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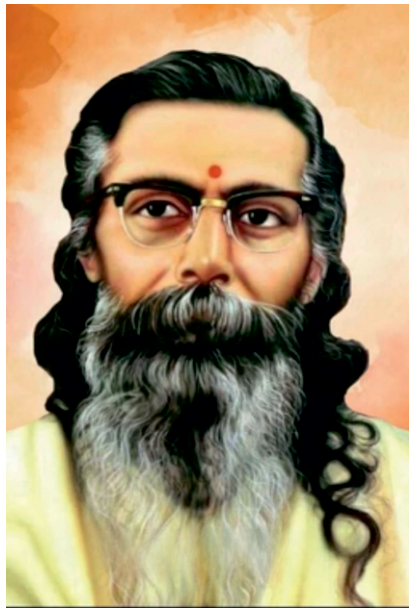
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## RSS: The Silent Architect of Modern India



**The Sikh Times**  
**Simmi Kaur Babbar**

New Delhi, 4th July : In the early 20th century, India was under the yoke of British colonialism. It was during this critical period of moral, cultural, and political decline that Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar, a nationalist, physician, and a

revolutionary from Nagpur, realized that true independence could only come through cultural regeneration and national character-building. On 27 September 1925, he laid the foundation of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) to awaken India's soul — not through violence or confrontation, but

through discipline, unity, and selfless service.

The RSS was founded with a clear mission to organize Hindu society on the basis of unity and character. To eradicate internal divisions (caste, language, region) among Indians. To instill patriotism and service-mindedness in the youth. To

revive Bharatiya Sanskriti (Indian culture) based on Sanatan Dharma values.

Its daily "shakhas" — a cornerstone of RSS training became centers of physical exercise, moral instruction, patriotic songs, and cultural discussions. No politics, no caste just a focus on discipline, unity, and nation-first thinking. RSS's top leadership, known as Sarsanghchalaks, have been visionaries committed to national duty:

1. Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar – Revolutionary founder, rooted in cultural nationalism.
2. M.S. Golwalkar (Gurujii) – A spiritual giant who built the RSS into a national force.
3. Balasaheb Deoras – Brought RSS closer to masses and social causes.
4. Rajju Bhaiya – Advocated for simplicity and education.
5. K.S. Sudarshan – Promoted swadeshi thought and scientific temperament.
6. Mohan Bhagwat (Current Sarsanghchalak) – Under his leadership, RSS has embraced modern outreach, global forums, and social service on a vast scale. ➡ **News continue page 02**

## Have to cross that bridge: Jaishankar on US plan to tax top Russian oil buyers

**The new US bill, introduced in the Senate, proposes a 500% tariff on countries that import from Russia. India is a large importer of crude oil from Russia.**



**New Delhi.** External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said India had already shared its concerns over energy security with the US Senator who has championed a bill proposing 500% tariffs on countries trading with Russia. Jaishankar, who is on a four-day visit to the US, said India, a major buyer of Russian oil, was aware of the potential implications of the bill. Addressing a press conference in Washington, Jaishankar underscored that developments in the US Congress of interest to India or those that could impact it were always closely tracked.

The minister, who attended the Quad Summit, said the Indian Embassy and officials were in touch with Republican Senator Lindsey Graham, who sponsored the bill. While introducing the bill, Graham specifically mentioned India and China, claiming the countries buy 70% of Putin's oil. "I think our concerns and our interests in energy security have been made conversant to him. So, we will then have to cross that bridge when we come to it, if we come to it," Jaishankar said.

Complicating matters for India is the fact that US President Donald Trump has backed the new sanctions bill, which proposes a hefty 500% tariff on imports from countries continuing to trade with Russia, including India and China. The bill is being seen as part of the Trump administration's efforts to get Russia to negotiate on the Ukraine war.

### HOW WILL IT AFFECT INDIA?

If the legislation is indeed passed, Indian imports to the US could face a humongous 500% tariff. However, India is close to signing a trade deal with the US, racing against time to avoid a 26% reciprocal tariff announced by Trump in April.

## Avoided slap, not humiliation: Cop resigns after Siddaramaiah's public rebuke

**Agency Karnataka.**

The Karnataka government is yet to take a final call on the voluntary retirement request submitted by Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) NV Baramani. He tendered his resignation earlier last month, alleging public humiliation by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah during a political event in Belagavi in April. Baramani submitted his letter to the Home Secretary on June 14, citing emotional distress and a breakdown in morale following an incident on April 28 at a Congress protest rally against rising prices. The rally, led by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, saw the officer deployed on stage security duty. Siddaramaiah, irked by BJP women workers causing disruption near the stage, summoned the officer in



front of the crowd and, in a moment of anger, raised his hand as if to slap him, but stopped short.

In his detailed letter, Baramani wrote that Chief Minister Siddaramaiah shouted at him from the stage, asking, "Hey! Who is this SP here? Get out!" and then allegedly raised his hand as if to slap him. "I instinctively stepped back and narrowly avoided being publicly slapped," the officer said. He stated that although the slap did not land, the public humiliation was broadcast for two days on television, witnessed by thousands present at the venue, including Congress leaders, officials, party workers, and the media. Baramani added that he quietly left the stage to preserve the dignity of the Chief Minister's Office and the police department. "Even though I avoided being physically assaulted, I could not escape the public humiliation," he wrote.

## Vijay meets Tamil Nadu custodial death victim's family, offers Rs 2 lakh

**Agency Tamil Nadu.**

Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) chief Vijay on Wednesday met the family of 27-year-old Ajith Kumar, who died in police custody in Tamil Nadu's Sivaganga, and offered his condolences. During his visit to their residence in Thirubhuvanam, Vijay paid floral tribute



to Ajith Kumar's portrait and handed over financial assistance of Rs 2 lakh to the grieving family. Earlier, TVK had strongly condemned the incident, saying the police department was functioning "cruelly, inhumanly, and immorally"

under the leadership of Chief Minister MK Stalin. The Tamil Nadu government has already announced a compensation package for the family, including Rs 5 lakh, a technician job at Aavin for Ajith Kumar's brother, and a patta for three cents of land in Theni revenue village. Cooperation Minister I Periyakaruppan personally handed over the appointment letter to the family.

Chief Minister Stalin also spoke to the family over the phone to express his condolences, while Leader of the Opposition Edappadi K Palaniswami called them the next day to convey his sympathies.

Stalin on Tuesday announced that the case had been transferred to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

"This is an act that cannot be justified or excused by anyone," Stalin said, adding that five policemen have been named as accused. He said the case was being transferred to the CBI to ensure there is no doubt about the fairness of the investigation.

## Fire near Tirupati's Govindaraju Swamy temple causes heavy property damage

**Agency Andhra Pradesh.**

A fire, caused by a short circuit, near Govindaraju Swamy temple in Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh, early this morning caused significant property damage in the vicinity. Two fire engines were required to extinguish the fire. However, a shop and a shed were completely gutted by the fire. Officials were looking into the incident to take stock of the situation.

The fire near the the Govindaraju Swamy Temple is the second major accident in the temple city this year. On January 8, at least six people died and over 40 were injured in a stampede at a token distribution centre, as thousands of devotees jostled for Vaikunta Dwara Darshan tokens for Vaikunta Ekadasi. Preliminary investigations pointed to poor crowd management, lack of barricades, and possibly the premature opening of gates.

The site of today's fire is next to the Sri Govindaraju Swamy Temple, located about 9 km east-southeast of the Tirupati Balaji temple, is one of the oldest and largest temple complexes in the district, and located on North Mada Street in Tirumala, Tirupati. The city of Tirupati is said to have been developed around it.

## Nitish Kumar, PM Modi face of NDA in Bihar polls: Rajnath Singh

**Agency New Delhi.**

At the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) state working committee meeting in Patna, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh addressed party leaders and workers, and said that Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be the faces of the NDA's campaign in the upcoming Bihar elections. He urged BJP workers to reach every household in the state with the message of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's development work.

Calling the BJP an organisation deeply rooted in its workers, Rajnath Singh said, "The BJP is like a tree whose strength lies in its roots - its dedicated workers. You are not ordinary karyakartas; you are builders of a golden Bihar." Commenting on the significance of Bihar, he described the land as sacred and rich in knowledge, referring to it as the land of Ashoka, Chanakya, and Aryabhata.

Reflecting on the party's history, Singh said he has seen the commitment of BJP workers for 40 years. "If you speak to a BJP worker with love, he will give you his heart. For us, the nation comes first. And now, we must do the same for Bihar," he added. He stressed that only the BJP can restore Bihar's lost pride and called upon the party to draw inspiration from its past and resolve to win the upcoming assembly elections. Singh

laid out a five-point call to action for party workers - establish a relationship of trust with the people, talk about Modi and BJP at every booth, spread awareness about government schemes, help Bihar regain its self-confidence, and



position BJP not just as a political party but as a force for social transformation.

Criticising the Congress and Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), Singh said their politics revolves solely around the desire for power, while the BJP is driven by the mission of nation-building. He asked workers to become carriers of Modi's mission and ensure his achievements reach every household. He also urged them to counter the opposition's misinformation with facts and confidence.

## Major Boost to Delhi's Water and Sewerage Infrastructure : Parvesh Sahib Singh

**The Sikh Times**  
**Date: July 3, 2025**

In a landmark move to enhance water and sewerage services across the Capital, the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) in its latest board meeting has approved several critical projects aimed at improving public utility infrastructure. These projects will directly benefit lakhs of residents, ensure equitable water supply, reduce pollution in River Yamuna, and accelerate long-pending rehabilitation works.

Chaired by Delhi's Water Minister Parvesh Sahib Singh, the meeting underscored the government's renewed focus on fast-tracking critical projects that were stalled due to bureaucratic delays and

procedural hurdles.

"Providing clean drinking water and an efficient sewerage system is not just about pipelines and drains—it's about restoring the rights, dignity, and well-being of our people. We are reviving long-pending projects and taking bold decisions to improve the quality of life for every citizen," said Parvesh Sahib Singh.

Until 2019, such schemes were cleared at the level of the Chief Engineer (Planning), enabling quicker execution. However, a decision by the previous government mandated that all proposals must be cleared by the full DJB Board, creating unnecessary bureaucratic

bottlenecks. This led to:

- Delays in the release of vital water/sewerage schemes,
- Deferred realization of infrastructure charges (IFC) from developers,
- Slowed allotment of homes to thousands of beneficiaries.

This not only stalled infrastructure development but also caused hardship for the public and loss of revenue for DJB.

With this latest board approval, the DJB is now authorized to directly manage and carry forward all such projects, ensuring timely implementation, improved service delivery, and enhanced revenue generation through faster realization of

IFCs. This marks a bold step toward restoring efficiency and public trust in urban service delivery.

The board has approved the re-initiation of the Delhi Water Supply Improvement Project in the command area of Wazirabad Water Treatment Plant (WTP) under Asian Development Bank (ADB) funding.

- Originally sanctioned in 2013, the ADB-backed project remained unawarded until July 2020, leading ADB to withdraw funding.
- After strong intervention by Water Minister Parvesh Sahib Singh, ADB has agreed to fund the project again.

➡ **News continue page 02**





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### Major Boost to Delhi’s Water and Sewerage Infrastructure: Parvesh Sahib Singh

l supervision of projects, the Delhi Jal Board has started recruiting young engineers through GATE (Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering) — ensuring a transparent and merit-based selection process.

In addition, retired officers from reputed Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) are also being engaged as consultants to leverage their vast experience in project execution and public infrastructure. However, these consultants will function strictly in an advisory capacity and will not hold any financial powers, in line with DJB’s commitment to accountability and transparent governance.

The approval of these projects and the structural reforms within DJB send a strong message that under the leadership of Parvesh Sahib Singh, Delhi’s water governance is being modernized, accelerated, and made citizen-centric. “We are bringing efficiency and urgency into public works that were once stuck in files and red tape. This is the beginning of a cleaner, healthier, and more responsive water governance system in Delhi,” the Minister added.

### RSS: The Silent Architect of Modern India

RSS was among the first organizations banned by Indira Gandhi during the Emergency. Thousands of swyamsevaks were jailed without trial, underground literature and protests were led by RSS-linked workers, defending Indian democracy.

**RSS runs one of the largest social service networks in the world:**

- \*Seva Bharati: Over 1.5 lakh projects in slums, tribal areas, and remote villages (education, healthcare, self-employment).
- \*Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram: Uplifting tribal communities.
- \*Samarasata Manch: Combating casteism and promoting harmony.
- \*Rashtra Sevika Samiti: Women’s wing training over 5 lakh women.

RSS’s work is done without discrimination of caste or class – a fact often ignored in public discourse. RSS has worked to preserve, promote, and rejuvenate Bharatiya culture.

Celebration of forgotten heroes like Rani Durgavati, Maharaja Suheldev, Veer Savarkar, and Subhash Chandra Bose. Promotion of Indian languages, festivals, and local traditions. Advocacy for Ram Jannabhoomi movement, leading to the historic construction of Shri Ram Mandir in Ayodhya. Though RSS itself is non-political, it gave birth to Bharatiya Jana Sangh (1951) and later Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Prominent leaders who were swyamsevaks:

- \*Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee – Prime Minister, poet, and statesman.
- \*Shri Narendra Modi – Current PM, globally respected nationalist leader.
- \*Shri L.K. Advani, Murli Manohar Joshi, Yogi Adityanath, Rajnath Singh, Amit Shah, and Manohar Parrikar – All shaped by RSS values.

RSS has not just influenced politics , it has transformed Indian leadership. RSS-inspired organizations like Hindu Swyamsevak Sangh (HSS) operate in over 40 countries, promoting Indian values.

Active participation in climate, rural development, digital literacy, and nation-building campaigns like Swachh Bharat, Self-Reliant India, and Digital India.

Despite its service, RSS has often been misunderstood: Labeled unjustly by vested interests as "communal" or "militant".

In reality, RSS has never been banned for violence, and courts have never proven any charge against it. RSS believes in “Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah” — welfare for all, not just Hindus.

The Rashtriya Swyamsevak Sangh stands tall as an institution that has never asked for credit, but has always delivered selfless service. It has nurtured character, discipline, leadership, and patriotism in crores of Indians across generations. As India marches towards its Amrit Kaal, the RSS continues to remain the spiritual, cultural, and social backbone of Bharat Mata.

It is time India recognizes and salutes the RSS for what it truly is. A nation-building force, rooted in silence, committed to seva, and driven by love for the motherland.

Kerala govt initiates steps to protect ‘Arattu Mandapam’; fishing folk unamused

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM.** The state government is all set to begin protection work of the historic Arattu Mandapam at Shankumukham, which is under severe sea erosion threat, this week. However, the project has sparked opposition from the local fishing community, who allege that the authorities are ignoring the protection of the livelihood, houses and life of the local fishing community and focusing only on the Arattu Mandapam. The irrigation department has already invited tenders to install 120 metres of polypropylene geotubes to protect the Arattu Mandapam.

According to irrigation department officials, the work will be awarded within four days and the work will take off immediately. “Now the sea has become a little bit calmer and the situation can change swiftly. The only challenge is to undertake the work while the sea is rough. The plan is to complete the project within 20 days,” said the official.

## Bombay high court rebukes pension delay, directs payment to ex-army man with interest

**Mumbai.** In a relief for an Army veteran (80) who was denied a pension for two years for not submitting a life certificate, the Bombay High Court directed that the arrears should be paid to him with interest.

"Insistence on a life certificate for the period from Jan 2021 to Jan 2023, in the face of payment of pension for the subsequent years on the basis of a life certificate produced by the petitioner in Feb 2023, renders the action on the part of respondent No.1 irrational," said Justices Makarand Karnik and Nitin Borkar on June 25. They directed the senior accounts officer, Principal Controller of Defence (Accounts), Allahabad, to pay "interest at the rate of 6% per annum from Jan 1, 2021, till actual payment." Krishnakutty Ramachandran resides in Walkeshwar with his daughter and son-in-law. His petition said he was injured in 1971 war and was sanctioned disability pension. During the Covid pandemic, he lost his wife. He went to Dubai to live with his son from February 19, 2021, and returned on February 1, 2023. He realised his pension account was not credited from Jan 2021 to Jan 2023. He learnt from Canara Bank, Andheri (W) branch, that his pension was stopped due to non-submission of a life certificate. He immediately wrote to the senior accounts officer with documents claiming Rs 2.72 lakh arrears. Despite his requests, the amount was not released.



His advocate, Mamta Sadh, referred to the bank’s May 12, 2023, letter. It stated that upon submitting a life certificate for 2019-2020, Ramachandran received a pension till Dec 2020. It was stopped due to non-submission of a life certificate. Upon receiving the life certificate, pension was restarted from Feb 1, 2023, onwards. The bank had requested the senior accounts officer to permit it to pay Ramachandran arrears for two years. The judges said the insistence on a life certificate for the two-year period is "illogical." "Submitting a life certificate may be a valid requirement...there is absolutely no propriety in depriving pensionary benefits to the petitioner" from Jan 2021 to Jan 2023. "In this view of the matter and looking at the age of the petitioner," they allowed Ramachandran's petition directing pension arrears to be

credited to his account within two months. They also "made it clear that if the arrears along with interest are not paid within the stipulated time, "this Court may be inclined to award a higher rate of interest in that case when the matter is listed for compliance" on Aug 29. Mumbai: In a relief for an Army veteran (80) who was denied a pension for two years for not submitting a life certificate, the Bombay High Court directed that the arrears should be paid to him with interest. "Insistence on a life certificate for the period from Jan 2021 to Jan 2023, in the face of payment of pension for the subsequent years on the basis of a life certificate produced by the petitioner in Feb 2023, renders the action on the part of respondent No.1 irrational," said Justices Makarand Karnik and Nitin Borkar on June 25. They directed the senior accounts officer, Principal Controller of Defence (Accounts), Allahabad, to pay "interest at the rate of 6% per annum from Jan 1, 2021, till actual payment." Krishnakutty Ramachandran resides in Walkeshwar with his daughter and son-in-law. His petition said he was injured in 1971 war and was sanctioned disability pension. During the Covid pandemic, he lost his wife. He went to Dubai to live with his son from February 19, 2021, and returned on February 1, 2023.

