkula served notice

Chandigarh .(Agency)

The Haryana government has intensified efforts to get houses allotted to its officials in Panchkula vacate in order to re-allocate them to judicial officers and employees, as per a recent direction of the high court.

A senior government officer told The Indian Express on Thursday that “34 out of the 58 identified houses have already been vacated by government staffers,” and “notices have been issued to the occupants of the remaining 24 houses.” The officer added, “They have been asked to vacate the houses by July 22 to ensure compliance with the high court’s orders.” On Tuesday, the Punjab and Haryana High Court directed the state government to reallocate 58 government quarters — currently occupied by employees from other departments — to judicial officers and staff within a week. “To the extent of the Chief Secretary admitting that 58 houses are

deficient in the 15 per cent pool reserved for judiciary, contempt appears to be, prima facie, made out,” the Bench had observed. The court warned that failure to comply would result in the dismissal of the Haryan Chief Secretary Anurag Rastogi’s appeal against contempt proceedings.

The court’s direction came alongside an order for charges to be framed against Chief Secretary for non-compliance with a 2011 court ruling that mandated the reservation of 15% of general pool government quarters for judicial officers and court staff, in line with recommendations of the Shetty Commission and the Supreme Court. Following these directions, the Haryana Public Works Department (PWD), Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA), and the Mumbai Police are present at the spot.

A senior officer stated, “We have issued



vacation notices to current occupants based on the ‘last come, first go’ principle. The

notice period is about to end. These employees live with their families and,

naturally, need time to find alternative accommodation, which may be the reason for the delay in vacating the houses.”

The contempt petition was filed by Rajesh Chawla, an employee of Panchkula District court, in October 2016, alleging wilful defiance of the high court’s September 7, 2011, order directing the Haryana government to implement the Shetty Commission’s recommendations and earmark 15 per cent of general pool government housing for judicial employees. Chawla had alleged that the government misrepresented facts by claiming to have allotted 38 houses from the district pool in Panchkula, whereas the directive pertained to the general pool comprising quarters in both Panchkula and Chandigarh. Arshdeep Bhullar, counsel for Chawla in the High Court, reiterated that “as per the order, the 58 houses must be vacated within one week.”

New foreign policy for a news world

Sooner than later, India will have to make a choice where it stands. Perhaps more important, what India stands for. The Narendra Modi government's policy of multi-alignment brought good results for the country's foreign policy for most of Modi's time as prime minister. But with Donald Trump acting like a bull in the china shop of world order, multi-alignment, at its best, has exhausted all possibilities. It was inventive while it lasted. India needs a new foreign policy. Exposed to the scorching heat of Trump's assaults on the existing order, the old policy is now like wine that tastes of wet cardboard. It emits an aroma similar to spoilt vinegar. The existing policy is no longer sustainable. Repackaging it in shimmering new Bohemian crystal will not make the old wine any better. It will not be potable, although the new bottle may draw praise. The old policy must be discarded. Or else, South Block will be stranded by the receding tide of history. In six months, Trump has decisively pulled the world away from multilateralism or even from plurilateral ways of advancing foreign policy. This may change if Trump does not complete his term for any reason, or if the next US president is either a Republican in the conventional mould or a Democrat. But India cannot wait for that. The challenge of adapting the country's foreign policy to the new global realities is urgent. Every single day's delay entails opportunity costs for 1.4 billion Indians whose aspirations, no longer circumscribed by the nation's borders, are at stake. India's biggest contribution at the recent BRICS summit in the enchanting city of Rio de Janeiro was to propose a new expansion of that acronym. As India prepares to succeed Brazil as BRICS chair, Modi told his co-leaders at the summit: "Our goal will be to redefine BRICS as Building Resilience and Innovation for Cooperation and Sustainability." That means BRICS will no longer be Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa. But in the Trump era, it falls short of hard bargains and transactional foreign policy. Modi is obsessed with catchy acronyms—his administration is peppered with them. If India does not innovate and reconfigure its foreign policy, it will soon dawn on those in the vanguard of the country's diplomacy that its ways are not working. Modi confidently said at Rio that "under India's BRICS chairmanship next year... just as we brought inclusivity to our G20 presidency and placed the concerns of the Global South at the forefront of the agenda, similarly, during our presidency of BRICS, we will advance this forum with a people-centric approach". The world has changed dramatically since India's G20 presidency and will have changed even more before BRICS leaders meet in India in 2026. Much thought and preparation ought to go into how the next BRICS chair is going to adapt to those changes. There is not a moment to waste. A bigger challenge for Indian diplomacy before its BRICS presidency will be the Quadrilateral summit of Australia, India, Japan and the US to be hosted by Modi later this year. Trump will not be travelling all the way to India to listen to niceties, which India is famous for in dealing with the mercurial US president. Trump will try within Quad to wreck the existing rules-based international order and impose his brand of unilateralism. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will be at his persuasive best through his long-time friend and US counterpart Marco Rubio to influence Trump into not wrecking this summit. If Jaishankar succeeds, India can proclaim victory like in Delhi G20, which was credible. But with Quad, any similar victory will be illusory. It will only signal that Washington doesn't care enough about the Quad and is letting its next summit be anodyne in outcomes.

Mineral riches spur India's outreach

India is among the countries that have been impacted by China's export curbs on rare earth elements.

RARE earths are in the spotlight as China's export curbs on these elements have disrupted output in a wide range of global industries. Automotive, electronics, defence, aerospace and renewable energy sectors have been hit as these minerals are essential for manufacturing critical components. India is facing this situation along with other countries, with the prospect of a slowdown looming large in the electric vehicle (EV) and automobile industries. The problem began in April when China's export restrictions came into force in response to the Donald Trump administration's threat of imposing high import tariffs. While the main target may have been the US, countries like India had to face red tape in sourcing these minerals, especially rare earth magnets needed for the EV industry. This prompted the belated recognition that such heavy reliance on China for minerals can have a crippling impact on industries in case supplies are cut off. It was the growing concern over this issue that evidently led to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's warning at the BRICS summit in Rio that critical minerals must not be 'weaponised'. It is not just rare earths, however, but several other minerals which are essential for sunrise industries like semiconductors. These include lithium, copper, zinc and uranium. Fast-growing economies like India need them to produce equipment of all kinds. The realisation that sources for long-term supplies need to be tied up, like in the case of fossil fields, has prompted the latest round of resource-oriented diplomacy. The PM's recent overseas tour took him to mineral-rich countries where investments could yield dividends.

It is no coincidence that the countries he toured earlier this month are rich in resources. The African leg covered Ghana and Namibia, which are well known for mineral deposits of all kinds. Despite China having made inroads in terms of influence and investments in Africa, these two nations have longstanding ties with India.

In the case of Ghana, the relationship goes back to the Non-Aligned Movement and the friendship between Jawaharlal Nehru and Kwame Nkrumah. Proposals for investments to develop mineral resources in collaboration with Indian companies are thus being viewed favourably. Among the West African country's key mineral resources are gold, which is already a big import item, along with diamonds, bauxite and manganese. Even lithium reserves have been discovered there recently. As for Namibia, the warm relationship goes back to the days of India's support for its independence movement. The highlight of the visit, the third by an Indian PM, was collaboration in mineral exploration as well as digital financial infrastructure. Namibia can be a valuable ally in providing resources like uranium for India's nuclear energy programme. It is also a major diamond producer, but the gems normally reach here through intermediaries. Direct trade, which

will be mutually beneficial, is now being talked about. The focus was on resources during the Latin American leg of the trip as well. The bonhomie witnessed in Argentina was based on an expanding economic relationship involving the development of mineral resources. Indian state-owned companies have already begun collaborating in exploration and mining of that country's huge lithium reserves. Argentina forms part of what is

locate. They are considered rare owing to their dispersed nature, which makes mining difficult and not economically viable at times. China has not imposed an explicit ban on exports to India, but some restrictions have been introduced for seven rare earth elements. Persistent delays in availability could have a serious impact in the coming days, especially as these minerals are used in a wide range of hi-tech industries.



known as the Lithium Triangle. Other members of this triad are Bolivia and Chile; the latter has the largest lithium reserves in the world.

India's scramble to ensure that it has access to lithium in countries like Argentina is because of the pivotal role of this mineral in lithium-ion rechargeable batteries. These are an integral element of a wide array of consumer electronics, such as mobile phones, laptops and tablets. They are indispensable for the manufacture of EVs and medical devices as well as in renewable energy storage systems. Lithium is also needed in the aerospace and automotive industries. Minerals were high on the agenda of the India-Brazil meetings in Rio following the BRICS summit. Plans were discussed for joint exploration, mining, processing, recycling and refining of minerals. Brazil has the world's third largest reserves of rare earths. However, it has only recently begun mining, with commercial production having started from its first mine last year. Rare earth elements, incidentally, are not termed such because reserves of these 17 minerals are difficult to

The resource-linked diplomacy is thus a pragmatic attempt to ensure that the country's development is not hampered at any stage by a shortage of these critical minerals. At the same time, it is high time India stepped up exploration and processing of minerals within its own borders. It has one of the largest reserves of rare earths — the fifth in the world at 6.9 million tonnes — but has done little in the way of exploitation of these resources. One reason has been difficulty in extraction as they are tied to radioactive minerals like thorium. It is not too late to start the process. The National Critical Minerals Mission was launched this year with an outlay of Rs 36,000 crore over a seven-year period. It is aimed at ensuring self-reliance in critical minerals by raising investments in exploration, expanding domestic output and acquiring assets abroad. In the meantime, imports must be sourced from multiple suppliers to prevent disruption to industrial production. It is here that PM Modi's Global South tour should help in making assured sources of supply available for immediate needs and in the long run.

Being 'saare jahaan se achchha' in space too

Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla became the second Indian in space after Squadron Leader Rakesh Sharma's April 1984 sortie to the Soviet Salyut 7 space station. The 41 years between the two have witnessed significant progress in space technology

At 3.02 pm on Tuesday, Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla (call name Shux) and his three crewmates' space mission ended with the textbook splashdown of their return capsule in the Pacific Ocean off California. The Axiom 4 mission, which entailed 18 days of experiments and observations aboard the International Space Station (ISS), created history for the Indian space programme. Shux became the second Indian in space after Squadron Leader Rakesh Sharma's April 1984 sortie to the Soviet Salyut 7 space station. The 41 years between the two have witnessed significant progress in space technology. Therefore, a comparison between Sharma's eight-day venture then and Shux's 18-day mission now would be unfair. Besides, while the former mission was more of a diplomatic endeavour between India and the then USSR as a result of Cold War coddling; the Ax 4 mission was a commercial, public-private venture involving collaboration between Nasa, Indian Space Research Organisation and European Space Agency on one side, and Axiom Space and SpaceX on the other. Artificial



