

He got many opportunities to serve India: PM after Jagdeep Dhankhar's resignation

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar resignation on the opening day of the Monsoon Session has sparked a political storm, with opposition parties expressing bafflement over the sudden move.

Jagdeep Dhankhar resigned as Vice President citing health reasons
President Murmu accepted resignation and notified Home Ministry
Opposition shocked over sudden move, seeks clarification from BJP

New Delhi. (Agency)

Amid feverish speculation over Jagdeep Dhankhar's abrupt resignation as Vice President, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Tuesday, posted a short farewell message. "Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar Ji has got many opportunities to serve our country in various capacities, including as the Vice President of India. Wishing him good health," the PM tweeted. Dhankhar, 74, caused a political earthquake of sorts on Monday with his surprise resignation, especially after a regular business day chairing proceedings in Rajya Sabha on the first day of the Monsoon session of Parliament.

In a letter addressed to President Droupadi Murmu, the Vice President said he was stepping down with immediate effect to "prioritise healthcare," in accordance with medical advice. "To prioritise health care and abide by medical advice, I



hereby resign as Vice President of India, effective immediately, in accordance with Article 67(a) of the Constitution," Dhankhar wrote in his letter to the President. Earlier in the day, President Droupadi Murmu accepted Dhankhar's resignation and the President's Office forwarded the same to the Home Ministry for official notification. Following the President's approval, the Ministry of Home Affairs officially notified Dhankhar's resignation from the post. Dhankhar took over as 14th Vice

President of India in August 2022 and was expected to serve a five-year term till August 2027. Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh presided over the morning session on Tuesday in the absence of Jagdeep Dhankhar, who not only remained absent from the Upper House but is also unlikely to deliver his farewell speech.

ROW OVER VEEP'S RESIGNATION

Jagdeep Dhankhar's sudden resignation has stunned the Opposition and triggered intense political chatter, with many questioning the official reason behind his exit. Hours before stepping down, Dhankhar was seen interacting with senior leaders, showing no signs of any health concerns or imminent plans to quit. Reacting sharply, the Congress on Tuesday suggested that the reasons behind the Vice President's resignation run "far deeper" than the health issues cited by him.

Nadda says V-P office was informed of his, Rijiju's inability to attend BAC meeting

New Delhi. (Agency)

Union minister JP Nadda on Tuesday said the Vice President's office was informed that he and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju would not attend a BAC meeting convened by Jagdeep Dhankhar last evening, shortly before he resigned from the post. Nadda's remarks came after Congress leader Jairam Ramesh raised questions over the absence of the leader of the Rajya Sabha and Rijiju at the Business Advisory Committee (BAC). "The Vice President's office was intimated about our inability to attend the meeting," said Nadda, the Union health minister and BJP president, when asked about Ramesh's claims.

He was speaking to reporters after Defence Minister Rajnath Singh held a meeting with senior ministers, including Nadda, Rijiju, Home Minister Amit Shah, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, and Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal.

Dhankhar resigned on Monday evening, citing medical reasons. He sent his resignation to President Droupadi Murmu and said he was stepping down with immediate effect.

The Congress on Tuesday claimed the reasons behind Dhankhar's resignation are "far deeper" than health issues cited by him.

Ramesh claimed Dhankhar "took umbrage" as Nadda and Rijiju skipped the BAC meeting.

CM Rekha Gupta Welcomes Kanwar Pilgrims with Floral Tribute

The Sikh Times
Sourabh Sharma

New Delhi. 22 July 2025: On the auspicious occasion of the holy month of Sawan, CM Rekha Gupta, extended a grand welcome to Kanwar pilgrims at the Shyamgiri Baba Temple Kanwar Camp in Shastri Park, New Delhi. Showering flower petals on the devotees, the Chief Minister reaffirmed the Delhi Government's role not as an organiser, but as a humble servant of the devotees.

She stated that serving Lord Shiva's followers is both a responsibility and a blessing for the administration. Chief Minister conducted a thorough inspection of the Kanwar Yatra route, reviewing security arrangements and directing officials to ensure the entire path remains safe and well-managed. She was

accompanied by Cabinet Minister Kapil Mishra, local MLAs, councillors, and senior officials of the local administration.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta emphasised that the Kanwar Yatra is more than a religious procession; it is a living celebration of Indian culture, heritage, and collective faith. She highlighted that the Delhi Government has undertaken unprecedented preparations this year to make the Yatra safer, more orderly, and comfortable for all devotees.

Key arrangements including permissions, electricity, drinking water, sanitation, mobile toilets, waste management, and security were streamlined through a

single-window clearance system. Social organisations, volunteers, and dedicated committees were praised by the Chief Minister for

committees via Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), ensuring timely implementation of logistical arrangements. Essential services

like power supply, water tankers, lighting, and hygiene facilities were directly managed and monitored by government agencies.

CM proudly noted that the government has set a new benchmark by completing the entire permissions process within 72 hours, reflecting its commitment to efficiency and responsiveness. She appreciated the efforts of

Cabinet Minister Kapil Mishra, Divisional Commissioner Shri Neeraj Semwal, District Magistrates, and other officials for their exemplary coordination.

[continue news page 2](#)



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What is their party position? Shashi Tharoor on snub by Kerala Congress

New Delhi. (Agency)

MP Shashi Tharoor said there was no basis to the charges by a section of Congress leaders over his stance on the national security issue, asserting that he was "not at all" worried about his future with the party.

Speaking to the media outside Parliament, Tharoor attempted to play down the apparent tensions with the Congress leadership even as he took a swipe at the party's Kerala unit. When asked about Kerala Congress leader K Muraleedharan's remark that he would not be invited to any party event in the state, a visibly unfazed Tharoor gave a cryptic response.

"The people who are saying this should have some basis for saying so. Who are they? What is their party position? I want to know. Then we will see. Don't ask me about the behaviour of others. I can talk about my behaviour," the four-time MP from Thiruvananthapuram said.

When asked if he was worried about the developments, Tharoor replied promptly, "Not at all".

SHASHI THAROOR'S 'LOYALTY' REMARK

Since the beginning of the year, Tharoor has stirred the Congress brass with his praise

for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and public endorsements of the government's policies. The political spat escalated on Sunday after Muraleedharan said Tharoor, despite being a member of the Congress Working Committee (CWC), was "no



longer one of us". "Till he (Tharoor) changes his stance, we will not invite him to any party programme held in Thiruvananthapuram. He is not with us, so there is no question of him boycotting an event," Muraleedharan told reporters. Muraleedharan's response came after Tharoor said at an event in Kochi that the nation always came first and parties were the means of making the country better. The Congress MP also shared a video of his response to the "inevitable question" about his alleged rift with the party.

CM Bhagwant Mann Declares War on Drug & Liquor Mafia in Punjab

The Sikh Times
Simmi Kaur Babbar

Delhi. July 21: In a historic and uncompromising move, Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Bhagwant Mann has launched a powerful and all-out offensive against the deeply rooted drug and liquor mafia across the state. Terming the menace a direct threat to the future of Punjab's youth and society, Mann has made it clear that "no one, however powerful, will be spared" if found guilty

of promoting or protecting the drug network.

Addressing the public and media recently, CM Bhagwant Mann said, "We have declared a full-fledged war against the drug mafia.

Punjab Police has been given a free hand to act without fear or favour. I assure the people of Punjab, no one will be spared—no matter how influential they are—if they are involved in drug trafficking or liquor smuggling." He further added, "Our mission is not just to arrest peddlers but to break the entire

network, from top to bottom. Those supporting the mafia from behind the scenes—politicians, officials, or anyone—will face strict legal action."

Since the launch of this aggressive campaign, Punjab Police has conducted relentless raids across districts, resulting in the arrest of hundreds of drug traffickers and the seizure of massive quantities of illegal narcotics and illicit liquor. Police checkpoints, surveillance, and intelligence operations have been intensified in both rural and urban areas.

[continue news page 2](#)



1.19 Lakh Bighas Cleared, 63 Lakh Acres Still Under Encroachment: Assam CM Sarma

"Till now, an estimated 1,19,548 bighas of land has been cleared through eviction drives," said Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma

New Delhi. (Agency)
At least 63 lakh acres of land, which would be equivalent to countries like Singapore, is still under encroachment in Assam, according to Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma. "Till now, an estimated 1,19,548 bighas of land have been cleared through eviction drives. But making Assam entirely free of encroachment could take another 20 years. Despite the timeline, our government is fully committed to this mission and will not relent," Sarma declared.

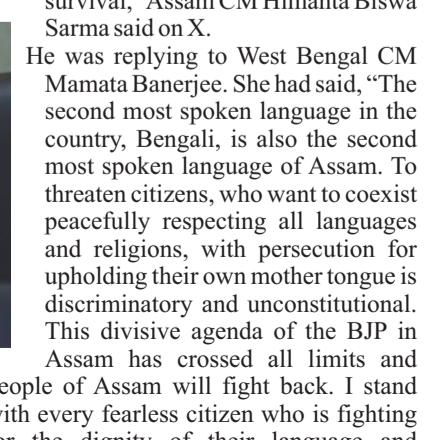
He cautioned that halting the eviction efforts would invite further encroachment, especially on forest and grazing lands, accelerating demographic shifts that could endanger Assamese culture, tradition, and the rights of indigenous communities. The Chief Minister reiterated that the state

government is strictly implementing the eviction policy to protect Assam's social and cultural fabric.

"We have lost our culture, our land, our

temples. The law gives us no remedy. That's why we are desperate—not for revenge, but for survival... Yes, we may be fighting a losing battle. But we will go

down fighting—with dignity, within the law, and for the soul of our Assam... Do not stop us. Just do not stop us from fighting for what is ours. This is our last battle for survival," Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma said on X. He was replying to West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee. She had said, "The second most spoken language in the country, Bengali, is also the second most spoken language of Assam. To threaten citizens, who want to coexist peacefully respecting all languages and religions, with persecution for upholding their own mother tongue is discriminatory and unconstitutional. This divisive agenda of the BJP in Assam has crossed all limits and people of Assam will fight back. I stand with every fearless citizen who is fighting for the dignity of their language and identity, and their democratic rights."



Chandigarh Police's hands full of 'bad characters': 275 in all, 9 of them women

Chandigarh (Agency)

No police station in Chandigarh is free from individuals tagged as 'bad characters', according to an updated list prepared by the Chandigarh Police. There are 275 'bad characters', including nine women. A police official said that the term 'bad character', in police records, is used to identify individuals with a history of repeated involvement in criminal activities, such as theft, robbery, snatching, murder, and drug trafficking. These individuals may or may not have been convicted in a court of law, but are marked by police surveillance based on consistent criminal behaviour or suspicion.

Maloya tops the list

Among all police jurisdictions in Chandigarh, the Maloya police station accounts for the highest number of bad characters—45 individuals. It is followed by IT (Information Technology) Park area (31) and Sector 11 (21). These areas include several informal settlements and high-density zones where criminal activities are reported more frequently, contributing to the higher count of individuals under scrutiny. Significantly, it is Sector 3 area



of the city where the police have identified only one 'bad character'. **Life under surveillance: Consequences of being a 'bad character'**

Individuals designated as 'bad characters' face numerous challenges in their daily lives due to constant scrutiny and social consequences. They are kept under close surveillance by their

attached to this status often leads to strained personal relationships and can severely impact marriage prospects. Legally, such individuals face complications in securing bail, particularly if they are repeat offenders or have pending cases. Additionally, having a police record often leads to visa rejections from several countries, limiting their international mobility and opportunities.

Getting off the list: A path to reform

Police officials clarified that inclusion in the 'bad character' list is not permanent. If an individual refrains from criminal activity over an extended period and maintains positive conduct in society, their name can be removed. The Station House Officer (SHO) or Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) can recommend removal after preparing a satisfactory report, often in consultation with intelligence inputs. A senior police officer said that to curb the criminal and snatching incidents, a special search operation (CASO)

has been carried out in the city, wherein special focus of police teams was to check suspicious persons, 'bad characters', history sheeters, those released from jail and to keep watch on persons involved in NDPS cases. The BC (bad characters) are being continuously kept under vigil.

Chandigarh: PGI nursing officers protest over delays in promotions, staff shortages

Chandigarh (Agency)

Under umbrellas and the pouring rain, hundreds of nursing officers of the PGIMER, Chandigarh, stood outside the Kairon Block, in a show of unity and discipline as they participated in a protest on Monday. The protest, under the banner of the PGI Nurses Welfare Association (PGINWA), highlighted concerns regarding delays in promotions, staff shortages, non-nursing duties, and overall stagnation in cadre restructuring.

The protest remained peaceful, organised, and was carried out without disrupting patient care, and marked a significant moment in the ongoing struggle of nursing professionals for fair treatment, recognition, and timely administrative action. The last review of the nursing cadre at the PGIMER happened in 2015. At that time, a proposal was made for 1,500 new nursing posts, keeping in mind the growing shortage of staff. This proposal was sent to the Union Health Ministry in 2016 but has been pending for years now. Meanwhile, the PGIMER has expanded; two major centres, Mother and Child Care and Neurosciences Centre, are being added, along with several new services and departments. Patient numbers have increased significantly, but the staff strength remains the same.

According to the norms, the PGIMER currently needs over 3,000 nursing staff. Nurses are overburdened, often caring for 3 to 4 times the ideal number of patients. In

the Emergency Ward alone, about 350 patients are present at any time, but only 7 to 8 nurses are on duty. This means one nurse is handling nearly 50 patients at once.

Adding to the issue, only patients with hospital beds are officially counted, while many on stretchers or in corridors also receive full nursing care but are not included in the workload data. Staff are



hopeful that the pending posts will be filled soon to reduce the pressure. Along with new posts, many promotional positions have also been lying vacant for years and need immediate attention.

Manjeet Kaur, president of the association, said, "today's protest was not just an event, it was a message. A message that PGIMER's nursing officers are united, aware, and will no longer accept neglect in silence". "We are professionals who serve this institution with our hearts and hands every day. But our rights, our growth, and our dignity cannot be postponed endlessly. We have demonstrated our strength.