## Gujarat horror: Woman, husband kill her father in fight over neglect; couple re-dressed body, tried to dispose of it

**RAJKOT.** Frequent quarrels over a 55-year-old man accusing his daughter and her husband of indifference and disregard, allegedly led the couple to bludgeon him to death in Targhadi village near Rajkot. On July 1, the body of an unidentified man was found near a temple in Suvag village, adjacent to Targhadi in Padadhri taluka. As preliminary investigations pointed to foul play, the body was sent for forensic postmortem. Using a combination of technical surveillance and human intelligence, the Local Crime Branch (LCB) and Padadhri police traced the victim's son, Kanti Damor. When shown a photograph, Kanti identified the deceased as his father, 55-year-old Himmatsinh Damor, a casual labourer who worked across villages in the taluka. LCB Inspector Vijay Odedara told TOI that Himmatsinh, a native of Jhabua district in Madhya Pradesh, had last

visited his daughter and son-in-law at their home in Targhadi on June 30. Following this



lead, police questioned the daughter, 28-year-old Kheta Ajanar, and her husband, 32-year-old Ganpat Ajanar. Initially evasive, the couple eventually confessed to the murder, admitting they killed Himmatsinh during a

heated argument triggered by his repeated accusations of neglect. They assaulted Himmatsinh with a wooden log and an iron rod, killing him on the spot. Fearing arrest, the couple removed his bloodstained clothes, washed them to destroy evidence, and then redressed the body.

They attempted to dispose of the body near the site where Himmatsinh used to work. While transporting it on a motorcycle, the vehicle broke down near Sarpadal village. The couple abandoned the body by the roadside and returned to Targhadi, later dropping the bike off at a repair shop in Metoda GIDC.

Inspector S N Parmar of Padadhri police station told TOI that Himmatsinh frequently visited the couple's home and often quarrelled with them. Further investigation revealed that Kheta worked as a farm labourer.

## Tricked into buying ‘18 litres/day’ cow, Kerala man gets consumer panel relief

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM.** Not every promise is genuine. Mathai learnt it the hard way. Three years after he was tricked into purchasing a cow that failed to give anywhere close to the ‘18 litres of milk per day’ he was assured, the Kasaragod native got relief from the State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (SCDRC). As per Mathai, he purchased a pregnant cow from Ganesh Rao, also from Kasaragod, on April 9, 2022, for Rs 36,500. Rao promised Mathai the bovine would give 18 litres of milk per day. However, after delivery, the cow gave just 2 litres of milk and reacted violently whenever it was milked. It refused to feed the calf and would kick it away, Mathai said. Mathai took the matter up with Rao. However, the latter’s wife approached the police accusing him of creating nuisance at their home. During mediation by the police, Rao claimed he would prove the cow delivered the promised

milk if it is milked at his residence. On the police’s directive, the cow and calf were taken to his residence. However, Rao refused to return



the animals. Mathai then approached the District Legal Services Authority, but Rao remained ex-parte. He then moved the District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission. There, he got a rude shock. Rao claimed he never sold such a cow to him. Still, the commission favoured Mathai and directed Rao to refund him, and also pay him compensation and legal costs. Aggrieved, Rao filed an appeal with the SCDRC. The bench comprising SCDRC

president Justice B Sudheendra Kumar, judicial member Ajith Kumar D and member K R Radhakrishnan heard the case. Artificial Intelligence uses Seller asked to pay refund, give Rs 15,000 as compensation. The bench observed that Rao did not cross-examine Mathai though he denied the contentions before the district commission. Since Mathai was not cross-examined, the evidence of the complainant (Mathai) remained as an unchallenged testimony. Rao argued that Mathai could not produce any receipt to prove the purchase and that his oral evidence alone was insufficient to conclude deficiency in service. However, the bench observed that documentary evidence could not be insisted in transactions like the purchase of a cow by rustic villagers. In such cases, oral evidence can be considered if it is reliable and convincing.

## Seven years on, Meenambal Sivaraj Nagar residents protest delay in housing allotment in Chennai

The protest comes after an alleged delay in the inauguration of the houses despite the construction being completed and tokens issued to eligible families last

**CHENNAI.** Seven years after their original homes were demolished here, nearly 70 residents of Meenambal Sivaraj Nagar near Basin Bridge staged a road roko on Wednesday, urging the Tamil Nadu Urban Habitat Development Board (TNUHDB) to immediately hand over the newly constructed tenements. The protest comes after an alleged delay in the inauguration of the houses despite the construction being completed and tokens issued to eligible families last year. Residents claim that the only thing preventing them from moving in is the pending formal inauguration by Chief Minister M K Stalin. In the meantime, they say they are burdened with rising rents.

According to the protesters, their families have lived in the area for six generations, originally in huts. In 1974, under then chief minister M Karunanidhi, 176 families were

allotted houses under TNUHDB. Over time, the population in the area grew to accommodate over 230 families. In 2019, during the previous AIADMK government, the dilapidated buildings were demolished, and families were given temporary allotment orders for the new tenement along with a one-time ex gratia payment of Rs 8,000. They were assured that new homes would be ready within two years. The project to construct 308 homes (Stilt+11-storeys) was awarded to a private contractor in 2020 at an estimated cost of Rs 40.14 crore, with a deadline of 18 months. However, construction was only completed in 2024. Despite the distribution of tokens last year, residents have not been permitted to move in.

Artificial Intelligence uses Artificial Intelligence uses “We were told the chief minister would inaugurate the project in March, on his



birthday. When that didn’t happen, they said it would happen in June on former CM Karunanidhi’s birthday. But that too didn’t materialise,” said G Dilip Kumar (32), one of the protesters. “We are daily wage workers. Paying rent has become a burden and some families have started sleeping on platforms. A simple inauguration is all we ask for.” Protesters said that the original residents in the locality have been asked to pay Rs

### Homeless labourer among three held for idol theft in Hyderabad

**HYDERABAD.** Rachakonda police arrested three persons for allegedly stealing temple idols from multiple temples on the city outskirts. The police seized 25 items, including 12 Panchaloha idols of Lord Rama, Sita, Lakshmana, Hanuman and others, worth Rs 5.36 lakh.

The arrested include two habitual offenders from Andhra Pradesh — Karacha Sivananda and Shaik Ham Shareef — both involved in seven theft cases. A third accused, Akkapalli Kranthi Kumar, was identified as the receiver of the stolen items. Police said Sivananda, who had been living in a rented room in Vanasthalipuram for six months, and Shareef, a homeless



labourer, became acquainted at labourer addas. Both were in need of money and decided to target temples. On February 27, they stole four temple bells from Mallikarjuna Swamy temple and Sivalayam in Bandlaguda. On June 15, they looted items including a Pustala Thadu and two Deepam stands from Mallanna Swamy temple in Upparaguda. On June 24, they stole a bike near Uppal Metro station and began conducting reces in Ibrahimpatnam and Abdullapurmet. On June 29, the duo committed a major theft at a temple in Abdullapurmet, during which they stole several Panchaloha idols. HC admits plea on illegal constructions on temple land. Justice B Vijaysen Reddy of the Telangana High Court on Tuesday admitted a writ petition alleging inaction by civic authorities in preventing unauthorised constructions on the premises of the Sri Krishna Ji Temple at Bakshigunj, Gazibanda in Hyderabad

## From heirloom to haute: Sky-high gold prices redefine bridal bling in Gujarat

**Ahmedabad.** Gold may still symbolise prosperity, but in Gujarat's wedding market, it is now coming in lighter, leaner forms. With prices soaring past Rs 1 lakh per 10 grams, brides and families are moving away from traditional 22-carat sets in favour of sleek and lightweight 18K and even 14K alternatives. Affordability is shaping aesthetics this wedding season with many opting for those featuring polki, meenakari, jadau, and semi-precious stones. Jewellers across cities report a noticeable drop in weight, but not in style. On Tuesday, the price of gold touched Rs 1,00,400 per 10 grams in Ahmedabad, pushing buyers to make more calculated decisions when planning wedding purchases. Jewellers say footfalls for planned wedding-related jewellery purchases are rising since rath yatra, but the weight of each purchase is literally going down. "Gold is inching beyond the reach of the average bridal buyer," said Haresh Acharya, director at India Bullion and Jewellers' Association (IBJA). "Geopolitical uncertainty and heightened central bank buying are

driving prices up. This has nudged a cultural shift away from traditional 22-carat wedding jewellery toward sleeker, lower-carat options. "Jewellers and bullion traders also attribute this slump to the shifting dynamics of Indian weddings, where elegance now walks hand-in-hand with budget mindfulness. In Ahmedabad, Jigar Soni, president of the Jewellers' Association, echoed the shift: "The price of gold is forcing families to rethink the size and weight of wedding ornaments. Instead of full-weight neck pieces and bangles, there is a growing preference for lightweight, designer-driven jewellery that combines lower-carat gold with intricate polki, Meenakari, jadau, and stone work. Jewellers say today's bride is focused on function, form, and flair. "Millennial and Gen Z couples want jewellery that reflects personal style and practicality," said Manoj Soni, a jeweller in Ahmedabad. "Rings, bangles, and bracelets in 14- or 18-carat gold allow for better strength, more colours, and intricate detailing, without breaking the bank." The shift is also evident in consumer behaviour.

65,000 towards beneficiary contribution to TNUHDB and those who started living there later have been asked to pay Rs 1 lakh for the new houses. But, those in the Rs 1 lakh category have access to housing loans, while the others are expected to pay the entire amount in single payment, added protesters. “We are willing to pay, but give us the option to do it in instalments,” said a resident.

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NEWS BOX

Thailand's new Cabinet members take oaths, including suspended PM Paetongtarn Shinawatra

**BANGKOK.** Thailand’s new Cabinet members took their oaths of office Thursday, including the suspended prime minister who is under an ethics investigation for her remarks to a senior Cambodian leader.Paetongtarn Shinawatra was suspended as prime minister on Tuesday, the same day Thailand's king endorsed a Cabinet lineup in which she would be the culture minister.Paetongtarn was smiling as she arrived at Government House for the swearing-in ceremony with other new members, but did not answer questions.Acting Prime Minister Suriya Jungrungeangkit led the new Cabinet members at the ceremony to receive the endorsement from King Maha Vajiralongkorn.Suriya is expected later to assign the acting prime minister duty to Phumtham Wechayachai, who was sworn in Thursday as deputy prime minister and interior minister. Phumtham had been deputy prime minister and defense minister since Paetongtarn took office last year.Paetongtarn has faced growing dissatisfaction over her handling of a border dispute with Cambodia, including an armed confrontation in May in which a Cambodian soldier was killed.

In a leaked phone call with Cambodian Senate President Hun Sen, she attempted to defuse tensions — but instead set off a string of complaints and public protests. Critics said she went to far in appeasing Hun Sen and damaged Thailand's image and reputation.The Constitutional Court voted unanimously Tuesday to review a petition accusing her of a breach of the ethics, and voted 7-2 to immediately suspend her until it issues its ruling. The court gave Paetongtarn 15 days to give evidence to support her case. It's unclear when it will rule.

Skydiving plane goes off New Jersey runway and crashes into woods, 15 people injured

**NEW JERSEY.** Fifteen people were taken to the hospital after a skydiving aircraft radioed it was having engine trouble after takeoff and crashed on landing near an airport in southern New Jersey on Wednesday, according to authorities. The single engine Cessna 208B was carrying 15 people when it crashed at about 5:30 p.m. at the Cross Keys Airport, about 21 miles (34 kilometers) southeast of Philadelphia, according to the Federal Aviation Administration.“The plane did try to circle back and attempt a landing we are told but was unsuccessful in that attempt,” Andrew Halter, with Gloucester County Emergency Management, said during a news conference Wednesday night.The injuries ranged from minor to critical and the plane was severely damaged, Halter said. Some of the people on board were covered in jet fuel and had to be decontaminated before being taken to the hospital, he said.“Just the fact that we have 15 people that are still with us here today, some with minor injuries, I think is fantastic and remarkable,” he said.Aerial footage of the crashed plane shows it in the woods, with several pieces of debris nearby. Firetrucks and other emergency vehicles surrounded the scene. Three people were being evaluated at Cooper University Hospital's trauma center in Camden, New Jersey, and eight people with less severe injuries were being treated in its emergency department, said Wendy A. Marano, a spokesperson for the hospital. Four other patients also with “minimal injuries” were waiting for further evaluation, she said. She wasn’t able to provide the exact nature of the injuries.

Rwandan army had 'critical' role in DR Congo offensive: UN experts

**KINSHASA.** Rwanda's army played a "critical" role alongside the M23 armed group in an offensive in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo early this year that culminated in the capture of two key cities, UN experts say.Rwanda denies providing military support for the M23, but UN experts have long said that the neighbouring country backs the armed group -- and said that there was ample evidence that the Rwandan army had played a direct combat role in the recent offensive in eastern DRC."RDF (Rwandan armed forces) operations were critical to the conquest and occupation of new territories and towns," the United Nations' group of experts on the DRC said in a report due to be published in the coming days, of which AFP has obtained a copy. The analysis came after the DRC and Rwanda signed a peace deal on Friday in Washington to end the conflict in eastern Congo, where M23 fighters seized the provincial capitals of Goma and Bukavu in a lightning offensive in January and February. Both countries pledged to pull back support for guerrilla fighters, in a deal that US President Donald Trump hailed as the start of a "new chapter of hope and opportunity" for the region.Mineral-rich eastern DRC has been devastated by conflict for more than three decades, with the violence escalating in recent months as the M23 seized large swathes of territory. The UN expert group said it had obtained photos, videos, drone footage, testimony and intelligence "confirming systematic and massive border incursions by RDF" and the Rwandan army's "reinforced presence" in the region.The evidence shows "RDF positioning at front lines and direct engagement in combat, and RDF handling of high-tech weaponry", the report said.It said that a week prior to the attack on Goma, "Rwandan officials confidentially informed the (UN expert group) that (Rwandan) President Paul Kagame had decided to imminently take control of Goma and Bukavu".Fragile peace dealKagame denies military backing for the M23, but his government says it maintains "defensive measures" because Rwanda is threatened by the presence in eastern DRC of the FDLR, a group founded by ethnic Hutu leaders involved in the 1994 Rwandan genocide of the Tutsis.

Tibetans in exile wonder, will the next Dalai Lama be as charismatic as this one

When his death comes, it will pitch the global Tibetan community into uncertainty, perhaps for years. His successor will have to be found through the traditional process of reincarnation.

**DHARAMSHALA.** The Dalai Lama has announced that he intends to reincarnate, paving the way for a successor to take on a mantle stretching back 500 years after his death. But as he approaches his 90th birthday, that news hasn’t eased the worries of Tibetan Buddhists who wonder: What will happen when this Dalai Lama is gone? For decades, the 14th Dalai Lama has been more than a spiritual leader. He has sustained a nation in exile and managed to build a community that’s kept the Tibetan culture and identity alive.He is the China -

reviled spokesperson for a Tibetan homeland that many, like him, can see only from afar. He has received a Nobel Peace Prize and been courted by royalty, politicians and Hollywood stars, helping him draw global attention and support for Tibet.When his death comes, it will pitch the global Tibetan community into uncertainty, perhaps for years. His successor will have to be found through the traditional process of reincarnation. China, whose troops took control of Tibet in 1950, says it will reject anyone chosen without Beijing's consent.Tibetans in India’s Himalayan town of Dharamshala, the Dalai Lama’s home in exile, and scattered around the world fear a new onslaught on their cultural and religious identity.“The absence of His Holiness would be a huge setback for the Tibetans,” said Penpa Tsering, the head of the democratically elected Tibetan government-in-exile. “The responsibility

lies on us as to how we carry forward the legacy of His Holiness.” **Along gap** The Dalai Lama has become one of the world’s most recognizable figures while



leading a Tibetan diaspora through their struggle for autonomy and opposition of China’s control of Tibet. He has not named a successor, but he says they will be born in the “free world” — outside China.Previous Dalai Lamas have been identified by senior

monastic disciples, under strict religious rituals meant to identify their predecessor's reincarnation. Monks interpret signs, consult oracles and send search committees to Tibetan households looking for a child who exhibits the qualities of the Dalai Lama.All of this takes years of effort, leaving a leadership vacuum. Years of religious education and training are needed before the identified successor grows up and takes up full responsibilities as spiritual leader.China has already sought to elevate other spiritual figures, particularly Tibetan Buddhism’s No. 2 figure, the Panchen Lama, whose legitimacy is highly contested by many Tibetans at home and in exile.Gyaltzen Norbu was installed by Beijing as the 11th Panchen Lama in 1995 after followers of the Dalai Lama recognized a different boy as the Panchen’s incarnation. That boy disappeared soon after.