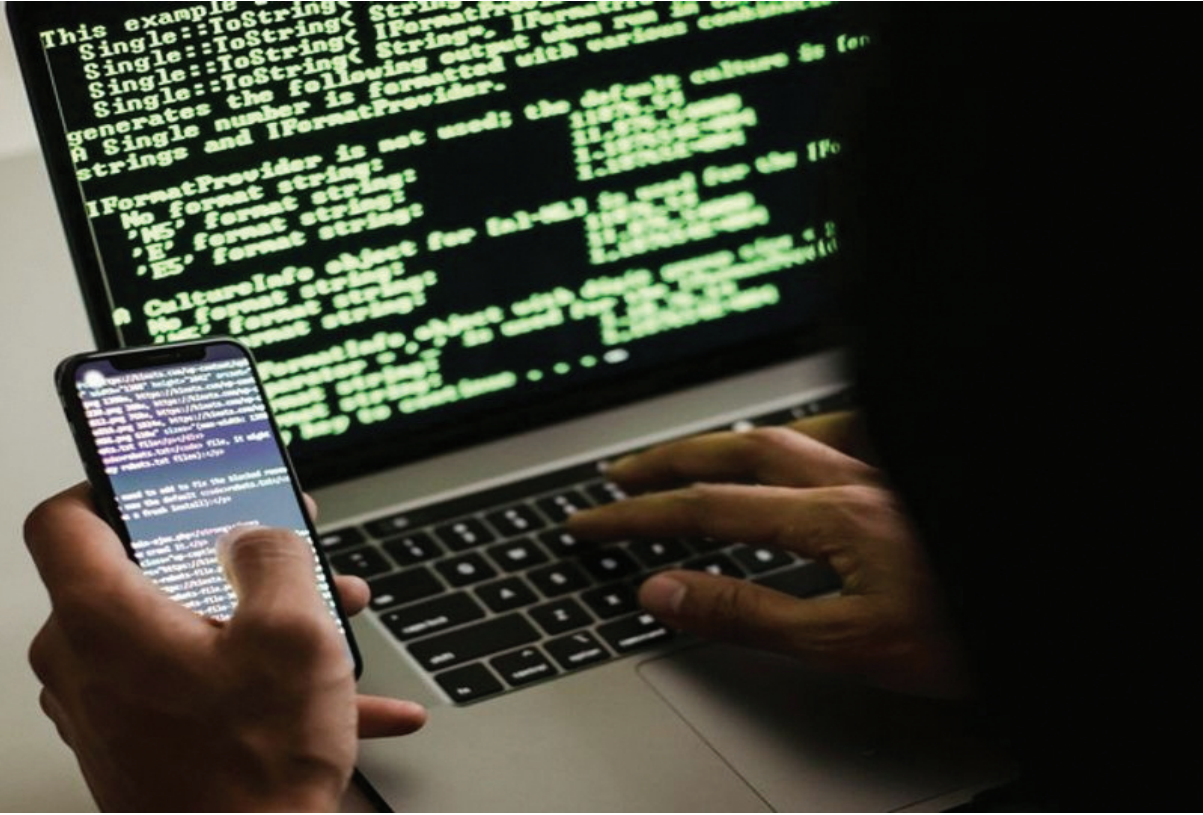
Intelligence uses Artificial Intelligence uses The experiments conducted four decades apart by both Sharma and Shux will be immensely relevant for India's own maiden manned space mission, Gaganyaan, in 2027. Sharma was part of a crew that conducted 43 experiments including a pioneering study of the impact of yoga on the human body in microgravity; other biomedical studies assessing the effect of weightlessness on the body; remote

sensing studies that later helped Indian satellites map natural resources; and material science studies. Communication with Earth—as crucial then as it's now—saw Prime Minister Indira Gandhi asking Sharma how India looked from space, to which the air force officer famously replied, "Saare jahaan se achchha." Shux conducted seven experiments as part of the Ax-4 crew, which included growth and radiation response of edible algae; muscle regeneration with supplement treatment in zero-gravity; microgravity growth of methi and moong seeds; resilience and ageing patterns of tardigrades (microscopic creatures called 'water bears'); cognitive testing with in-flight displays; comparative growth of proteins in cyanobacteria in microgravity; and the impact of microgravity on crop seed physiology. In his last words to the nation before leaving the ISS, Shux echoed Sharma with confidence and pride that India looks better than all other lands even today. The ambitious missions ahead will provide India ample opportunities to prove it in space as well.

In digital arrest cases, golden hour crucial for cops to act

Banks must evolve from transaction facilitators to proactive cybersecurity partners

DIGITAL arrest is not a legal term but a cyber extortion scam where victims are coerced by impersonated officials into paying money or sharing data. Digital arrest scams operate like global corporations. At the base are mule accounts — bank accounts run by coerced or unaware individuals to move stolen funds. The middle tier includes scam centres with trained staff impersonating officials through fake calls and documents. At the top, masterminds control strategy and finances from abroad. Funds are routed through layers of mule accounts, shell firms, forged cards and cryptocurrency to evade detection. In digital arrest scams, the "golden hour" — the first four hours after a fraud — can determine whether funds are recovered or lost. During this window, banks flag suspicious activity while police act with intelligence and investigation. Swift coordination is key to disrupting the scam in real time. Banks must evolve from transaction facilitators to proactive cybersecurity partners. With scammers using spoofed identities, leaked data and fake authority setups to instil fear even in educated victims, banks are well-positioned to detect and block fraud in motion. AI- and ML-driven systems should flag anomalies like large or rapid transfers, new payees or sudden liquidations. Integration with the DoT's Financial Fraud Risk Indicator (FRI) allows real-time risk profiling of mobile numbers and automatic blocking or delay of high-risk transactions. Verification must be strengthened with behavioural biometrics (unique



user habits) and device fingerprinting (device traits), to prevent unauthorised access. Tackling mule or temporary accounts used to move stolen funds and shield culprits is critical. A 2024 BioCatch report found each mule-linked device in India accessed 35 accounts on average, with

hotspots in Bhubaneswar, Navi Mumbai and Lucknow. Fraudsters lure individuals via fake job offers or agents, sometimes aided by bank insiders. Banks must use advanced analytics to spot suspicious patterns like frequent small deposits followed by large withdrawals and enforce strict

KYC during account opening. Customer education is equally vital. Banks should run continuous awareness campaigns via SMS, email and social media to alert users about red flags like isolation tactics, fake legal notices or coercive video calls. Equally important is real-time coordination with Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4Cs) 1930 helpline and NCRP portal. Acting within the golden hour greatly improves chances of fund recovery through swift freezing and tracing of money trails. The police should increasingly adopt pre-emptive cyber intelligence operations to intercept scams in real time. Recently, the Tamil Nadu Cyber Intelligence Wing detected two digital arrest scams in Coimbatore. Officers reached a doctor's home just in time; he had already lost Rs 2.9 crore and initially refused to open the door, believing the arrest was real. The case highlights both the seriousness of such scams and the value of timely intervention. While the police don't monitor bank activity directly, they can act swiftly through closer collaboration with financial institutions via the Citizen Financial Cyber Fraud Reporting and Management System (CFCFRMS) platform. The police should combat digital arrest globally via Interpol operations like First Light and HAECHI V to dismantle cross-border syndicates. Ultimately, banks detect, the police intervene, forming a hyperlocal cyber shield. Swift action, strong coordination and public vigilance are key to stopping these scams.

Eyes in sky: Real-time monitoring to curb land use changes in Nuh Aravalis

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Satellite image-based monthly reports to identify non-forest activities and usage of drones for real-time monitoring — these are among a slew of measures to secure Nuh Aravalis and stop land use changes. Investigations have revealed how forest and revenue land in the Aravalis is being systematically exploited through coordinated illegal mining.

To stop the plunder, two drones will be deployed to monitor and track illegal activities in the hills of Nuh. Forest officials said the drones will provide real-time imagery and help detect violations such as illegal constructions, land-use change, mining, deforestation and encroachments. This move follows a major illegal mining case registered in Basai Meo, in which several people — including the sarpanch, officials from mining, revenue and forest departments along with private contractors — were booked by the state vigilance and anti-corruption bureau (SVACB). Alongside

drone surveillance, the forest department is also planning to analyse satellite image-based monthly reports to identify non-forestry activities within notified Aravali areas. If any such changes are observed, strict action will be taken as per law. The aerial surveillance will be conducted with the support of the Drone Imaging and Information Service of Haryana Limited (DRIISHYA). South Haryana conservator of forest Subhash Yadav said, "The idea is to ensure early detection of changes in land use and initiate timely action." To build awareness among stakeholders, a workshop is scheduled by the end of this month. It will focus on educating local authorities, village representatives and residents about Aravali forest laws, various notifications and types of violations, Yadav said. Earlier this month, the forest department blocked two illegal roads in Nuh's Basai Meo village by planting around 7,500 saplings. The two roads were carved out by the mining mafia to gain access to the ecologically



sensitive Aravalis to carry out quarrying. To permanently obstruct these entry points and restore the damaged area, the forest department converted them into green zones through rapid afforestation. Basai Meo has been under scrutiny after revelations of illegal road construction and mining on forest and agricultural land, directly contravening the Supreme Court directives and environmental norms. SC has prohibited mining in the protected Aravali region,

which includes parts of Nuh, to conserve the fragile ecosystem and prevent further environmental degradation. The apex court banned mining within 5km of Delhi in 2002 and imposed a blanket ban on mining in south Haryana in 2009 after observing significant damage to the Aravalis. A 2018 report by the SC-appointed CEC noted that approximately 25% of the Aravali range was lost due to illegal mining in Rajasthan between 1967 and 1968. The Aravalis in Nuh face constant pressure from illegal mining, land clearing and construction. Continuous monitoring and stakeholder participation are crucial for their protection. This move comes amid growing concerns over the degradation of Haryana's Aravali landscape, especially in districts like Nuh, where forest protection laws such as the Punjab Land Preservation Act (PLPA), 1900, and central forest notifications are often violated.

Land row stalls metro project, panel to break deadlock over Gurgaon Cyber City station

Gurgaon.(Agency)

The Haryana govt set up a high-level committee to resolve the impasse over finalisation of the proposed Gurgaon metro station at Cyber City. According to a GMRL official, the revised route of the new metro corridor cannot be finalised until the issue over the planned NCRTC's station, proposed on HSIIDC land near Shankar Chowk, is settled.

To address this issue, the state has now constituted a six-member committee, which is to submit its report in a month, and is chaired by ACS (town & country planning) AK Singh. Its members include GMDA CEO Shyamal Misra, GMRL MD Chander Shekhar Khare, HSIIDC MD Yash Garg, chief project manager, NCRTC, and deputy commissioner Ajay Kumar. The move comes after a meeting of high-powered committee (HPC) held last month under the chairpersonship of chief secretary Anurag Rastogi, where the finalisation of alignment was flagged by GMRL as a major hurdle to the project.

During the meeting, the HPC held discussions on finalising the location of the NCRTC station at Cyber City, and HSIIDC raised objections to it due to potential disruptions to road traffic. Meanwhile, NCRTC expressed its inability to shift the station to another location owing to a sharp curve in the alignment. It was decided that a detailed traffic impact study should be undertaken to evaluate the concerns.

According to sources in GMRL, HSIIDC was "not keen" on giving land for the proposed NCRTC station at Shankar Chowk. "The metro station is planned in the same vicinity. But until the NCRTC station's location is finalised, we cannot lock the alignment. The integration point at Cyber City needs to be planned carefully to ensure seamless commuter transfer between systems," the senior GMRL official said.

Moreover, an alternative site for the station — near Institute of Pesticide Formulation Technology — is under consideration, but this land belongs to

Infrastructure lapses exposed: Drowning in drain sparks demand for safety steps

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Gurgaon: The worst fears of residents came true when body of a 22-year-old man, who had been missing for three days, was found in an under-construction drain along Hamilton Court Road. The incident sparked outrage among locals and highlighted the safety gaps on sites of ongoing civic projects in city. GMDA is carrying out a project to renovate the stretch at a cost of Rs 21 crore. It was undertaken by the authority in Feb 2024 and was to be completed within 12 months, but only 50% of the work has been completed. Meanwhile, residents have been complaining for months about the poor condition of the stretch, pointing to uncovered drains, lack of proper barricading, and inadequate lighting. Despite several reminders to GMDA, no corrective measures were taken, they said. "It is a dangerous stretch—cars get stuck here often. A few weeks ago, a cow was found trapped in a drain pit here. There is no space left for pedestrians. The work is being executed in a shoddy manner, with

no proper planning. The road was revamped with a footpath ahead of the G20 summit in 2023, and then they started tearing it up again in 2024," said Col Pravin Uberoi (retd), a resident of Sushant Lok-1. "There is no barricading or



signages on the stretch and streetlights malfunction frequently. We have been facing these issues for the last one-and-a-half years," Uberoi added.

The recent incident of drowning at the site has intensified demands for a safety audit and strict accountability from the authorities, with many residents saying

Elusive warbler spotted in Ladakh, its first official sighting in 46 years

Gurgaon.(Agency)

At an elevation of 3,200 metres, Ladakh's rugged mountain sweep in the backdrop, a group of five sat huddled and listened intently to the 'click-click-click' captured in a recording. The insect-like call was proof that one of the most elusive bird species they had come looking for was there. Visual proof came soon enough, making July 15 the day when a confirmed sighting of the long-billed bush warbler would be recorded after 46 years. The tiny brown bird was trilling from a thicket in Kargil's Suru Valley. The last time the bird (Locustella Major) was seen was also in Ladakh in 1979, when a group of birders from Southampton University were on a tour (1977-80) to chronicle the region's avian fauna. Between 1979 and now, only one more sighting of the long-billed bush warbler was documented when ornithologist James Eaton spotted it in Naltar Valley of Gilgit-Baltistan in 2023. The current expedition to Ladakh by five

birders — Harish Thangaraj, Lt Gen Bhupesh Goyal, Manjula Desai, Rigzin Nubu and Irfan Jeelani — was planned specifically to spot this rare warbler. Team leader Thangaraj told TOI the group



"has years and years of experience sighting birds" and "what we are now looking for are 'lost birds' — that were spotted decades ago but were never seen since". "There are more such birds on our

the tragedy could have been averted.