Frant continue news

Delhi Govt Announces Industrial Ideathon 2025 Schedule: Sirsa

Shri Sirsa added "We believe in policy by participation. With this ideathon, we are institutionalising youth involvement in the government processes. The collaboration between DSIIIDC and NSUT is the first step in a longer journey to make Delhi the innovation capital of India." All participants will receive certificates, and winning teams will be felicitated by senior dignitaries in a closing ceremony. The event is expected to attract over 120 teams from more than 30 academic institutions.

CM Rekha Gupta Welcomes Kanwar Pilgrims with Floral Tribute

Reiterating the government's role, CM Rekha Gupta said that this year, the administration functioned at every level as a volunteer not as a formal organiser. With the help of religious organisations, arrangements such as shelters, rest areas, health services, and refreshments were set up in various parts of Delhi, showcasing a unique blend of faith and public service.

She extended her best wishes to all devotees for the upcoming Shivratri and future Kanwar Yatras, assuring that the Delhi Government will remain committed to upholding tradition, public faith, and inclusive service in the years ahead.

Speaking on the occasion, Cabinet Minister Shri Kapil Mishra echoed the sentiments of the Chief Minister, stating that the Kanwar Yatra is not just a religious event, but a celebration of India's cultural and spiritual heritage. He lauded CM Rekha Gupta's leadership, under which the Kanwar Yatra has emerged as a shining example of devotion, service, and respectful governance in Delhi.

CM Bhagwant Mann Declares War on Drug & Liquor Mafia in Punjab

Chief Minister Mann emphasized, "I have given Punjab Police complete freedom to act boldly and take down every link of the mafia chain. I want to see Punjab completely free of this poison." In a passionate appeal to the people of Punjab, Bhagwant Mann urged every citizen to stand with the government in this fight. "This battle is for the soul of Punjab. I request all Punjabis to support this mission. Share information, expose the culprits, and together we will wipe out this menace," he stated.

Alongside the anti-drug mission, CM Mann declared that the liquor mafia will also face complete eradication. Illegal distilleries, smuggling operations, and unauthorized liquor trade will be dismantled with equal force.

He asserted, "Our government will not tolerate any black business that corrupts our youth and destroys families. The liquor mafia too will meet the same fate as the drug mafia. This is a new Punjab—and criminals have no place in it."

The Bhagwant Mann-led Aam Aadmi Party government has come forward as a government of fearless decisions and people-centric policies. This anti-mafia mission reflects not only their commitment to law and order but also their emotional bond with the people of Punjab.

As CM Mann confidently declared, "We will give Punjab a bright future—free from drugs, corruption, and fear."

Woman kills husband in Mumbai's Nalasopara, buries body 4 feet under house: police

Mumbai (Agency)

Preliminary police inquiry revealed that Chaman was allegedly having an affair with one Monu Vishwakarma (33) and allegedly fled with him after killing Chauhan

A 32-year-old woman allegedly killed her husband and then buried his body four feet under their house in the Nalasopara area near Mumbai, police said. The matter surfaced on Sunday and the police have launched a hunt for the woman and her friend, with whom she allegedly eloped after committing the crime. The deceased was identified as Vijay Chauhan, 35, who lived in the Gangdipada area of Nalasopara (East) along with wife Chaman alias Gudiya Devi and their seven-year-old son.

According to the police, Chauhan and his brother Akhilesh had bought a new house. Akhilesh has been trying to contact Chauhan since the past few days as he needed money for the payment of the new house. But, whenever Akhilesh would call on Chauhan's phone, his wife was answering the calls. On Monday Akhilesh visited Chauhan's house and found it to be locked with



some foul smell coming out. He informed the police, who broke open the house, but found no traces of Chauhan. However, Akhilesh observed that three tiles on the floor were different from rest. They also observed a pile of soil near the house.

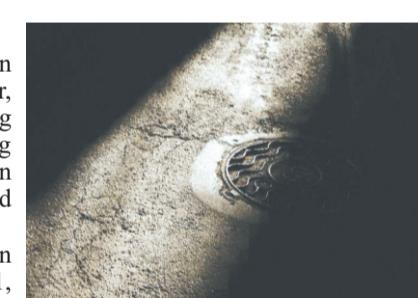
Bengaluru man found dead hours after entering manhole for cleaning; 4 arrested

Bangalore (Agency)

Four people were arrested in Bengaluru after a labourer, who developed breathing issues on Sunday evening while cleaning a manhole in Akshaya Nagar, was found dead on Monday.

The deceased has been identified as Puttaswamy, 31, a resident of RMC Yard. The police said Nagaraju, Antony, Ananthkumar, and Devaraju have been arrested under section 106 (causing death by negligence) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and under the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act.

According to a police officer, Nagaraju hired Puttaswamy and daily wager Antony to clean a clogged manhole around 7 pm



on Sunday. The two men entered without safety gear and developed breathing problems after inhaling toxic gases. Despite their distress, no medical assistance was provided after the two men emerged from the manhole.

On Monday morning, Puttaswamy was found dead at home. His body has been sent for postmortem examination.

Following a complaint filed by the deceased's father, the Bengaluru police registered a case and launched an investigation. In 2023, two workers died while cleaning the Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) of a luxury apartment on Kanakapura Road in the city. In 2021, three people, including one from Odisha and another from Nepal, died in Bengaluru while carrying out manual scavenging work.

According to a 2024 report by the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Karnataka has 2,927 identified manual scavengers. A government official said the state has reported nearly 100 deaths due to manual scavenging in the last 30 years, and nearly half of them were in Bengaluru.

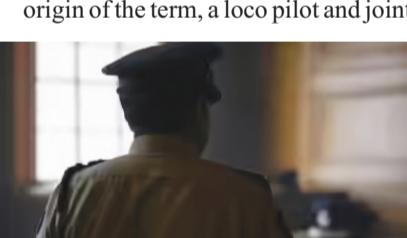
'Pakistan' in A'bad? FIR lists long-used name

Ahmedabad. An FIR filed recently in the city has drawn attention for listing an unusual address: 'Pakistan Colony, Railway Colony, Sabarmati'. The name, used informally by locals for more than three decades, refers to a section of land behind the railway colony that was once a no-man's land. Despite urban development, the nickname endured and is still casually used. Interestingly, it isn't the only place in Ahmedabad with such unusual nomenclature.

In fact, this isn't the only 'Pakistan' located in the city. In Vatva's Char Maiya area, you will find not just 'Pakistan', but also 'Sri Lanka', and 'Bangladesh'—localities that earned the names based on the ethnic makeup of the residents. Though never officially recognised, these names are widely used in local speech and continue to surface in legal documents. The most recent example came on May 16, when Sabarmati police registered an FIR in a

prohibition case and listed the address of one accused as 'Pakistan Colony' in Sabarmati.

According to longtime residents and railway staff, the name 'Pakistan' dates back more than 35 years. Recalling the origin of the term, a loco pilot and joint



secretary of the Western Railways Employees' Union (WREU), Sanjay Suryabali said, "There used to be a barren and secluded area behind the railway tracks and adjacent to the railway colony. Railway employees, frustrated by the lack of facilities beyond a certain point, began

2006 Mumbai Blasts: 'Truth prevailed, justice delivered,' says acquitted accused as 8 walk out of jails hours after HC verdict

While two were not released due to pending cases against them, one of the accused had died due to Covid-19 and another was already released on parole

Mumbai (Agency)

Hours after Bombay High Court acquitted the 12 accused in the 2006 Mumbai train blasts case, eight of them were released from different jails in the state.

While two were not released due to pending cases against them, one of the accused had died due to Covid-19 and another was already released on parole. The two accused were not released due to pending cases against them. The two include Mohammed Faisal Attaur Rahman Shaikh lodged at Aurangabad Jail and Naveed Hussain Khan Rasheed lodged at Nagpur jail. Moreover, Kamal Ahmed Mohd Vakil Ansari died due to Covid-19 in 2021 at Nagpur Central prison, while another accused

Ehtesham Qutubuddin Siddiqui, who was earlier on death row and Mohammed Ali Alam Sher Sheikh, who was on life-term, were released from Nagpur Central Prison around 8 pm. Moreover, other accused including Tanveer Ahmed Mohammad Ibrahim Ansari, Mohd Majid Mohd Shafiq, Suhail Mohammad Sheikh, and Zamir

Ahmed Latifur Rehman Sheikh were released from Amravati Central Jail around 9 pm. Asif Khan Bashir Khan was released from Yerawada Jail in Pune and Muzammil Ataur Rahman Shaikh was released from Nashik jail.

The two accused were not released due to pending cases against them. The two include Mohammed Faisal Attaur Rahman Shaikh lodged at Aurangabad Jail and Naveed Hussain Khan Rasheed lodged at Nagpur jail. Moreover, Kamal Ahmed Mohd Vakil Ansari died due to Covid-19 in 2021 at Nagpur Central prison, while another accused

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Shaikh has not been released since he has another case against him," said a senior officer from Prison Department. Anjum

Inamdar, Pune-based activist with Muslim Mulniwasi Manch said, "Asif was released around 8.30 pm from Yerawada Prison and was received by his brother. His brother and Asif both expressed their feeling of truth having prevailed and justice being delivered to them. Suhail Mohamed Shaikh, after being

released from Amravati Central Prison around 9 pm, told media persons outside the jail premises, "Today we are released after 19 years. We had complete faith in the court and the establishment and it has worked. There was nothing in the case against us. We should have been acquitted by the special court itself, but now the High Court has done it.

We are thankful to the lawyers who worked for us and the judges." THE SIKH TIMES Edited, Printed, Published Owned by Simmi Babbar N-31, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar Delhi-110009 Printed at Qaumi Patrika Printing Press, A4/A4/144, Tronica City (Loni), Ghaziabad (Uttar Pradesh) Corporate Office: 5, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, Press Area, ITO, New Delhi Editor-in-Chief Gurcharan Singh Babbar Mob: 9654077232, 9971339997 Website: www.thesikhtimes.in Email: sikhstimesindia@gmail.com RNI No. DELENG/2008/25465

Agriculture must drive prosperity, not force migration: CM Yogi

The Sikh Times

Lucknow, July 22: Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Tuesday, highlighted agriculture as Uttar Pradesh's largest employment sector, supporting nearly three crore farmers. Speaking at the 36th Foundation Day of UP CAR, he stressed that agriculture should drive prosperity, not migration, and called for greater adoption of innovation and research to transform the sector. He noted that the MSME sector follows agriculture in employment, engaging 1.65 crore people. He stated that the development of Uttar Pradesh is key to India's progress. "If UP advances, no power in the world can stop India from becoming a developed nation. Every individual must make honest efforts in their respective fields to achieve this shared goal," he said. CM Yogi said that agricultural research and development must align with India's diverse climate and

soil conditions. "All such possibilities lie within UP," he noted, adding that the state has a crucial role to



play in achieving Prime Minister Modi's vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047. He further stated that Uttar Pradesh is richly endowed by nature, especially in the field of agriculture. "We have vast, fertile land and abundant water resources. UP might be the only region in the world where over 86% of agricultural land is irrigated," he stated. The state also boasts a strong network of agricultural institutions, including four state-run agricultural universities, with a fifth under development, as well as centrally run universities.

Chandigarh, July 22: In a major relief to Anganwadi Workers and Helpers across the state, the Haryana Government has decided to cancel cases registered against them during their agitation. A government spokesperson informed that Anganwadi workers and helpers had staged protests during 2021-22, during which police cases were filed in districts such as Gurugram.

Haryana Government grants major relief to Anganwadi Workers and Helpers

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NAME CHANGE

I, HEENA HANS W/O VISHAL HANS R/O NO 431 SECTOR 15 ESCORTS NAGAR FARIDABAD HARYANA 121007 I HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO HEENA TANEJA

NAME CHANGE

I, RENU DEVI W/O SUPAN PRAKASH Dagar, R/o H-208-POLE NO-56D, BHAJAN MOLA, MALIK PUR, NAJAFGARH, SOUTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110073, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO RENU Dagar FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSE

NAME CHANGE

I, SURAJ KUMAR PANT S/o LATE JAI DUTT PANT, R/o House No. E-178, 202 Foota Road, West Karauli Nagar, North East Delhi, Delhi-110094, have changed the name of my minor son SAUMIYA PANT aged 15 years and he shall hereafter be known as SAUMY PANT, for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, AMARJEET S/O JAGOT SINGH R/o H-201, SHYAM ENCLAVE-DIN-DAR PUR, NAJAFGARH, DELHI-110043, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO AMARJEET SINGH FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSE

NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as Kunal Bharti S/o Dharmendra Kumar Mishra, R/o E-206, Type-3, Thayari Nagar, VTC, Lodhi Road, PO-Lodhi Road, Sub District, New Delhi, District: Central Delhi, State: Delhi, PIN Code: 110003, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as KUNAL MISHRA.

NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as Sanya Alias SANYA BAGRI, D/o YOGESH KUMAR R/o 36/12, GROUND FLOOR, EAST PATEL NAGAR, PATEL NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110008, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SANYA BAGRI.

NAME CHANGE

I, Raj Kumar Solanki S/o Ram Charan, R/o F-639, Palam Extension, Dwarka, Sector-7, South West Delhi -110075, have changed the name of my minor son KARTIK SOLANKI aged 12 year and shall hereafter be known as KRISHNA SOLANKI.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I TARUN KUMAR S/o KRISHAN DASS R/o House No-234, Block No-5, Sector-11, Model Mandir, Khindri, Kalyanpur, East Delhi, Delhi - 110091 declare that name of my mother has been wrongly written as ANITA in my 10th and 12th class education documents. The actual name of my mother is ANEKSHREE, which may be amended accordingly.

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It is for general information that I VARUN KUMAR S/o KRISHAN DASS R/o House No-234, Block No-5, Sector-11, Model Mandir, Khindri, Kalyanpur, East Delhi, Delhi - 110091 declare that name of my mother has been wrongly written as ANITA in my 10th and 12th class education documents. The actual name of my mother is ANEKSHREE, which may be amended accordingly.