US contractors say their colleagues are firing live ammo as Palestinians seek food in Gaza

**BEERSHEBA.** American contractors guarding aid distribution sites in Gaza are using live ammunition and stun grenades as hungry Palestinians scramble for food, according to accounts and videos obtained by The Associated Press.Two U.S. contractors, speaking to the AP on condition of anonymity because they were revealing their employers’ internal operations, said they were coming forward because they were disturbed by what they considered dangerous and irresponsible practices.They said the security staff hired were often unqualified, unvetted, heavily armed and seemed to have an open license to do whatever they wished.They said their colleagues regularly lobbed stun grenades and pepper spray in the direction of the Palestinians. One contractor said bullets were fired in all directions — in the air, into the ground and at times toward the Palestinians, recalling at

least one instance where he thought someone had been hit."There are innocent people bein hurt. Badly. Needlessly," the contractor said. He said American staff on the sites monitor those coming to seek food and



document anyone considered “suspicious.” He said they share such information with the Israeli military. Videos provided by one of the contractors and taken at the sites show hundreds of Palestinians crowded between metal gates, jostling for aid

amid the sound of bullets, stun grenades and the sting of pepper spray. Other videos include conversation between English-speaking men discussing how to disperse crowds and encouraging each other after bursts of gunfire.The testimonies from the contractors — combined with the videos, internal reports and text messages obtained by the AP — offer a rare glimpse inside the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, the newly created, secretive American organization backed by Israel to feed the Gaza Strip’s population. Last month, the U.S. government pledged \$30 million for the group to continue operations — the first known U.S. donation to the group, whose other funding sources remain opaque.Journalists have been unable to access the GHF sites, located in Israeli military-controlled zones. The AP cannot independently verify the contractors' stories.

Four dead, 38 missing after ferry sinks on way to Indonesia's Bali

**DENPASAR.** At least four people were dead and dozens unaccounted for Thursday after a ferry sank on its way to the resort island of Bali, according to local authorities who said 23 survivors had been plucked from the water so far. Rescuers were still racing to find missing people after the vessel carrying 65 passengers sank before midnight on Wednesday as it sailed to the popular holiday destination from Indonesia's main island Java."23 rescued, 4 dead," Rama Santama Putra, police chief of Banyuwangi in East Java, where the boat departed, told AFP.President Prabowo Subianto, who was on a trip to Saudi Arabia, ordered an immediate emergency response, cabinet secretary Teddy Indra Wijaya said in a statement Thursday, adding the cause of the accident was "bad weather".The local rescue agency in the Javan city Surabaya had earlier said 61 were missing and four rescued, without giving a cause for the boat's sinking. "KMP Tunu Pratama Jaya... sank about

25 minutes after weighing anchor," the Surabaya search and rescue agency said."The ferry's manifest data totalled 53 passengers and 12 passenger crews," it said.A rescue team and



inflatable rescue boats were dispatched and a bigger vessel was later sent from Surabaya to assist the search efforts. Four of the known survivors saved themselves by using the ferry's lifeboat and were found in the water early Thursday, the agency said.It said the ferry was also transporting 22 vehicles, including 14 trucks.Accidents

commonRescuers said they were still assessing if there were more people onboard than the ferry's manifest showed. It is common in Indonesia for the actual number of passengers on a boat to differ from the manifest.The ferry from Java to Bali takes around one hour and is often used by people crossing between the islands by car. It was unclear if any foreigners were onboard when the ferry sank.Marine accidents are a regular occurrence in Indonesia, a Southeast Asian archipelago of around 17,000 islands, in part due to lax safety standards and sometimes due to bad weather.In March, a boat carrying 16 people capsized in rough waters off Bali, killing an Australian woman and injuring at least one other person.A ferry carrying more than 800 people ran aground in shallow waters off East Nusa Tenggara province in 2022 and remained stuck for two days before being dislodged with no one hurt.And in 2018.

House back to work as GOP leaders try to win over holdouts on Trump's tax bill

**WASHINGTON.** House Republicans were straining late Wednesday to advance President Donald Trump's tax and spending cuts package despite GOP leaders having spent the afternoon and evening working furiously to convince skeptical holdouts to send it to his desk by the Fourth of July deadline.The roll call vote was being held open for more than an hour as several Republicans refused to give their votes. With few to spare from their slim majority, the outcome was in jeopardy. House Speaker Mike Johnson had recalled lawmakers to Washington, eager to seize on the momentum of the bill's passage the day before in the Senate and vowed to press ahead.“Everybody wants to get to yes,” Johnson said during an interview on Fox News as the voting was underway.Quickly convening for the vote on the more than 800-page bill was risky gambit, one designed to meet Trump's demand for a holiday finish. Republicans have struggled mightily with the bill nearly every step of the way this year, often succeeding by the narrowest of margins, only one vote. Their slim 220-212 majority, leaving little room for defections.Several Republicans are balking at being asked to rubber-stamp the Senate version less than 24 hours after passage. A number of moderate



Republicans from competitive districts have objected to the Senate bill's cuts to Medicaid, while conservatives have lambasted the legislation as straying from their fiscal goals.It falls to Johnson and his team to convince them that the time for negotiations is over. They will need assistance from Trump to close the deal, and lawmakers headed to the White House for a two-hour session to talk to the president about their concerns.“The president's message was ‘We’re on a roll,’” said Rep. Ralph Norman, R-S.C. “He wants to see this.”Republicans are relying on their majority hold of Congress to push the package over a wall of unified Democratic opposition. No Democrats voted for bill in the Senate and none were expected to do so in the House.“Hell no!” said House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries, flanked by fellow Democrats outside the Capitol.

South Korea's leader says trade deal with US remains unclear ahead of Trump's deadline

**SEOUL.** South Korean President Lee Jae Myung said that it remained unclear whether Seoul and Washington could conclude their tariff negotiations by the deadline set by US President Donald Trump for next week, noting Thursday that both nations were still working to clarify their positions and identify areas of agreement.Speaking at his first news conference since taking office last month, Lee also reiterated his intentions to improve badly frayed ties with North Korea, though he acknowledged that mutual distrust between the Koreas is too deep to heal anytime soon.Trump’s tariff hikes and other “America First” policies are major challenges for Lee's month-old government, as are North Korea's expanding nuclear program and domestic economic woes.Lee, a liberal, came to power after winning a snap presidential election caused by the ouster of conservative President Yoon Suk Yeol over his ill-fated imposition of martial law in

December.Lee said the tariff negotiations with the US have been “clearly not easy” and stressed that the countries must reach mutually beneficial outcomes.“It’s difficult to say with certainty whether we will be able to reach a conclusion by July 8. We are now doing our best,” Lee said.”What we need is a truly reciprocal outcome that benefits both sides and works for everyone, but so far, both sides are still trying to define exactly what they want.” Trump’s 90-day pause in global reciprocal tariffs is set to expire on July 9, potentially exposing South Korean products to 25% tax rates.Washington has separately been seeking higher duties on specific products such as automobiles and semiconductors, which are key exports for South Korea's trade-dependent economy.There are growing concerns in Seoul that Trump may also demand a broader deal requiring South Korea to pay significantly more for the

28,000 US troops stationed on the peninsula to deter North Korean threats.Lee has consistently urged patience



on tariffs, arguing that rushing to secure an early deal would not serve the national interest. His trade minister, Yeo Han-koo, was reportedly arranging a visit to Washington for possible meetings with US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer and Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick.

On North Korea, Lee said he would seek to restore long-dormant talks with Pyongyang, whose expanding military cooperation with Russia pose major security concerns to their neighbors. “I think we should improve relations with North Korea based on a reliable coordination and consultation between South Korea and the US,” Lee said. “But I expect that won’t be easy as mutual antagonism and distrust are too serious.” Lee previously faced criticism that he was tilting toward North Korea and China and away from the US and Japan. But since the election, Lee has repeatedly vowed pragmatic diplomacy, saying he would bolster the alliance with the US while also seeking to repair ties with North Korea, China and Russia. Some critics say it’s too difficult to satisfy all parties.



NEWS BOX

Maharashtra government withdraws amended bill to hike illegal tree felling fine

**Mumbai.** State govt on Wednesday withdrew an amendment proposing a 50-time hike in penalty for illegal felling of trees and not recognising the cutting of branches as an offence.Forest minister Ganesh Naik moved the motion to withdraw the bill to amend the Maharashtra Felling of Trees (Regulation) Act of 1964, which proposed to increase the penalty for illegal tree felling from Rs 1,000 to Rs 50,000, in the legislative assembly. Naik said state govt would speak to tree experts and a new bill would be introduced after a cabinet discussion on the issue.In 2024, govt had introduced the amendment bill to impose a hefty fine of Rs 50,000 on any person or party found guilty of felling trees without obtaining prior permission from the authorities concerned. Govt also got powers to forfeit the tools, vehicles, and materials used in felling and removing trees. The law was to extend to the whole of Maharashtra, excluding urban areas. However, environmentalists were sceptical about the enforcement of the rule."According to the current law, it is not that trees cannot be cut down, only permission has to be taken. So, why is the forest minister asking to withdraw this bill?" asked BJP MLA Sudhir Mungantiwar, who was state forest minister when the amendments were made in 2024. "Global warming is a worldwide phenomenon. Also, there is this kind of competition in every village to cut down trees," he pointed out. Naik replied in the assembly: "In this bill, even cutting branches is like cutting down a tree and attracts penalty...Even if farmers cut down a tree unknowingly, there was a fine of Rs 50,000. This bill is not being withdrawn to benefit someone.

Ahmedabad Municipal sign foretells road collapse, rain delivers

**Ahmedabad.** The civic body appears to have a newfound sense of precognition. Just below the Apparel Park metro station in Khokhra, a warning sign erected in mid-May by Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) foretold that the freshly dug road "may collapse in the future". True to the prophetic words, when the heavens finally opened on June 13 and continued the next day, the road did exactly that.This foresight comes as the city once again plunges into its annual rainy season ritual, which is, a test of patience, balance, and sheer luck for anyone attempting to navigate our city's roads.Despite the corporation reportedly splurging Rs 500 to Rs 600 crore annually on road repairs, residents are quick to point out that the results are "scant". From office-goers to students, from truck drivers to delivery agents, all find themselves battling swamped and slippery roads. Even for those in four-wheelers, the challenges are many. "You are dodging craters and constantly burning more fuel from repeatedly braking in the heavy traffic," lamented 33-year-old Mitesh Vyas, a banker from Memnagar. Newly resurfaced roads in Bopal-Ambli, Gurukul-Bhuyangdev road, Maninagar and one near Odhav flyover crumbled soon after the first few instances of showers."If it rains heavily, you can no longer see the potholes and end up damaging your vehicle or being involved in an accident.

Light to moderate rain in Chennai till July 8



**CHENNAI.** In what may come as a much needed respite from hot weather, Chennai and its surrounding areas are likely to receive light to moderate rains, especially during evening hours, for next one week.On Wednesday, some parts of the city received the first of these evening showers that lasted for around half an hour. The day time temperature will be around normal 36-37 degree Celsius. These rains are not monsoon-driven, but triggered by local factors and convective processes.Weather blogger Pradeep John said there will be short spells of rain likely in the evenings/nights for the next 10 days.

GHMC acts on TNIE report, clears Saroornagar nala

**HYDERABAD.** Following a report by TNIE on July 1 —titled Choked Saroornagar Nala Breeds Mosquitoes, Misery— which highlighted residents' concerns over the nala becoming a dumping ground for garbage and sewage, the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) promptly swung into action.Officials inspected the site and launched a cleaning drive to clear blockages, restore the smooth flow of water and address public health concerns.Civic activist Pratyush took to X to thank the civic body, posting: “Thanks to GHMC officials for finally cleaning the nala and removing all the garbage from the surroundings. We urge the authorities to conduct regular inspections and maintain sanitation.”

Held under ‘digital arrest’ for 15 days, 80-yr-old retired professional from Ahmedabad loses 86L

**Ahmedabad.** For nearly 15 days, an 80-year-old retired professional and his 78-year-old wife, lived under what police are calling a "digital arrest". Confined to their Ambawadi home and monitored by fraudsters through WhatsApp video calls, the elderly couple was coerced into transferring Rs 86.22 lakh to multiple bank accounts under the pretext f a govt audit. The victims were targeted by a well-orchestrated cyberfraud that began on June 4. According to the FIR filed with the Cybercrime police, the victim, Shashi\* (name changed) received a call from a woman identifying herself as Jhanvi Ahuja, allegedly a senior officer from the Cybercrime branch in Bandra, Mumbai. She claimed that a mobile number linked to Shashi's Aadhaar number had been used to send objectionable messages against the govt and a religious community. She then transferred the call to a man posing as a police officer named Mohan Kumar, who escalated the accusations.Kumar told Shashi that a man named Vivek Das, recently arrested in a money laundering case, had used the Aadhaar number to open a bank account through which Rs 3.8 crore had been transferred. He accused Shashi of having sold his Aadhaar-linked account for a commission

and warned that a custody warrant could be issued if he failed to cooperate.Soon after, Shashi received a fake police summons via WhatsApp, warning of detention unless an audit cleared his name. The fraudsters told him



that, due to his age, he could avoid arrest by following specific "investigation protocols" under the supervision of a govt-approved public prosecutor.From June 5 to June 27, the couple were placed under constant video surveillance. They were instructed not to leave their home or open the door without permission. They were asked to report their movements twice daily over WhatsApp.

Fearing arrest and worried about their safety, Shashi followed the instructions. Shashi was introduced to another fraudster posing as public prosecutor Deepak Venkataraman, who instructed him to prepare a financial inventory and transfer his assets to bank accounts supposedly designated for forensic auditing. Convinced that his freedom and reputation were at stake, Shashi broke his fixed deposits, took a gold loan, and over the course of 17 days, transferred a total of Rs 86.22 lakh to multiple accounts shared by the scammers on WhatsApp.Throughout this period, the couple received fake acknowledgements on forged letterheads bearing Supreme Court logos and anti-money laundering clearance stamps. The documents promised the return of the money after verification.The fraud unravelled when Shashi's chartered accountant visited the couple and immediately flagged the communications as fraudulent. A complaint was filed with the Cybercrime helpline, and a formal FIR under Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita sections for criminal conspiracy, cheating, and breach of trust against unknown persons was registered soon after.

Rs 306-crore nod for Kochi's Chellanam seawall phase II

Chellanam is one of the ten hotspots identified by the Irrigation Department as being most vulnerable to severe sea erosion.



**KOCHI.** The second phase of the tetrapod seawall project at Chellanam, costing Rs 306 crore, has received approval at a ministerial-level meeting held in Thiruvananthapuram. As previously planned, the remaining 3.6-km stretch of the seawall will now be constructed. The project will be implemented with funding from the Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board (KIIFB). Industries Minister P Rajeeve said the revised administrative sanction for the project will be issued this week itself.Approval

for the second phase was granted with special consideration to ensure coastal protection in the remaining vulnerable stretches of the Chellanam coast where the tetrapod structure has not yet been constructed. The first phase of the tetrapod seawall, extending 7.3 km, was completed in 2023 at a cost of Rs 347 crore. It was the first decision taken by the state cabinet after the current government assumed office. Aritificial Intelligence usesAritificial Intelligence The original plan proposed constructing 10km of

tetrapod seawall along with rubble barriers in two sections. However, based on revised construction costs and recommendations from an IIT report, the first phase was completed over a 7.3km stretch. The second phase will complete the remaining distance as per the initial plan, and prompt follow-up action will be taken. A detailed project report (DPR) worth Rs 306 crore has already been prepared, so only a revised administrative sanction is needed. KIIFB's financial approval is also expected soon.Chellanam is one of the ten hotspots identified by the Irrigation Department as being most vulnerable to severe sea erosion. At current construction rates, the state government is spending an average of Rs 100 crore for every kilometre of coastal protection, said Rajeeve. He also criticised the Union government's reluctance to spend even a single paisa on coastal protection, stressing the state's firm commitment to safeguarding affected regions.He said that it was the LDF government that brought long-awaited relief to Chellanam, which had been suffering from sea erosion threats for years. Rajeeve expressed gratitude to Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and Water Resources Minister Roshy Augustine for facilitating the approval of the second phase.

Kerala University V-C suspends registrar; on whose authority, asks minister

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM.**The political war between the state government and the Raj Bhavan took a turn for the worse on Wednesday with the Kerala University (KU) vice-chancellor suspending Registrar K S Anil Kumar for cancelling the June 25 event, hosted by a private organisation and attended by Governor Rajendra Arlekar, for displaying the controversial image of Bharat Mata carrying a saffron flag on the dais, at the Senate Hall. V-C Mohanan Kunnummal ordered Anil Kumar's suspension two days after he submitted a preliminary report, which was critical of the registrar, to Arlekar on the incident. Higher Education Minister R Bindu and the Left-dominated Syndicate questioned the legitimacy of the V-C's order, while Anil Kumar said he would take legal recourse.Mohanan suspended the registrar by invoking Section 10 (13) of the Kerala University Act that empowers the V-C to act on behalf of the Syndicate in urgent

situations when the apex body is not in session. In the suspension order, the V-C said disciplinary action was being taken against the registrar for his acts which were “prejudicial to the interests of the university”. P Harikumar, joint registrar (administration) has been given temporary charge of registrar.“The official has been suspended after it was found that he has shown disrespect to the governor and taken unilateral decisions by bowing to external pressure,” the V-C said, adding the mater would be reported in the next Syndicate meeting. “The Syndicate has been entrusted with conducting a detailed inquiry,” he said.Aritificial Intelligence usesAritificial Intelligence Maintaining he did not show any disrespect to the governor, Anil Kumar said he would move court against his suspension. He said he had ordered the cancellation of the event much before Arlekar arrived.Reacting sharply to the registrar's suspension, Bindu accused the V-

C of misusing his powers. “The Syndicate is the appointing authority of the registrar. The V-C can place the matter before the Syndicate, but he is not empowered to act on his own,” she said.Alleging that Kunnummal had been given charge of V-C in KU because of his “RSS links”, Bindu also took a dig at the governor. She said “some chancellors” were trying to vitiate the atmosphere in the state's education sector through their “saffronisation attempts” and added such moves would be dealt with appropriately.Left-backed Syndicate members rallied behind Anil Kumar and said he will continue to report for duty. Member G Muraledharan said only the Syndicate is empowered to take disciplinary action on officers above the rank of deputy registrar. “Section 10 (13) empowers the V-C to take decisions only in emergency situations. He has no right to use those powers in a matter that needs through examination and.