"There is absolutely no monitoring of the stretch. They dug up everything and left it unattended. The contractor has also damaged sewer and electricity lines during digging. If someone is killed due to negligence, those responsible should be held accountable. Until accountability is fixed, such tragedies will keep happening," Anil Kapoor, another resident, said. Meanwhile, a GMDA official said safety protocols were part of every contract they signed. "They are mentioned in the agreement we sign with the agency. All terms and conditions regarding pollution mitigation and safety measures are clearly stated in the contract. While some safety measures were taken, they were not fully implemented," he said. The official added that instructions had been issued to all field officers to ensure that contractors strictly followed safety protocols. Reacting to the police notice served to GMDA in the case, the official said, "It's an ongoing investigation. We have responded to the notice."

list," he added. Earlier this year, in Feb, the group had made another expedition in search of the bird but failed to spot it. "We searched in Gurez and Tulail valleys at altitudes between 2,400m and 2,800m. But it yielded no results, possibly because of altitude mismatch," Thangaraj said, referring to the Gilgit-Baltistan sighting, which was at a higher reach.

After the first unsuccessful attempt, the group stepped up research and got in touch with Eaton for an insight into the warbler's habitat. It was the Malaysia-based ornithologist's knowledge that steered them on the right path — in this case, near terraced fields surrounded by rumex and gooseberry shrubs at Sankoo in Suru Valley. "Eventually, the bird was found in a willow amidst terraced fields. It's the first time the warbler has been seen on a willow, which will now be added to its known habitats," Thangaraj told TOI.

News box

Construction work leaves uneven patches on Dwarka away tunnel on Gurgaon side

Gurgaon. (Agency)

Barely months after it opened to the public, the ride into the newly constructed tunnel on Dwarka Expressway towards the city is far from smooth. A portion at the tunnel's entrance on the Gurgaon side was dug up last week for cable-laying work, leaving commuters to navigate an uneven patch. At times, barriers are placed along the side, further restricting movement.

The 1.5km tunnel is part of the Dwarka Expressway that connects the expressway to NH8 towards Gurgaon. It was opened on trial in May this year. It was aimed at improving connectivity from Delhi's Dwarka and IGI airport to Gurgaon. While National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) claimed the dug-up portion was temporarily restored with concrete, the final bituminous layer is still pending. A senior NHAI official said, "There was subsidence due to some cable works — especially during peak hours," he said. At another stretch on the Dwarka Expressway near the Bijwasan railway underbridge (RUB), opposite BPCL depot, a section of the road surface has settled, posing difficulties for commuters coming from Mohammadpur Shahbad, Sector 8, and Sector 21.

How much fat in a samosa? Noida schools to put up oil boards

Noida. (Agency)

After 'sugar boards', oil boards will be the next caution that schools affiliated with CBSE will advertise on campuses to discourage students from having processed and fried foods and promote healthy eating habits.

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) on July 15 issued a circular, asking all schools to display 'oil boards' in common areas such as cafeterias and lobbies. On these digital or physical posters, the circular said, schools must list out fat or oil content in different food items, such as 28g fat in one piece of samosa, 10g fat in a kachori, and 17g fat in a handful of fries.

The move, the board said, was announced keeping in view the trend of rising obesity levels among youngsters across India. "Data points out that there is a sharp rise in obesity among both adults and children. As per NFHS-5 (2019-21), over one in five adults in urban areas are overweight or obese. According to The Lancet GBD 2021 obesity forecasting study, published in 2025, the number of overweight and obese adults in India is projected to rise from 18 crore in 2021 to 44.9 crore by 2050, making it the country with the second-highest global burden. The prevalence of childhood obesity is impacted mostly by poor dietary habits and reduced CBSE's directive is similar to the notice issued on May 14, which asked all schools to display 'sugar boards'.

Parents and school managements in Noida and Ghaziabad said on Thursday that it was an important initiative.

"We wholeheartedly welcome CBSE's directive to display 'oil boards'. This is a vital extension of the earlier 'sugar board' initiative, and it reflects a strong, unified approach to tackle childhood obesity and unhealthy dietary habits. ced physical activity," the circular read.

Sludge, muck piled next to them but it's business as usual at these food stalls

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

On Kala Patthar Road, one of the busiest stretches in densely populated Indirapuram and dotted with several marketplaces and malls, food is never far away. Neither, it seems, is filth.

PEGASUS LAND AND HOUSING PRIVATE LIMITED
Corp. Off.: ROF Group, Building No. 80, First Floor, Sector-44, Gurgaon-122003, Ph. 0124-4399399

Notice is hereby given to the Public at large that the following booking of residential apartments in the Affordable Housing Project "ROF AMBLISS" being developed by M/s Pegasus Land and Housing Pvt. Ltd. situated at Sector 78, Gurugram, Haryana vide License No. 74 of 2022 dated: 01.08.2022.

That the below mentioned Units are falling under list of defaulters due to Non-Payment of dues as per the provisions of Affordable Housing Policy, 2013 and are hereby served a final notice to clear their dues within 15 Days of this Publication. If the balance payments against the said units are not received within next 15 days, then the allotment of the below mentioned Units shall stand cancelled as per the provisions of Affordable Housing Policy, 2013

Application No.	Carpet Area (Sq. Ft.)	Apartment No.
60174	3 BHK, TYPE 1P (645.409 SQ.FT.)	T1-103
60854	2 BHK+S, TYPE 2 (643.041 SQ.FT.)	T1-304

Therefore, all the person/allottee (s) are hereby called upon to clear all there dues within 15 days to avoid cancellation of the said Units as per the terms of the Haryana Affordable Housing Policy 2013.

In the absence of payment within the stipulated period above, it shall be presumed and/or deemed that the allottee (s) or concern has no such claims/objections by virtue of this notice and, if any, the same have been waived or abandoned without any reference to such claims/objections made thereafter and necessary action will be taken as per the applicable Policy and Law.

For Pegasus Land and Housing Pvt. Ltd.
Place: Gurugram (Haryana) Director

From 140 to 41: Far from clean but Gurgaon jumps up 99 spots in Swachh rankings

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Amid construction debris that blight the scenic Aravalis on Gurgaon-Faridabad road and garbage dumps strewn on streets that paint a grim picture of sanitation struggles, the city has made a leap in its Swachh Survekshan ranking, moving from 140 to 41. The rankings, announced on Thursday, place Gurgaon in the category of cities with populations between 3 lakh and 10 lakh, a change from last year's category of over 1 lakh. However, this shift in categorisation does little to conceal the city's struggles with effective garbage management. The city's report card reveals a decline in several key areas. Door-to-door waste collection has dropped from 85% last year to just 59% this year. The decline is attributed to the civic body's decision to terminate its contract with the previous solid waste management concessionaire and hire a private firm for doorstep waste collection for one year. Residents have consistently complained about irregular services, noting that instead of deploying a new team, the contractor outsourced the work to vendors already operating in different parts of the city. Also, source segregation — essential for effective waste management — has worsened from an already low 15% to a mere 10%. Residents express a willingness to

engage in source segregation, but the lack of infrastructure such as vehicles with compartments for transporting segregated waste, facilities for dry waste, e-waste, composting pits for wet waste processing and material recovery facilities, are hindrances in their efforts. In cities like Indore, which consistently ranks first in the Swachh rankings, residents segregate waste into six streams — dry, wet, domestic hazardous, plastic, sanitary, and e-waste — and collection vehicles are equipped with six compartments to transport these streams, ensuring complete segregation. Indore achieves 100% waste segregation, according to the survey. Gurgaon's improved ranking is attributed to progress in several areas, according to the Swachh survey.

Dumpsite remediation has increased from 22% to 50%, residential area cleanliness has risen slightly from 86% to 90%, waterbody cleanliness has improved from 80% to 100%, and waste processing versus generation has advanced from 93% to 98%. In contrast, Manesar received a lower ranking of 574 in the category of cities with population between 50,000 and 3 lakh. In its affidavit to National Green Tribunal (NGT) in April, MCG reported progress in bioremediation of waste at the

Bandhwari landfill. From Jan to Dec 2023, approximately 16.5 lakh metric tonnes (MT) of waste were processed. The following year, from Jan to Dec 2024, this figure increased to 17.5 lakh MT. Despite these efforts, over 12 lakh MT of waste remains unprocessed at the landfill. Recent MCG data suggests that in the last six months, only 2 lakh MT waste has been processed.

The city's improved ranking comes despite being under Solid Waste Environment Exigency Programme (SWEEP) for over a year. The state govt declared a solid waste exigency in the city on June 12, 2024. Garbage management, which the corporation failed to handle effectively, was transferred to a committee tasked with implementing the exigency programme. From April 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025, MCG spent Rs 348 crore on sanitation. Residents are sceptical of the rankings. "Garbage scattered across the city is not a surprise. Instead, a leap of 100 points in Swachh rankings is a surprise for us. It's either that the other cities are worsening their performance or there is manipulation of data. The scoreboard shows improvement in remediation at dumpsites, whereas courts, NGT have been snubbing MCG for its waste processing at Bandhwari. I've visited several cities but have not

seen a city as dirty as Gurgaon," said Chaitali Mandhotra, a resident of Ardee City and co-convenor of United Gurugram RWA. Former joint secretary at Cabinet Secretariat Kundan Lal Sharma, who lives in the city said, the city's leap from 140th to 41st place in national sanitation rankings is a clear signal. "Waste management in the city is not an insurmountable problem. It is, in fact, highly manageable — provided the right decisions are taken and the right people are empowered. The city doesn't need more cosmetic clean-ups or celebratory hashtags. It needs a ground-up redesign of its governance model, rooted in capacity-building, decentralisation, and co-governance with its residents," he added. MCG commissioner Pradeep Dahiya attributed the city's 41st position to teamwork. "Our representatives, sanitation workers, officials and citizens have collectively achieved this, but there is a lot of scope for improvement. We are continuously striving to ensure that in the next cleanliness survey, the city is ranked among the cleanest cities in the country. The corporation will prioritise speeding up waste disposal, increasing doorstep waste collection, waste segregation green zone development and cleanliness awareness campaigns," he said.

Over 80 Delhi, Bengaluru schools get bomb threats: What's the law to deal with it

Multiple schools in Delhi have been targeted with bomb threats, prompting immediate police action. The incidents highlight the legal framework and response measures in place to address such threats, impacting school operations.

Agency New Delhi.
A wave of unsettling bomb threats gripped several schools in Delhi and Bengaluru on Friday, prompting immediate and rigorous responses from law enforcement and school authorities. While 40 private schools in Bengaluru received threats, which mentioned, "you all deserve to suffer", 45 schools in Delhi received similar threats. Many of these emails have turned out to be hoaxes, but the incidents have caused widespread panic and disruption, putting a spotlight on the legal repercussions for those responsible.

Upon receiving the alerts, teams from the police, fire service, bomb disposal squad, and dog squad rushed to the affected schools. This is standard procedure for any bomb threat, whether it targets a market, hospital, school, or aircraft, and agencies treat such calls with the utmost seriousness, even if they are likely hoaxes.

Many schools declared an early dismissal as a precautionary measure. Given the high-profile nature of the targeted schools, the Delhi Police immediately launched an investigation, involving both local police and cyber units. Investigations revealed that the email sent to the Dwarka school on July 15 was from a 12-year-old student. After tracking down the child, police focused on counselling him to understand the motive behind his actions. His parents were also advised to monitor their child more closely.