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NEWS BOX

Bangladesh school jet crash death toll rises to 27**DHAKA. (Agency)**

The death toll from the crash of the Bangladesh Air Force training fighter jet into a school building in Dhaka rose to 27 as more people succumbed to their injuries, authorities said on Tuesday. The F-7 BGI aircraft, a training fighter jet manufactured in China, experienced a "mechanical fault" moments after takeoff and crashed into the two-storey building of Milestone School and College at Diabari in Dhaka's Uttara area on Monday. The toll is now 27, and 25 of them are children, Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus's special adviser, Saidur Rahman, told reporters. About 170 were injured, with several of them said to be critical. Wails of despair and pain reverberate at hospitals where patients were treated with burn injuries. Twenty deaths were reported initially, and seven died of their injuries overnight. The pilot, Flight Lieutenant Mohammad Towkir Islam, was among those killed in the crash. The government has declared a state day of mourning for Tuesday in memory of those affected by the crash. A statement from the Chief Advisor's Office on Monday announced that the national flag will be flown at half-mast at all government, semi-government, autonomous institutions and educational institutions across the country. Special prayers will be organised at all places of religious worship in the country for the injured and the dead. A high-level investigation committee has been formed by the Bangladesh Air Force to determine the cause of the accident.

Swarms of Russian drones attack Ukraine nightly as Moscow puts new emphasis on deadly weapon**world. (Agency)**

The long-range Russian drones come in swarms each night, buzzing for hours over Ukraine by the hundreds, terrorizing the population and attacking targets from the industrial east to areas near its western border with Poland. Russia now often batters Ukraine with more drones in a single night than it did during some entire months in 2024, and analysts say the barrages are likely to escalate. On July 8, Russia unleashed more than 700 drones — a record. Some experts say that number could soon top 1,000 a day. The spike comes as US President Donald Trump has given Russia until early September to reach a ceasefire or face new sanctions — a timeframe Moscow is likely to use to inflict as much damage as possible on Ukraine. Russia has sharply increased its drone output and appears to keep ramping it up. Initially importing Shahed drones from Iran early in the 3 1/2-year-old war, Russia has boosted its domestic production and upgraded the original design. The Russian Defense Ministry says it's turning its drone force into a separate military branch. It also has established a dedicated center for improving drone tactics and better training for those flying them.

Fighting 'a war of drones'

Russian engineers have changed the original Iranian Shahed to increase its altitude and make it harder to intercept, according to Russian military bloggers and Western analysts. Other modifications include making it more jamming-resistant and able to carry powerful thermobaric warheads. Some use artificial intelligence to operate autonomously.

The original Shahed and its Russian replica — called "Geran" or "geranium" — have an engine to propel it at 180 kph (just over 110 mph). A faster jet version is reportedly in the works. The Washington-based Institute for the Study of War noted that cooperation with China has allowed Russia to bypass Western sanctions on imports of electronics for drone production. Ukraine's military intelligence estimates that Russia receives up to 65% of components for its Geran drones from China. Beijing rejects the claims.

FBI Ignored Key Evidence In Hillary Clinton Email Case: Declassified Files**Washington. (Agency)**

US former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton is once again under scrutiny in the United States after a report claimed the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) "failed to fully investigate" Clinton's use of a private email server and mishandling of highly classified information during her time working with the Obama administration. The report comes days after US Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard alleged that the Obama administration manufactured the "hoax" around Donald Trump's Russia link.

The FBI received "thumb drives" from a "confidential source" that contained official data acquired via cyber intrusions — including emails from President Barack Obama — the federal agency "barely glanced" at it, according to a declassified appendix to a June 2018 Justice Department (DOJ) inspector general report.

US Senator Chuck Grassley's office released a statement on the DOJ's Clinton annex report, alleging that then-FBI Director Comey, Deputy Director Andrew McCabe, former Agent Peter Strzok, and others failed to perform additional, targeted searches of the drives, even though they contained information relevant to the inquiry. This document shows an extreme lack of effort and due diligence in the FBI's investigation of former Secretary Clinton's email usage and mishandling of highly classified information," Grassley said. According to Grassley, the thumb drives contained highly sensitive information exfiltrated from US government agencies, including the Department of State, as well as then-President Barack Obama's emails and, potentially, congressional information. The thumb drives were reportedly never reviewed as part of the Clinton investigation, contrary to the recommendation of a draft FBI memorandum. The report was penned by then-DOJ Inspector General Michael Horowitz, who holds the same position at the Federal Reserve Board and Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. It is not known if the FBI has carried out any other thorough investigations of the said hard drives since the 2018 watchdog report was released.

Looming over two cases threatening Musk's car company is a single question: Can he be trusted**MIAMI. (Agency)**

Elon Musk fought court cases on opposite coasts Monday, raising a question about the billionaire that could either speed his plan to put self-driving Teslas on U.S. roads or throw up a major roadblock: Can this wildly successful man who tends to exaggerate really be trusted? In Miami, a Tesla driver who has admitted he was wrong to reach for a dropped cell phone moments before a deadly accident, spoke of the danger of putting too much faith in Musk's technology — in this case his Autopilot program. "I trusted the technology too much," said George McGee, who ran off the road and killed a woman out stargazing with her boyfriend. "I believed that if the car saw something in front of it, it would provide a warning and apply the brakes." In unusual coincidence, regulators arguing an Oakland, California, case tried to pin exaggerated talk about the same Tesla technology at the center of a request to suspend the carmaker from being able to sell vehicles in the state. Musk's tendency to talk big — whether it's his cars, his rockets or his government cost-cutting efforts — have landed him in trouble with

investors, regulators and courts before, but rarely at such a delicate moment. After his social media spat with President Donald Trump, Musk can no longer count on a light regulatory touch from Washington. Meanwhile, sales of his electric cars have plunged and so a hit to his safety reputation could threaten his next big project: rolling out driverless robotaxis — hundreds of thousands of them — in several U.S. cities by the end of next year. The Miami case holds other dangers, too. Lawyers for the family of the dead woman, Naibei Benavides Leon, recently convinced the judge overseeing the jury trial to allow them to argue for punitive damages. A car crash lawyer not involved in the case, but closely following it, said that could cost Tesla tens of millions of dollars, or possibly more. "I've seen punitive damages go to the hundreds of millions, so that is the floor," said Miguel Custodio of Los Angeles-based Custodio & Dubey. "It is also a signal to other plaintiffs that they can also ask for punitive damages, and then the payments could start compounding." That Tesla has allowed the Miami case to proceed to trial is surprising. It has settled at least four deadly



accidents involving Autopilot, including payments just last week to a Florida family of a Tesla driver. That said, Tesla was victorious in two other jury cases, both in California, that also sought to lay blame on its technology for crashes. Lawyers for the plaintiffs in the Miami case argue that Tesla's driver-assistance feature, called Autopilot, should have warned the driver and braked when his Model S sedan blew through flashing lights, a stop sign and a T-intersection at 62 miles-an-hour in an April 2019 crash. Tesla said that drivers are

warned not to rely on Autopilot, or its more advanced Full Self-Driving system. It says the fault entirely lies with the "distracted driver" just like so many other "accidents since cellphones were invented." Driver McGee settled separate suit brought by the family of Benavides and her severely injured boyfriend, Dillon Angulo. McGee was clearly shaken when shown a dashcam video Monday of his car jumping a Key West, Florida, road and hitting a parked Chevrolet Tahoe which then slammed into Benavides and sent her 75 feet through the air to her death. Asked if he had seen those images before, McGee pinched his lips, shook his head, then squeaked out a response, "No."

Tesla's attorney sought to show that McGee was fully to blame, asking if he had ever contacted Tesla for additional instructions about how Autopilot or any other safety features worked. McGee said he had not, though he was heavy user of the features. He said he had driven the same road home from work 30 or 40 times. Under questioning, he also acknowledged he alone was responsible for watching the road and hitting the brakes.

Trump escalates feud with Wall Street Journal, bans reporter over Epstein story**world. (Agency)**

President Donald Trump on Monday followed up his lawsuit against The Wall Street Journal over last week's Jeffrey Epstein story by banishing one of the newspaper's reporters from Air Force One for an upcoming Scotland trip. The moves reflect Trump's aggressiveness toward media who displease him — even a media magnate, Rupert Murdoch, with outlets that have been friendly to him in the past. Trump filed a \$10 billion defamation lawsuit against the Journal and Murdoch on Friday because of the newspaper's article about a sexually suggestive letter bearing Trump's name that was included in a 2003 album compiled for alleged sex trafficker Epstein's birthday. The president has denied having anything to do with it. On Monday, the White House said it was removing a Journal reporter from the pool covering the president's trip this weekend to his golf courses in Turnberry and Aberdeen in Scotland. The Journal's Tarini Parti had been scheduled to cover him on the trip. "Due to the Wall Street Journal's

fake and defamatory conduct, they will not be one of the thirteen outlets on board," White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said. Aggressiveness with the press is in the Trump playbook



It's a tactic the Trump White House has used before. It restricted the access of journalists from The Associated Press to press events when the news outlet would not change its style guidelines to reflect Trump's renaming of the Gulf of Mexico. That launched a legal battle that is wending its way through the courts. The defamation lawsuit is another tool Trump has used against media outlets. He has sued CBS News for its editing of a "60 Minutes"

interview with former opponent Kamala Harris; ABC News for a false statement made by George Stephanopoulos in a story regarding a New York writer who had accused Trump of sexual abuse; and Meta after it removed Trump's social media accounts following the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol. In each of those cases, Trump won multimillion-dollar settlements. But in those instances, news was only one part of a major corporation's business. In the case of Murdoch and News Corp., news is the chief part of his business. The Journal has vowed to fight. It's also the first time Trump has sued for defamation as a sitting president, and it's not clear whether any president has done that in the past. "There's nothing inherently wrong with a president bringing a libel suit," said noted free speech attorney Floyd Abrams. "But this claim certainly seems like nothing more or less than an effort to suppress speech that our president finds discomforting. That's not why we have libel law. It's why we have a First Amendment."

20 killed, 171 injured as Bangladesh Air Force training jet crashes into school in Dhaka

The aircraft crashed onto the campus of Milestone School and College, in Dhaka's Uttara neighborhood, where students were taking tests or attending regular classes.

world. (Agency)

A Bangladesh Air Force training aircraft crashed into a school campus in northern Dhaka on Monday, killing at least 20 people, including its pilot, and injuring more than 170 people, officials and local media said.

The pilot attempted to steer the aircraft away from densely populated areas. However, despite his efforts, the aircraft tragically crashed into the two-storey building of the school, said the ISPR — the media wing of the military.

"All injured individuals are being promptly transported to the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) and nearby hospitals for necessary treatment, with assistance from Air Force helicopters and ambulances," it said. The aircraft crashed due to a mechanical fault (the details of which will be informed after investigation) after taking off from the Bangladesh Air Force Base AK Khandaker in Kurmitola at 01:06 pm as part of a regular training, the statement said. It said that the chief of army staff and senior military officers rushed to the crash site where rescuers, including firefighters, army troops, police and elite Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), continued their rescue

operations. A high-level investigation committee has been formed by the Bangladesh Air Force to determine the cause of the accident, the statement added.

Rafiqah Taha, a student at the school who was not present at the time of the crash, told The Associated Press by phone that Milestone School and College, with some 2,000 students, runs classes from elementary to twelfth grade. On Monday, she said, some students were taking tests while others attended regular classes. "I was terrified watching videos on TV," said the 16-year-old student. "My God! It's my school." The interim government has declared one-day state mourning on July 22 when the national flag will be flown at half-mast across Bangladesh and its missions abroad. Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus expressed shock and sorrow over the casualties caused by the crash.

UK, Canada and 26 other countries urge immediate end to Gaza war**LONDON. (Agency)**

Twenty-eight countries including Britain, Japan and a host of European nations issued a joint statement Monday saying the war in Gaza "must end now" the latest sign of allies' sharpening language as Israel's isolation deepens.

The foreign ministers of countries also including Australia and Canada said "the suffering of civilians in Gaza has reached new depths." They condemned "the drip feeding of aid and the inhuman killing of civilians, including children, seeking to meet their most basic needs of water and food." The statement described as "horrifying" the recent deaths of over 800 Palestinians who were seeking aid, according to the figures released by Gaza's Health Ministry and the U.N. human rights office. "The Israeli government's aid delivery model is dangerous, fuels instability and deprives Gazans of human dignity," the countries said. "The Israeli government's denial of essential humanitarian assistance to the civilian population is unacceptable. Israel must comply with its obligations under international humanitarian law."



Israel and U.S. reject the criticism. Israel's Foreign Ministry rejected the statement, saying it was "disconnected from reality and sends the wrong message to Hamas." It accused Hamas of prolonging the war by refusing to accept an Israeli-backed proposal for a temporary ceasefire and hostage release.

"Hamas is the sole party responsible for the continuation of the war and the suffering on both sides," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Oren Marmorek posted on X. U.S. Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee also rejected the statement from many of America's closest allies, calling it "disgusting" in a post on X and saying they should instead pressure the "savages of Hamas."

Germany was also notably absent from the statement. German Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul wrote on X that he spoke with Israeli counterpart Gideon Saar on Monday and expressed the "greatest concern about the catastrophic humanitarian situation" in Gaza as Israel's offensive widens. He called on Israel to implement agreements with the EU to enable more humanitarian aid.

Indian-American economist Gita Gopinath to leave IMF to rejoin Harvard University faculty

Gopinath will rejoin the Harvard Economics Department on September 1 as the inaugural Gregory and Ania Coffey Professor of Economics.