“Mumbai” spelt as “Mumabai”: MU imposes fine on contractor for spelling error in convocation certificates

The spelling mistake on the convocation certificates came to light earlier this year in January.

**Mumbai** Mumbai University (MU) has decided to impose a financial penalty on the contractor responsible for printing convocation certificates that mistakenly spelt “Mumbai” as “Mumabai” above the university logo. The decision, finalised at a recent Management Council (MC) meeting, mandates the contractor to pay either 20% of the total contract amount or ?10 lakh—whichever is higher. The move comes after an inquiry committee submitted its findings to the university, leading to the resolution. The university has already begun the process of recalling the erroneous certificates issued to the graduating batch of 2023-24 and reissuing of corrected ones.One of the MC member Sheetal Devrukhkar-Sheth from Yuva Sena, who was present for the meeting, said, “The varsity has fined the contractor, but there is no mention of who is responsible within the university.” Further questioning the varsity's silence on accountability of its own administration, she said, “Contractors will come and go, but officials responsible for overseeing

this must be held accountable for such grave errors.”As the MU's convocation ceremony was held on January 7, convocation certificates were subsequently dispatched to



affiliated colleges for its distribution to respective students. While some colleges held institution-level convocation ceremonies for the same, many just distributed it to graduating students.The spelling error was spotted after the certificates reached the colleges. While there were some colleges which returned the erroneous certificates to the varsity immediately after spotting the error, but a few had already distributed these certificates among students. Though university officials claim only 1,000 certificates were affected.

Door delivery of rations to aged, disabled begins in TN

According to official sources from the cooperation and food department, the door-to-door delivery project aims to cover cardholding families where the members are either below 18 years of age or 70 years and above.

**CHENNAI.** The Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Department on Wednesday commenced the pilot project for home-delivery of essential commodities—rice, sugar, wheat, palmolein oil, and toor dal — under the Public Distribution System (PDS) for senior citizens and persons with disabilities (PwDs) in Chennai and nine other districts.A minimum of 10 fair price shops across two taluks in each district have been selected for the pilot study of this initiative.Apart from Chennai, the other nine districts included in the first phase of the project are Tirunelveli, Sivaganga, Dindigul, Ranipet, Erode, Dharmapuri, Nagapattinam, the Nilgiris, and Cuddalore.On June 17, TNIE was the first to report on the government's decision to roll out the project across the state.According to official sources from the cooperation and food department, the door-to-door delivery project aims to cover cardholding families

where the members are either below 18 years of age or 70 years and above. Cardholding families where all the members fall in the disabled category will also be covered under the scheme, sources said.As part of the initiative, 10 ration shops in the southern zone of Chennai have been selected to serve around 650 ration cardholders.PDS home-delivery initiative to benefit 15L ration cardholdersThe selected areas are Velachery, Saidapet, Jaffarkhanpet, Nesapakkam, and surrounding regions. The commodities under the pilot drive will be delivered before July 5. The initiative, expected to be formally launched by Chief Minister M K Stalin in a week or two, will benefit 15 lakh of the total 2.21 crore ration cardholders across all 38 districts in the state.Aritificial Intelligence usesAritificial Intelligence usesThe pilot study is designed to identify and address challenges in implementing the initiative,



including transporting goods from ration shops to beneficiaries' homes, number of houses to be covered per day, functionality of biometric and iris scanners, and public participation in the scheme.On Wednesday, a minivan from a fair price shop in Velachery taluk loaded with PDS goods entered the residential areas near 100 Feet Road in Velachery along with officials from the civil supplies department and staff. The van was equipped with a weighing scale, a point-of-

sale (PoS) machine, and the commodities.For those unable to authenticate using biometrics, iris scanners will be used as an alternative. The ration shop employees weighed the rice and sugar in front of the beneficiaries and delivered the items to them. During the delivery in Saidapet, several residents gathered in front of the vehicles requesting commodities.Particularly, those aged above 60 requested the staff to handover the entitlements during distribution. Similarly, in Velachery, a few elderly women who have three to four members in their ration cards said that they are the ones who usually visit fair price shops to purchase commodities and requested that the home-delivery be extended to them as well. However, officials clarified that the service is limited to select ration cardholders only.S Velavan (72), a resident of Velachery.



## Return of good vs bad terrorists

Amid an exaggerated obsession with a return to hyphenation between New Delhi and Islamabad by the international community, India is dangerously unconcerned about the resurgence of an existential threat to its national security. The so-called 12-day war between Israel and Iran—as indeed other global events following the return of Donald Trump to the White House—has revived the idea of ‘good terrorists vs bad terrorists’ in international strategies and diplomacy. It is a menacing idea that the US promoted in South Asia and the Arab world for more than three decades until Trump first became US president in 2017. India paid a big price for it as the country that suffered most from terrorism in those decades. Now the spectre is back. But New Delhi’s response so far has been to ignore it, hoping it will go away by pretending that the threat does not exist. The Trump administration knows very well that Pakistan is a state sponsor of terrorism. But in choosing to ignore it and inviting the patron saint of such terrorism today, Field Marshal Asim Munir, to the White House, the US is glorifying him as a good terrorist. Similarly, Trump has lifted sanctions against Syria although the country’s new regime is headed by a man who is a terrorist now in a pacifist avatar. The new Syrian regime has been engaged in genocide of Christians and the Alawaite minority. They have kidnapped scores of women from Damascus. But, for the US and the European Union, President Ahmed al Sharaa is now a good terrorist. I first heard the term ‘good terrorists vs bad terrorists’ from Frank Wisner II, who was US ambassador to India and later a lobbyist for the Indian embassy in Washington. I was present during a conversation between Wisner and J N Dixit a few months after the latter had retired as foreign secretary, where the ambassador told Dixit in so many words that Pakistanis were “good terrorists” because they had consistently supported US interests in South and Central Asia. Dixit, a veteran of Pakistan and Afghanistan affairs, challenged Wisner and told him that he was promoting a treacherous idea, a sort of double-edged sword. The ambassador said this had been American policy and would remain so. Artificial Intelligence uses Artificial Intelligence uses In a haunting twist of irony, Iran’s ambassador to India when Dixit was foreign secretary had lobbied for a similar approach to terrorism. In an enlightening sub-section on Iran in Hamid Ansari’s autobiography, By Many a Happy Accident: Recollections of a Life, the former vice president recalls the deep suspicions which India and Iran harboured against one another when he arrived in Tehran as ambassador in 1990. Such was the trust deficit that even functionaries in the supreme leader’s office in Qom were refused visas to visit India. The conversation between Dixit and Iran’s then ambassador in New Delhi, Alireza Sheikhattar, took place after Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao had successfully pushed through his pet policy of disentangling Iran from Pakistan’s vice-like grip. Dixit’s visit to Tehran in 1992 was a turning point in bilateral relations and made Iran a trustworthy friend of India until Rao’s successors, Manmohan Singh and Narendra Modi, pushed Iran back into Pakistan’s embrace. Words and actions by Iran and Pakistan during and after the Israel-US attacks on Iran’s nuclear facilities make it clear that Tehran is back in Islamabad’s embrace. The clock has been turned back to pre-1992 years. Sheikhhattar told Dixit that given enough latitude within India, his country, as the fountainhead of Shia faith, could wean away Shias in Kashmir from taking the path of secession and violence against New Delhi’s interests. Iran could also be a benign influence on Shias elsewhere in India, such as Uttar Pradesh.

## Iron out flaws in new criminal laws

The application of Section 152 of the BNS, criminalising acts endangering sovereignty, unity and integrity of India, has been a subject of controversy.

THE new criminal laws (NCLs) came into force on July 1, 2024, with the hope that the criminal justice system (CJS) of British vintage would transform into a people-centric, progressive and potent institution to deliver justice (Nyaya) and guarantee security (Suraksha) to the people (Nagarik). Though one year in the life of a statute is not enough to draw a conclusion about its success or failure in meeting people’s expectations, it is vital to take note of the early warning signs. Before the rollout of the NCLs, many law professionals expressed apprehension about their workability and adoptability. It is commendable that all wings of the CJS have made the transition from the old laws to the new ones without noticeable problems from the outset. Throughout the country, first information reports (FIRs) are being registered and investigated as per the new laws. This became possible thanks to the massive training campaign that was planned by the Ministry of Home Affairs and executed zealously by various stakeholders. Even law colleges have adopted the changes in the academic curriculum without much difficulty. Strengthening and according highest priority to the provisions relating to safety and protection of women and children are among the key features of the new penal law. They are being put to use in right earnest. Rationalisation of punishment, keeping in view the nature and gravity of the offences, was a much-awaited exercise; its impact would be visible in due course.

Concern for sovereignty, unity and integrity of India is of paramount importance and it is singularly exhibited in Section 48 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023, which provides for the registration of cases against anti-national elements abetting crimes in India while operating from abroad. The trial in such cases — and those against proclaimed offenders — can be held in absentia as per Section 356 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023.

It is, however, a harsh reality that these sections remain underutilised against terrorists and gangsters who make ransom calls and incite terrorism in India from foreign lands. At the same time, the application of Section 152 of the BNS, criminalising acts endangering sovereignty, unity and integrity of India, has been a subject of controversy. It has come under scrutiny of the Supreme Court for its alleged misuse to curb freedom of expression. Since the NCLs provide for digitalisation of criminal investigations and mandatory use of forensic tools to bring in transparency, large-scale computerisation is the need of the hour. It is regrettable that progress on this front is not only slow but also suffers from lack of technical knowhow. Most of the states are not able to generate sufficient financial resources to purchase hardware and software required for scientific and digital investigations. The Central Government has launched several schemes to provide financial assistance to the states, including ‘Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Children’, setting up of cyber forensic-cum-training laboratories and ‘Assistance to States & UTs for



Modernisation of Police’. It is up to the states to use these schemes for resource augmentation and capacity-building. Recruiting an adequate number of cyber-literate and digitally trained manpower to transform the traditional lathi-wielding constabulary into a tech-savvy police force is a big challenge due to financial crunch and reluctance on the part of political masters. Hitherto, the police department is the main source of employment for less-educated rural youth, and any change in the recruitment policy is going to meet stiff resistance from legislators. Framing of new rules and protocols and the software required to interlink the functioning of the constituents of the CJS, which are essential to make the NCLs fully operational, are still in a nascent stage. It is a monumental task which cannot be undertaken without reviewing and tweaking the Rules of Business of the Home Department, Rules and Orders of high courts, Police Rules, Prison Manuals and the charter of duties of the prosecution agency. It would require the meeting of minds of all stakeholders to finalise these regulations under a unified command. Tinkering with the existing rules by various wings of the CJS to fit them into the new mould would not suffice as they are bound to come in

conflict with operational demands of other domain areas. While introducing the NCLs, it was declared that these laws were people-centric and justice-oriented, especially for the victims of crimes. Concepts like witness protection, victim compensation and the right to active participation of victims in investigation and prosecution proceedings were introduced. However, the practicability and utility of these provisions is yet to be tested for want of application in most of the jurisdictions. The plight of victims of cyber frauds and digital arrests is visible in the failure to recover their money, with no immediate solution in sight. The NCLs envisaged speedy justice as timelines for some of the proceedings in courts were fixed; these limits are hardly adhered to, being advisory in nature. Speedy justice would remain a distant dream unless the number of courts are increased manifold and procedures simplified to address core issues responsible for delays. Some confident steps have been taken in the right direction. Normally, it takes decades for a law to mature and find its purposeful application. It’s time to undertake a review of the NCLs to rectify drafting mistakes, iron out faultlines and address emergent public concerns with an open mind to enhance the utility of these laws.

## Welcome push to make insurance more accessible

**A recent survey showed that health insurance premiums have soared 73 percent since 2020, while medical inflation has averaged a whopping 14 percent a year. The steep rise in premiums from pre-Covid levels and rising rejection rates have pushed a larger section of consumers to opt out of coverage altogether**

Insurance provides a safety net against some of life’s known unknowns as well as unknown unknowns. Though it is seen as a necessity in the developed world, India has been struggling to make this cover widely accessible. The top reasons are astronomical premiums and a complex claims process with a high rejection rate. In this context, it is commendable that the government has been pushing the industry oversight body, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDAI), to rein in skyrocketing premiums and speed up claims settlement. In the health insurance segment, premiums have spiked as much as 15 percent in recent months. Meanwhile, government data shows the country’s insurance penetration—the share of total premiums to GDP—edged down to 4 percent in 2022-23 from 4.2 percent in 2021-22.

Artificial Intelligence uses Artificial Intelligence uses The concerns were recently reiterated by the Union financial services secretary, M Nagaraju, who reminded insurers: “There is a need to curb mis-selling and ensure



premiums are low so that coverage can increase.” He underlined that quick settlement of claims is critical to restore faith in insurance products. A recent survey showed that health insurance premiums have soared 73 percent since 2020, while medical inflation has averaged

a whopping 14 percent a year. The steep rise in premiums from pre-Covid levels and rising rejection rates have pushed a larger section of consumers to opt out of coverage altogether. An IRDAI report concedes that 11 percent of health insurance claims are usually denied, while 6 percent are kept pending for long. Apart from rejections, as many as half of all policy holders face issues such as partial approvals or delays while settling claims. To set things in order, the IRDAI needs to be well staffed and review the board decisions of insurers as a matter of routine. That things have been adrift is apparent from the fact that the regulator has been without a chairperson since this March. There is also the longstanding demand for the GST Council to waive the substantial 18 percent tax on premiums. Waiving GST for all health insurance products would be a good start towards greater affordability and broader coverage. It is high time the government removed at least some of the many hurdles in the path of this critical industry.

## A decade of Digital India now a people’s movement, central to self-reliance

**When the intent is right, innovation empowers the less empowered. When the approach is inclusive, technology changes the lives of those on the margins.**

Ten, we embarked on a bold journey into uncharted territory with great conviction. While decades were spent doubting the ability of Indians to use technology, we changed that approach and trusted their ability to use technology. While decades were spent thinking that using technology would deepen the gap between the haves and the have-nots, we changed this mindset and used technology to eliminate the gap. When the intent is right, innovation empowers the less empowered. When the approach is inclusive, technology changes the lives of those on the margins. This belief laid the foundation for Digital India: a mission to democratise access, build an inclusive digital infrastructure, and provide opportunities for all. In 2014, internet penetration was limited, digital literacy was low, and online access to government services was scarce. Many doubted whether a country as vast and diverse as India could truly go digital. Today, that question has been answered not just in data and dashboards, but in the lives of 140 crore Indians. From how we govern, to how we learn, transact, and build, Digital India is everywhere. **Bridging the Digital Divide** In 2014, India had around 25 crore internet connections. Today, that number has grown to over 97 crores. Over 42 lakh kilometres of Optical Fibre Cable, equivalent to 11 times the distance between Earth and the Moon, now connects even the most remote villages. India’s 5G rollout is among the fastest in the world, with 4.81 lakh base stations installed in just two years. High-speed internet now

reaches urban hubs and forward military posts alike, including Galwan, Siachen, and Ladakh. Artificial Intelligence uses Artificial Intelligence uses India Stack, our digital backbone, has enabled platforms like UPI, which now handles 100+ billion transactions a year. Around half of all real-time digital transactions happen in India. Through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), over Rs 44 lakh crore has been transferred directly to citizens, cutting out intermediaries and saving Rs 3.48 lakh crore in leakages. Schemes like SVAMITVA have issued over 2.4 crore property cards and mapped 6.47 lakh villages, thereby ending years of land-related uncertainty.

### **Democratising Opportunity for All**

India’s digital economy is empowering MSMEs and small entrepreneurs like never before. ONDC (Open Network for Digital Commerce) is a revolutionary platform which opens a new window of opportunities by providing a seamless connection with a huge market of buyers and sellers. GeM (Government e-Marketplace) enables ordinary people to sell goods and services to all arms of the Government. It not only empowers them with a vast market but also saves money for the Government. Imagine this: You apply for a Mudra loan online. Your creditworthiness is assessed through an account aggregator framework. You get your loan and start your venture. You register on GeM, supply to schools and hospitals, and then scale up via ONDC. ONDC recently crossed 200 million transactions, with the last 100 million in just six months. From

Banarasi weavers to bamboo artisans in Nagaland, sellers are now reaching customers nationwide, without go-betweens or digital monopolies. GeM has also crossed Rs 1 lakh crore GMV in 50 days, with 22 lakh sellers, including more than 1.8 lakh women-led MSMEs, fulfilling orders worth Rs 46,000 crore. Digital Public Infrastructure:



India’s Global Offering India’s Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) from Aadhaar, CoWIN, DigiLocker, and FASTag to PM-WANI and One Nation One Subscription is now being studied and adopted globally. CoWIN enabled the world’s largest vaccination drive, issuing 220 crore QR-verifiable certificates. DigiLocker, with 54 crore users, securely and seamlessly hosts over 775 crore documents. Through our G20 Presidency, India launched the Global DPI Repository and a \$25

million Social Impact Fund, helping nations across Africa and South Asia adopt inclusive digital ecosystems.

### **Startup Power Meets Aatmanirbhar Bharat**

India now ranks among the top 3 startup ecosystems in the world, with over 1.8 lakh startups. But this is more than a startup movement; it is a tech renaissance. India is doing extremely well in terms of AI skill penetration and AI talent concentration among our youth. Through the \$1.2 billion India AI Mission, India has enabled access to 34,000 GPUs at globally unmatched prices of under \$1 per GPU hour, making India not just the most affordable internet economy but also the most affordable computer destination. India has championed humanity-first AI. The New Delhi Declaration on AI promotes innovation with responsibility. We are establishing AI Centres of Excellence across the country. The Road Ahead The next decade will be even more transformative. We are moving from digital governance to global digital leadership, from India-first to India-for-the-world. Digital India has not remained a mere government program; it has become a people’s movement. It is central to building an Aatmanirbhar Bharat and making India a trusted innovation partner to the world. To all innovators, entrepreneurs, and dreamers: the world is looking at India for the next digital breakthrough.