However, the individuals behind the emails sent to other Delhi schools on July 16 and July 18 are still under investigation. Previous incidents show a pattern, with a 12th-grade student being identified as the sender of multiple hoax emails between

February 2024 and January 2025. Police sources indicated that this student claimed to have sent the emails as a "joke". In some



cases, the investigation has led to traces of emails being routed through servers in Hungary and Russia, making it challenging to identify the exact source.

Making false bomb threats to schools is a serious offence in India, leading to severe legal consequences. The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), enacted in 2024, provides clear guidelines for handling such cases.

Under the BNS, individuals making false bomb threats can face charges under several sections, including: Section 176 - Giving false information with intent to breach public peace: This section applies if a person knowingly gives false information that causes fear, panic, or disorder, such as a bomb threat. It carries a punishment of up to five years imprisonment, a fine, or both.

Section 353 - Obstructing public services: False bomb threats disrupt essential services like police, fire, and administration. Violators can face up to five years imprisonment, a fine, or both.

Court backs divorce after wife fails to respond to husband's reconciliation efforts

Agency New Delhi.
The Bombay High Court has upheld a divorce decree granted by the Pune Family Court, observing that the wife made no sincere effort to resume cohabitation despite the husband's attempts to reconcile, including moving out of his family home and renting a separate apartment for them.

The couple, who married on December 12, 2013, separated just a year later in December 2014. Matrimonial proceedings began in 2015.

The wife had approached the High Court, challenging the Family Court's 2019 judgment which dismissed her petition for restitution of conjugal rights and allowed the husband's counterclaim for divorce.

The bench of Justices Revati Mohite Dere and Dr. Neela Gokhale noted that repeated mediation attempts had failed. The court also took note of the husband's unchallenged testimony that he had rented a flat and invited his wife to live there, but she never showed up.

The wife's allegations included harassment by in-laws, being forced to do housework and pressure to agree to mutual divorce. She also claimed her jewellery was taken and that her consent to the divorce was obtained by force. However, the court found contradictions in her statements, including her own admission that the household had multiple servants.

The husband, on the other hand, sought divorce on grounds of cruelty and desertion. He alleged that the wife left without notice, mistreated his specially-abled sister, refused physical intimacy and made false accusations of extra-marital affairs.

The High Court held that the wife's conduct amounted to cruelty, noting her humiliating behavior in front of others and indifference towards the husband's family. The court said, "The husband's unrefuted evidence clearly shows he suffered mental cruelty."

The bench concluded that the marriage had irretrievably broken down. It also rejected the wife's claim that she was deserted, noting that the husband had taken steps to live separately from his family and offered her a chance to rebuild the relationship.

Why can't same-sex partner be medical proxy: Court asks government, medical body

Agency New Delhi.
The Delhi High Court on Thursday asked the Central Government and the National Medical Commission (NMC) to explain why same-sex couples are not allowed to make medical decisions for each other as "medical proxies." Justice Sachin Datta issued a notice to the Centre and NMC and sought their response by October. "Why can this benefit not be extended to non-heterosexual couples? What is the procedure for people who live alone and only have friends nearby?" the judge asked. The court was hearing a plea filed by Arshiya, a Delhi-based businesswoman. She married her partner, also a woman, in New Zealand in 2023. Both are Indian citizens living in Delhi. Her partner works as a lawyer.

The petition challenges the National Medical Commission Registered Medical Practitioner (Professional Conduct) Regulations, 2023, which allow only family members such as a spouse or parent to make medical decisions if a person is hospitalised and unable to decide for themselves.

The petition highlights that while the Supreme Court's 2023 Supriyo judgment called for policy changes to recognise queer couples, the government has failed to act, especially in allowing same-sex partners to act as medical proxies during emergencies. Senior advocate Saurav Kirpal, appearing for the petitioner, said many LGBTQ+ persons are estranged from their families and may not have relatives nearby to make such decisions.

The petition, filed by advocates Manjira Dasgupta and Bhargav Ravindran, seeks court directions to allow hospitals and doctors to recognise non-heterosexual partners as medical representatives. Alternatively, it asks for a declaration that a medical power of attorney given in advance to a non-heterosexual partner should be valid. Currently, Clause 7.16 of the Indian Medical Council Regulations, 2002 allows consent only from a "husband or wife, parent or guardian in the case of a minor, or the patient himself." In this case, Arshiya's partner's family does not live in Delhi. The couple argues that, under the existing rules, they would be unable to make critical decisions for each other in a medical emergency.

Separate accidents on Delhi-Haridwar highway kill 4

Three devotees participating in the Kanwar Yatra, were killed, and three others injured in three separate accidents on the Delhi-Haridwar national highway.

Agency New Delhi.
Four people, including three devotees participating in the Kanwar Yatra, were killed, and three others injured in three separate accidents on the Delhi-Haridwar national highway on Thursday.

In the first incident, two devotees - identified as Raj, 18, and Vipin, 20 - died and three people, including a woman, were injured when their motorcycle collided with a scooter near Budhana underpass on the National Highway stretch under Khatauli police station limits.

Khatauli Station House Officer Brijesh Kumar said the victims were en route from Ghaziabad to Haridwar to collect water from river Ganges when



they met with the accident. The bodies

have been sent for post-mortem, and the injured have been shifted to the hospital, with some in serious condition, he added.

The second incident claimed the life of another pilgrim, Rohit, 23, a resident of Delhi's Rohini.

Rohit was run over by a truck near Purkazi town. Purkazi Station House Officer (SHO), Jaivir Singh, said the body has been sent for post-mortem. In the third incident, Madhya Pradesh resident Mahesh Kumar, 38, was killed early in the morning near Saleempur village, also under the Purkazi station limits.

SHO Jaivir Singh said that Mahesh Kumar was sleeping under a parked tractor-trolley belonging to Kanwar Yatra devotees when he was run over. Police clarified that Kumar was not participating in the Kanwar pilgrimage.

45 Delhi schools get bomb threats. Over 50 such incidents this week

Agency New Delhi.
More than 45 schools in Delhi received bomb threats on Friday, triggering panic and prompting the evacuation of students. This was the fourth day of bomb threats targeting over 50 schools in the national capital.

Simultaneously, 40 private schools across Bengaluru also received bomb threats. "I will erase every last one of you from this world. Not a single soul will survive... You all deserve to suffer," the threat email read.

Among the schools that received threatening emails were Richmond Global School, Delhi International Public School, Maxfort Junior School and Guru Nanak School in Pitampura, six schools each in Dwarka and Rohini. Teams from the Delhi Police and fire department were rushed to the

schools and thorough search operations were launched. However, the threats were found to be hoaxes in most schools. In the first three days of this week, 11 schools and one college



in Delhi received similar threat emails. ATISHIATTACKS BJP Former Chief Minister and AAP leader Atishi, who previously headed the Education department, accused the BJP government of failing to provide

"safety or security to our children".

"More than 20 schools have received bomb threats today! Think of the trauma that children, parents and teachers would be going through. The BJP controls all 4 engines of governance in Delhi, and is not yet able to provide any safety or security to our children! Shocking!" Atishi tweeted. On Wednesday, Delhi witnessed a similar wave of bomb threats to schools across the national capital. However, nothing suspicious was found after the schools were thoroughly checked.

A 12-year-old student was detained for sending a bomb threat to St Thomas School in Dwarka, PTI reported. "He was counselled and handed over to his family members," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Dwarka) Ankit Singh said.

Siddaramaiah 'killed' by Meta, translation blunder gets Chief Minister's goat

The post, originally written in Kannada to mourn the death of veteran actor B Saroja Devi, was mistranslated into English, prompting sharp criticism from Siddaramaiah.

Agency New Delhi.
In a major gaffe, Meta's automatic translation tool wrongly declared Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah dead while translating a condolence message posted by the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) on Facebook.

The post, originally written in Kannada to mourn the death of veteran actor B Saroja Devi, was mistranslated into English, prompting sharp criticism from Siddaramaiah and an official missive to Meta.

"Chief Minister Siddaramaiah passed away yesterday multilingual star, senior actress B. Took darshan of Sarojadevi's earthly body and paid his last respects," the post's faulty translation read.

'PAUSE KANNADA AUTO-TRANSLATION'

Reacting strongly to the faux pax, the Chief Minister asked social media platforms to

act responsibly and urged Meta to suspend its Kannada auto-translation feature until it is accurate.

"Faulty auto-translation of Kannada content on Meta platforms is distorting facts and misleading users. This is especially dangerous when it comes to official communications. My media adviser, KV Prabhakar, has formally written to Meta urging immediate correction," Siddaramaiah tweeted.

"Social media platforms must act responsibly. I caution citizens to be aware that translations shown are often inaccurate. Such negligence by tech giants can harm public understanding and trust," he further said.

Meta seemed to have corrected the



translation later. LETTERTOMETA

India welcomes US's terror tag for Pak group behind Pahalgam attack



Agency New Delhi.
The government on Friday welcomed the US administration's decision to designate the Pakistan-based outfit, The Resistance Front, which was behind the Pahalgam terror attack, as a terrorist group. The Centre noted that the move underscores the strong counter-terrorism cooperation between India and the United States.

"India has consistently emphasised the need for global cooperation in the fight against terrorism and the dismantling of terror infrastructure. The designation of TRF is a timely and important step reflecting the deep cooperation between India and the United States on counter-terrorism," the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement.

The government affirmed that India remains committed to a "policy of zero tolerance towards terrorism" and "will continue to work closely with its international partners to ensure that terrorist organisations and their proxies are held accountable".

Welcoming the move, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar also called it "a strong affirmation of India-US counter-terrorism cooperation".

"Appreciate State Secretary Marco Rubio and the State Department for designating TRF—a Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LeT) proxy—as a Foreign Terrorist Organisation (FTO) and Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT). It claimed responsibility for the April 22 Pahalgam attack. Zero tolerance for Terrorism (sic)," he tweeted.

On Thursday, the Donald Trump administration designated The Resistance Front, a proxy of Pakistan-based terror group Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) as a foreign terrorist organisation. Secretary of State Marco Rubio called it an action that demonstrates the US' commitment to enforcing President Donald Trump's "call for justice for the Pahalgam attack", as well as protecting America's national security interests and countering terrorism.

Murder accused out on bail hacked to death near police station in Tamil Nadu



Agency New Delhi.
A 28-year-old man was murdered at an eatery located right next to a police station in Tamil Nadu's Salem on Tuesday.

The victim identified as Madhan alias Appulu was a native of Thoothukudi, was out on conditional bail in connection with a murder case. As part of his bail terms, he had reported to the Hasthampatti Police Station around 10 am along with his wife to sign the attendance register.

Madhan went to a nearby hotel to eat after completing the formalities. While he was at the eatery, three unidentified men suddenly surrounded him and hacked him to death with sharp weapons before escaping the scene.

Police from Hasthampatti Station rushed to the spot, recovered Madhan's body and sent it to the Salem Government District Hospital for autopsy. Preliminary investigations suggest the murder could be an act of revenge. Police suspect the involvement of a six-member gang and have launched a full investigation to identify and apprehend the attackers.

The Chief Minister also shared the letter written by his media adviser to Meta, asking the Mark Zuckerberg-led tech giant to work with Kannada language experts "to enhance the quality and contextual accuracy" of translations from Kannada to English. "We have noted with concern that the auto-translation from Kannada to English is frequently inaccurate and, in some cases, grossly misleading," it said.

This poses a significant risk, especially when public communications, official statements, or important messages from the Chief Minister are incorrectly translated... Many may not realise that what they are reading is an automated translation rather than the original message," the letter to Meta stated.

NEWS BOX

Didn't know that a national women's football team existed when I started out: Aditi Chauhan

New Delhi. (Agency)

Aditi Chauhan says she didn't know that a national women's football team existed in India when she kicked the ball for the first time. Nearly two decades later, she retires as a trailblazer, having become the first Indian woman to play professional football in Europe. "Playing football, I didn't know there was a national team first of all. So I started because of the fun of the game," the 32-year-old recalled in an interview with PTI Videos. "When I started, I never imagined that, you know, everything that I achieved...it was not even a dream that I could imagine," she said. Chauhan is not entering full-time coaching immediately but is open to helping out the next generation of players achieve their goals in top-flight football and for that, she is pursuing professional courses. The former India women's team goalkeeper, who has announced her retirement from the game after a career spanning 17 years, during which time she



has won many laurels with the national team as well as with her clubs, now wants to focus on developing new players. "I would love to. These last few years also, I've been mentoring the other goalkeepers. I enjoy that role," she said. She's completed her goalkeeping level 1 coaching course and wants to do more. "I don't want to commit that I want to get into coaching. But yes, I would definitely like to help out," the former India women's number one custodian said.