TOKYO. (Agency)

NEW YORK: Indian-American economist Gita Gopinath who is serving as the first deputy managing director at the International Monetary Fund (IMF), said she is rejoining Harvard University as an economics professor. "After nearly 7 amazing years at the IMF, I have decided to return to my academic roots," Gopinath, the first female chief economist in IMF history, said in a post on X. Gopinath will rejoin the Harvard Economics Department

on September 1 as the inaugural Gregory and Ania Coffey Professor of Economics. She said she is "truly grateful" for her time at IMF, where she was first chief economist and then served as first deputy managing director, describing her time there as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to serve the IMF's membership during a period of unprecedented challenges. "I now return to my roots in academia, where I look forward to continuing to push the research frontier in international finance and macroeconomics to address global challenges, and to training the next generation of economists," she said. Arifical Intelligence uses Arifical Intelligence to join the IMF in January 2019 as chief economist and was promoted to the post of first deputy managing director in January 2022. Prior to joining the IMF, Gopinath was the John Zwaanstra Professor of International Studies and of Economics at Harvard University's economics department (2005-22) and before that she was an assistant professor of economics at



the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business (2001-05). IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva described Gopinath as an "outstanding colleague" an exceptional intellectual leader, dedicated to the mission and members of the Fund, and a fabulous manager, always showing genuine care for the professional standing and well-being of our staff. Georgieva said Gopinath came to the IMF as a highly respected academic in macroeconomics

and international finance and admiration for her only grew through her time at the IMF, where her analytical rigor was paired with practical policy advice to the membership during an especially challenging period, which included the pandemic, wars, the cost-of-living crisis, and major shifts in the global trading system. Georgieva added that Gopinath steered the IMF's analytical and policy work with clarity, striving for the highest standards of rigorous analysis at a complex time of high uncertainty and rapidly changing global economic environment. Gopinath oversaw the IMF's multilateral surveillance and analytical work on fiscal and monetary policy, debt, and international trade. As a key member of IMF senior leadership team, she represented the organisation in many international fora, notably the G-7 and G-20. As Chief Economist, Gita ensured that the World Economic Outlook remained the preeminent report on the global economy an especially impressive achievement during the Covid-19 pandemic which presented.

Sanskrit, French as optional languages; teaching in Punjabi in early grades: Union ministry lists Punjab's initiatives under NEP



Ludhiana. (Agency)

From introducing pre-primary classes in all schools to the introduction of Sanskrit and French as optional languages to teaching in mother tongue in early grades — the Union Ministry of Education Monday listed several initiatives that have been undertaken by the Punjab government in sync with the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020.

Responding to a question by Jalandhar MP Charanjit Singh Channi, Union Minister of State (MoS) in the Ministry of Education Jayant Chaudhary replied that Punjab has taken several initiatives in alignment of NEP. "As informed by the state of Punjab, following initiatives aligned with the NEP 2020 are being actively implemented, under the umbrella of centrally sponsored schemes of Samagra Shiksha and PM SHRI, with continued financial and technical support from the Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education, Government of India: 1. Implementation of pre-primary classes in all primary schools of Punjab including rural areas 2. Foundational Literacy and Numeracy: The NIPUN Bharat Mission is being implemented with focus on achieving FLN by grade early childhood education activities are being promoted in all primary schools," Chaudhary said. The reply said on multilingualism and mother tongue instruction, Punjab schools are teaching in the mother tongue Punjabi in early grades. "In context to multilingualism, the state has already taken the following initiatives: Sanskrit, French, German and Urdu languages are also implemented as an optional subject at senior secondary level.

Paper leak: Eight former Western Railway employees awarded five years in jail, fined 5L

Ahmedabad. A special CBI court here on Monday sentenced eight former Western Railway employees to five years' imprisonment and imposed a Rs 5 lakh fine on each of them after finding them guilty of leaking the paper of an exam conducted by the railways in 2002. The court said that this case is a "glaring example of betrayal of public trust".

Those punished are former head clerks Sunil Golani and Prakash Karamchandani, senior cipher operator Mahendra Vyas, signal maintainers Rajesh Goswami and Anand Meraiya, assistant diesel drivers Mehbobali Ansari and Paresh Patel and railway protection force personnel Pappu Khan. The CBI filed a case against them based on a complaint made by the chief vigilance inspector on Aug 17, 2002.

They were charged with criminal conspiracy, theft, causing the disappearance of evidence and dishonestly receiving or retaining stolen property after they leaked and sold question papers for the exam to be held on Aug 18, 2002, for the post of probationary assistant station master. The exam was cancelled.

After the trial, special judge D G Rana stated, "This not only caused substantial financial and administrative loss to the govt exchequer but also inflicted deep disappointment and irreparable emotional and intellectual damage to thousands of honest and hardworking aspirants who invested their precious time, effort and resources to prepare for the examination in good faith."

'To whom should I go for justice now?': Pain, anger among Mumbai train blasts victims' families

Mumbai. (Agency)

On the evening of July 11, 2006, Mahendra Pitale was travelling home from work. Like most days, he stood at the door of an overcrowded North-bound local train. Around 6 pm, as the train approached Jogeshwari station, a powerful blast tore through the coach, throwing him out. He woke up the next day in hospital to find his left arm amputated.

Nineteen years later, with the High Court on Monday acquitting all 12 accused in the 7/11 Mumbai train bomb blasts, Pitale says, "This one day is more unjust than the 19 years of suffering we have gone through. My only expectation now is that if these were not the perpetrators, then find the real culprits. I am convinced that the investigation fell short." The court also set aside a special court verdict that had awarded the death sentence to five convicts, and refused the Maharashtra government's plea seeking confirmation of their sentences. On July 11, 2006, a series of bombs had ripped through seven local trains in Mumbai, killing 187 people and injuring

824.

Following Monday's verdict by a special High Court bench of Justices Anil S Kilar and Shyam C Chandak, the victims of the blast and their families expressed their disappointment.

Ramesh Naik, who lost his 27-year-old daughter Nandini when a bomb went off on a train at Borivali, says, "We waited for 19 long years for justice, but was it delivered? After 19 years, we are being told that the accused are not guilty. To whom should I go for justice now? Who should I hold responsible — the judiciary or the government? Nandini had just graduated from college and was about to start her career." Months before the blast, Naik had lost his younger daughter Rachana to an illness. The two consecutive tragedies left the family shattered.

Anuj Kilawala, who worked as a development officer with a private firm, was among the dead. His wife Chandika Kilawala says, "The government always fails to provide speedy justice to the victims. If it had not been for my



daughter, who took over the family business, we would have struggled."

In another part of the city, Chirag Chauhan calls the verdict a "failure of the judiciary". In 2006, Chirag, then a CA student, was returning from his articleship when a blast went off on a train near Jogeshwari. While Chauhan survived the blast, an injury to his spinal cord left him paralysed waist down.

"The judgment is shocking. This is not just about me; there are hundreds of others who were victims of this attack. I am yet to go through the whole judgment but I don't understand why this has happened. We are

hoping to appeal the verdict in the higher court," he says.

Hansraj Kanjaria, 55, walks on crutches since he injured his legs in the blast. That day, he was returning from his workplace to his home in Goregaon, when the bomb went off on the train. "The incident may have happened 19 years ago but the wounds are still fresh. I remember the blasts vividly — everyday. The incident altered my life and I think about it every moment I walk. Like me, all the victims would have hoped to get some sense of justice from the administration. But today's judgment today is a complete failure of the administration.

How is it that they haven't been able to find those responsible for these attacks?" Usha Sharad Bobbata's husband Sharad Bobbata, a manager at the Punjab National Bank in Sion, was on a train in Matunga when the blasts hit. Usha says that on July 11, 2006, she didn't get the usual evening call from Sharad. "He would always call me while leaving office to ask if he needed to pick anything from the market.

As Manikrao Kokate warns of defamation suit over 'card game' video, Rohit Pawar posts 2 more clips of minister

Mumbai. (Agency)

After Maharashtra Agriculture Minister Manikrao Kokate threatened to move a defamation suit in connection with a recent video showing him playing an online card game at the state Assembly, Opposition MLA Rohit Pawar of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) posted two more videos in which he was seen playing games on the phone in the House.

Kokate, however, refused to tender his resignation in the wake of the controversy, saying that he did not commit any mistake. "Why should I resign? Have I outraged the modesty of anyone or have I robbed anyone? What is my crime? I have written to the Chief Minister, Deputy CM, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and Chairman of the Legislative Council to probe the incident. Let the truth come out. If I am found guilty, I will resign," he said on Tuesday morning.

Adding that House proceedings were not underway when the video was captured, the minister said he will drag to court the person who shared the clip and "defamed" him.

Minutes after Kokate's warning, Pawar posted that the minister was lying and underlined that he was playing the online game while the proceedings were going on. "Here is the video where one can clearly hear the discussion about giving dairy animals to tribals. Instead of participating, the minister was playing the game online," Pawar said as he posted the two videos.

The NCP(S) leader said the videos prove that Kokate was lying as he was not seen skipping an advertisement that had popped up — the minister had claimed so — but playing the card game while sitting inside the House. On Monday night, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis disapproved of Kokate's behaviour in the legislature. "Sometimes you have to sit inside the House to listen to others. Even though he (Kokate) has explained that it was merely a pop-up window, I feel that whatever happened is not something to be proud of," Fadnavis said.

Density of torrential rains decreasing in Himachal, but don't lower guards: IMD

Shimla. (Agency)

The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) Centre in Shimla has stated that the intensity of torrential rains across Himachal Pradesh is beginning to decrease and is expected to stabilise by Wednesday, but people should remain cautious. Rainfall, however, is still likely to persist across the state until 27 July.

IMD senior scientist Shobhit Katiyar told The Indian Express, "The peak activity of torrential rain has started declining this afternoon, but another spell is expected in the next 24 hours. From Wednesday onwards, the intensity of the rain will not be as high as it has been over the past 24 hours, but we advise people not to lower their guard. Extreme weather events, including incessant rainfall, cannot be ruled out, especially in the context of the already forecast above-normal monsoon (approximately 109 per cent) for the state this season. In addition to the seasonal



outlook, we have also predicted above-normal rainfall for July."

"Torrential rains are also being experienced in several other states, including Jammu & Kashmir, Uttarakhand, Punjab and Haryana. The monsoon is expected to remain active till September 30," Katiyar added.

IMD forecaster Pramod Sharma said, "The ongoing active monsoon phase is largely attributed to an upper-air cyclonic circulation

persisting over west Rajasthan and adjoining Pakistan, extending up to 3.1 km above the mean sea level and tilting southwards with height.

This has been a key factor behind the torrential rainfall in Himachal. Additionally, the monsoon currently extends from Jammu through Chandigarh, Sarsawa, Varanasi, Ranchi and into the northeast Bay of Bengal." Sharma further said, "The forecast for the coming days indicates continued rainfall activity. Light to moderate rain is likely at most places from July 21 to 23, and at many places from July 24 to 27. Isolated areas may receive heavy rain from July 23 to 27, with the possibility of very heavy downpours on July 21 and 22."

"Among the wettest locations, Kangra Aero recorded the highest rainfall of 15 cm, followed by Nagrota Surian (13 cm), Sandhole and Chuari (12 cm each), and Mandi and Ghamarwin (11 cm each).

Electricity equipment theft: Six sentences of convict to run concurrently, says Allahabad HC

The petitioner submitted that a trial court, while convicting him in all six cases on the same date, sentenced him to undergo imprisonment for one year and six months in each case.

Lucknow. (Agency)

THE ALLAHABAD High Court has ordered that the sentences of a man convicted in six cases related to the theft of electricity equipment shall run concurrently, observing that his life and liberty would be jeopardised if his grievance was not addressed.

The petitioner submitted that a trial court, while convicting him in all six cases on the same date, sentenced him to undergo imprisonment for one year and six months in each case. However, due to the non-exercise of discretion under Section 427(1) Cr.P.C., the sentences were directed to run consecutively, meaning a total incarceration period of nine years. "We are of the considered view that the life and liberty of the petitioner will be jeopardised if his grievance is not redressed in this writ petition. Thus, the writ petition is allowed. The sentence of one year and six months imprisonment awarded to the petitioner in all the six session

cases, shown in the chart, shall run concurrently. The fine has been deposited by the petitioner, per enclosed receipts," the court observed.

The court said in its order, "The Registry to inform



the District Jail, Aligarh to release the petitioner-Santosh, considering the concurrent running of sentences." The court passed the order while hearing a petition filed by one

Santosh, seeking a direction to the Superintendent, District Jail, Aligarh, for issuance of appropriate orders for concurrent running of sentences imposed in six cases arising out of theft of electricity equipment, in which the petitioner was convicted upon admission of guilt under the plea bargaining mechanism.

The court noted in its order that the counsel for the petitioner submits that the discretion provided under Section 427(1) Cr.P.C. has not been exercised by the trial Judge.

The petitioner has confessed the crime on plea bargaining, considering that in all the cases the petitioner would be released after one and half years of imprisonment, as all the cases have been lodged by the police. The non-exercise of discretion of consecutive or concurrent running of sentence by the trial Judge while convicting the petitioner simultaneously in six cases led to travesty of justice and long incarceration in jail.

Has Chandipura changed its pattern? ICMR teams visit Gujarat as samples of all 14 deceased children test negative for virus

Vadodara. (Agency)

With samples of children, who died of suspected Chandipura virus over the last few weeks, testing negative for the infection, teams of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) visited Gujarat earlier in July in a bid to study the "changing pattern" of the viral encephalitis.

The teams collected samples of sandflies, domestic animals and residents from villages where suspected Chandipura deaths among children have been reported since June this year. The ICMR teams camped in four districts of the state — Panchmahal, Rajkot, Bhavnagar and Valsad — and studied the pattern of the virus.

According to officials in Panchmahal, the ICMR team visited the district last week to gather samples of sandflies, ticks, mosquitoes and other vectors along with the that of domesticated animals and cattle,

rats and human beings from the areas where four deaths have been reported.

Panchmahal Chief District Health Officer Dr Vipul Gamit told The Indian Express, "The ICMR team has gathered samples of those in the vicinity of the family that witnessed a death in the last month. They will be studied for antibodies — IgM and IgG — to understand the spread of the virus. There is a changing pattern in the virus... the same case with Japanese encephalitis, which in the recent past, has not been detected positive in laboratory tests."

Dr Gamit said that much like 2024, the Chandipura suspected cases — that later turned out to be negative after tests in Gujarat Biotechnology Research Centre (GBRC) — emerged sporadically from villages that were unrelated to one another. "In one case, of a five-year-old boy from



Panchmahal who died, and later tested negative, the other two children living in the same house — his cousins aged 7 and 8 — did not have any symptoms and are doing well," Dr Gamit said, adding that the symptoms include high-grade fever, convulsions, followed by diarrhoea with "little or no time" for medical response. "Once the respiratory organs are involved, the children cannot be saved," he added.