# Kanwar yatra: Cops to set up control rooms and divert traffic on key routes

**Ghaziabad.** Ahead of the upcoming kanwar yatra, senior police officers from Ghaziabad, Delhi, Noida, Hapur, Baghpat, and Bulandshahr conducted a coordination meeting in the city on Wednesday to discuss issues of traffic and law and order. The yatra will begin on July 11 and end on Aug 9, and sawan shivratri will be observed on July 23. Several lakh devotees from the state and Delhi-NCR are expected to travel to Haridwar during this period. A senior police officer said that key points affecting law and order and route diversions on major routes were presented via PPT during the yatra at the meeting. "Information about alternative routes for light and external vehicles was shared, considering the movement of kanwariyas on major routes. A plan of action was discussed to handle any emergency situations during the kanwar yatra. Instructions were given to conduct the kanwar yatra through traditional routes. For better communication, 3 control rooms, 1 traffic control room, and 12 sub-control rooms will be established



in Ghaziabad," the officer said. ACP (traffic) Ziauddin Ahmad also announced plans to establish a WhatsApp group comprising senior gazetted police officers from neighbouring districts, including Delhi, Ghaziabad, Noida, and

other areas, to facilitate swift decision-making regarding necessary actions at border areas and ensure effective management of traffic and law and order situations. "At all border areas, the police from both districts will be present, and if

they need extra manpower, other district police will help each other without wasting time. To implement this decision on the ground, a nodal officer will also be present at the border," the ACP said. Around 2,000 police personnel will be deployed in the district exclusively for kanwar duty, he added. Senior police officials from Hapur and Bulandshahr expressed apprehension regarding pilgrims who continue their journey to Chota Haridwar in Muradnagar and Haridwar after Shivratri. They have requested assistance from Ghaziabad police force post-Shivratri to ensure the safe passage of pilgrims through their respective district territories.

Soon, Ghaziabad traffic police will announce the traffic diversion plan for the Kanwar. Signage boards with symbols will be installed to inform about vehicle diversions. "Diversion of heavy vehicles will start on July 11, and the diversion of light vehicles will start on July 16," the ACP said.

## Driven by new policy, liquor revenue sees 35% rise in Q1

**Noida.** Liquor revenue in the city jumped by 35% in the first quarter of 2025-26 compared to the same period last year. The city recorded Rs 625 crore in liquor revenue from April to June 2025, compared to Rs 462 crore during the same period in 2024-25. According to excise department data, the revenue in the first quarter of 2023-24 was Rs 430 crore, showing a 7% growth between 2023-24 and 2024-25 and a much larger jump this year. The sharp rise is attributed to the new liquor policy in the state, which made significant structural changes to the retail and licensing system. The month-wise revenue shows a steady rise across all three months. In April 2025, revenue was Rs 210 crore, followed by Rs 211 crore in May and Rs 204 crore in June. In comparison, April 2024 recorded Rs 135 crore, May Rs 168 crore and June Rs 159 crore, indicating a significant year-on-year rise across each month. The first quarter also saw substantial liquor consumption in the city. Around 21 lakh litres of country liquor were sold, along with 49 lakh bottles of Indian Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL), roughly 37 lakh litres. Additionally, over 2.14 crore beer cans were sold, which is approximately 4.30 crore litres of beer consumed in just three months.

District excise officer (Noida) Subodh Kumar said the new features introduced in the UP liquor policy played a major role in increasing revenue. "One of the key reforms was the introduction of composite shops, where both beer and IMFL can now be sold together. This increased convenience for both vendors and customers," Kumar told TOI.

He said the licensing process was made completely online, making it easier for vendors to obtain permissions and renewals without delays. "Another important step was mandating the sale of liquor through point of sale (POS) machines. The govt has also actively encouraged online billing, which ensured better tracking and helped increase revenue," said Kumar.

Officials said that the city's growing population, rising urban demand, and the wider availability of liquor under the new policy framework all contributed to the growth trend.

## 4 Gurgaon realtors fined Rs 5 crore for illegal groundwater extraction, borewells sealed after NGT order

**Gurgaon.** Four realtors in the city were fined Rs 5 crore by Haryana Water Resources Authority (HWRA) for unauthorised groundwater extraction following an order by NGT.

Borewells and sump wells at these project sites, which are located in sectors 102, 103 and 37D, were also sealed, stated an inquiry report filed by HWRA chairperson Keshni Anand Arora to NGT. The case stems from a plea initiated in NGT in 2023 over groundwater violations in the city. A joint committee of NGT submitted its report confirming the violations in Nov 2023. "We imposed a Rs 5 crore penalty on four real estate projects in the city. Earlier, we had submitted a report on the violations to NGT," a senior HWRA official told TOI. However, during a hearing in April this year, an NGT bench headed by Justice Prakash Shrivastava criticised the delay in enforcement by state authorities. "The latest reply, dated April 22, 2025, filed by the CEO, HWRA,

only mentions that show-cause notices and a reminder notice were issued to the realtors," the tribunal noted, adding that to ascertain if the borewells existed with due permission, only the document granting permission was required to be verified.



The tribunal raised concerns over why such a basic verification exercise had taken over a year to complete and directed HWRA to identify those responsible for the delay. Arora, who holds the rank of additional chief secretary in Haryana govt, was assigned the task of identifying the

officials responsible for these oversights.

HWRA's inquiry found that one of the project sites denied carrying out dewatering activities, but inspections revealed seven functional tubewells and confirmed the use of groundwater within the premises. Despite being issued 12 reminders online and 17 in writing, the realtor did not obtain the required no objection certificate (NOC). Another site, which submitted an application for dewatering permission in Nov 2023, lacked a mandatory impact assessment report, which is essential for evaluating environmental implications and planning the safe disposal of extracted water. Inspections at the third project uncovered several tube wells, including two located outside the main complex, which were later sealed. In a separate case, the project proponent failed to appear for any of the HWRA's scheduled hearings, and their application for NOC is still pending.

## Boards to graduation: Gang that made fake marksheets busted, 2 held, 60 documents seized

**Noida.** They would get marksheets from different universities from Google. Their customers used the fake marksheets for all sorts of things, including jobs. Price tags for doctored certificates stood at anything between Rs 80,000 and Rs 2 lakh. On Tuesday, Abhimanyu Gupta (40) and Dharmendra Gupta (42) ran out of luck when they were arrested by police on charges of making and selling fake marksheets on demand. Police received an input a few days ago that a gang making fake marksheets was active in the area. After this, a team conducted a recce and kept an eye on the kingpins of the gang.

DCP Yamuna Prasad said the station in-charge sent a policeman to get the marksheets made. He talked to the kingpin about getting the BSc marksheets for which the deal was fixed for Rs 66,000. After that, police caught both of them on

the spot. "The accused — both hailing from Kanpur Nagar and currently residing in Sector 39 — have been operating the racket for at least four years. They would get marksheets from different universities from Google and doctor the certificate with information of unemployed people, people who failed in exams and those who crossed the age limit for employment," the DCP said. Additional DCP Sumit Kumar Shukla said the accused used to lure students who failed in CBSE, UP or any other board and university examination. "The customers use the fake marksheets to get jobs or other benefits, and in return, the accused get Rs 80,000 to Rs 2 lakh," Shukla added. Station house officer Amit Kumar Maan said the suspects rented the first floor of a four-storey house in Sector 1 and employed some young men and

women at salaries of Rs 10,000-12,000 to call and lure people. It is suspected some more people may be involved, the SHO said.

Maan said a case has been registered at the police station under sections 318(4) (cheating), 338 (Forgery of valuable security, will, etc.), 336(3) (forgery), 340(2) (Forged document or electronic record and using it as genuine), and 3(5) (joint liability) of the BNS. Over 60 fake marksheets, migration certificates, laptops and cheque books were seized from the duo, holding BA degrees, ACP Swatantra Kumar Singh said. "Police have also recovered 14 plain examination papers, seven mobile phones, 22 CVs and other documents. Both the accused owned luxury cars and two flats each in different parts of Noida. We have seized the cars of the accused," the officer said.

## 4 zones, 4 cos: MCG tweaks doorstep waste pickup plan in Gurgaon

**Gurgaon.** MCG has modified its plan for engaging door-to-door waste collection agencies for the third time. According to the latest plan, MCG will now engage four separate companies, allocating one for each zone. Officials said they would ensure the tender is distributed among four distinct agencies. Though this has led to a delay in appointing a specialised agency in the city — which is sectioned into four zones — officials say the decentralised operation will foster "a healthy competition." An MCG official said, "The distribution of waste collection responsibilities among four distinct agencies across different city zones will lead to a decentralised operation. The allocation restricts each agency to a single zone, preventing multiple zone assignments." "This arrangement fosters healthy competition among the service providers. These considerations prompted the modification of the original proposal. This structure prevents any single agency from establishing a monopoly," the official added.

Initially, MCG proposed to engage two agencies for the city, followed by a second proposal suggesting three agencies for the city to ensure efficient delivery and



operation of civic services throughout the city. MCG's contract with the city's door-to-door waste collection agency expired on June 15. The agency was hired for a year in June last year after the MCG terminated its contract with the previous solid waste management concessionaire. Councillor of Ward Number 4 Pardeep Kumar Padam said, "I receive complaints

every day accompanied by photographs showing that household waste collection has not been done for five consecutive days. During my recent meeting with MCG officials regarding this issue, they informed me about deploying vehicles as a stop-gap arrangement. However, upon contacting the agency, the contractor revealed that they haven't yet received the

contract. This has developed into a significant issue that MCG needs to resolve without delay." TOI reported on June 8 that secretary and commissioner of urban local bodies (ULB) department Vikas Gupta approved a proposal to hire 400 light commercial vehicles (LCVs) through a seven-day short-term tender. The plan involved deploying 100 vehicles in each of the city's four zones for six months, or until the new model request for proposal (RFP) to hire an agency becomes operational. The ULB department recently revised its waste management tender guidelines across municipal corporations in the state. The new framework has reduced the contract period from seven to five years, with a possible two-year extension based on performance.

It was on June 23 that MCG constituted a cell to supervise sanitation-related work in the city. The cell will monitor door-to-door waste collection, road sweeping, management of legacy waste at Bandhwari landfill site and handling of construction and demolition (C&D) waste. Additional commissioner Ravinder Yadav was designated as the cell's nodal officer to oversee operations.

### News box

## 4-year-old crossing road with mother dies as tempo hits them in Faridabad

**Faridabad.** A tempo traveller ran over a four-year-old child, resulting in his death and injuring his mother. The incident occurred near a petrol pump in Sector 3 on the Faridabad-Ballabgarh road, the police said. The deceased, identified as Marin, and her mother, Tanya (26), were residents of Naher Singh colony.

Tanya had stepped out for some work and was returning home at the time of the accident. According to police, she was crossing the road near Jaat Bhawan in Sector 3 along with her son when the tempo knocked them down. Eyewitnesses said the driver appeared to be under the influence of alcohol, which may have caused the accident. "The impact of the collision flung both mother and child onto the road. Bystanders rushed to their help and took them to a nearby private hospital, where doctors declared the child dead," a police officer said.

Tanya remains in a critical condition and is undergoing treatment. Following the crash, the tempo lost control and crashed into a grill opposite the nearby petrol pump. Locals managed to catch the driver, identified as Pradeep (37), who purportedly tried to flee. Police said the crowd beat him before handing him over. Sector 3 police post in-charge Satish Kumar stated that an FIR has been registered based on the family's complaint under sections 106 (death by negligence) and 281 (rash driving). "The matter is under investigation," the officer added.

## 3 more govt schools in race for PM Shri tag in Gurgaon

**Gurgaon.** Three senior secondary schools in the district were recommended for the PM Shri (Prime Minister Schools for Rising India) status under the third phase of the scheme. The district education department shortlisted three schools out of 18 applicants and forwarded their names to the state headquarters for final approval. The selected schools include Govt Senior Secondary School, Kankrola, Govt Boys Senior Secondary School, Manesar, and Government Girls Senior Secondary School, Heli Mandi. According to officials, most of the 18 govt schools that applied did not meet the essential



PM Shri criteria including the required fire no objection certificates, approved building plans, equipped libraries, science labs, and playgrounds. Only three schools were found eligible after a district-level committee review, which included the district project coordinator, assistant project coordinator, district education officer and district elementary education officer. The schools will work on a five-year development programme and each of them will get funds of around Rs 1 crore every year to implement the same.

## 3 held for violence during demolition drive in Anangpur in Faridabad

**Faridabad.** Three people, who allegedly incited a mob and attacked govt officials during an anti-encroachment drive in the city's Anangpur area on Tuesday, have been arrested. The arrest comes a day after the incident that took place during a demolition operation by the forest department at Kant Enclave. A police officer said, "As officials carried out the demolition, a mob began pelting stones at the demolition team and other staff members, causing injuries and disrupting govt work. Several official vehicles were also damaged during the attack."

Assistant town planner and duty magistrate Hitesh filed a complaint based on which a case was registered at Surajkund police station under sections 121 (1) (voluntarily causing hurt), 132 (assault or criminal force to deter public servant from discharge of his duty), 190 (unlawful assembly), 191(2) (rioting), 221 (obstructing public servant in discharge of duty), 222 (3a) (omission to assist public servant when bound by law to give assistance) and 324 (4) (mischief).

Police spokesperson Yashpal (ASI) said the three accused who were held include Rajbir (65) and Naveen (28), both residents of Anangpur, and Rajiv (38), a resident of Nachauli, Faridabad. Initial interrogation revealed that when the demolition squad reached Rajbir's property at Kant Enclave, his nephew Naveen allegedly on the pretext of clearing out belongings summoned some of his associates, including Rajiv, a practising lawyer.

## UP to showcase its power as an 'Expressway State' . . . .

Contd. ....page-3

UPEIDA's exhibition stall will be equipped with state-of-the-art digital technologies and immersive experiences. It will feature two conference rooms, a store room, and a pantry. Visitors will be welcomed with interactive elements, including 3D modelling, virtual reality, anamorphic displays, immersive projection mapping, and real-time simulations. The stall will also showcase defence sector prototypes such as tanks, missiles, and aircraft via 3D dummies. Aesthetic elements will include wooden plywood flooring, needle-punch carpeting, PVC vinyl façade work, backlit boxes, and waterproof, well-ventilated infrastructure. Four-seater meeting tables, high-end furniture, LED screens, and digital standees will support B2B and B2C engagements, while an interactive table will provide real-time information about all ongoing UPEIDA projects. With this ambitious and forward-looking presentation, UPEIDA-2025 is poised to reaffirm Uttar Pradesh's emergence as a national leader in infrastructure and industrial growth, and a promising destination for global investment.



# How Delhi Police constable posed as ‘decoy customer’, caught man with Rs 60,000 counterfeit currency in 2018

**Mohammed Hussain, who was arrested in October 2018, was convicted of dealing in counterfeit currency this year.**

**Agency New Delhi.**

This month, a Delhi court is set to sentence a man convicted of dealing in counterfeit currency. However, the series of events that led to the man’s arrest was set into motion on a chilly afternoon on October 16, 2018, when a secret informer arrived at the office of the Anti-Auto Theft Squad (AATS) in Delhi’s Shahdara with a vital piece of information, as per court records.

The informer told Constable Manu that a man named Mohammed Hussain was selling counterfeit currency at the service road near the Cross River Mall in Shahdara. This tip-off led the police to believe that Hussain had been circulating and trafficking fake Indian currency notes (FICNs). The information was conveyed to Inspector Sanjay Sharma, the AATS in-charge, and a raiding team of five police officials was formed to bust Hussain’s network. According to court records, Head Constable Giriraj posed as Yakoob, a decoy customer, and stood near the location where the informer had said he had seen Hussain. Giriraj then saw Hussain and went to strike a deal with



him. For two genuine Rs 500 notes, he was given counterfeit currency worth Rs 2,000 by Hussain.

At close to 5 pm, Giriraj waved his hand—a predetermined signal decided by the raiding team—and the others closed in and apprehended Hussain within minutes. While conducting a search of the accused, the police found 29 fake Rs 2,000 notes from his right pant pocket. The recovered currency was sent to the Forensic Science Laboratory, Rohini, and after

the results showed that the currency was fake, a chargesheet was filed on January 11, 2019, as per court records.

Six and a half years later, a Delhi court convicted Hussain under Section 489B of the Indian Penal Code (using as genuine, forged or counterfeit currency-notes or bank-notes).

It is highly improbable that without any rhyme or reason for the police to pick only accused Mohd. Hussain and plant FICNs upon him... Moreover, in view of the unbreached testimonies of the witnesses available on record, the plea of accused regarding his false implication is without any basis,”

Additional Sessions Judge Hardeep Kaur of Patiala House Court noted in her order dated May 30. The counsel for Hussain had argued that the accused belonged to a poor strata of society and had been falsely implicated in the case. He argued that the money had been planted by the Delhi Police. The defence lawyer had also argued that no CCTV footage of the incident had been collected and no public witnesses had joined the investigation.

## Delhi Police nab staff and 3 others, including 2 minors, for robbing hotel in Kirti Nagar

**Agency New Delhi.**

The Delhi Police Wednesday arrested two men and apprehended two minors, including the staff, hours after they allegedly robbed a hotel in the Capital’s Kirti Nagar area. According to the police, Prince Kumar, the night manager at Hotel Dev Place, lodged a complaint stating that two masked men entered the hotel at around 3 am, threatened him with a knife, and overpowered him. Kumar told the police that the two men then fled with Rs 83,000 in cash and a mobile phone from the reception counter. However, the police said that during the preliminary investigation and local inquiry, when the team analysed CCTV footage, it noticed Kumar was behaving in an unusual manner.