Shubman Gill must become a man manager like MS Dhoni to be great captain: Gary Kirsten

New Delhi. (Agency)

Former South Africa cricketer and India head coach Gary Kirsten has suggested Shubman Gill to become an incredible man manager like MS Dhoni. Gill has been recently appointed India's new Test captain following the retirement of Rohit Sharma from the longest format. The star batter is having a tough time as a leader in the ongoing series against England, trailing by 1-2 in the series. Recently, Gary Kirsten shared his views on Gill's captaincy, saying that he's made good early impression and has all the abilities to become a great India captain. Kirsten also suggested him to become a great man manager like MS



Dhoni. "Well, it's early days. I think he's got great potential. Captaincy is a whole lot of things that you've got to put together. He's a great thinker in the game. He's a good player himself. But there's a whole bunch of things you've got to get right. And I think man management is going to play, like any leader. Dhoni was an incredible man-manager. If he can get that component of his leadership really fired up, I think he has all the credentials to become a great captain for India," Kirsten said in an interview with Rediff.com. Gill is enjoying rich form ever since being handed the full-time captaincy, having scored 607 runs from three matches so far at an average of 101.16 with three centuries to his name. He started the series with a magnificent innings of 147 in the first Test at Headingley, Leeds and followed it up with knocks of 269 and 161 in the two innings respectively at Edgbaston, Birmingham. As a result, he etched his name in the record books, registering the second highest match aggregate in a Test of 430 runs and was also adjudged Player of the Match in India's 336-run victory.

England reach Euro 2025 semis after shootout win over Sweden

England will face Italy, who are in the last four for the first time since 1997, in Geneva on Tuesday after a rollercoaster comeback.

ZURICH. (Agency)

England roared into the semi-finals of Women's Euro 2025 on Thursday after coming back from two goals down and then beating Sweden 3-2 in a chaotic penalty shoot-out to continue their title defence.

Smilla Holmberg blasted over from the spot to settle the shootout drama in Zurich after the match finished 2-2 thanks to Lucy Bronze and Michelle Agyemang's quick-fire strikes just as England looked to be limping out of the tournament. The reigning European champions were staring at elimination with 11 minutes remaining in normal time after Kosovare Asllani, who opened the scoring with her 50th international goal in the second minute, and Stina Blackstenius shot Sweden into a two-goal lead at half-time. "That was



one of the hardest games I have ever watched. We could have been out four or five times," England boss Sarina Wiegman told the BBC. "We started badly. We didn't create anything so we changed shape and we scored two goals which was crazy. The shootout, we missed a lot but they missed more and we're through." England will face Italy, who are in the last four for the first time since 1997, in Geneva on Tuesday after a rollercoaster comeback. "Not how we planned it to be, of course, but it's a learning experience that we

put in our back pocket and learn from going forward," Chloe Kelly, who was key to both England goals and took one of the few good penalties of the shootout, told reporters. "We solved the problems and then it was about getting back in the game. The resilience of the team is incredible." Defeat ended Sweden's bid for a first major honour since winning the first official Euros back in 1984, Peter Gerhardsson's team falling in the most painful of fashions. Goalkeeper Jennifer Falk, who saved four penalties, had the

chance to send Sweden through but like Holmberg she scooped her effort over the bar and gave England the chance to reach the last four. "All analysis feels fairly pointless right now, right now it's melancholy. You feel a certain sadness that it turned out this way," said Sweden coach Peter Gerhardsson. England survive England scored 10 goals in their final two Group D matches to reach the last eight but showed none of that attacking flair in the early stages at the Letzigrund Stadium. Sweden were on the front foot from the off and somehow it was no surprise when Asllani drilled home her opener after just one minute and 46 seconds, the attacking midfielder being left completely free to collect Blackstenius' lay-off and score. Jess Carter's loose pass led to that goal and moments later goalkeeper Hannah Hampton almost gifted Blackstenius her third goal of the tournament after miscontrolling the ball and allowing the Arsenal striker to bear down on an open goal before Leah Williamson slid in to cut out the danger. Lauren Hemp's pot shot was brilliantly tipped onto the bar by Falk but that was a rare bright spot in a dismal opening half for England, who were deservedly two behind at the break.

Bevon Jacobs relishes dream T20I debut for New Zealand on South Africa return

New Delhi. (Agency)

Bevon Jacobs had a debut to remember as New Zealand opened their T20 Tri-Series campaign with a 21-run win over South Africa in Harare. The 23-year-old batter, born in South Africa but raised in New Zealand, played a calm and composed knock of 44* off 30 balls to steer his team out of early trouble. Coming in at a difficult moment, Jacobs joined forces with Tim Robinson for a crucial sixth-wicket stand worth 103 runs, laying the foundation for a competitive total that proved too much for the hosts. "It's one of those moments you dream of as a kid," Jacobs said after the match. "To finally stand there next to my teammates and hear the national anthem, with my family in the crowd, it was very special." Facing South Africa - his country of birth - made the occasion even more meaningful. "Our family chat was full of jokes about which team they were going to support. It was funny, but also really special, like a full circle moment," he added.

Despite some nerves early on, Jacobs settled into his role alongside Robinson. "I was always



nervous at the start, but Robbo was great out there. We communicated well and built the innings together," he said. Robinson, who top-scored with a blistering 63, praised Jacobs' maturity. "For a guy playing his first international, Bevon showed great awareness and calm. He didn't look rattled at all." Jacobs' debut comes at a transitional moment for New Zealand, who are currently without several senior players still returning from the Major League Cricket final in the United States. However, with performances like these, the new-look side has shown promising depth.

Jacobs began his domestic cricket journey with Canterbury in 2023 before moving to Auckland the following year. He was picked up by Mumbai Indians in the IPL draft earlier this year but didn't make the playing XI. With momentum on their side, New Zealand will now face Zimbabwe on Friday night. The Black Caps have dominated their past T20 encounters with Zimbabwe, winning all six, including three matches in Harare.

ENG vs IND: Manjrekar questions Shubman Gill's sledging battle after Lord's loss

- Sanjay Manjrekar doubts Gill's fiery response compared to Kohli
- Gill scored 485 runs before dismissal for 6 in second innings
- Verbal spat with Crawley happened moments before stumps on Day Three

New Delhi. (Agency)

Former Indian cricketer Sanjay Manjrekar believes that Shubman Gill's heated exchange with English opener Zak Crawley during the third Test at Lord's may have unsettled the young captain and impacted his batting. Gill, 25, who had scored three centuries - including a career-best 269 - in the first two matches, was dismissed for just 6 in the second innings after the verbal altercation, which occurred moments before stumps on Day Three. India went on to lose the Test and now trail 1-2 in the five-match series. "The thing with Virat Kohli was that he would get even more fired up and become a better batter [if things got nasty].



What disappointed me with Shubman Gill - and that's why I was wondering, where is Shubman Gill heading? - because that seemed like it didn't have the right effect on Shubman Gill the batter," Manjrekar said on ESPNcricinfo's Match Day. Gill arrived at the Home of Cricket in scintillating form, having already amassed 485 runs in the series. But unlike his previous innings - where he often faced an older, softer ball - the fourth innings presented a sterner challenge: a fresh new ball on a tricky surface. According to Manjrekar, the extra spotlight Gill drew upon himself with his actions may have only

made his job harder. "If Shubman Gill had that kind of a fiery side to him, we would have seen it a little earlier. You don't have to show it when you're captain. Or did he show it because he's got this confidence now that he's won a Test match and scored so many runs?" Manjrekar questioned. "Because with Virat Kohli, you could see he was ready for a scrap. He was always looking to get into the thick of things - even before he was captain. That was a trait we saw early on. With Shubman Gill, I've never seen it before." With an eight-day break before the fourth Test, Manjrekar feels the timing is ideal for Gill to regroup and reassess his mindset - both as a leader and as a batter. "I think this break of eight days is perfect for him. There are a lot of good people around him. His father - who played a big part in his cricketing journey - would know his son better than anyone. Whether he's a Virat Kohli, a potential Kohli, or an [MS] Dhoni - or somewhere in between. I'm guessing somewhere in between. So he's got to find his own way. But whatever that way is, it has to enhance his leadership qualities and make him a better batter," he added. With the Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy still on the line, all eyes will be on how Gill responds - not just with the bat, but in how he embraces pressure and leads from the front in what has become a riveting series.

India's Vision 2047 can wait as football's leaky boat needs fixing first

New Delhi. (Agency)

A phrase that sounds like it belongs on a billboard in a sci-fi movie, not in the middle of the current Indian football. By the time India turns 100 as an independent nation, the AIFF wants the national team to be rubbing shoulders with Asia's best, competing at the top level, and backed by a vibrant footballing ecosystem. All of that sounds great. But here's the thing: you can't start building a future when the present feels like it's running on duct tape and crossed fingers. INDIAN SUPER LEAGUE? MORE LIKE 'IN SUSPENDED LIMBO' The Indian Super League - that glitzy, made-for-television, poster child of modern Indian football - is on ice. The 2025-26 season is currently on hold. Why? Because the AIFF and FSDL, the people who helped bring the ISL to life, are locked in a messy



power struggle over control of the league. The dispute is now sitting with the Supreme Court, which is as far away from a football field as you can get. So, where does that leave clubs? In complete limbo. Coaches can't plan. Players can't prep. Pre-seasons are unofficial workouts. Foreign signings are already pulling back. And most critically, fans - the lifeblood of the league

are left with more questions than fixtures. A league that was supposed to stabilise Indian football now feels like a passenger waiting for the conductor to decide which track to take. NEW SEASON, NO COACH Just weeks after the ISL stalled, the Indian men's national team found itself in another familiar situation: headless. Manolo Marquez, the Spanish coach brought in after Igor Stimac, walked away after India failed to make it to the third round of the 2026 FIFA World Cup qualifiers. But the real blow came from that home defeat to Hong Kong - 0-2 in Kolkata - which now threatens India's path to the AFC Asian Cup 2027. So here we are again. No coach, no matches scheduled, and no official word on what the roadmap looks like for the rest of the year.

Arsenal pays world record women's soccer transfer fee to sign Olivia Smith from Liverpool

Arsenal is a 15-time English champion and won the Champions League for the second time in its history last season.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Olivia Smith became the most expensive player in women's soccer history Thursday when she joined Arsenal from Liverpool for a world record transfer fee of 1 million pounds (\$1.34 million). The new benchmark in women's soccer surpasses the 900,000 pounds (\$1.1 million) Chelsea paid for Naomi Girma from San Diego Wave in January. "She's one of the most talented young players in the game and has huge

potential for further development here at the club," Arsenal director of women's football Clare Wheatley said. The 20-year-old Canada forward signed a four-year deal, a person with knowledge of the contract told The Associated Press. The person, who also confirmed the record fee, spoke on the condition of anonymity because the full details of the transfer have not been made public. Smith's deal highlights the rapid increase in spending in women's soccer with transfer records regularly broken in recent years. Zambia striker Racheal Kundananji set a new record when joining Bay FC from Madrid CFF for \$788,000 last year, and that figure was quickly exceeded by Girma's move to Chelsea, becoming the first \$1 million women's soccer player. As recently as 2020, the most expensive women's player was Denmark's Pernille Harder, who joined Chelsea from Wolfsburg for \$355,000. England's Keira Walsh left



Manchester City for Barcelona in 2022 for a deal worth \$513,000, and Chelsea broke the record again in 2024 when signing Mayra Ramirez from Levante for \$542,000. But those figures are still a long way behind the men's game where Neymar remains the record signing following his 2017 move from Barcelona to Paris Saint-Germain for \$262 million. Kylian Mbappe joined PSG for \$216 million and is the second most expensive player of all time. After one season

at Penn State, Smith joined Sporting Lisbon in 2023 and scored 16 goals in 28 appearances. She moved to Liverpool last year and scored nine times in 25 games. Smith is also Canada's youngest international after making her debut at 15 in 2019. "Olivia is an exciting young player and we believe she can make a big contribution here at Arsenal," head coach Renee Slegers said. "We've been impressed by her mentality and character, excelling in two European leagues at such a young age." Arsenal is a 15-time English champion and won the Champions League for the second time in its history last season. Despite Chelsea being the dominant force in women's soccer in England, Arsenal is the only English team to win the Champions League. "It's my dream to compete for the biggest titles here in England and in Europe and I'm excited to get started and contribute to doing that here with Arsenal," Smith said.