Teams of ICMR also visited Bhavnagar, Valsad and Rajkot to collect samples of the vectors and other residents in close proximity to the deceased.

Officials of the Gujarat government's medical department said that the ICMR will take the samples to its laboratory in Puducherry to check if the pattern of the virus has changed in the current season. An official said, "The sudden increase in the number of negative cases of acute encephalitis syndrome (AES), which are not showing a positive report, has prompted the ICMR to send across a team this year to study the pattern of the virus. Specific villages in certain areas where the cases have been high have been selected by the ICMR teams for the study."

Vadodara's SSG hospital has recorded 14 deaths out of the 24 cases, including a 1.5 year old infant from Dahod, of suspected Chandipura reported this year.

In-charge Medical Superintendent and Dean of Baroda Medical College, Dr Ranjan

Aiyer, said, "Every year, around June, in the month of monsoon, Chandipura cases occur due to vectors and sandflies, especially among people living in mud houses in rural areas... This year, we received unknown virulent cases of around 24 children, who presented similar symptoms, particularly in areas of Panchmahal-Dahod and even Madhya Pradesh. They deteriorated very rapidly despite a paediatric team treating them.. However, all samples have tested negative for Chandipura."

What is Chandipura virus?

Chandipura virus belongs to the *Rhabdoviridae* family, which includes rabies.

It is transmitted by sandflies and mosquitoes, including *Aedes aegypti*, which is also a vector for dengue. The virus resides in the salivary glands of these insects and can be transmitted to humans or domestic animals through bites.

Only inclusive growth can cut subsidy burden

All the peninsular states have dramatically reduced extreme poverty and made considerable improvements in living standards, human development, and economic modernisation. These are fantastic achievements when measured against the abysmal state of affairs in North and East India. However, the next phase of economic transformation necessitates a strategy of prosperity that secures higher incomes for the majority of people to improve the lives of their families—without relying on public subsidies. And the biggest challenge to executing such a strategy will be reversing the persistent and ubiquitous inequality that characterises the contemporary economic landscape of the peninsula. To understand this better, it is essential to distinguish between inclusion and redistribution. Consider a family of working adults. One earns 80 percent of the family income, and the rest, 5 percent each. The top earner will subsidise the others, but that will make the family entirely dependent on this single earner. In a family where all four members contribute 25 per cent each to the total income, the question of dependence does not arise. When growth enriches the few at the expense of the many, governments spend more on redistribution to compensate for inequality. This gives rise to "schemes" to provide the majority with subsidised medicines, affordable meals, pensions, income support, and free transport, among other benefits. These subsidies are more affordable the richer a State. Hence, a lot of people who suffer from unequalising growth in the peninsula are better off than those in poorer states. However, fiscal policy is a hard taskmaster. States with a \$3,500 per capita income (PCI) are spending the same proportion of their budgets on providing compensating subsidies as states with a \$1,100 PCI. Both categories of states have no resources to invest in growth, employment and human capital. The peninsular states will be at higher levels of income and human development due to past progress, but will also be stuck in a development trap. The success of peninsular states in fostering growth is precisely why they need to pay the most urgent attention to reducing inequality, not inequality of consumption through redistributive subsidies, but inequality of participation in delivering growth and enjoying the income rewards that come with it. Take Kerala. It has the highest per capita income (PCI) of all major states and topnotch human development. However, there are not enough quality jobs for a well-educated young population. Female labour force participation is falling. Income and consumption inequality in Kerala are now among the highest of all Indian states. This means that the state government must undertake increasingly heavy fiscal lifting to compensate those not benefiting from the Kerala story. Tamil Nadu (TN) has the highest manufacturing-GDP ratio in the peninsula. Consumption inequality is declining. While deprivation and inequality between rich and poor districts are pronounced, state government interventions and subsidies have considerably improved the quality of life in poorer districts in recent years. Yet, wages offered by foreign mega corps like Samsung and Foxconn are too low for these workers to be eligible to pay income tax.

So, manufacturing has not been the engine of inclusive prosperity in Tamil Nadu. The state continues to subsidise these workers and their families with meals, education, and transportation, despite their employment in high-quality manufacturing jobs. It also spends a significant amount of public money offering incentives to foreign investors, but the resultant investments do not deliver a quantum increase in inclusive prosperity—the rich continue to disproportionately enjoy the income and wealth benefits of the manufacturing boom.

CM Sangma and his team need to turn their attention to education with the intent and vigour they have shown in the health sector.

MEGHALAYA put its best foot forward for the visiting VIP earlier this month. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman was on her first long trip, one of four days, a substantial one by any measure for a senior colleague of the Prime Minister, to this small state.

The FM's visit was well-choreographed by the state government, led by its affable Chief Minister Conrad Sangma, an NDA ally. There was a visit to what she called an "iconic" living root bridge in Sohra (old name Cherrapunji); the town used to hold the record for the world's highest rainfall but has been more in the news in recent weeks for the sensational murder of Raja Raghavanshi. For those whose minds have been swayed by the garish media coverage of that messy business, remember that the root bridges are engineering marvels which will outlast such events. They represent ancient traditions in modern times; a staggering 72 bridges in Meghalaya are mentioned in the UNESCO cultural landscapes listing. Local villagers weave the bridges from the extended roots of India rubber trees and create ladders, platforms and towers. One account said the FM remarked that the root bridges represented "a global benchmark in ecological resilience". The visit wasn't exactly a relaxed one—she packed a lot into those four days. Apart from an interview with a young entrepreneur by the pretty Ward's Lake in Shillong, she opened the state's first major mall, flagged off the first consignment of pineapples—among the sweetest produced in the country—to Dubai, visited Sohra's Ramakrishna Mission (a pioneer of modern education in the region), interacted with members of the business community, farmers and women SHGs (self-help groups), laid the foundation stone of a conference centre as well as that of a massive concert and football venue in this music and sports-loving state. Sitharaman was clearly impressed and she posted photos as well as videos on social media. That should have pleased the state government, which had, smartly and strategically, decided not to raise the issue of funds or other matters directly with her. It let others who were meeting her do the talking and pose questions. The FM underlined the improvement in Meghalaya's health sector, which once made extremely dismal reading. The state's Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) or the number of women who die in childbirth was among the highest in the country in 2020-21, at 243 per one lakh live births. Thanks to a multi-sector approach, which combined better access to healthcare, transit homes for high-risk pregnant women, transportation facilities and a new app which enabled closer monitoring and reporting of pregnant women by health workers at different levels, the MMR dropped dramatically and now hovers around 107. This is an extraordinary achievement by any measure and Meghalaya received high praise at an international

conference in Berlin this year that celebrated innovative and creative bureaucracy. Also, there has been a significant decline in infant mortality, although stunting and anaemia among children remain critical obstacles. The FM must also be aware of the continuing challenges, which the CM himself readily admits. The Primer on Maternal and Child Health in Meghalaya, published by Accountability Initiative, said there were a range of issues which continue to resist change and need continuous and long-term focus. "Problems of social taboos, teenage pregnancies, poverty, remoteness, etc. pose long-term constraints. Addressing them must remain a protracted focus of the state," the primer said. Another challenge was highlighted by Ibalarishisha Syiem

which are in the plains, Shillong's narrow sloping roads on hills of different gradients do not lend themselves easily to expansion. The city is becoming more crowded with concrete buildings looming over lanes and thousands of vehicles being added to its vehicular population every year. Parking is a problem and jams are long and painful, although scooter taxis and walking are options. The Shillong Times, quoting official data, says Meghalaya has about six lakh registered vehicles; the East Khasi Hills district, which is dominated by Shillong, accounts for about half of them. The capital's population is around five lakh. Plans to decongest Shillong include relocating the state government offices and the legislature to a newer part of the city, while another segment will house major educational institutions like the National Law University and other centres as well as cultural and sports arenas. "People will have to move to those areas from their current homes, it's not practical to make long commutes when those townships come up," said a senior official who is familiar with the plans.

There is a key sector where the state government needs to engage robustly, as it has done in the health sector—education, especially at the school level. Both the highly regarded Annual Survey of Education Report (2024) and the Central Government's Performance Grading Indicator (PGI) have given stinging indictments of Meghalaya's performances in this area. The PGI is a rigorous assessment that looks at some 73 categories, including whether students have access roads to schools and transportation; it reviews the quality of teaching and learning as well as school building infrastructure, including toilets and drinking water. I was disappointed to find that all states of the Northeast, barring Sikkim, figured in the lower categories. Meghalaya, according to the PGI report, sits at the very bottom.

Chief Minister Sangma and his team need to turn their attention to this area with the intent and vigour they have shown in the health sector. The two are seamlessly connected. Without health, there cannot be an educated population—and vice versa. One is sure that Sitharaman and Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan will lend considerable support. Innovations such as those pioneered by Dhir Jhingran, a former IAS officer from Assam, and his Language and Learning Foundation, which has worked successfully across numerous states, could be considered. However, at a fundamental level, for initiatives to take off, Meghalaya will need basic infrastructure of good school buildings in rural areas, with trained teachers, proper classrooms and mid-day meals to draw children and retain them.

Medical truth needs to expose cosmetic fiction

Regulation of risky products and their marketing is necessary. Beauty norms should be challenged in visual and broadcast messaging and societal trends.

Curated perfection and influencer culture are driving the innocent pursuit of youth and beauty in a perilous direction. Fair skin, unblemished faces, and lustrous hair are the ideals of attractiveness, and exploiting this aspiration, the cosmetic industry is peddling an array of skin-whitening agents, DIY beauty kits, supplements, and so-called "miracle" injectables. Easily accessible and under-regulated, influencers and beauty experts relentlessly promote them. Self-help classes market magic cures, such as glutathione and Vitamin C injections, which the movie and modelling industries use regularly. As are steroid creams, Vitamin D supplements, skin patches, and hair health products. Unmonitored sales and prolonged use can play havoc with one's health.

Artificial Intelligence uses Arificial Intelligence uses. At the heart of this trend is a generation growing up on internet advice and reel-life illusions, as well as assured beauty shortcuts to social acceptance and success. However, beneath the promises lies a menacing truth. A recent study revealed that formaldehyde, commonly used in embalming and industrial manufacturing, is also

heavily used in cosmetics, face creams, and body lotions for darker skin. Darker-skinned consumers are disproportionately exposed to these toxins. Societal pressures make them consume more beauty products that may contain hazardous chemicals, such as parabens, sulfates, and phthalates. At least 30 percent of users have reported adverse reactions. The film industry plays its own role, celebrating the likes of Shah Rukh Khan and Tom Cruise for their youthfulness and setting



unattainable vanity goals. The fallout is becoming apparent as dermatologists report an increasing number of cases of skin damage, infections, vitamin overdose, hormonal and reproductive complications, and a disturbing rise in mental health issues linked to the misuse of steroid creams. The medical fraternity attributes this to the influence of social media and inadequate medical monitoring and prescription practices. Consumers fail to realise that these quick fixes, while enhancing beauty, have multiple side effects. Melanotan nasal sprays often lead to melanoma, and self-injecting Botox filler kits can cause infections and even blindness. It is high time that public discourse caught up with medical reality. Regulation of risky products and their marketing is necessary. Beauty norms should be challenged in visual and broadcast messaging and societal trends. Brands have to be accountable for the safety of their products as well as the narratives they create. Ethical guidelines must be drawn up for influencers to follow.

A time for thoughtful gestures

Donating to those in need, whether food, clothes, water or money, can deepen one's personal journey and friendship with God this Kamika Ekadashi. Genuine giving comes from the heart, centred on the wellbeing of others rather than personal gains.

Today is Kamika Ekadashi, extra special because it falls in the holy month of Shravan, which commenced on July 11 and ends on August 9. It is meant to be a time of reflection, spiritual inquiry, and stock-taking of events, relationships, and directions that are important to us. A calendar opportunity provided by tradition to re-evaluate what we want to keep, and think of how we can make small or big changes for our well-being. The belief goes that this Ekadashi is further powered by the preceding Ashadhi Ekadashi on July 6. That's also known as Dev Shayani Ekadashi because it's believed to be the day when Bhagavan Vishnu enters a four-month period of celestial 'sleep' in Yoga Nidra, or yogic 'sleep'. The entire responsibility of keeping the universe going falls on Lord Shiva during this annual occurrence, a period also known as Chaturmaas or 'four months'. It's believed that it's good luck to regularly listen to the Vishnu Sahasra Namam or 'The Thousand Names of Vishnu', a passage from the Mahabharata, during this period. Grandsire Bhishma imparted it to Yudhishtira from his bed of arrows. Or else, read or listen daily to even one verse from the Bhagavad Gita. This is recommended to connect with and channel Mahavishnu's deeply restful and powerful Yoga Nidra energy into our lives, thereby reducing stress. To enhance this step in our personal

journey, and in our sakhya or friendship with God, we are also given a recommendation for Kamika Ekadashi, indeed for the entire month of Shravan. The recommendation is simple yet powerful—donate to those in need, giving whatever you can of food, clothing, water, or monetary assistance. Everything counts, big or little. Even a student or someone on a tight budget can make small but thoughtful gestures to earn merit. Arificial Intelligence uses An elderly mochi or cobbler gave me a good clue about this when I went to get a slipper repaired. There were food carts along the road selling momos, samosas and veg burgers. I impulsively asked if I could get him something. Instead of the fried food, he said he would like bananas, a wise choice. So, I got him six from the fruit man's cart. It cost a small sum of ₹30, but it was clean, power food, full of nutrition. Giving fruit is certainly a good, healthy option as a gesture that any one of us could make, and not only on an Ekadashi.