“It was observed that the complainant, Prince Kumar, was deleting data from his social media accounts on his phone. When questioned about this, he failed to provide a satisfactory explanation. From the outset, the complainant’s behaviour appeared suspicious and unusual. The large amount of cash at the hotel reception counter, considering the hotel’s profile, suggested possible insider involvement,” said Sukant S Ballabh, Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (West)

The police said Kumar allegedly broke down under sustained interrogation, and confessed to being the mastermind behind the robbery. He said during a previous stint in jail, he had developed a friendship with Ram Kumar Yadav, another accused with a history of robbery. After their release on bail, both remained in contact and conspired to commit the robbery to make quick money, said the police.

The police stated that Kumar accumulated cash at the reception over a few days, as per their plan, and informed Yadav, who arrived at the hotel with two boys on a stolen motorcycle. While one of the boys waited outside, Yadav and the second minor entered the hotel, threatened Kumar with a knife, and robbed the money. A third minor, a hotel worker, was also involved and lured into the plan by Kuamr with the promise of a share in the loot, said the police.

## Delhi consumer court orders hair transplant clinic to pay Rs 6.3 lakh to man who saw ‘not even 1% improvement’



**Agency New Delhi.**

The New Delhi District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission recently directed a hair transplant clinic to pay Rs 6.3 lakh compensation to a client after finding it guilty of negligence in providing service. The Commission also noted that DHI Asian Roots was operating without a government licence to perform modern hair transplant procedures.

The complainant, Vivek Kumar, approached the DHI Asian Roots clinic in Safdarjung Enclave in 2012 before his marriage to treat baldness and paid Rs 5 lakh. He alleged before the Commission that he was promised results after 12 months, but even after three sittings, he could not notice “even 1 per cent improvement” with his receding hairline. He filed a complaint with the Commission in December 2023.

The Commission’s order, dated May 22, which followed an 11-year legal battle, directed DHI Asian Roots to refund Rs 5 lakh to Kumar, along with Rs 1 lakh for mental harassment and Rs 30,000 for litigation costs.

## Rescued from ‘unhygienic’ old age home, senior citizens land at govt shelter housing 106 residents in 13 rooms

**Agency New Delhi.**

One housing eight to 10 senior citizens in a cramped room, and another home to members of the upper middle class, who can pay a “donation” of Rs 2.5 lakh upfront to find a seat at the shelter. Both old age homes have recently come to the limelight due to a viral video—showing an elderly woman tied up inside a room—that led to a surprise inspection by officials of the Uttar Pradesh State Commission for Women and the state’s Social Welfare department at Anand Niketan Vridha Ashram in Noida’s Sector 55 last Thursday.

The inspection led to three residents—allegedly found in “unhygienic conditions”—of the privately-run home being shifted to a government-run shelter at Dankaur village. The same day, two of the rescued residents were taken away by their families from the Dankaur shelter, where 106 elderly men and women stay in 13 rooms.

The two shelters, both set up with an aim to aid abandoned senior citizens, are worlds apart when it comes to the facilities they offer.

An hour away from Noida’s high-rises and past the Yamuna Expressway toll booth, the landscape shifts dramatically in Dankaur village. Here, the old age home operates out of a rented building that, locals said, once served as a school. A single glance is enough to sense the neglect. The walls are unplastered, the main entrance door and adjacent window panes are missing—the shattered glass is patched over with plywood. Inside, the common toilet reeks, with its metal doors half-broken and urine pooling on the floor. Brick urinals stand in the open. In the dining hall, soiled red plywood tables attract bees. Rainwater has seeped in through parts of the unfinished roof, with moss creeping into corners where dampness has taken root.

## Barapullah flyover phase 3 project: Got nod to fell trees, work will start soon, says PWD



**Agency New Delhi.**

The last hurdle in the way of completion of the long-delayed Barapullah Phase 3 flyover has now been cleared with the Public Works Department (PWD) receiving permission from the Central Empowered Committee (CEC) to fell 250 trees that are required for the project to progress, officials said on Wednesday. “We have received in-principle approval for felling of trees from the CEC,” said a senior PWD official. “As the CEC has given permission to fell trees, work on the ground will start soon. The trees are located near the Humayun’s Tomb stretch and near Mayur Vihar,” the official added.

The CEC is a five-member committee formulated by the Supreme Court to monitor afforestation and tree-cutting permissions in big projects. The project will be completed within six months after the permission to fell the trees is granted, PWD Minister Parvesh Sahib Singh had earlier said. Singh has also said that the government plans to operationalise the project by December. The Barapullah Phase 3 project—a 3.5-km elevated corridor—envisages seamless connectivity between Mayur Vihar I in East Delhi and AIIMS in South Delhi.

The new flyover, which will merge with the existing Barapullah flyover at Sarai Kale Khan, is also expected to significantly enhance east-west connectivity.

## Driver kills mother, teen son in Delhi’s Lajpat Nagar after being ‘scolded’; apprehended

**Agency New Delhi.**

A driver allegedly murdered a garment shop owner and her 14-year-old son in Delhi’s Lajpat Nagar area after they scolded him for his work, the Delhi Police said, adding the man has been apprehended. According to the police, the deceased were identified as Ruchika Sewani, 42, and her son Krish Sewani. The police said Sewani’s husband made a PCR call late Wednesday after his wife and son did not open the door of their house in Lajpat Nagar. “A PCR call was received at 9.43 pm on Wednesday from Kuldeep Sewani, aged 44, a resident of Lajpat Nagar-I. He said that his wife and son were not responding to his calls. He said the door was closed, and there was a blood stain on



the gate and the stairs,” Hemant Tiwari, Deputy Commissioner of Police (South East), said.

Once the police reached the spot, they broke the gate and found the body of

look like slit marks of a sharp-edged weapon.

The police analysed the CCTV footage in the area and found that the accused, Mukesh, 24, went towards the Amar Colony area.

“The main accused, Mukesh, is a permanent resident of Hajipur and is currently residing at Amar Colony. He was apprehended while he was on the run from the police. He works as a driver and a shop helper at the garment shop owned by the Sewani family in Lajpat Nagar market,” DCP Tiwari said.

Data shared by the Delhi Police shows that cases of murder in the national capital have risen slightly over the past year. As many as 107 cases of murder were reported between January 1 to March 31 in 2025, a slight uptick from 105 in 2024 during the same period, but lower than 2023, when it was 115.

## ‘Fresh drinking water wasted for a year’: Damaged pipeline in Delhi’s Greater Kailash 2 sparks residents’ outrage

**Agency New Delhi.**

It is 3 pm on Wednesday. A van enters a neighbourhood in Delhi’s Greater Kailash-2, near Masjid Moth, to drop off school students. The students have a task ahead of them—navigating a waterlogged stretch on their way home. A damaged water pipeline has been a constant pet peeve for the residents in the area for over a year now. “The 24-inch (in diameter) pipeline, which comes from Sonia Vihar and covers the whole of South Delhi, was damaged last year... fresh drinking water have been wasted since then. We have spoken to the engineer, the chief engineer, and other officials of the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) ... but nobody listens. The water has been going into drains,” said Residents Welfare Association (RWA) Secretary Chaman



Sharma.

The damaged portion of the pipeline is located near the Balwant Rai Mehta School. Despite several complaints, the residents of this upscale South Delhi locality allege, the DJB has not plugged the leak. Tried reaching out to the Superintendent Engineer of the area, but he could not be contacted for a comment.

Meanwhile, an official, pleading anonymity, said that the tenders have

been passed for the repair, adding that a work order will take a week to be issued. “The pipeline needs to be changed... This has been delayed since there is a huge tree hampering the work. When the repair happens, water supply will be disrupted in the locality and other areas for a day,” the official said.

The residents are displeased with the DJB’s efforts. “We have sent multiple letters. They have been saying for months that ‘new tenders will be issued’. Every department just dodges us, saying it does not come under their jurisdiction,” said RWA Manager Jitendra Gulati. RWA president Dheer Singh Kasana said the volume of water wasted has increased in the last four to five months. He added that the water leakage has also deteriorated the condition of the road.

## Inspect, update report, assess academic indicators: Over 50 Delhi govt schools flagged for poor results, put under mentorship

**Last year, 67 Delhi Government schools were put under 32 district-level Education Department officers for mentorship.**

**Agency New Delhi.**

The Delhi Education Department has identified 56 government schools with the lowest pass percentages in Class 9 and Class 11 during the 2024-25 academic session, and placed them under the direct mentorship of its senior officers. The list, prepared based on result analysis by the Directorate of Education (DOE)’s Exam Branch, includes schools where Class 9 pass percentages dipped as low as 45.37 per cent. Among the lowest-performing schools in Class 9 are West Azad Nagar-Government Co-ed SSS (pass percentage: 45.37 per cent), Qutab Road-SBV (46.75 per cent), Katwara-GBSSS (48.57 per cent), and Bindapur-GBSSS (50.83 per cent). Several others recorded pass rates in the range of 51–59 per cent. Only two schools from the list were flagged for low performance in Class 11—Sunder Nagari-GBSSS and Keshavpuram-SBV. In a circular Tuesday, DOE assigned one officer to each school “for mentoring the

overall academic performance during the session 2025-26”. “Mentors are expected to visit the respective schools at least once in a fortnight and submit the Inspection Report... preferably on the same day of visit,” read the circular.

Deputy directors of education (DDEs) from various zones and districts have been tasked with adopting these schools. After conducting the inspections, the officers must submit updated, detailed reports to the Delhi Education Management Information System (MIS), according to officials. As part of the inspection, officials will assess a comprehensive set of academic indicators, including the identification of low-performing subjects, teacher vacancies, student attendance, availability of learning materials, usage of NCERT textbooks, the status of ICT labs, and the implementation of vocational education, among others. The officials would check whether school

heads and teachers have adopted individual low-performing students for academic mentoring, and whether their progress is being tracked. A verification of the usage of CBSE/DoE-issued sample



papers, action plans for low achievers, and whether parents are being regularly informed about attendance and performance will also be done.

Beyond a one-time intervention, the academic recovery plan is grounded in long-term monitoring. The mentors have

been instructed to observe three-year result trends for classes 9 to 12.

With year-wise performance and fail percentages being tracked, this is also not the first time the Delhi Government has undertaken the initiative. In 2024, 67 Delhi Government schools were put under 32 district-level officers in the Education Department for mentorship.

The circular also refers to Mission Mathematics, an ongoing programme introduced to strengthen math learning, which was expanded this year to Classes 6 to 10. The officials are expected to monitor the implementation of this programme and Teaching Learning Material (TLM) competitions during their school visits. The emphasis, the Directorate noted, is on “need-based academic support” and improving learning outcomes in a “joyful” and “centric” manner.





Gautala Autramghat Wildlife Sanctuary, Shuli Bhanjan hill, Brazen Glen group of caves and Gogababa hill are some of the hotspots for trekkers. City based trekking organizations say that monsoon treks over the weekend is quite popular and reveal that this year, enquiries have been pouring in due to early monsoon. Most organisers have decided to prepone their trekking dates. Kishor Gathadi, an experienced trekker says, "This year we are starting our trekking programmes earlier than usual. Generally we start from July as the monsoon is at its peak. But this time due to early rains we start from June 23. There are a lot of engineering students

## With monsoon settling in, youngsters are geared up for exciting treks in and around Aurangabad.

who will be part of the treks this year, since most of them have just finished their exams. We have 60 entries so far and the number is increasing on a daily basis." Ravi Choudhary of another organization adds, "More than 50 students have enrolled with us for so far. With early showers it's not a surprise that nature lovers want to get started with adventure activities." For most students trekking is an exciting activity that gets them close to nature and also helps stay fit naturally. Mansi Mahadik, student of

Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University says, "I'm looking forward to having a lot of fun trekking this year as the rains have been good." Kshitija Bardapurkar a student from Marathwada Institute of Technology College adds, "I cherish the memory months later after a trek. It provides a respite from the drab routine of city life. Nature also inspires me to write poetry." But it isn't only limited to being a fun activity

and also provides an opportunity to learn new things and spread environmental awareness for some. Ravi adds, "While conducting treks, we encourage the trekkers to clean the plastic littering the area and also plant seeds." Prakash Kulkarni, a student of Maulana Azad College who is all set to plant 500 neem seeds during his trek says, "Trekking is no doubt fun and a great form of exercise. But I also like to contribute to the environment in my own way.

I have bought 500 neem seeds which I will sow along the stretch that I pass during my trek." Meanwhile Rahul Ingle, another student from Maulana Azad College who has been an avid trekker since past five years, has plans to teach rappelling to new trekkers. Expert trekker Utsav Helambkar doles out some advice to new student trekkers. "Students should follow all the instructions given by their trekking head so as to avoid any mishap. Sometimes, girls tend to wear incorrect footwear during trekking. Wearing the right footwear, carrying enough food and water and a first aid box is very important. Also trekkers should walk in groups to reduce the risk of losing their way," ashokumarmundetiya.S

The western Grand Canyon was largely carved out by about 70 million years ago when dinosaurs roamed the earth, an analysis of mineral grains lying at the bottom of these hulking shapes reveals.

The new research pushes back the conventionally accepted date for the formation of the Grand Canyon in Arizona by more than 60



# Grand Canyon

was carved out while dinosaurs roamed

large part by an ancestral waterway of the Colorado River that was flowing in the opposite direction millions of years ago, said Flowers. "An ancient Grand Canyon has important implications for understanding the evolution of landscapes, topography, hydrology and tectonics in the western U.S. and in mountain belts more generally," said Flowers.



million years, says Rebecca Flowers, assistant professor of geological sciences at the University of Colorado Boulder. The team used a dating method that exploits the radioactive decay of uranium and thorium atoms to helium atoms in a phosphate mineral known as apatite, said Flowers, who co-authored the study with Kenneth Farley, professor at the California Institute of Technology, the journal Science reports. The helium atoms were locked in the mineral grains as they cooled and moved closer to the surface during the carving of the Grand Canyon, she said, according to a Colorado statement. Temperature variations at shallow levels beneath the Earth's surface are influenced by topography, and the thermal history recorded by

the apatite grains allowed the team to infer how much time had passed since there was significant natural excavation of the Grand Canyon, Flowers said. "Our research implies that the Grand Canyon was directly carved to within a few hundred meters of its modern depth by about 70 million years ago," said Flowers. Flowers said the entire modern canyon may not have been carved all at the same time. Different canyon segments may have evolved separately before coalescing into what visitors see today. Over a mile deep in places, Arizona's steeply sided Grand Canyon is about 280 miles long and up to 18 miles wide in places. Visited by more than five million people annually, the iconic canyon was likely carved in





## Who is Soham Parekh, Indian techie who worked at 4-5 US startups at same time

**New Delhi.** An Indian engineer is at the centre of a controversy in Silicon Valley, after several US-based startup founders publicly accused him of moonlighting at multiple companies without disclosure.

Soham Parekh, who is believed to be based in India, is alleged to have simultaneously worked at up to four or five startups—many of them backed by Y Combinator—raising questions about hiring practices in remote-first tech culture. The controversy began when Suhail Doshi, founder of Playground AI and former CEO of analytics firm Mixpanel, posted a public warning on X (formerly Twitter). “PSA: there’s a guy named Soham Parekh (in India) who works at 3–4 startups at the same time. He’s been preying on YC companies and more. Beware,” Doshi wrote. Doshi said Parekh had briefly joined Playground AI last year but was fired within a week after his dual employment came to light. Doshi also shared what he claimed was Parekh’s CV, which listed companies like Dynamo AI, Union AI, Synthesia, and Alan AI among his past employers. He alleged that most of the rsum was likely “90% fake.” Other founders came forward with similar experiences. Flo Crivello, founder of Lindy, said his team had hired Parekh just a week earlier. “Fired this morning,” he wrote. “He did so incredibly well in interviews, must have a lot of training.” Nicolai Ouporov, CEO of Fleet AI, confirmed Parekh had worked with them as well, adding that he had “been doing this for years.” Matthew Parkhurst, CEO of Antimetal, also weighed in. He described Parekh as “really smart and likeable,” but said they let him go after discovering his multi-company commitments. “Hiring Soham is a new rite of passage tbh. Any great company should go through it,” Parkhurst joked.

## Sensex, Nifty struggle for direction as markets await India-US deal news

**New Delhi** Benchmark stock market indices opened higher on Thursday, tracking global markets which rallied due to the US-Vietnam trade deal. However, the indices quickly erased early gains to trade flat, minutes after the opening bell. The S&P BSE Sensex was down by 13.01 points to 83,396.68, while the NSE Nifty50 lost 3.70 points to 25,449.70 as of 9:29 am.

Dr. VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Limited, said that Nifty is likely to trade in the 25200-25800 range for some more time till a trigger breaks the range. "A positive trigger can come from a possible India-US trade deal to be announced in a few days. The US-Vietnam trade deal indicates the eagerness of the US administration to strike as many trade deals as possible since deals with EU and Japan appear unlikely soon," he added. Asian Paints topped the gainers with a 1.33% jump, followed by Tata Steel, up 1.12%. Infosys rose 0.69%, Mahindra & Mahindra gained 0.51%, and Tech Mahindra climbed 0.39%.

Kotak Mahindra Bank fell the most at 1.74%, followed by Bajaj Finance, down 1.49%. Bajaj Finserv dropped 0.89%, Trent declined 0.88%, and NTPC slipped 0.52%. The Nifty indices opened with mixed performance. Nifty Midcap 100 gained 0.18%, Nifty Smallcap rose 0.11%, while India VIX fell 0.86%, showing reduced market volatility. Several sectors posted gains at the opening. Nifty Auto led with a 0.60% rise, followed by Nifty Metal up 0.52%, Nifty Oil & Gas gaining 0.48%, Nifty Healthcare rising 0.26%, Nifty IT up 0.24%, and Nifty Pharma climbing 0.16%.