ITR-2 online filing live: Know who can file, new changes and other details

New Delhi. (Agency)
The Income Tax Department has now made it possible to file ITR-2 online for the financial year 2024-25. This means taxpayers can easily submit their returns through the e-filing portal without using the offline Excel version if they wish. Many people find the online option faster and less confusing because it fills in some details automatically. The IT Department in a post on X wrote, “Income Tax Return Form of ITR-2 is now enabled for filing through online mode with pre-filled data at the e-filing portal. It must be noted that earlier, on July 11, the Excel utilities for ITR-2 and ITR-3 were released, allowing people to download the forms, fill them offline, and then upload them on the portal.

WHO SHOULD USE ITR-2?ITR-2 is mainly for people who earn from salary or pension, own more than one house, have capital gains, or get income from other sources. But it is not for those who have business or professional income. Hindu Undivided Families (HUFs) can also use this form if they fit these rules.

IMPORTANT CHANGES THIS YEAR
This year, the ITR-2 form has a few important changes that every taxpayer should know. You now have to report your long-term capital gains separately for periods before and after July 23, 2024, as new indexation and tax rules apply. If you hold unlisted bonds or debentures, you must clearly mention them depending on how long you have kept them. Any money you receive from share buybacks on or after October 1, 2024 should be shown under “Income from Other Sources” and also marked as “Nil” under capital gains. Plus, if you earn more than Rs 1 crore in a year, you must disclose your assets and liabilities. This limit was earlier set at Rs 50 lakh.

Sensex down by around 500 to 600

CHENNAI (Agency).
Domestic market sentiment on Friday, despite a supportive global backdrop, remained cautious, led by sharp declines in key private banks and telecom. Investors are closely watching corporate earnings and institutional flows to gauge short-term trends. As of 11:41 AM, the equity benchmark indices were trading lower, with the Sensex down by around 500 to 600 points, slipping below the 82,000 mark, and hovering near 81,600–81,750. The Nifty50 also dropped below the 25,000 level and was seen trading around 24,930–24,960, down by approximately 150 to 180 points. This subdued performance in domestic equities came despite positive global cues following strong US labour and retail data, which had helped ease concerns about a global economic slowdown. The downturn in Indian markets was largely driven by selling pressure in banking and telecom stocks. Axis Bank was the top loser on the Nifty, falling by nearly 4 to 6 percent after reporting a weaker-than-expected Q1 result. The bank's net profit dropped by 4 percent year-on-year to ₹5,806 crore, while its net interest margin narrowed to 3.80 percent. A rise in gross non-performing assets, which increased from 1.28 percent to 1.57 percent on a quarterly basis, added to investor concerns. Kotak Mahindra Bank and Bharti Airtel also contributed to the drag on indices, with notable declines. Meanwhile, select IT stocks provided some relief. Wipro gained around 3 to 4 percent after posting better-than-expected Q1 earnings, aided by continued resilience in client spending in the US. Broader markets showed mixed action—while midcaps were down mildly, small-caps saw limited declines of around 0.7 percent. Some stocks on the BSE defied the trend and posted gains of over 15 percent. Globally, the mood remained optimistic. Asian markets traded higher following a record close on Wall Street, supported by upbeat US economic data. The MSCI Asia ex-Japan index was up around 0.7 percent.

Tesla Model Y in India may get cheaper, but it’s not because of the Trump trade deal

New Delhi. (Agency)
Tesla’s Model Y has finally landed in India with a price tag of ₹61 lakh (ex-showroom). That’s nearly double what it costs in the US, where it starts at \$37,490 (about ₹32 lakh). For Indian buyers, it’s an eye-watering premium. Many expected the India-US trade corridor to play a role in softening prices. But it turns out that’s not the route this price cut might take. The real twist? Any potential drop in pricing could be linked to Europe, not America. That’s right. India’s ongoing Free Trade Agreement (FTA) talks with the European Union might play a bigger role than any Trump-era tariff negotiations with the US. Model Y in India isn’t from the US, it’s from Germany. The Model Y units displayed at Tesla’s new Mumbai showroom are not manufactured in the US. And that’s important. Tesla’s US factories don’t currently produce right-hand-drive (RHD) cars, which are necessary for Indian roads. Tesla’s China factory in Shanghai does export RHD units, but for the RHD markets like Australia and Japan. Tesla began RHD production at Giga Berlin around April 2024, as per a Reuters report this was likely in preparation for export to India. India-EU FTA talks could lead to lower tariffs India currently charges over 100 percent import duty on fully built cars, which doubles the price of vehicles like the Model Y. But that could soon change. India is considering bringing down tariffs on EV imports from the EU to as low as 10 percent in a phased manner, according to a Reuters report citing officials and industry sources. This comes as part of India’s ongoing FTA negotiations with the European Union. If the agreement is finalised, German-made cars like the Model Y and the VAG cars, Mercedes and more might see a steep price correction. Indian carmakers, however, are pushing back, asking the government to maintain at least 30 percent duties for the next four years to protect their turf.

2025 tech layoffs: Amazon, Microsoft, Google fuel job fears amid AI push

Amazon lays off hundreds from AWS despite 17% revenue rise
Microsoft cuts 9,000 jobs amid rising AI infrastructure costs
Google offers voluntary exit programme, avoids forced layoffs

New Delhi. (Agency)
Amazon has laid off a huge chunk of its employees from its AWS cloud division. The exact number remains uncertain, reported Reuters. Other tech giants like Microsoft, Google, Intel and Meta also joins the trail. The year 2025 was supposed to be a new chapter. A time when artificial intelligence promised smarter work, faster growth, and a better future. But for tens of thousands of workers across the world, it has meant sleepless nights, and uncertain futures.

From the glass towers of Microsoft in Redmond to Intel’s chip plants in Oregon, from Amazon’s cloud hubs in Hyderabad to Disney offices in Mumbai - Job loss has turned into a global layoff wave. According to Reuters, Amazon has laid off hundreds of employees from its AWS cloud computing division, with affected departments including support, training, and cloud specialist units. Despite strong revenue from AWS (a 17% increase in Q1), Amazon continues to trim costs across its business verticals. The report highlights that laid-off employees will receive 60 days’ pay, extended health benefits, and severance. MICROSOFT LAYS OFF 9,000 EMPLOYEES AS AI TAKES OVER In early July, Microsoft also confirmed another round of layoffs. Around 9,000 people, nearly 4% of its workforce to be cut. Seattle Times reported Microsoft had pledged \$80 billion in capital spending for its fiscal year 2025. However, the soaring cost of scaling its AI infrastructure has



weighed on its margins, with its June quarter cloud margin expected to shrink from last year. Microsoft plans to reduce organisational layers with fewer managers and streamline its products, procedures and roles. “The company’s shift from human-led sales to AI-powered solution engineering marks a changing tide,” reports Windows Central. GOOGLE INTRODUCES VOLUNTARY EXIT PROGRAM On the other hand, Google has introduced “Voluntary Exit Program” amid restructuring rather than immediate job

terminations. This was introduced for U.S.-based employees, particularly in the Search, Ads, and Engineering teams. According to The Economic Times, the move comes alongside office return mandates and aims to reduce headcount without forced terminations. All of these layoffs have one thing in common - the revolution of AI. Instead of using human-intensive procedures and traditional hierarchies, businesses are opting for automation, machine learning, and leaner digital-first approaches. Separately, Bloomberg News revealed that Microsoft’s King subsidiary, based in Barcelona and home to the Candy Crush video game, is laying off roughly 200 employees, or 10% of its workforce. Job layoffs have also been reported by Big Tech peers that are making significant investments in artificial intelligence. Leaving people in a dilemma of what their future beholds after being cut from one of the world’s largest MNC.

Reliance Retail acquires Kelvinator to expand appliance business

Axis Bank shares: The stock has been on a downward trend in recent times. It has fallen 5.77% in the last five days, 9.14% in the past one month, and 15.27% over the last year.

New Delhi (Agency).
Reliance Industries announced on Friday that its arm, Reliance Retail, has acquired home appliance brand Kelvinator to grow its presence in the booming consumer durables market, reported The Economic Times. Reliance did not reveal how much it paid for Kelvinator. However, the company said that bringing Kelvinator under its umbrella will help it mix its wide retail network with the trust and quality that Kelvinator has built over the years. A BRAND WITH NOSTALGIC VALUE Kelvinator is a name that many Indian households still remember fondly. The brand first became popular in the



country in the 1970s and ’80s with its catchy tagline, “The Coolest One.” Over the years, it has earned a reputation for making reliable, durable, and affordable appliances. SERVING INDIA’S DIVERSE NEEDS Isha M Ambani, Executive Director of Reliance Retail Ventures Limited

(RRVL), said that the company’s mission has always been to meet the varied needs of every Indian by making technology accessible, relevant, and future-ready, the report mentioned. She added that acquiring Kelvinator is a key step that will help Reliance offer trusted global products to Indian customers, backed by its vast scale, strong service network, and wide distribution reach. The company believes this move will help it grow faster in the consumer durables sector, connect more closely with customers, and open up bigger long-term opportunities in India’s changing market.

Startup founder calls flight travel insurance a scam, shares experience

Founder criticises travel insurance as a 'borderline scam'
Claiming Rs 3,000 for flight delay turned into weeks-long struggle
Founder doubts value of insurance after frustrating experience

New Delhi. (Agency)
A business founder has shared his frustrating experience with travel insurance, calling the industry’s practices a “borderline scam” after struggling for weeks to claim compensation for a delayed flight. Ayushman Pandita, founder of Growth Rocket, detailed his ordeal on LinkedIn after attempting to claim Rs 3,000 for a three-hour flight delay between Bangalore and Delhi. What

should have been a straightforward process turned into a weeks-long battle across multiple platforms and customer service calls. THE CLAIM JOURNEY Pandita purchased travel insurance for Rs 249 whilst booking his flight, describing it as an afterthought. “I didn’t think much of it while booking. Just clicked ‘Add’ and moved on,” he wrote. When his flight was delayed by three hours, he attempted to use the app to make a claim but found no option available. A 20-minute call to customer care revealed the policy was handled by a third-party insurer, directing him to check his email for further instructions. The email mentioned he could claim but provided no clear process, simply stating: “Contact support if you face issues.” MULTIPLE PLATFORMS, NO RESOLUTION What followed was a maze of different platforms and requirements. Pandita described being directed from email to

a web portal, then to download yet another app, before finally being asked to provide documents via WhatsApp. “I went to the portal and surprise, no claim option. Only a link asking me to download their app,” he explained. After downloading the app and creating an account, he still found no clear way to make his claim. A second customer service call lasted 30 minutes, during which he was asked for “all details, policy number, certificate number, random codes from my inbox.” WEEKS OF FRUSTRATION Three weeks after the initial delay, Pandita says he has spoken to six different people and visited more than five portals, yet the claim process remains incomplete. “They make the claim process so long and painful that I’m somehow convinced this isn’t a flaw, it’s by design,” he claimed in his post. Pandita suggested that insurance companies profit from customers who give up on small claims due to the complex process.