Delhi NCR is presently awash with kavadiyas on their way to Haridwar to fetch Ganga water for the shivlings in their temples at home. Sometimes it feels like an invasion because there are lumpen gangs among them who resort to violence and the destruction of cars and shops in

the city. The police seem to be firmly on their side. I feel bad about this because the genuine pilgrims marching stoically under the sun on the long road to Haridwar get a bad name because of the rowdies. Many devout householders, shop owners and even companies set up camps along



the route for the kavadiyas, offering them free food, baths, and mats to rest on under a canopy. One year, at a big kavadiya camp at Buddha Jayanti Park in Delhi, one such group of hosts, traders from Karol Bagh market, told me piously, "We do it for us, not them, because it's good merit". The rewards they're after are "peace and prosperity". These camps usually serve heavy, oily, fried food—puri, kachoris, samosas, potato

curry, and loads of sweets, which does not sound helpful at all for those walking long distances. I often wonder if these hosts could be persuaded to change their offerings to fruit, milk and nutritious vegetable curries with rotis or rice. It could be economically managed with a bit of planning to really help sustain pilgrims, rather than making it about themselves. But that requires self-awareness or, at a cosmic level, awareness-building programmes by the state governments along the route, a 'chintan manthan'. Another hurdle is the immovable wall of established tastes. Bhandaras or community meals in temples usually feature fried food. Even fasts are broken with fried food. So, it seems pretty impossible to change the 'halwai habit', a halwai being the professional cook hired to turn out the puris and potato curry. So, I'm wholly hesitant to suggest it to anyone, but can't help wondering each Shravan why nobody wants to consider offering appropriate marching food, maybe tasty sattu rotis and alternative sabzi. I can't practice what I preach because I am inclined to other causes.

Not so swachh: MCG, MCM among 81 civic bodies in Haryana that fudged waste data

Gurgaon.(Agency)

After the Swachh Survekshan results were declared on July 17, city residents spoke about alleged data manipulation. They asked how Gurgaon could improve its rankings from 140 last year to 41 this year despite construction debris and garbage strewn across the roads and public places. It has come to light now among Haryana's 87 municipalities, 81 local bodies — including NCR cities Gurgaon, Faridabad and Manesar — provided inaccurate information by claiming 100% door-to-door waste collection during the survey. Several urban local bodies (ULBs) recorded less than 60% coverage, with some falling below 40%. According to the data accessed by TOI, significant discrepancies were found between reported and actual door-to-door waste collection coverage across several cities in Haryana. Gurgaon's claim of 100% door-to-door collection contrasted sharply with the actual survey finding of 59% coverage. MCG commissioner Pradeep

Dahiya told TOI, "We will probe the matter and a report will be sought from the nodal officer of Swachh Bharat Mission. We will submit it to the directorate and wait for their review on the same." In the backdrop of the revelations, Haryana ULB department has written to all municipalities, highlighting such "significant misreporting" indicates serious negligence, stemming from either oversight failures or intentional data falsification. The letter, sent on July 19 to the municipalities, also says this behaviour "damages the state's reputation" and affects its position in national Swachh Survekshan rankings. The department has instructed municipalities to levy penalties on agencies that have misrepresented facts in their door-to-door waste collection and waste transportation services data on the Swachh portal. The department mandates issuing show-cause notices to the respective SBM nodal officers of these ULBs. Both deputy municipal commissioners and municipal

commissioners must submit a detailed factual report to headquarters within seven days, including recommendations for issuing chargesheets against relevant officials under applicable service regulations, read the letter. The communication also revealed that while most Haryana ULBs reported 100% doorstep waste collection coverage on the SBM portal, independent assessment for Swachh Survekshan in 2024 showed considerably lower figures. The ULB department instructed commissioners and deputy municipal commissioners to submit their findings on this matter by July 26. The data inconsistencies extended to other cities as well. Manesar's reported 100% coverage was found to be only 72% in reality. Faridabad's claim of 100% coverage was contradicted by ground surveys showing only 35% actual coverage, revealing a substantial 65% gap. Similarly, Nuh's claim of complete coverage was discovered to be just 54%. Palwal and Panchkula demonstrated actual coverage rates of 57% and 61%

respectively, despite claiming 100%. The surveys also revealed Rewari achieving 73% coverage, while Bhiwani registered 48%. "This gross misreporting reflects a grave dereliction of duty either due to supervisory failure or deliberate data manipulation. It tarnishes the image of the state, undermines our ranking in national assessments and jeopardises funding and credibility under the Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0 Urban," read the letter sent by the ULB to the municipalities on Saturday. However, several cities demonstrated commendable performance in waste collection services. Karnal's reported 100% coverage was largely accurate, with surveys confirming 98% implementation. Panipat and Samalkha achieved impressive 99% coverage, whilst Rohtak reached 96%. Ganaur's claim of 100% coverage was fully validated by the ground survey. Among the cities that performed well, Karnal also submitted 100% doorstep waste collection coverage and the survey found it to be 98% on the ground.

GMDA must meet at least once a month, not once or twice a year, says Rao Inderjit Singh

Gurgaon.(Agency)

GMDA was established to emulate the Noida Authority model as a centralised body that would steer the city's development. Union minister and Gurgaon MP Rao Inderjit Singh said at TOI's #WeMakeGurgaon Townhall on Saturday, "Despite the intention of creating a one-window powerhouse, the existence of both the municipal corporation and GMDA, according to Singh, resulted in a lack of clarity regarding their respective areas of influence and administration. Conceived as a Noida Authority-like body, GMDA doesn't function as one. Formed in 2018, the development authority is now seven years old, so there's been enough time to steer it in the direction of its purpose. But the state govt has not quite been able to take it there. One of the main criticisms of GMDA is that its execution is slow and its contributions to the city's infrastructure improvements not very apparent.

Singh said when GMDA was formed, its CEO was allowed to sanction only projects up to Rs 50 lakh. Only recently, it was enhanced to Rs 2.5 crore. "The power of the MCG house (to sanction projects) was earlier Rs 2 crore only and now it has become Rs 10 crore. If you have a project which is over Rs 10 crore, it has to go to the minister, and if it is over Rs 25 crore, to the high-powered purchase committee sitting in Chandigarh. Now, this is a remote-controlled administrative setup with which I am not really very happy," said Singh, referring to the slowness of project execution in Gurgaon.

In Noida, he added, Noida Authority operates through a single-window system. But Gurgaon is hobbled by multiple agencies, creating a complex administrative structure. Noida manages licences for residential colonies and plotted areas, while in Gurgaon, developers independently acquire land from farmers, aggregate it and then seek licences from the town and country planning department, said the minister, pointing out structural flaws in Gurgaon's governance.

Doctors perform rare double valve repair, liver transplant in single surgery

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Doctors at Paras Hospital successfully carried out a complex surgery combining a living donor liver transplant with a double heart valve procedure, a clinical first, according to the team. The 17-hour operation was performed on March 26 on 55-year-old Anara M from Kyrgyzstan, who had end-stage autoimmune liver disease alongside severe mitral and tricuspid valve dysfunction. She had been in and out of hospitals for years and came to Paras Hospital on February 25 seeking urgent advanced care. A multidisciplinary assessment found that both procedures, a liver transplant and double valve repair, were critical to saving her life. However, attempting both in a single sitting posed a significant surgical risk. A team of nearly 20 specialists, including liver transplant surgeons, cardiac surgeons, anaesthetists, and critical care staff, undertook the marathon surgery. The operation began with a four-hour heart procedure, during which doctors replaced Anara's mitral valve and repaired the tricuspid valve. In a rare intraoperative decision, doctors then awakened the patient mid-surgery to assess her heart function in real time. Once the heart was deemed stable, the



team proceeded with the liver transplant — a 12-hour procedure performed in the same session. "It is the first time anyone has combined a living donor liver transplant with simultaneous mitral and tricuspid valve repair," said Dr Vaibhav Kumar, director, Institute of Liver Transplant and GI Surgery at Paras Health Gurugram. "Our team carried out the liver transplant with great precision and deep anatomical knowledge. By doing double valve repair at the same time, we increased the risk and complexity significantly. Completing both procedures in one session demonstrates

our surgical skill and the strength of our collaborative approach. We have set a new standard for what can be done in modern transplant and cardiac surgery," he added. Dr Sanjay Kumar, vice chairman, Cardiac Surgery at Paras Health Gurugram, said the case was extremely rare and high-risk. "The patient had severe dysfunction of both the mitral and tricuspid valves. This meant that unless her heart was stabilised first, the liver transplant would not have been possible," he said. "Successfully replacing the mitral valve and repairing the tricuspid valve allowed the transplant team to move forward with confidence. This achievement shows the strong teamwork between the cardiac and liver teams, the hospital's infrastructure, and our dedication to providing patients a second chance at life." The liver donor was Anara's 23-year-old nephew. He was discharged five days after surgery and returned to Kyrgyzstan within three weeks, having fully recovered and resumed work. Anara spent eight days in intensive care and seven in recovery before being discharged on the 15th day. She returned home after six weeks and has since resumed a healthy, normal lifestyle.

100 new auto stands to tackle chaos near metro stations in Noida

Noida.(Agency)

Parking chaos, traffic jams and encroachments near metro stations due to no regular auto stands in the city — all these may soon be a thing of the past. The transport department is set to identify and develop nearly 100 auto-rickshaw stands across Noida and Greater Noida in a bid to decongest roads and streamline last-mile connectivity outside metro stations. Thousands of autos operate without fixed stands, leading to haphazard parking outside metro stations such as Botanical Garden, Golf Course, City Centre and Sector 52. Though Noida has a few auto stands, most of them are outdated and lack proper signage. The absence of designated auto stands outside metro stations leads to encroachment and traffic



jams too. Hence the move — setting up 100 auto-rickshaw stands — that comes after a recent meeting of the auto union with the DCP (Traffic) and transport officials, where the urgent need for systematic stands and proper regulation was highlighted by the union. Assistant regional transport

officer (administration) Siyaram Verma said a joint meeting with stakeholders, including traffic police and Noida Authority, is scheduled for July 26. "The idea is to designate clear pick-up and drop-off points on various routes to ease congestion and make it easier for commuters to find autos," Verma said, adding, "Once locations are finalised, signage and infrastructure will follow." Noida currently has nearly 18,000 registered auto-rickshaws. Most of them cater to last-mile connectivity from metro stations and bus stops to residential and commercial sectors. With the city expanding and daily ridership growing, officials believe that regulating these autos through dedicated stands is essential.

Gurgaon's problem is it's remote-controlled from Chandigarh, Rao Inderjit Singh says at TOI Townhall

Gurgaon.(Agency)

When Rao Inderjit Singh said "we don't have the autonomy we need", the audience nodded in appreciation and agreement. It was a nod both to the minister's candour as well as his ability to get to the nucleus of the problem that affects a Gurgaon resident all year — the city's acute infrastructure and governance problem.

There are few who know and can read the city as well as Singh, who is currently serving his sixth term as MP from Gurgaon and his third stint as a minister in the central govt led by Narendra Modi. So, when a question came on the city's governance, Singh's diagnosis was quick and precise. Despite the presence of senior state govt functionaries in the city and frequent visits by both the current and former CMs, key decisions regarding Gurgaon's future, he observed, continue to be made in Chandigarh. "Gurgaon is remote-controlled from Chandigarh," he said, speaking at the second edition of TOI's #WeMakeGurgaon Townhall, held on Saturday at Indiabulls Centrum Park in Sector 103. In a conversation that covered a spectrum of subjects, from the city's rain miseries to his own political career, the Union minister offered a forthright and wide-ranging address, candidly acknowledging deficiencies and also laying out his vision for what is to come in the months and years ahead.

real, urgent and growing."

To a question on whether Haryana should consider making Gurgaon its capital, Singh responded by saying it was an impractical idea. "Not a chance," he said. "Gurgaon is already bursting at the seams. We don't have enough water, infrastructure or public services to absorb that level of institutional expansion. Before we talk about a capital, we need to upgrade our current systems." However, he added, "Given our legal infrastructure and population of professionals, I believe Gurgaon should house a high court." Singh mentioned progress on highways, arterial roads and flyovers, all designed to ease the city's notorious traffic problems and improve inter-sector mobility. But there are major gaps still, he admitted. Waterlogging and inadequate sewerage systems continue to plague many areas, especially during monsoon. "Basic issues still remain. But we're actively working on them. These are not being ignored," he assured.

Asked if Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA), created with the vision of enabling unified urban planning for a city with too many agencies and little coordination, had, in his opinion, fulfilled its purpose, Singh said it continues to evolve and holds significant promise. "The intention behind GMDA was to bring Gurgaon under a single development umbrella. It's

a work in progress, but we've taken the first steps towards autonomy." For representatives of RWAs in new sectors around Dwarka Expressway who were among those in the audience, this was an opportunity to voice their grievances before their MP. Lack of public transport, erratic sanitation services, frequent water shortages, and poor road maintenance were the four main problems they brought up. Singh listened, took notes, and assured them he would take these up with the appropriate departments. "I will personally follow up," he said. "Your voices matter." Many in the audience said this was the first time they had been able to speak directly to their elected representative in such an open and public forum. "I'm here to listen and I will act. I may not be able to solve everything immediately, but I promise you will be heard," was Singh's message to them.

As the conversation moved to his long political career, and whether he might hang up his boots as he has hinted before, Singh dismissed a question on whether he would turn his attention to state politics with a shake of the head. Does he see himself as a future CM contender? "The chief minister's chair is a bed of thorns," he said with a smile. "I'm 75 years old. I have no ambition to pursue that path." His political journey, he said, would continue in whichever direction the party deemed fit.

News box

7-year-old reports phone theft, stabbed 20 times with scissors by Gurgaon teen

Gurgaon. (Agency)

A 16-year-old boy was apprehended for the alleged murder of his seven-year-old neighbour, stabbing him nearly 20 times with scissors before hiding the body behind bushes near KMP Expressway.

According to police, the murder was the fallout of an incident two months ago when the victim spotted the accused with his father's stolen phone. The matter escalated when the younger boy's father confronted the teen's family, leading to a public apology and the 16-year-old being beaten up by his father in front of others. This episode, police said, left him seething with revenge. Although the two children continued to play together after the incident a couple of months, the accused was allegedly plotting his revenge. The opportunity came on Saturday when the victim stepped out to play after completing his homework. The teen allegedly lured the younger boy away from the residential area and launched a savage attack on him near the expressway, repeatedly stabbing him in the chest and stomach.