## Jindal Steel Chhattisgarh Ltd signs MoU with state government for projects worth Rs 75,000 crore

**RAIPUR:** Jindal Steel Chhattisgarh Ltd, a unit of industrial powerhouse JSPL having presence in steel, mining and power, has inked a significant memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Chhattisgarh government for multiple projects.

Aimed at driving economic growth, generating employment and fostering sustainable industrial development the agreements were signed for the projects including 500 MW Solar Power Plant, the 2400 MW Thermal Power Plant, and a steel plant with a capacity of 7.5 million tons per annum (MTPA). A proposed investment of Rs 75,000 crore will be allocated for the projects, the company stated. The MoU ceremony was attended by chief minister Vishnu Deo Sai and secretary-industries and commerce Rajat Kumar along with other senior officials.

**Artificial Intelligence uses** Artificial Intelligence uses

“The state has effectively transitioned from ease to speed of doing business as over 350 reforms have already been implemented to make the investment process seamless”, said the CM. The state’s new industrial policy has received encouraging investment proposals from several key conglomerates from diverse sectors. “Besides local employment and strengthening the state’s economy, we are committed to promoting industrial infrastructure in Chhattisgarh”, said Pradeep Tandon, executive president Jindal Group in Chhattisgarh. The upcoming projects under industrial investments will create new development opportunities for the local community and the state’s industrial growth, he added. The establishments of steel and power plants are considered as vital for manufacturing, infrastructure, and energy generation driving the economic growth.

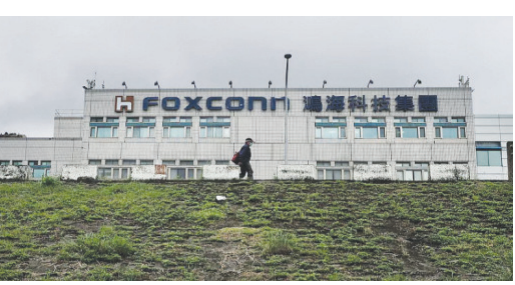
# Foxconn recalls Chinese staff from India; Apple’s local expansion faces setback

**More than 300 Chinese staff have already exited India, and mostly Taiwanese support personnel remain at Foxconn's Indian sites.**

**CHENNAI.** Foxconn Technology Group, the Taiwanese contract manufacturer best known for assembling Apple’s iPhones, has recently recalled several hundred Chinese engineers and technicians from its operations in India. This development marks a significant challenge for Apple’s strategic shift to diversify its production base outside of China, especially as it prepares to ramp up manufacturing of the upcoming iPhone 17. According to a Bloomberg report, more than 300 Chinese staff have already exited India, and mostly Taiwanese support personnel remain at Foxconn's Indian sites. While neither Apple nor Foxconn has publicly commented, the recall began quietly about two months ago and is reportedly linked to Beijing’s growing restrictions on the transfer of manufacturing know-how and technology to other countries, especially India and Southeast Asia. Chinese authorities have informally urged domestic regulatory bodies to discourage the export of advanced equipment and high-skilled labor in an effort to prevent foreign rivals from becoming viable alternatives to China’s manufacturing dominance. This move comes at a particularly sensitive time for Apple. India has rapidly gained ground in Apple’s global supply chain, now accounting for nearly 20 percent of iPhone production. Foxconn has played a central role in building up this capability by deploying experienced engineers from China to train Indian staff and help set up local production processes. Their sudden

**New Delhi.** HDFC Bank’s Managing Director and CEO, Sashidhar Jagdishan, has moved the Supreme Court after an FIR was filed against him by the trustees of Mumbai’s well-known Lilavati Hospital. Calling the case “frivolous”, Jagdishan’s lawyer told the court that the complaint was nothing but pressure tactics over pending payments. Senior Advocate Mukul Rohatgi, who appeared for Jagdishan, argued that the FIR had no solid ground and was filed only because the bank was trying to recover money from the hospital. He added that the case could not be heard by three different benches of the Bombay High

Taiwanese support personnel remain at Foxconn's Indian sites. While neither Apple nor Foxconn has publicly commented, the recall began quietly about two months ago and is reportedly linked to Beijing’s growing restrictions on the transfer of manufacturing know-how and technology to other countries, especially India and Southeast Asia. Chinese authorities have informally urged domestic regulatory bodies to discourage the export of advanced equipment and high-skilled labor in an effort to prevent foreign rivals from becoming viable alternatives to China’s manufacturing dominance. This move comes at a particularly sensitive time for Apple. India has rapidly gained ground in Apple’s global supply chain, now accounting for nearly 20 percent of iPhone production. Foxconn has played a central role in building up this capability by deploying experienced engineers from China to train Indian staff and help set up local production processes. Their sudden



withdrawal is expected to slow the pace of workforce training and reduce the speed of technology transfer, which in turn could raise operational costs and reduce assembly line efficiency. While the production quality is not expected to suffer in the short term due to established procedures and support from Taiwan-based staff, there is a real risk that efficiency and ramp-up timelines may be impacted, particularly for the iPhone 17. Indian government sources cited by Bloomberg say they were informed of the move and are not yet observing major

disruptions in production. However, analysts note that the real impact may surface during the critical pre-launch months for new iPhone models when engineering precision and line-speed become vital. Apple has previously emphasised that its preference for China as a manufacturing base goes beyond labor costs, citing the high level of skill and production culture ingrained in Chinese workers. The current geopolitical climate, however, is forcing a recalibration. As tensions between the United States and China escalate — including threats of new tariffs under Donald Trump’s potential return to the White House — India and countries like Vietnam have been making a concerted push to attract companies looking to diversify supply chains. India in particular has benefited from this shift, securing large investments from Apple’s suppliers including Foxconn, Pegatron, and Wistron (now Tata Electronics).

## HDFC Bank CEO moves Supreme Court against Lilavati Hospital FIR



**New Delhi.** HDFC Bank’s Managing Director and CEO, Sashidhar Jagdishan, has moved the Supreme Court after an FIR was filed against him by the trustees of Mumbai’s well-known Lilavati Hospital. Calling the case “frivolous”, Jagdishan’s lawyer told the court that the complaint was nothing but pressure tactics over pending payments. Senior Advocate Mukul Rohatgi, who appeared for Jagdishan, argued that the FIR had no solid ground and was filed only because the bank was trying to recover money from the hospital. He added that the case could not be heard by three different benches of the Bombay High

using it to arm-twist the bank instead of paying their dues. Justice MM Sundresh, who heard the brief arguments, has asked for the case to be listed for hearing on Friday. The clash between one of India’s largest private banks and a big Mumbai hospital is linked to a financial transaction, but the exact details of the FIR or the amount involved were not shared in court. The Supreme Court will now look into whether the case holds any merit or if it should be quashed. All eyes will be on tomorrow’s hearing for the next update in this high-profile dispute.

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## Lost your ITR login Here's how to file income tax using net banking

**New Delhi.** It’s tax filing season again, and many people are busy getting their papers and numbers in order. If you are ready to file your Income Tax Return (ITR) for the financial year 2024-25 but have forgotten your login password for the Income Tax portal, don’t panic. You can still file your ITR without any hassle. All you need is your net banking. **FILE ITR WITHOUT PASSWORD**

If you can’t remember your Income Tax portal password, you don’t need to reset it straight away. Most major banks in India allow you to access the e-Filing portal through their net banking services. It’s a safe and easy way to file your return on time. To check if your bank offers it, you can look for the Net Banking option on the Income Tax e-Filing website or ask your bank directly. The process is straightforward; for instance, ICICI Bank provides a step-by-step guide for this purpose. To file your ITR through ICICI Bank’s net banking, you need to log in with your ID and password, navigate to 'Payments and Transfers', and then 'Manage Your Taxes'.

From there, you select 'Income Tax e-Filing', which redirects you to the income tax website allowing

## Dubai’s booming restaurant scene is feeling the heat of high costs and high failure rates

**DUBAI.** From suspended tables to underwater lounges, some 13,000 food and drink establishments in Dubai pull out all the stops to attract customers in one of the world’s most saturated dining markets. They cater to all tastes and budgets. Some spots ladle out inexpensive biryani while others offer dishes dusted with edible gold. These are some of the ways the emirate is competing with its neighbors Saudi Arabia and Qatar for tourist dollars and, so far, it’s beating them handily. Dubai has more restaurants per capita than any major city except Paris. But the city-state’s booming restaurant scene is testing the limits of its growth-at-all-costs model, raising questions about how long Dubai can keep feeding its own ambitions.

**A crowded and competitive market**

The competition is cutthroat, so presentation is key. “Gone are the days when it just tastes good,” said Kym Barter, the general manager of Atlantis The Palm, a resort perched on a manmade archipelago that boasts more Michelin stars than any other venue in

the Middle East. But dazzling Dubai’s food bloggers — the most popular of whom have millions of social media followers — isn’t enough. Staying afloat means battling high rents and winning over a diverse and demanding group of consumers. Artificial Intelligence uses Dubai has roughly nine expatriate residents for every Emirati citizen. Most of its private sector workers are migrants on temporary contracts, and only Vatican City has a higher share of foreign-born residents. Tourists, in turn, outnumber locals about five to one by some estimates, and they spend lavishly. Visitors to Dubai drop an average of over five times more than those traveling to nearby Saudi Arabia or even the US, according to global restaurant consultant Aaron Allen. Dubai is “on the right path” to becoming the world’s food capital, said Torsten Vildgaard, executive chef at FZN by Björn Frantzén. The restaurant, which runs at more than \$540 a head, was one of two in Dubai to nab three Michelin stars in May. “We’re only

seeing the tip of the iceberg of what’s to come in terms of gastronomy here,” Vildgaard added. With each new set of illuminated high-rises and hotels, another crop of eateries emerge, vying for patrons. The legions of construction workers powering Dubai’s progress also need affordable options. That growth, propped up in part by investor pressure on some of the world’s biggest chains to expand in Dubai, has created what some analysts warn is a bubble. “If you’re a publicly traded company like Americana, what are you supposed to do — just stop opening restaurants?” restaurant consultant Allen said, referring to the Gulf-based operator of KFC, Pizza Hut and other big franchises. The frenetic expansion of Dubai’s restaurant industry is part of a regional shift that has seen Gulf Arab states pour hundreds of billions of dollars into building out tourist destinations as they move away from hydrocarbons to diversify their economies. Saudi Arabia has a high-stakes, \$500 billion project: a straight-line futuristic city called Neom.



you to file your returns without logging in directly to the IT portal. This method not only simplifies the filing process but also provides access to various services such as quick e-File ITR, Upload Return, View Form 26AS, Tax Calculator, Download ITR, and E-Pay Tax.

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# Inside China's quiet move to disrupt iPhone production in India

**New Delhi.** At a time when Apple was preparing to ramp up production of its next flagship iPhone in India, hundreds of Chinese engineers and technicians working at its main supplier, Foxconn’s factories, have been told to pack up and leave. Over 300 skilled workers have exited Foxconn’s iPhone plants in southern India, reported Bloomberg. While Foxconn and Apple haven’t officially commented, the timing and silence speaks volumes. The development is more than just a routine reshuffle of manpower. It comes amid growing tension between Beijing and Western tech firms shifting manufacturing away from China and the border dispute between India-China.

For Apple, which has invested heavily in expanding its manufacturing footprint in India, the loss of trained Chinese technical staff is a setback. These engineers were not only involved in assembling devices but also in training India’s workforce and transferring decades of process knowledge built inside Chinese mega-factories.

**SLOW UNRAVELLING OF CHINA’S GRIP**

China’s clampdown on the outflow of

talent, technology, and equipment has grown sharper in recent months. According to Bloomberg, the Chinese government has informally urged companies and regulators to stop exporting key equipment and restrict movement of skilled labour to destinations like India and Southeast Asia. The intention seems clear: slow the pace of the “China plus one” strategy being adopted by multinationals hedging against geopolitical risk.

Over the past year, China has restricted exports of rare earth magnets used in electric vehicles, tightened control over APIs for the global pharma supply chain, and now, through its grip on Foxconn, has begun holding back skilled mobile manufacturing talent. It’s no longer just trade friction. It’s supply chain resistance.

**FOXCONN IN INDIA**

Foxconn, which still produces the bulk of iPhones in China, has gradually built large-scale assembly lines in India over the past four years. In 2024, Apple hit a milestone: more than \$10 billion worth of iPhones were assembled in India, of which about \$7 billion were exported, mostly to the US. India now accounts for nearly 20% of Apple’s global iPhone

output. The latest model, the iPhone 17, was to be a huge step in Apple’s plans to make India its second home for high-end production. That roadmap now looks uncertain. While Bloomberg reports that quality won’t be affected by the Chinese withdrawal, efficiency and training are expected to suffer. Foxconn’s Chinese



engineers played a critical role in setting up India’s assembly lines, bringing with them years of expertise from Shenzhen’s highly optimised factories. Without them, India’s new recruits will have to climb the learning curve without real-time mentoring. And that’s not easy when producing devices that require over a thousand individual components to be

assembled with microscopic precision.

**WHY THIS MATTERS MORE THAN AN APP BAN**

India’s own economic retaliation against China after the 2020 Galwan Valley border clash was largely symbolic, banning apps like TikTok and curbing Chinese investments in sectors like telecom and power. Yet, despite public sentiment, China remained India’s largest import partner, with over \$101 billion in imports in FY24, according to India’s commerce ministry. China’s current playbook is different. By quietly extracting engineers and making the movement of skilled labour more difficult, it’s targeting the very foundation of India’s electronics ambitions. Unlike app bans or visa curbs, this affects factory floor efficiency, knowledge transfer, and long-term manufacturing capabilities.

According to Bloomberg, Indian authorities were informed of the withdrawal but weren’t told why. There has been no formal disruption in iPhone production yet, but officials are monitoring the situation closely.





# Rasha Thadani

**Chooses Health Over Paparazzi Glam At Airport, Says ‘Tabiyat Bilkul...’**

**Rasha Thadani was seen at Mumbai airport wearing simple black joggers, with a bright red mask and refused to pose for the paparazzi.**

Raveena Tandon’s daughter, Rasha Thadani, is known for being friendly with paparazzi, as she often poses and smiles for the cameras. However, during her recent appearance, fans noticed something was different. Recently, the young actress, who started her acting career last year in the movie Azaad, was seen at Mumbai airport wearing simple black joggers and a bright red mask. When the photographers asked her nicely to remove the mask for pictures, Rasha politely said no because she wasn’t feeling well. According to a video shared by the paparazzi, as soon as Rasha stepped out of the airport, several photographers started following her to click pictures. In the background, a few of them could be heard politely asking her to take off the mask for better photos. However, she chose to keep the mask on to take care of her health and said, “Tabiyat bilkul thik nahi hai. (I’m not feeling well at all).”

Rasha Thadani stepped into Bollywood with Azaad, where she starred alongside Aaman Devgan, nephew of Ajay Devgn. Although the movie didn’t do well at the box office, the actress grabbed attention for her energetic dance performance in the song Uyi Amma. In a chat with BBC Asian Network, Rasha shared how her mother, actress Raveena Tandon, helped her get ready for the film.

She said, “My mom, ever since I started working on this film, because she somehow also knew that she likes this, she’s going to do this, she used to make me sit and watch Rekha Ji’s performances, Saroj Ji’s performances and even Sadhna Ji’s performances. So she would break it down for me and say, ‘Okay, see her expression, this is a happy expression, but see how she’s done it, see her eyes, see her lips.’ She would really break it down and try to teach me the craft of it more than just watching it for the fun of it.”

After her debut in Azaad, Rasha Thadani is now preparing for her next film Laikey Laikaa. She will be seen opposite Abhay Verma, who rose to fame with Munjya. The film is expected to hit theatres in 2026.



## Isha Malviya, Sheezan Khan’s Viral Dance To Billo Rani Is Fire



Srman Jain’s birthday bash saw several well-known names from the television industry in attendance, but it was Isha Malviya and Sheezan Khan who truly stole the spotlight. A video of the duo lighting up the dance floor to the iconic track Billo Rani has surfaced on social media and is now going viral. Their infectious energy and perfectly coordinated moves have left fans cheering and praising their electrifying performance. In a chic all-white outfit, Isha Malviya exuded beauty and charm, whereas Sheezan rocked a boxy vest and trousers, which he teamed with matching sneakers.

FYI, both Isha Malviya and Sheezan Khan have worked with Srman Jain in the past. While Isha collaborated with him for the show Lovely Lolla, Sheezan joined hands with Jain for Tu Aashiki Haii. In both the shows made under Sargun Mehta and Ravie Dubey’s Dreamiyata Drama, Srman Jain served as the executive producer. In the romantic drama Tu Aashiki Haii, Sheezan Khan plays a complex and unconventional role of DSP Arjun Walia alongside Abhishek Kumar and Amandeep Sidhu. With layered characters and emotionally charged performances, the show explores themes of complex love, betrayal and duty.

Talking about his role at the show’s launch event, Sheezan said, “This is the first time in my career that I’ve played a character I couldn’t personally resonate with.”

As for Lovely Lolla, Isha Malviya and Gauahar Khan played the lead duo in the series. It is streaming on Ravi and Sargun’s YouTube channel, Dreamiyata Drama.

Besides her TV shows, the former Bigg Boss contestant is also making waves online for her incredible moves and expressions in Sanju Rathod’s viral hit Gulabi Sadi. In other news, Isha Malviya was also reported to be in advanced talks to join Khatron Ke Khiladi 15, the stunt-based reality show. Talking to celebrity photographer Viral Bhayani’s team, she addressed speculations about her participation. The television actress said, “Honestly, right now, I don’t know anything about that. So, let’s see what happens.”