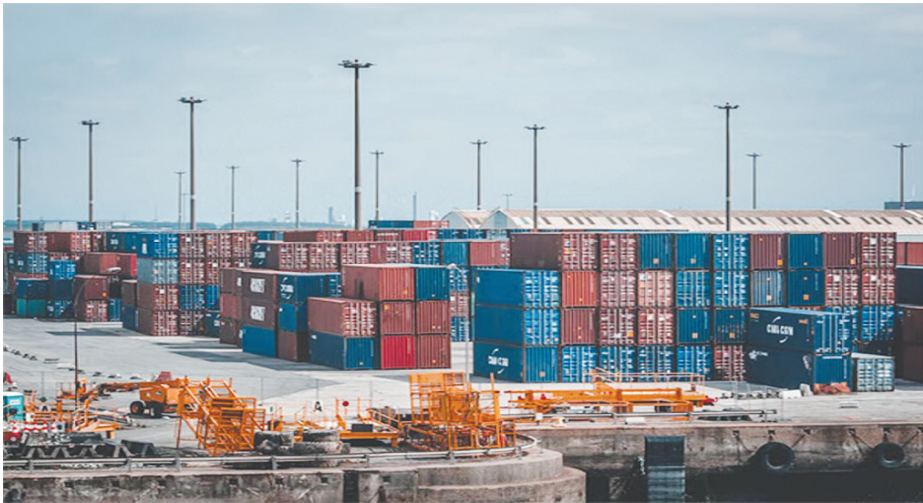


emergencies or short-term needs, while investing helps it grow for bigger goals. Gupta says, “The difference between saving and investing, how to create good habits, and where debt can mess a plan up” is something everyone must learn early. Second, know that every investment carries risk and offers returns. “The basics of risk and return — what they are, what they mean, and how to calibrate them for what you want. Every asset class finally is just a story of risk and return,” she added. This means stocks, bonds, gold or even FDs all have their own mix of risk and reward. Lastly, never mix insurance and investment. Protection through insurance is for covering risks to life, health or income, while investment is for building wealth. Mixing both can spoil both purposes. “The importance of protection and separating it from investing. Both are needed but mixing them is deadly,” Gupta said. In the end, Gupta’s advice is simple but clear: learn the basics, get your money habits right, and build a strong foundation. “Good investing is built on strong foundations.

US-India trade talks: Tariff on Indian goods could end up around 10–15%

The US President Donald Trump has signaled optimism about a deal, stating that a “very close” agreement is in progress. He hinted that the tariff on Indian goods could end up being around 10–15%, in line with other “smaller countries,”

CHENNAI. (Agency)
As the July 31 deadline for the ongoing trade negotiations between the US and India approaches, both sides are reportedly converging on a modest 10–15 percent US tariff on Indian imports—avoiding the steep 27 percent reciprocal tariff previously announced by US President Donald Trump, which is set to take effect on August 1, 2025. India is actively working to reduce or avert the proposed tariff hike. According to reports, Indian officials are seeking terms



at least on par with or better than those secured by countries like Indonesia and Vietnam, which negotiated final rates closer to 19–20 percent. In exchange for the US lowering or dropping its planned duties, India is offering tariff cuts on US industrial goods and even proposing a zero-for-zero agreement on auto parts. The US was initially considering imposing

a 27 percent import tariff on Indian goods as part of its broader trade strategy under the Trump administration’s “Liberation Day” policy. While a base 10% universal tariff has already been introduced across most US imports, India has been listed for a higher “reciprocal” tariff rate of 27%. This follows the earlier suspension of the tariff, which was supposed to take effect

on July 9, to allow time for negotiations between the two countries. However, the US President Donald Trump has signaled optimism about a deal, stating that a “very close” agreement is in progress. He hinted that the tariff on Indian goods could end up being around 10–15%, in line with other “smaller countries,” rather than the initially proposed 27%. However, this depends on the outcome of the negotiations, which are expected to conclude before the August 1 deadline. Until a final decision is reached, Indian exporters in sectors like electronics, auto components, and agriculture are facing uncertainty. Many businesses have delayed shipments and new orders, awaiting clarity on the final tariff structure. A scaled-down trade pact focused on key sectors may be signed in the final days of July, which could prevent the full tariff from being implemented. For now, the situation remains fluid. If no agreement is reached by August 1, Indian goods could be subject to the full 27% tariff, which may significantly impact trade flows and pricing across several industries.



Priyanka Chopra

Shares Passionate Kiss With Nick Jonas In Steamy Beach PDA Video



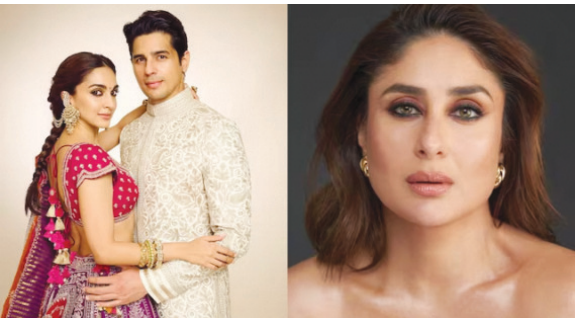
Nick Jonas and Priyanka Chopra are heating up the internet with their latest romantic getaway. The singer took to Instagram to drop a flirty, PDA-filled video with his wife from a picturesque beach vacation, and fans can't get enough of the couple's infectious chemistry. Set to the Jonas Brothers' track "I Can't Lose," Nick captioned the video, "I can't lose. #summer," perfectly matching the clip's mood. The reel begins with Nick looking forlorn on the beach with the phrase "Without her overlaid on the video. But just a second later, Priyanka Chopra appears in his arms, as they kiss, cuddle, and laugh while goofing around in swimwear under the sun. The caption changes to "With her" driving fans wild with the adorable transformation.

The clip not only shows the pair being completely in love but also highlights Nick's ever-growing "jiju" fanbase in India and beyond. Fans flooded the comments with reactions like, "This is the kind of love we all want!" and "Nick Jiju setting the bar too high.

"Just earlier this month, Nick and Priyanka stole the show at the London premiere of Heads of State, her Amazon Prime Video action-comedy. Dressed in a glamorous purple fringed gown, Priyanka danced to Camila Cabello's Bam Bam while Nick filmed her with pure adoration. "Date night for #headsofstate premiere in London," he wrote on the clip, which ended with a sweet hug.

Fans hailed Nick as "the best cheerleader" for always supporting Priyanka and being open about his love. One user wrote, "He lets her shine and stands right beside her, that's real love." Heads of State stars Priyanka Chopra alongside Idris Elba and John Cena. Directed by Ilya Naishuller, the film follows an unlikely alliance between the British Prime Minister and U.S. President who are caught in a global conspiracy. Priyanka plays a badass MI6 agent tasked with protecting them.

Kiara Advani, Siddharth Malhotra Announce Baby Girl's Birth; Kareena Kapoor To Romance 20-Yr-Old Next?



Bollywood's much-loved couple, Sidharth Malhotra and Kiara Advani, are now proud parents to a baby girl. The couple welcomed their daughter on July 15, 2025, at Reliance Hospital in Mumbai. Both Kiara and the newborn are doing well, and the news has been met with love and blessings from fans, friends, and family.

Kareena Kapoor is reportedly set to play a ghost in her upcoming film. As per reports, she will also romance an actor much younger than her. The Bollywood actress is 44 years old, and reports mention that she will be paired opposite an actor who will be nearly 20 years younger than her.

Ranveer Singh's career took a hit with films like Jayeshbhai Jorda and Cirkus in 2022. Even though Ranveer bounced back with Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani in 2023 and later made a cameo in Singham Again, he hasn't announced a new movie for a long time now. While one of his films with HanuMan director Prasanth Varma got shelved, there have been no updates around Don 3 and Baiju Bawra, too. Now that Ranveer Singh is all set to impress the audience once again with Dhurandhar, his co-star R Madhavan has commented on the actor's journey in the film industry.

Megastar Amitabh Bachchan has lauded Abhishek Bachchan's work in I Want to Talk, Housefull 5 and Kaalidhar Lapata. He said that all three performances stood out and added that nobody can stop him from praising his son.

Kriti Sanon has been confirmed for Don 3! After many weeks of speculation and teasing, Farhan Akhtar's Excel Entertainment has finally confirmed that Kriti Sanon has replaced new mom Kiara Advani in Don 3. The film will star Ranveer Singh as the lead, and Farhan Akhtar will once again direct the film, just like Shah Rukh Khan's Don and Don 2.

Sonakshi Sinha's Brother Kuss On Family Rift Rumours After Her Interfaith Marriage: 'We're Okay'



Sonakshi Sinha's brother Kuss Sinha has finally broken his silence on speculation surrounding a family rift after her wedding to actor Zaheer Iqbal. In a new interview with Zoom, Kuss clarified that contrary to rumours, he did attend Sonakshi's wedding and dismissed online chatter suggesting tension in the family.

"I live life very simply. If I know my own truth, then people can say a thousand different things. It doesn't affect me," Kuss said, addressing viral speculation that neither he nor his brother Luv were present at the wedding. "I know people were saying there was some random chatter going on. And I was like, okay, so if someone wants to bring this up, it's their agenda. I have nothing to do with it."

He added that just because he wasn't visible in pictures doesn't mean he wasn't present. "If you



can't see me in pics, it doesn't mean I wasn't there. I don't need to put everything out there every time," he stated. When asked about Luv Sinha's absence, Kuss declined to speak on behalf of his brother or sister, saying, "I just put it simply because I don't want to comment on Luv's behalf. And I don't want to comment on Sonakshi's behalf here also. I think everybody is allowed to have their individual stunts. As long as they're doing it with honesty, I think that's okay." Kuss also shared his support for Sonakshi's personal choices. "It is how it is, and I respect that. I may not be into it day to day, but I respect her choices also. Like I said, she's an adult, she's an individual. She's allowed to make her choice. And as my dad always said, she's not doing anything illegal, right?" When asked if he gets along with Zaheer Iqbal, Kuss said, "We're okay! I don't have anything against him that way. We're okay." Sonakshi and Zaheer tied the knot in an intimate civil ceremony on June 23, 2024, surrounded by friends and family. While her father, veteran actor Shatrughan Sinha, was seen posing with the newlyweds, the absence of her brother Luv had sparked speculation.



Ananya Panday

Flaunts Her Curves In Sexy Pink Athleisure Set

Bollywood actress Ananya Panday, who has over 26 million followers on Instagram, keeps her fans engaged by regularly sharing stunning glimpses into her life. This time, Ananya Panday outdid herself with a series of pictures that have taken social media by storm! The 'Kho Gaye Hum Kahan' actress dropped a photo dump, flaunting her new athleisure wear.

Ananya Panday captioned the post, "Blooming with style, sweating with power Skechers apparel got me thriving inside and out." Ananya Panday looked stunning in pink athleisure wear. She wore a white jacket over her patterned set as she flaunted her curves. Have a look here:

The actress's Instagram activity this week has caught everyone's attention. On Monday, Ananya took to her Instagram to share pictures from her Greece vacation. She looked glamorous in a mini pink dress in the first picture; however, it's the next picture that went viral! The actress turned up the heat with a stunning bikini shot by the pool, exuding confidence and looking effortlessly hot. She was seen wearing a red bikini top paired with matching bottoms, complemented by a bright orange sarong draped over it. She