"I had told my son not to play with him, but he was a kid. Neither did I think that such an incident could ever happen," said the victim's father, who works as a courier delivery partner in the city. The victim's mother, who had left him in his father's care before heading to work, grew worried when he didn't return home by his usual time of 8-8.30pm. After hours of searching, she filed a missing person's report late on Saturday night. The body was discovered the next morning in the green belt area near Kalwadi village. "After retrieving the phone, the boy and his father had to apologise to the victim's family. Harboring resentment, the minor lured the boy away from home and stabbed him 18-20 times with scissors, leading to his death," a police officer said. The case unfolded rapidly as police questioned the victim's friends and zeroed in on the accused, who confessed to the crime during questioning. The accused will be presented in a juvenile court on Monday.

Best platform we've had, hope our voices will now be heard, say Indiabulls Centrum Park residents at TOI Townhall

Gurgaon. (Agency)

The air at The Times of India's #WeMakeGurgaon Townhall in Gurgaon was buzzing with anticipation, energy, and most importantly, hope on Saturday. For residents of the Dwarka Expressway area, the new sectors and new townships like Indiabulls Centrum Park, the presence of Union Minister and Gurgaon MP Rao Inderjit Singh in their midst made them feel their voices would finally pierce the curtain of indifference that seems to be drawn around, saddling them with problems ranging from the lack of public transport to water. It helped that Singh strode into the town hall more as the local MP who was there not just to speak but to listen, approachable to anyone who walked up and started a conversation. "This townhall was the best platform for our voices to reach the authorities that people living in the newly developed areas around Dwarka Expressway have ever got," said Arvind Ranjan, president of the RWA at Indiabulls Centrum Park, the venue for the event. His words captured what many felt: a sense that their voices were finally echoing beyond WhatsApp groups and complaint portals and into actual policy corridors. "Today, we witnessed democracy in action, which is transparent, accountable and inclusive," added Saurav Chaudhary, general secretary of the same RWA. Indeed, the minister not only heard every concern patiently but also assured residents that he would take up each issue with the appropriate authorities and push for timely action. Singh's frankness helped as he acknowledged the limitations of centralised governance from Chandigarh and promised to work towards stronger autonomy for Gurgaon. His openness, particularly as he mentioned Gurgaon's contributions to the state's revenue and the mismatch in attention it receives in return, struck a chord with everyone in the crowd.

Additional DM will oversee cashless treatment for road accident victims

Noida.(Agency)

To streamline the Centre's cashless treatment scheme for road accident victims, Noida district magistrate Manish Kumar Verma has appointed additional DM Mangesh Dubey as the grievance redressal officer. The DM and transport department have issued guidelines for implementing cashless treatment for road accident victims in the district. The scheme, launched under Section 162 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, is designed to provide immediate medical care during the 'Golden Hour' following an accident, with coverage of up to Rs 1.5 lakh for treatment received within the first seven days at empanelled hospitals, including those under the Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (ABPMJAY). In June, TOI had reported the scheme's rollout was delayed in NCR districts, where some hospitals claimed to be awaiting state-level empowerment directives before they could offer cashless services. A guideline and details of the cashless treatment scheme have also been shared by Assistant Regional Transport Officer (ARTO) Udit Narayan Pandey. As per eligibility criteria, victims of a motor vehicle accident on any road in the country who require trauma or poly-trauma care are entitled to cashless treatment. The scheme applies to all types of road vehicles as defined in Section 2(28) of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988. In terms of treatment facilities, immediate treatment will be provided to victims in empanelled hospitals, including those covered by the Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana. Treatment begins immediately upon hospitalisation without any initial payment. For coverage, the guideline states that, in cases of serious injuries, treatment up to a maximum of seven days or costing up to Rs 1.

'If you are diligent and vigilant, none of this would happen': Delhi court pulls up MCD, police over traffic jam outside premises

An advocate had moved a petition alleging that 'illegal encroachments, traffic congestion and unregulated activities' had proliferated in a 1 km radius of Tis Hazari courts and surrounding areas.

Agency New Delhi.

A Delhi court on Monday pulled up the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) and the traffic police for "insufficient action" while hearing a petition filed by a lawyer requesting to remove illegal encroachments on public roads and footpaths around the Tis Hazari court complex. "If you will be diligent and vigilant, none of this will happen... You are dutybound to take action... if you are taking action, it is not sufficient," Civil Judge Rinku Jain of Tis Hazari court said.

"What are you doing when there is a violation? Why does the status report not mention the number of challans you have issued? You have not mentioned properly what action has been taken," the judge added.

Advocate Devender Dhiryan, whose chamber is in Tis Hazari, had moved the petition before the court alleging that



"illegal encroachments, traffic congestion and unregulated activities" had proliferated in a 1 km radius of Tis Hazari courts and surrounding areas. The court had on earlier occasions asked the authorities to submit detailed reports highlighting the steps being taken to deal with the congestion.

"I cross Tis Hazari twice. There are fewer mobile vendors and a lot more stationary

vendors... one big problem is that people stop their cars on the road to buy stuff. This causes jams," Judge Jain said.

"Those who are sitting permanently, what action has been taken against them? What is the area allotted to tehbazari [licence] holders and the area they are actually occupying... have they expanded it to two or three times? I am just asking them to check that," the court added, directing the authorities to file a fresh status report.

"The report filed on behalf of MCD is not in terms with the previous order dt. 02.06.2025. The report has not mentioned if the area actually occupied by the tehbazari holders around Tis Hazari Courts... counsel for defendant no. 1 undertakes to file fresh report in terms of order dt. 02.06.2025," the judge said in his order, listing the matter for August 25.

Judge Jain also told the authorities that while he will not be passing directions, they were dutybound to take action. "You cannot turn

a blind eye saying there is no direction from the court," he said.

A status report submitted by the MCD this month stated that no mobile vendors were permanently stationed in the area and that the "MCD keeps taking action against the Tehbazari holders who encroach beyond allotted size and also against vendors who violate the terms & conditions of Certificate of Vending".

This answer was unsatisfactory to the court, and it directed the authorities to tell them how much area the licence holders (or vendors) were occupying and if this was multiple times bigger than what was allotted to them.

In an earlier status report dated March 26, 2025, the civic body had stated that there were 198 vendors with a licence around the court complex. Other vendors, it had told the court, had a certificate which allowed them to vend at a particular place for up to 30 minutes.

At 695, Delhi airport sees maximum number of bird hit incidents since 2020

Agency New Delhi.

Delhi airport witnessed 695 bird hit incidents since 2020, the highest number of such cases reported by any major airport across the country, Union Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol told Rajya Sabha on Monday.

Mumbai reported the next highest number of confirmed bird hits at 407 cases since 2020, followed by Ahmedabad (337) and Bengaluru (343), Mohol's reply stated.

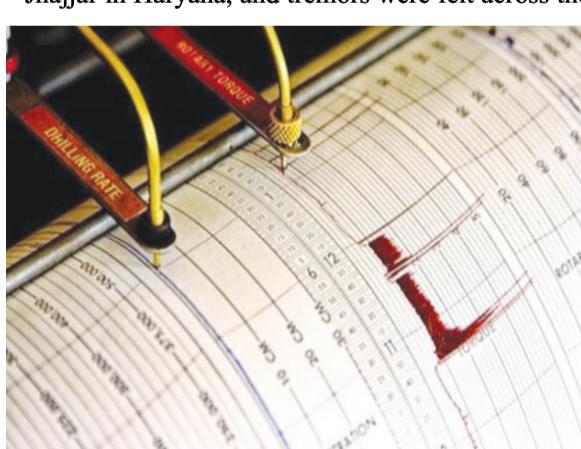
Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport, which is also the largest airport in the country, has experienced 41 bird hits this year till June alone. It witnessed 185 bird hits in 2023, and 183 such cases in 2022, as per the reply. Last year, IGI airport reported 130 bird-hit cases.

"To ensure safety of aircraft operations related to wildlife hazard, requirements to develop Wildlife Hazard Management Plan (WHMP) and to establish procedures have been mandated," Mohol said in his reply. Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL), the airport operator, has implemented a number of measures in the last few years, the reply stated, to mitigate bird-hit and wildlife strike incidents. According to the reply, the key measures include bird repellent and rodent control measures, scientific and rescue measures, habitat and insect management, biological and chemical control methods, and awareness and collaboration initiatives. DIAL has also previously noted that "certain concerns impede the operations of airport authorities, notably, bird strikes during aircraft take-off and landing phase. The occasional collisions between aircraft and birds consistently draw significant attention from aviation regulators and airports."

3.2 magnitude earthquake strikes Faridabad, tremors felt in Delhi-NCR

Agency New Delhi.

An earthquake of magnitude 3.2 hit Faridabad on Tuesday morning, with mild tremors felt in Delhi-NCR. The epicentre of the earthquake was 16 km southwest of Faridabad, Haryana. As per the National Centre for Seismology, the earthquake hit Faridabad at around 6 am on Tuesday morning, rising from a 5 km depth. On July 10 morning, a relatively mild earthquake of magnitude 4.4 jolted Delhi and nearby areas on. That epicentre of the earthquake was near Jhajjar in Haryana, and tremors were felt across the



National Capital Region. The National Centre of Seismology had said the earthquake last week was shallow and originated about 10 km below the earth's surface. Shallow earthquakes have greater capacity to cause damage, but in this case, the magnitude of the earthquake was not very strong. There were no immediate reports of any damage.

Delhi is prone to earthquakes and falls in Zone IV of seismically active areas of the country, which is the second highest category.

In recent years, the region has experienced several magnitude-4 earthquakes. In 2022, a 4.1-magnitude earthquake originated in Delhi's neighbouring state Haryana. It was a shallow quake but did not cause any damage. Delhi has not recorded an earthquake above magnitude 5 in the last 10 years, according to data from the US Geological Survey.

No issues found: Air India completes fuel control switch checks on Boeing fleet

Air India says it has found no faults in the fuel control switch locking mechanism across its Boeing 787 and 737 fleets, after inspections ordered by the aviation watchdog following the June 12 Ahmedabad plane crash.

Agency New Delhi.

Air India on Tuesday announced that it has successfully completed precautionary inspections of the Fuel Control Switch (FCS) locking mechanism on its entire Boeing 787 and Boeing 737 fleet, with "no issues found". The inspection was carried out in view of the catastrophic incident on June 12, when an Air India Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner crashed into a building shortly after takeoff from Ahmedabad en route to London Gatwick. The crash killed 260 people, including 19 on the ground, and left only one passenger alive out of the 242 onboard.

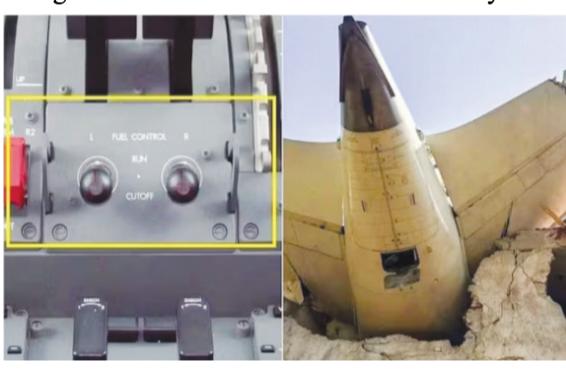
"No issues were found with the said locking mechanism during the inspections. Air India had initiated voluntary inspections on July 12,

ahead of the DGCA directive, and completed them within the prescribed timeline. The same has been communicated to the regulator. Air India remains committed to the safety

Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), which ordered checks of the fuel control switch systems on Boeing and other aircraft operating in India.

A 15-page preliminary report on the Air India plane crash revealed that the switches supplying fuel to the engines were turned off within a second of take-off — a key factor suspected behind the deadly crash.

The report also stated that the ill-fated flight lasted about 30 seconds from takeoff to impact. It noted that after reaching its peak recorded speed of 180 knots, the aircraft's Engine 1 and Engine 2 fuel cutoff switches moved from the 'RUN' to 'CUT OFF' position within the span of a single second. The report, however, did not clarify how these switches were turned off mid-flight.



of passengers and crew members," an Air India spokesperson said.

The inspections were carried out on both Air India and Air India Express aircraft. The inspections followed a directive issued last month by the

Supreme Court refuses to halt QR code order for Kanwar Yatra eateries for now

Agency New Delhi.

The Supreme Court on Tuesday refused to stay for now the directives issued by Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand requiring eateries along the Kanwar Yatra route to display QR codes to enable pilgrims to know the details of the owners. The top court also said the eateries must display their licenses and registration certificates as per the law.

A bench of Justices MM Sundresh and Kotiswar Singh, noting that Tuesday was the last day of the yatra, said it would not go into the legality of the directives.

"We are told that today is the last day of the yatra... At this stage, we would only pass an order that all the respective hotel owners shall comply with the mandate of displaying the

licence and the registration certificate as per the statutory requirements," the top court said.

The Kanwar Yatra, which began on July 11, coinciding with the first day of the



holy month of Sawan, sees devotees walk large stretches to fetch holy water from the River Ganga to offer to Shivalingas. During this yatra, devotees avoid the consumption of meat.

In view of this, the Yogi Adityanath-led government issued an order last month mandating eateries to display QR codes containing details about their owners. The Uttarakhand government also followed suit. The directives were challenged in the Supreme Court by academician Apoorvanand Jha and others, who contended that it would lead to discriminatory profiling.

Last week, the top court issued notices to the governments of Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

A similar diktat issued last year, mandating eateries to display names of owners outside the shops along the Kanwar Yatra route, was stayed by the Supreme Court. Then, the top court had said the eateries only required to indicate the type of food they were offering.

Parliament heats up over Bihar roll revision

The Election Commission defended the Bihar roll revision, assuring the Supreme Court that the citizenship of a person would not be cancelled if he or she is found ineligible for registration. The Opposition, however, isn't buying the argument, and alleged the revision could be misused to delete the names of minority, Dalit and Opposition-leaning voters ahead of the assembly polls.

Agency New Delhi.

The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) in Bihar remains a flashpoint between the Election Commission of India and the Opposition, as it rocked the first day of the monsoon session in Parliament on Monday. The poll body has dismissed Aadhaar as one of the documents for the survey — a point of contention for the Opposition — who have alleged massive disenfranchisement. Earlier, the top court left it to the discretion of the Election Commission to decide whether the document should be included. However, in its counter-affidavit, the poll body defended the move, assuring the Supreme Court that the citizenship of a person would not be cancelled if he or she is found ineligible for registration in the roll revision.