## Sara Ali Khan Is Overwhelmed By Fans Reaction During Metro In Dino Promotions



**Anurag Basu’s directorial Metro... In Dino trailer has already been released. And looks like it has impressed the audience.**

Sara Ali Khan, Aditya Roy Kapur are busy promoting their upcoming film Metro In Dino. The lead actors have been sharing a lot of updates and entertaining fans. Recently, the whole team was spotted promoting the film, and it looks like Sara is impressed with fans’ reaction. To note, the film is all set to release on July 4.

Taking to her Instagram handle, Sara shared a video in which she offered a glimpse of her recent tour. Fans were seen rooting for her and the film. The actress even hugged a small child. “Dil ka kya? That’s not a question when you’re amidst all this love, support and encouragement. Abhi theatre jao parso! #MetroInDino releasing on the 4th of July!!” read the caption here. One of the fans wrote, “Hey sara what are you doing there! Your place is my heart don’t go here and there.” Another wrote, “All the best.”

Anurag Basu’s directorial Metro... In Dino trailer has already been released. And looks like it has impressed the audience. The trailer opens with Aditya Roy Kapur and Sara Ali Khan traveling in a cab. They are just friends but slowly fall in love. The other couples are also introduced with their past and present. All are navigating through a tough time, and their relationships too. However, the song of the film is surely going to stay, and fans are loving too.

The first song from Metro... In Dino was released. Titled Zamaana Lage, the track reunites music maestro Pritam with Arijit Singh and Shashwat Singh, delivering a heartwarming ballad that beautifully ties the film’s interconnected stories together. Directed by Anurag Basu, Metro... In Dino is a spiritual successor to the 2007 film Life in a... Metro and explores multiple urban relationships. The song’s music video gives a glimpse into the lives of its ensemble cast. Sara Ali Khan and Aditya Roy Kapur share a gentle romantic arc, where he sees her off at the metro. Konkona Sen Sharma’s character seems hesitant about accepting affection from Pankaj Tripathi. Speaking exclusively to News18 Showsha, Anurag says that it was, in fact, Irrfan’s idea to turn the 2007 film into a sequel. Talking about it, he tells us, “Post Jagga Jasoos, Irrfan and I were talking about a sequel to Life In A Metro.”



## Divyanka Tripathi’s

**Mood Swing Leaves Vivek Dahiya Speechless In Viral Reel**

TV stars Divyanka Tripathi and Vivek Dahiya show how to keep their relationship full of fun and laughter. The couple often shares funny and sweet moments on social media, which keeps their fans entertained. In their latest video, the Yeh Hai Mohabbatein actress talks about how she sometimes gets angry. In the Instagram reel, Divyanka Tripathi and Vivek Dahiya bring the laughs with a playful lip-sync to a hilarious dialogue. It begins with Vivek asking, “Everything else is fine, but what is your weakness?” to which Divyanka cheerfully replies, “I get angry very quickly.” When Vivek follows up with, “Why do you get angry?” Divyanka suddenly snaps, yelling, “Why are you asking this again?”—and jokingly slaps him. Her unexpected reaction leaves Vivek stunned and speechless, perfectly delivering the comic timing the reel calls for.

Apart from their fun videos, Divyanka Tripathi and Vivek Dahiya often grab attention for their travel and special family moments. But earlier this year, the couple were in the news for a different reason. Rumours about their divorce started spreading online, which left many surprised. Before things could escalate, Vivek came forward and clearly denied the news. Speaking with ABP, the actor said, “We’re having a lot of fun. Divyanka and I were laughing together. While eating ice cream, we were thinking, ‘If it goes on for longer, we’ll even order some popcorn.’ It’s entertaining for us. I saw the reports, Divyanka and I laughed it off. We know how clickbait works. I do YouTube vlogging too, so I get this business model very well. If you post a sensational thumbnail, people will click. But there’s nothing inside. People should avoid giving views to baseless news. It’s fake entertainment.”

Divyanka Tripathi and Vivek Dahiya got married on July 8, 2016. Since then, they have appeared together in many shows, including Nach Baliye 8.





NEWS BOX

Ishan Kishan imitates Harbhajan Singh in rare County bowling chance

New Delhi. Ishan Kishan appears to be enjoying his stint in County cricket. The India wicketkeeper-batter has made an early impression for Nottinghamshire with two fifties in as many red-ball games in the County Championship Division 1. On Wednesday, in a light-hearted moment during a drawn match against Somerset in Taunton, Ishan even got the chance to roll his arm over.

Kishan bowled spin—both off-spin and leg-spin—within the span of a single over. For his first delivery in the County Championship, he imitated Harbhajan Singh’s iconic action, bowling from over the wicket to Tom Kohler-Cadmore, who was batting in the 140s. Kishan nailed the Bhajji impression with remarkable accuracy.He followed it up with a couple of conventional off-spinners before switching to around the wicket. From that angle, he channelled Shane Warne and bowled leg-spin. His final delivery drifted well wide of the batter, but the umpire generously chose not to signal a wide.As it turned out, that was the final over of the match. Kishan finished with figures of



0 for 1 from his sole over. A clip of his impromptu bowling stint for Nottinghamshire quickly went viral on social media.

ISHAN SHINES WITH THE BAT

Powered by Kohler-Cadmore’s unbeaten 147, Somerset declared at 238 for 4 in their second innings, holding a lead of 108 runs when the draw was agreed. Earlier, Somerset had posted 379 in the first innings, with strong contributions from Tom Banton and Tom Abell. In reply, Notts piled on 509 in 163.2 overs, led by centuries from Ben Slater (124) and Jack Haynes (157).

Ravindra Jadeja guiding India lower order vs England with intent: Varun Aaron

New Delhi. Former India pacer Varun Aaron lauded Ravindra Jadeja for playing a key and composed role with the bat on Day 1 of the second Test against England in Birmingham. The Indian all-rounder stood tall amidst a top- and middle-order collapse, guiding the lower order with proactive and aggressive intent against the England bowlers.Unlike their commanding performance in the Leeds Test, India’s top order failed to replicate the same dominance. However, it was skipper Shubman Gill and Jadeja’s calm partnership at the back end of the innings that helped India end Day 1 in a competitive position.Coming in to bat at No. 7, Jadeja provided crucial support to his captain, helping India recover from a shaky 211/5 after the dismissal of Nitish Kumar Reddy.



The pair stitched together a vital unbeaten 99-run stand, steadying the innings and pushing India past the 300-run mark by stumps.ENG vs IND, 2nd Test, Day 1: HIGHLIGHTS

Aaron, speaking on JioHotstar, pointed out how Jadeja’s calculated aggression—especially against spinner Shoaib Bashir—played a key role in shifting momentum back in India’s favour. He highlighted Jadeja’s ability to rotate strike, keep the scoreboard moving, and maintain a strong presence at the crease without falling into a defensive shell.“I thought Jaddu’s body language was brilliant. From ball one, he was looking to rotate strike, show intent, and stay mobile at the crease. He didn’t just try to grind it out ball after ball — he was actively looking to make things happen,” Aaron said.What stood out was how he approached Bashir. Normally, he’d play him cautiously, but today he took calculated risks — and that’s what mattered. He made sure the scoreboard kept moving.

Tough talk, tame tactics: Gambhir faces heat over Edgbaston Test selection calls

- ➡ India made three changes to its playing XI but did not pick Kuldeep Yadav
- ➡ Kuldeep would have provided variety and a new dimension to the Indian attack
- ➡ Coach Gambhir looked to have entered the Test with a defensive mindset

New Delhi. You can score 1,000 runs, but unless you take 20 wickets, you don't win Test matches."

That was Gautam Gambhir, India's head coach, speaking after the defeat at Headingley. It was a line filled with intent, a no-nonsense assessment from a coach who sounded like he knew where his team had faltered.Now rewind to 2021. Back then, Gambhir, as a commentator, had this to say when Kuldeep Yadav was left out for a home

Test against England:"A little unfortunate on Kuldeep to be honest. I thought they should have actually picked Kuldeep against England. A wrist spinner is a rare commodity. He has been with the team, he hasn't played any cricket so Kuldeep would have been a great asset."Three years later, he's the one calling the shots. And yet, Kuldeep remained on the bench at Edgbaston.

**BOLD WORDS, SAFE PLANS**

Gambhir has said all the right things on this England tour. Immediately after the defeat in Leeds, he had reiterated that "taking 20 wickets" was India's top priority. Everyone expected that lesson to reflect in the XI picked for the Edgbaston Test. But when the teams walked out, what was visible was precisely what Gambhir had warned against-timid, defensive selections.Now, what he says in front of the media is not what he implements on the field. The second Test between India and England at Edgbaston has become the most glaring example of this, where Gambhir contradicted his own words within just 6-7 days.After choosing a



conventional XI in the series opener-a match they dominated for large parts but still lost by five wickets-India responded with three changes. Bumrah's omission was understandable, a decision taken with workload management in mind. But the inclusion of two all-rounders-Nitish Kumar Reddy and Washington Sundar-spoke more to Gambhir's fondness for multi-dimensional cricketers than to the needs of picking 20 wickets for winning Tests.

This was where Kuldeep Yadav could have been the game-changer. With dry, warm weather and increasingly flat decks, the left-arm wrist-spinner would have provided the

kind of x-factor India lacked at Headingley.Kuldeep isn't just another spinner-he unsettles batters, especially those conditioned to play orthodox spin. Against Bazball, which thrives on confidence and rhythm, Kuldeep could have introduced that sliver of doubt. But instead, India benched their best wicket-taking option after Bumrah, and picked two bits-and-pieces cricketers to bat at Nos. 7 and 8.

**DEFENSIVE GILL, EXPERTS**

**BAFFLED**

Even Michael Atherton, at the toss, looked puzzled. Referring to Kuldeep, he said to Shubman Gill:

**"Hasn't he played just 8 Tests in 15 years?"**

Gill replied: "It was very tempting to play him but considering our lack of runs down the order, we needed batsmen."It wasn't just Atherton. The large-scale changes raised eyebrows across the punditry spectrum. Nasser Hussain called it a "panic reaction", pointing out that India hadn't performed that badly in Leeds. They had five individual centuries and made 835 runs across two innings. The issue wasn't with the bat-it was with the inability to take 20 wickets.

Wimbledon 2025 Day 4 schedule: Novak Djokovic, Jannik Sinner eye Round 3 berths

New Delhi. Normalcy returned to Wimbledon on Wednesday as top seeds successfully cleared second-round hurdles and progressed after the first two days of chaos. Carlos Alcaraz and Aryna Sabalenka clinched comfortable second-round wins, but fourth seed Jasmine Paolini joined the likes of Coco Gauff, Jessica Pegula, Alexander Zverev and Daniil Medvedev in crashing out of the competition early.Alcaraz, who needed five sets to win his opening round in London, took on British qualifier Oliver Tarvet. The defending champion was not the most popular man on Center Court as the crowd rooted for the local



hope. However, Alcaraz got the job done.The 22-year-old second seed was not at his best but after saving three break points in a nervy first service game against a college student ranked 733rd in the world, he asserted his authority to win 6-1 6-4 6-4.Wimbledon 2025: Full CoverageEarlier on Centre Court, women's top seed Sabalenka battled to a 7-6(4) 6-4 win against Czech Marie Bouzkova.

On Thursday, seven-time champion Novak Djokovic and World No. 1 Jannik Sinner will highlight men's singles action while the likes of Iga Swiatek, Mirra Andreeva and Elena Rybakina will be in action in the women's singles field.Djokovic will face a ticky test against veteran Dan Evans, a wildcard at Wimbledon. Djokovic will be looking to avoid five-setters early in the tournament in a bid to have a deeper run and achieve his goal of winning No. 25 at SW19.A mouth-watering contest awaits the London crowd in the evening. On Court 1, fourth seed and local hope Jack Draper will take on veteran Marin Cilic in the men's singles second round. The likes of Ben Shelton and Tommy Paul will also be in action while French showman Corentin

Frustrating: Chris Woakes not happy with close umpiring calls in Edgbaston Test

- ➡ Chris Woakes had figures of 21-6-59-2 on Day 1 of Edgbaston Test
- ➡ Woakes got the wickets of KL Rahul and Nitish Kumar Reddy
- ➡ India finished Day 1 at 310 for 5 in 85 overs

New Delhi. Chris Woakes expressed his dissatisfaction with a couple of umpiring decisions that went against his bowling on Day 1 of England’s second Test against India at Edgbaston in Birmingham.Woakes was the standout bowler for the hosts, claiming the wickets of KL Rahul and Nitish Kumar Reddy to finish with impressive figures of 21-6-59-2.However, he missed the chance to make further inroads early in the innings after England chose to bowl first. Yashasvi Jaiswal survived an LBW appeal when the umpire’s call showed the ball was clipping only the top of the off-stump. ENG vs IND,

2nd Test, Day 1: HIGHLIGHTSShortly after, Karun Nair also survived an LBW shout after being struck on the pads while offering no shot. Jaiswal went on to score 87 while Nair made 31 off 50 balls.

“Well yes, it’s really frustrating. These are decisions which can go your way, but this is the game we play and we move on,” Woakes



said in the press conference after the day’s play.

**'THERE'S ENOUGH IN THE PITCH'**

India ended the day in a solid position at 310 for 5 after 85 overs. Ravindra Jadeja and Shubman Gill stitched together an unbeaten

99-run partnership following the quick dismissals of Rishabh Pant and Nitish Reddy.Despite India’s strong recovery, Chris Woakes believes that if England can break the Jadeja-Gill stand early on Day 2, they’ll be right back in the contest.“It’s still a good pitch. There’s enough in it if you hit the right areas. We’ve got wickets at regular intervals. If we can break this stand early tomorrow, we’re still in the game,” Woakes said.Woakes also had words of praise for Gill, who followed up his century in Leeds with another impressive hundred in Birmingham. The newly-appointed Indian skipper remained unbeaten on 114 off 216 balls, a patient innings that included 12 boundaries.“It was a grat

hundred. He did really well for his team. He managed to absorb pressure and then capitalise,” Woakes added.

On Day 2, England will be looking for early wickets, while India will aim to capitalise on the partnership between Jadeja and Gill.

WI vs AUS, 2nd Test: Steve Smith back in XI, set to lose spot in slip cordon

New Delhi. Steve Smith has been named in Australia's playing XI for the second Test against West Indies, which begins on July 3 in Grenada. Pat Cummins confirmed Smith's inclusion, replacing Josh Inglis, after Smith's recovery from a dislocated finger sustained during the World Test Championship final.

Smith's injury had prevented him from participating in the first Test in Barbados. Despite the setback, he focused on rehabilitation using innovative training methods in a baseball cage in New York, which helped expedite his recovery process.He's ready to go, the finger held up well," captain Pat Cummins said on Wednesday in Grenada.He was really happy, particularly batting.

Although Smith has returned to the squad, his fielding positions have been adjusted to

minimise the risk of re-injury. Smith will not be in the slip cordon, his favourite spot, when the Australian quicks are operating in the second Test."Fielding we still



potentially need to manage it a little bit, so he might not be in the slips too often – maybe for spin he'll be OK, but (for the) quicks he might need to wait another week," Cummins said.

During his time in New York, Smith practised in a shaded batting cage under a bridge, providing a conducive environment for his recovery.AUS PLAYING XI FOR 2nd TESTUsman Khawaja, Sam Konstas, Cameron Green, Steve Smith, Travis Head, Beau Webster, Alex Carey (wk), Pat Cummins (c), Mitchell Starc, Nathan Lyon, Josh Hazlewood

**AUSTRALIA SET FOR GRENADA DEBUT**Smith's ability to adapt quickly in foreign conditions is seen as a significant asset for Australia, who are playing at St George's Park in Grenada for the first time in history.The venue in Grenada has hosted only four Tests (from 2002 to 2022) with the last one coming against England in 2022. West Indies hammered a touring English side by 10 wickets on a pace-rich surface.

ENG vs IND: Shubman Gill slots into No. 4 like he has always belonged

- ➡ On a day that was dominated by Jasprit Bumrah being rested for the Edgbaston Test, Shubman Gill showed why he was the best man to take up the mantle and continue India's rich tradition of having the best players at No.4 in Tests.

New Delhi. It was a day when, for the first three hours, all the talk was about Jasprit Bumrah and the Indian management’s decision to rest him. The second Test was a game where India needed to counter-punch, according to Ravi Shastri, and the choice to bench their best bowler was, at the very least, baffling in the eyes of the former Indian coach.The day, however, began with Indian batters stepping up once again. Yashasvi Jaiswal scored a fluent 87 to give India early momentum, and Karun Nair showed flashes of brilliance. India needed a big day to silence the Bumrah chatter—and it was skipper Shubman Gill who rose to the occasion.The 25-year-old was under scrutiny when he was named captain and handed the No. 4 role, especially after a poor run in Australia that had put his place in the squad under question. But Gill responded with a century in the Headingley Test and followed it up with



another strong performance on Day 1 at Edgbaston.The No. 4 spot has historically been reserved for India’s finest—legends like Sachin Tendulkar and Virat Kohli—and Gill seems determined to continue that legacy, as pointed out by Mohammed Kaif.Sachin Tendulkar, Virat Kohli and now Shubman Gill... India is always blessed to have a solid world class

batsman at No. 4. Maybe this continue forever. Gill continuing a great tradition," said Kaif in his tweet.Despite the run-scoring looking easy at times, India did find themselves in tough situations, with England applying consistent pressure. Gill came in after a well-set Karun Nair was dismissed and saw India lose key wickets at crucial moments.How Gill adjusted and tempered his stroke-makingThe flat Edgbaston surface promised free-flowing runs—or at least, Indian fans hoped so-after being put into bat. But Gill showed that the key was resilience, and the runs would eventually come.Across the 199 balls he faced to bring up his seventh Test hundred, there was only one moment where fortune played a part. In the 34th over, Brydon Carse produced a sharp delivery that struck Gill on the pads. However, a faint inside edge saved him. That was the only slice of luck he needed.