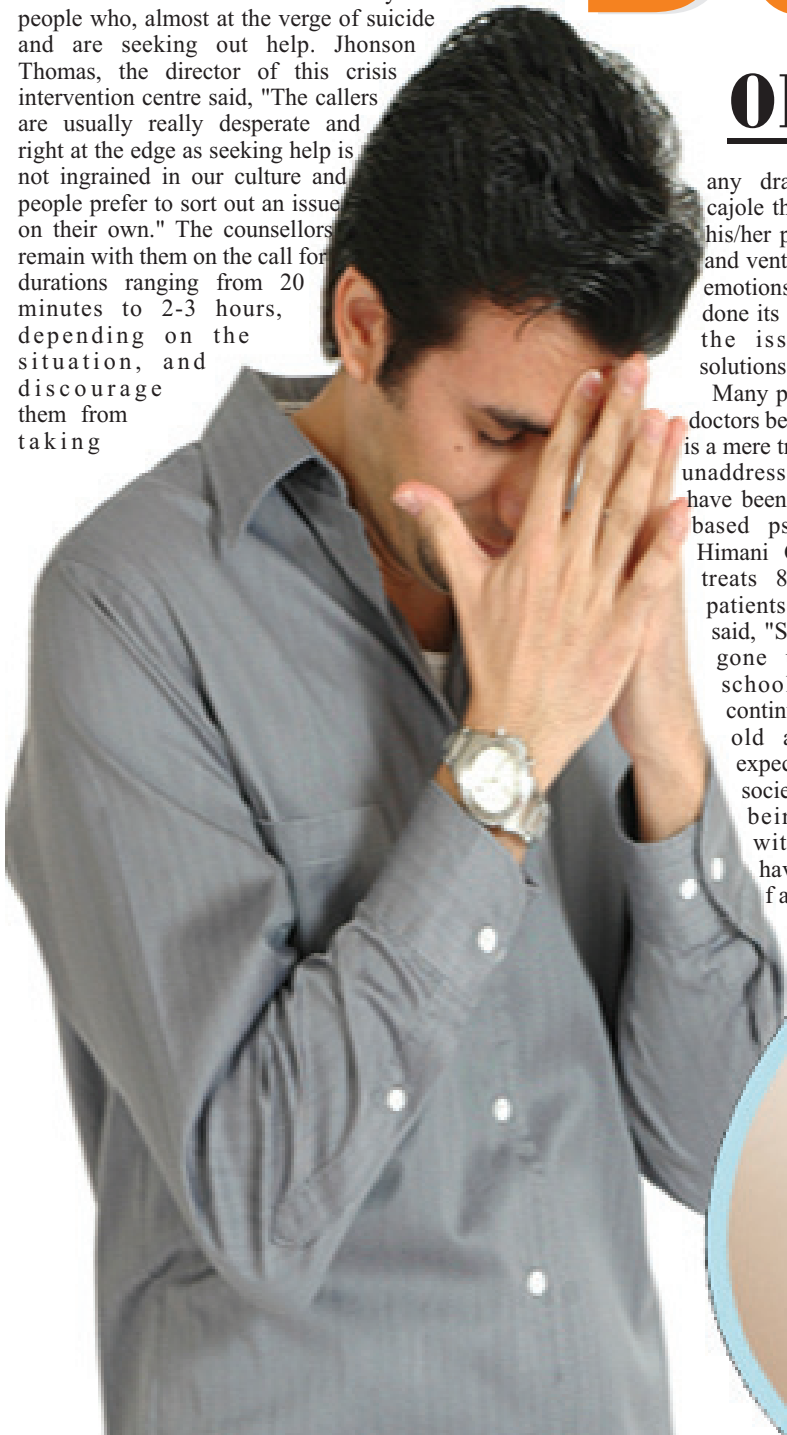
left her wavy hair loose and simply accessorised with sunglasses. Another picture showed her lounging by the pool in a bikini.

Meanwhile, on the professional front, Ananya Panday was last seen in the period courtroom drama, Kesari Chapter 2, along with Akshay Kumar and R Madhavan. Directed by Karan



Singh Tyagi, the film was produced under the banner of Karan Johar's Dharma Productions. She will next be seen in Sameer Vidwan's upcoming romantic drama, Tu Meri Main Tera Main Tera Tu Meri, opposite Kartik Aaryan. She will also star in the romantic comedy Chaand Mera Dil, alongside actor Lakshya. The official release date of the film is yet to be announced. She also has Call Me Bae season 2 in her kitty.

The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) statistics reveal that a total of 1,35,445 people committed suicide in 2012 which amounts to an average of 15 suicides an hour or 371 suicides daily. Maharashtra ranked second on the suicide index with Tamil Nadu topping it. Aasra, a 24x7 suicide helpline based out of Mumbai receives about 50 calls daily from people who, almost at the verge of suicide and are seeking out help. Jhonson Thomas, the director of this crisis intervention centre said, "The callers are usually really desperate and right at the edge as seeking help is not ingrained in our culture and people prefer to sort out an issue on their own." The counsellors remain with them on the call for durations ranging from 20 minutes to 2-3 hours, depending on the situation, and discourage them from taking



Depression

on the rise, undetected

any drastic step. "We cajole the caller to share his/her problem in detail and vent out their bottled emotions. Once that is done its easier to address the issue and offer solutions," he added. Many psychologists and doctors believe that suicide is a mere trigger reaction to unaddressed issues that have been piling on. City-based psychologist, Dr Himani Chaphekar, who treats 8-10 depression patients every month, said, "Stress levels have gone up right from school level which continues well into the old age. Excessive expectations to excel, societal pressures and being unsatisfied with what you have are the factors

that contribute largely to depression." Commenting on the fact that Indians do not take their mental health very seriously and are sceptical of addressing it she added, "There are many stigmas and misconceptions associated with mental health and well being. While people rush to a doctor for a normal cold and flu they avoid seeing a psychologist as they feel that a psychological disorder is their own doing that they need to be ashamed of." Emphasising on the need for quick identification and diagnosis of such disorders, she added, "Very few people know that mental health is directly co-related to hormonal imbalance or chemical changes/imbalance and is hence also physiological. All this misconception ensures that people are not able to distinguish between sadness, normal anxiety and clinical depression that requires treatment." Adding to it another cit

y-based psychiatrist, Neville Misquitta said, "The stigma for mental health patients arises from the behaviours and emotions that sets them apart from others. Once these are controlled, there is no stigma. And modern medication can do this. If diagnosed with depression the person needs to follow the prescribed medical advice. The road to recovery is normally smooth but one needs to be patient." Speaking about the average age group of the callers on the suicide helpline Thomas added, "15-45 is the most prominent age group that is prone to suicidal tendencies globally. The second most vulnerable age group comprises 60 plus people. While for the first age group its usually a break-up, loss of a loved one or a general loss that's the biggest trigger, among the second age group the reasons range from loneliness, chronic illnesses, coping with the lack of loved ones to coming to

terms with retirement and making a transition to a sedentary lifestyle." Examinations, especially the waiting period between exams to the results being declared is when students are most vulnerable. In recent times, unemployment, an unsatisfactory financial position and marital discord have also been seen as the major reasons of depression. Blaming the changing social scenario for the rise in depression rates and subsequent suicides, Thomas said, "India has been in a transition phase, since the last 15-20 years, with a changing value and support system. The MNC culture has brought about long working hours, lesser time spent with family, more distractions and more reliance on technology etc." Pointing out the flaws in a nuclear family structure he added, "Joint families earlier used to be a huge protective set-up as there were so many people to talk to. Man is social animal and needs to constantly talk things out." Corporations and educational institutions all have a provision for in house counsellors who can be approached. "While companies do have a counselling cell, employees refrain from using it openly or otherwise as firstly you cannot discuss work related problems there and secondly no one wants to be seen as a whiney, problematic employee," said Neelam Puri, an IT professional. "The constant competition these days is really nerve wrecking. From climbing the corporate ladder, to looking good, to managing all the stress factors related to city life and then the financial and emotional upheavals really takes a toll and all of us do feel depressed every now and then," confessed Nafisa Begum, an advertising professional



Pregnancy

Mom-to-be take special care of your heart

pregnancy and is doubled by the eighth month. There are changes such as:
-Increase in blood volume
-Increase in cardiac output
-Increase in heart rate
-Decrease in blood pressure
However, women who has a late pregnancy or has a pre-existing cardiovascular diseases, will not be able to handle the increase the cardiac input, heart beat rate and the blood volume to the body. The cardiac ailments which can prove fatal during pregnancy are:



As a mother's body prepares to take care of two individuals, the heart has to work overtime to accommodate all the imminent changes. An over-worked heart often leads to certain health woes, viz, swollen ankles, fatigue, mild shortness of breath, and frequent urination. Women with pre-existing cardiovascular diseases or conditions like diabetes, high cholesterol, obesity, hypertension or women who smoke, are at higher risk of these complications. These complications may have an important impact on the mother and the baby. During pregnancy, changes occur to the heart and blood vessels that add stress on a woman's body and increase the workload of the heart. The cardiac input, heart beat rate and the blood volume increases during

Cardiomyopathy: For women with Cardiomyopathy, the heart is weak and is not able to pump large amount of blood through the body and maintain a normal electrical rhythm for the pregnant mother. This can lead to heart failure or irregular heartbeats called arrhythmias. **This can be lethal for both the mother and baby.**
Heart valve disease: For women with heart valve disease, heart's valves do not work the way they should and the heart will not be able to handle the changes in the blood volume and pressure. It can be lethal for both the mother and the baby.
How should the mother prepare her heart for pregnancy?
Lethal heart diseases: Women with heart ailments or a family history of

cardiac disorders should consult a cardiologist and a gynaecologist before planning a baby.
Congenital heart defect: If the mother or father had a congenital heart defect, there is a 5 - 10 per cent chance that the child could have it at birth. If both the mother and father had a congenital heart defect at birth, there is a higher risk that the child would be born with it. Such parents are asked to do a fetal ecogram before the 24th week of pregnancy.

Anti-epileptic drugs: Anti-epileptic drugs can also induce a cardiac problem with the baby. Most women do not have the luxury of stopping medications during pregnancy without

seizure recurrence. Doctor's consultation is extremely important in such situations.



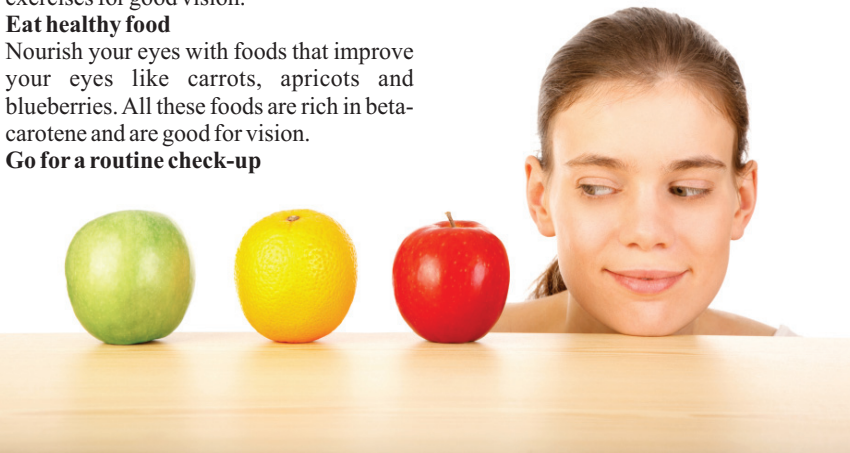
Ten commandments for good eye health

Eyes are the most neglected especially when we spend hours straining our eyes in front of the screen - computer or smartphones.

This negligence can cause blindness or vision impairment in the long run. Follow the Ten Commandments for good eye health and vision, to keep your window to a colourful life safe.
Wash your hands
Wash your hands thoroughly before touching your eyes. Our hands are filled with dirt and minute pollutants, when they meet your eyes can cause eye infections and conjunctivitis.
Quit smoking
Smoking is bad for the human body including your eyes. Excessive smoking or constant chewing of tobacco can cause macular (eye-nerve) degeneration or blindness, due to the presence of harmful compound, nicotine.
UV protect your eyes
Yes, sunshine is good for eye health, but nothing in excess is ever good. If your work



demands you to stay outdoors, then always wear good UV protected sunglasses. This will help prevent or delay the problem of cataract.
Wear safety goggles
Eye injuries can also impair your vision in a great way; in order to avoid it always remember to wear safety goggles or eyewear, while working with chemicals, playing sports, bursting crackers or while swimming.
Stare at a distance
All work and no play will surely make your lethargic and add strain to your eyes. Take a break and change the focus of your eyes to greener or look at a distance. Practice eye exercises for good vision.
Eat healthy food
Nourish your eyes with foods that improve your eyes like carrots, apricots and blueberries. All these foods are rich in beta-carotene and are good for vision.
Go for a routine check-up



Even if you have god vision and have no trouble in reading, go for a vision check at least once a year. This is a good way to detect various eye related ailments and prevent it with timely treatment.
Do not ignore
If you face any abnormality with your vision never neglect it. Take action and consult an ophthalmologist at that instance. This action of yours will help prevent major problem in the future.
Blink your eyes regularly
Keep blinking your eyes, to keep your eyes fresh and avoid eyestrain. Computer users tend to blink their eyes far less, thus it is recommended that they should follow the eye exercise of blinking their eyes every three-four seconds.
Splash water
Splashing your eyes with water will help to relieve your eyes from excessive stress. Thus, whenever you feel your eyes are strained, go splash some water on them.