The Opposition isn't buying the argument that the exercise will lead to a cleaner voter list. Hence, the rocky first day of the monsoon session and its spillover on the second day with leaders, including Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi, Akhilesh Yadav and others, protesting outside the complex with placards showing slogans against the SIR. The leaders raised strong objections, alleging that the revision could be misused to omit the names of minority, Dalit and Opposition-leaning voters ahead of the



assembly polls.

OPPOSITION SMELLS A POLITICAL AGENDA

This is not a revision, but a political operation — Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi said in the House on Monday. "Why is this being done only in Bihar and not across the country?"

RJD and Trinamool Congress also raised similar concerns, claiming the drive could lead to mass deletions of voters from marginalised communities, especially in rural and minority-dominated regions. "It's a backdoor method to rig elections before they begin," RJD leaders said in Lok Sabha.

Shambavi Choudhary MP, Lok Janshakti Party (Ran Vilas), told India Today, "The opposition is scared in Bihar. They are losing, that's why they are now talking about SIR. These

Fighter jet MiG-21 to be retired after 62 years, ceremonial send-off in September

Agency New Delhi.

The Indian Air Force is set to retire the iconic fighter jet MiG-21 after 62 years. The last jet will be given a ceremonial send-off on September 19 at the Chandigarh airbase by the 23 Squadron (Panthers). Inducted into the Air Force in 1963, the MiG-21 is celebrated for its vital role in the India-Pakistan wars in 1965 and 1971, the 1999 Kargil war, the 2019 Balakot strikes, and Operation Sindo.

The aircraft, however, saw frequent crashes in recent years — more than 400 accidents and significant pilot casualties — earning him the controversial 'flying coffin' label.

India is currently the largest operator of MiG-21s. The MiG-21, despite undergoing a few upgrades since its induction in the 1960s, has exceeded its intended service life.

Expanded into the Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-21, it was designed by the Mikoyan-Gurevich Design Bureau in the Soviet Union. Nearly 60 countries have flown the supersonic jet fighter.

The life extensions of the MiG-21 fleet were repeatedly increased due to the delay in the production and subsequent delivery of the indigenous LCA Tejas Mk1A, with which the former is intended to be replaced. The IAF presently operates two squadrons of MiG-21 Bison, comprising 31 aircraft. With the retirement of the MiG-21s, the Indian Air Force's combat strength will drop to 29 squadrons — its lowest since the 1960s. The number is even lower than during the 1965 war, and below the IAF's sanctioned strength of 42 squadrons.

MiG-21, Indian Air Force's Workhorse, To Be Phased Out In September

Agency New Delhi.

The MiG-21 — that redoubtable warhorse of the Indian Air Force — will be phased out of active service by September, to be replaced by the newer and nimble Tejas Mk1A fighter jets.

The IAF has 36 MiG-21 planes left in its arsenal, a far cry from the nearly 900 — of which around 660 were built in India — that so successfully protected the nation's skies and territories.

The MiG-21 first entered service in 1963, on a trial basis. The Russian-made jet went on to form the backbone of the Air Force till the mid-2000s, when the Sukhoi Su-30MKIs were brought in. The final variant to serve India — the ones which will now be phased out — was the Bison, which featured upgraded electronics and better navigation and communications systems.

In October 2023, MiG-21 fighter aircraft from the No 4 squadron flew for one last time over the town of Barmer in Rajasthan, a 'farewell and thank you for the memories' moment it shared with the planes taking up its role in the state that borders Pakistan, the also Russian-made Sukhoi.

"We will stop flying the MiG-21 fighter aircraft by 2025 and will replace them with the LCA Mark-1A," then-Air Force chief, Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari had said then.

In July 2022 the Air Force had confirmed a three-year timeline to phase out the four remaining MiG-21 squadrons still in service. The plan also involves phasing out the MiG-29s by 2027.

The phasing out of the MiG-21 fleet comes after numerous crashes involving the aging plane, including an incident in Rajasthan in May 2023 in which the three villagers were killed. The MiG-21 in question took off from the Suratgarh Air Force base for a routine exercise when it crashed near Bahol Nagar in Rajasthan's Hanumangarh after a 'technical snag'.

The Air Force grounded the entire MiG-21 fleet after that accident. Among the earlier squadrons to have been phased out was the Srinagar-based No 51, which took part in Operation Safed Sagar during the Kargil war. It also repulsed Pakistan's retaliatory action in February 2019, a day after airstrikes in Balakot targeted terrorist camps in Pak.

statements are useless, that's why they are saying all these. The Opposition knows that they are losing, that's the reason why they have started building this narrative."

Congress MP Shashi Tharoor echoed Choudhary, calling the SIR a "backdoor attempt at voter suppression", while RJD leader Manoj Jha termed it a "deletion drive".

The Opposition demanded an immediate halt to the process and called for an all-party oversight committee. JDU leader and Union minister Ram Nath Thakur said, "They are in opposition. Certainly they will raise this, but they should also provide evidence against their claims."

CENTRE AND ECI DEFEND SIR

In response, the central government said that the SIR is a routine process and follows the guidelines set by the Election Commission. Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal said in Parliament, "There is no agenda behind this. The ECI is simply ensuring a clean and updated electoral roll". He added that no individual would be "unfairly removed" from the electoral rolls and the revision followed legal procedures. The ECI has time and again maintained that this process is being done transparently, with public notices and grievance redressal systems in place.

NEWS BOX

Bryan Mbeumo completes Manchester United move: Club of my dreams

New Delhi. (Agency)

Bryan Mbeumo has described his £71 million move to Manchester United as "dream come true" after signing a five-year contract with the option of a further year. The Cameroon international joins from Brentford, bringing to an end one of the longest transfer sagas of the summer. The 25-year-old forward becomes new manager Ruben Amorim's third signing of the window, following the arrivals of Matheus Cunha and left-back Diego Leon. United agreed to pay an initial £65 million for Mbeumo, with a further £6 million in performance-related add-ons.

"As soon as I knew there was a chance to join Manchester United, I had to take the opportunity to sign for the club of my dreams — the team whose shirt I wore growing up," said Mbeumo. "My



mentality is to always be better than I was yesterday. I know that I have the spirit and character to reach another level here, learning from Ruben Amorim and playing alongside world-class players." Mbeumo had been on United's radar since early June, when the club launched an opening £55 million bid for the Brentford star. That offer, as well as a second attempt worth £62.5 million, was rejected. But negotiations finally yielded a breakthrough last week when United submitted their third proposal, which Brentford accepted.

Mbeumo had a standout season with Brentford in 2024-25, scoring 20 goals and providing seven assists in the Premier League — both personal bests. Since joining the Bees from Troyes in 2019, he has made 242 appearances, scoring 70 goals and laying on 51 assists. United's new forward arrives at a club that finished a disappointing 15th in the Premier League last season and missed out on European qualification. But under Amorim, the club is attempting a full-scale rebuild.

MS Dhoni concerned about declining youth fitness: Lots of people don't play sport

New Delhi. (Agency)

At 44, MS Dhoni continues to impress — not just with his legacy, but with his enduring fitness. Since retiring from international cricket in 2020, the former India captain has remained a key figure in the IPL. His sharp reflexes and lightning-fast stumpings — often under two seconds — are a testament to his unwavering focus on physical health.

While Dhoni leads by example with his own disciplined routine, he recently voiced a broader concern: the declining fitness levels amongst Indians, especially children. Speaking at an event in Ranchi, he shared that even with his own daughter, they make a conscious effort to incorporate activities that encourage physical movement.

"Nowadays that age is coming down, in the sense the amount of physical activity is coming down. So, the average fitness level of us as Indians, that has gone down. Even my daughter, I feel she doesn't do a lot of



physical activity. She is not into sport so we have to plan things where you (are) physically active. That's how it has been. A lot of people don't play sport," said Dhoni while attending an event in Ranchi. Dhoni began his international career in 2004 and took over as captain in 2007. Throughout his playing years, he was known not just for his calm leadership, but also for his exceptional fitness — from sprinting between the wickets to his agile wicketkeeping behind the stumps. He remains the only captain to have won all three major ICC white-ball trophies: the T20 World Cup, the ODI World Cup, and the Champions Trophy. Dhoni's disciplined approach to fitness and his sharp game sense were instrumental in his success on the field.

Really proud of this group: Joe Burns emotional after leading Italy to T20 World Cup

Joe Burns qualified for Italy through his Italian grandparents

Burns captained Italy to 2026 ICC T20 World Cup qualification

Italy secured qualification with strong performances in European Regional Final

New Delhi. (Agency)

Joe Burns, a former Australian Test opener with four centuries to his name, has found a second cricketing life in the blue of Italy — one filled with heart, heritage, and history in the making. Proudly guiding Italy to their first-ever qualification for the ICC Men's T20 World Cup, Burns described the achievement as one of the most emotional and meaningful moments of his cricketing journey. Now 35, Burns played 23 Tests for Australia between 2014 and 2020. He qualified to represent Italy last year through his grandparents, embracing his roots and

stepping into a leadership role that few expected but many have now come to admire. Appointed captain of the Italian side, Burns led the team through an emotional and strategic campaign to qualify for the 2026 ICC Men's T20 World Cup in India and Sri Lanka — Italy's first-ever appearance at a senior men's global ICC event. "It's not lost on us the magnitude of the impact we can have on Italian cricket. To wear the Italian cap at a World Cup would make us a groundbreaking team. And we think we've got the team to get there," Burns told BBC Sport. Burns describes the journey as "surreal," but the results were anything but accidental. Italy entered the European Regional Final in The Hague alongside Scotland, the Netherlands, Jersey and Guernsey — all chasing just two qualification spots. Italy impressed throughout, dominating key matches and displaying tactical awareness well beyond what many had expected from an Associate side. "We did one week of training in Rome, one week in the UK, and I said to them on the first day in Rome: 'I don't care if we're playing Luxembourg in the first Sub-

Regional game or India in a World Cup Final — I just want us to be the most prepared team in world cricket.' That's something we can



control, something that doesn't require any skill," Burns said. Italy's campaign included a confident win over Guernsey and a crucial, clinical defence of 167 against tournament favourites Scotland — a performance that all but sealed their qualification. Though they lost their final game to the Netherlands, Italy had already done the math. Even a narrow defeat would be enough to see them through. Burns, fully aware of the stakes, ensured his team focused on meeting the net run rate requirement. "We started trying to win, but

when it wasn't going to plan, we shifted. It became about limiting the damage. The spinners, Crishan Kalugamage and Ben Manenti, really brought the game back for us," he explained.

For Burns, this campaign has been about much more than cricket. His shirt number, 85, is a tribute to his late brother Dominic. His decision to represent Italy is rooted in family history — his grandparents were Italian, and his nonna was a key figure in his early life. "I grew up with Italian traditions, and this opportunity has helped me connect with my heritage. My nonna watched me play for Australia and would always ask why I was hitting the ball in the air! I know she'd be proud now," he shared.

The wider impact is what drives him.

"We're trying to create a legacy. This is about more than just one tournament — it's about what Italian cricket can become in the future," Burns said. With over 100 clubs and 3,500 registered players, cricket in Italy is growing. Burns hopes this World Cup qualification will act as a catalyst for greater support, improved infrastructure, and expanded opportunities.

ENG vs IND: Joe Root aims to kill three birds with one stone, eyes massive jump

New Delhi. (Agency)

Joe Root is currently the fifth-highest run-scorer in the history of Test cricket — but he has a chance to climb as high as second. The England veteran will get that opportunity when his team faces India in the fourth Test, starting July 23 at Old Trafford in Manchester.

Ricky Ponting, Jacques Kallis, and Rahul Dravid currently occupy the second, third, and fourth spots, respectively. Root needs just 31 runs to surpass both Dravid and Kallis. To overtake Ponting and move into second place, he'll need 120 runs. Given his current form, Root has a strong chance of achieving the milestone. That said, he still trails Sachin Tendulkar's all-time record by 2,663 runs. Root has an excellent Test record in Manchester, having scored 978 runs from 11 matches at an average of 65.20 with one hundred and seven fifties.

Most runs in Test cricket history



Carlos Alcaraz joins list of marquee withdrawals from Canadian Open

Carlos Alcaraz cites muscle fatigue for withdrawal from Canadian Open

Novak Djokovic and Jannik Sinner also pull out due to injuries

Tournament director expresses disappointment over star player absences

New Delhi. (Agency)

Carlos Alcaraz has become the latest marquee name to withdraw from next week's Canadian Open in Toronto, joining an increasingly high-profile list of absences that already includes Novak Djokovic, Jannik Sinner and Jack Draper. The world No. 2 cited muscle fatigue and the need to recuperate following a demanding stretch of tournaments, which ended with his runner-up finish to Sinner in the Wimbledon final earlier this month. "I'm really sad to have to miss the National Bank Open in Toronto," Alcaraz said in a statement released by the tournament organisers. "I



tried my best to be ready for the tournament, as it's one I really enjoy playing, but it comes just too soon for me as I recover after Wimbledon. I wish the event well and look forward to being back on the Canadian courts next year." The 22-year-old Spaniard is in the midst of a historic season, having lifted titles at the Italian Open, the French Open and Queen's Club. His 24-match winning streak was brought to an end by Sinner at the All England Club, but Alcaraz's run to back-to-back Grand Slam finals at Roland Garros and Wimbledon has only reinforced his position as one of the standout players of the new generation. Taking to social media, Alcaraz

added: "After many consecutive weeks of competition without rest, I will not be able to play in Toronto this year. I have small muscle issues and need to recover physically and mentally for what comes next. To the tournament and my fans in Canada, I am very sorry — I will see you next year." Tournament director Karl Hale expressed his disappointment at the Spaniard's absence. "It's disappointing to lose a player of Carlos' quality, as we know our fans were looking forward to watching him," he said. "Although he has been on the scene for a while, he's still at the beginning of his career and there will be plenty of opportunities for Canadians to see him again in the future." Alcaraz, a five-time Grand Slam champion, reached the quarter-finals in Canada last year before falling to Tommy Paul. His withdrawal means the tournament will now be without four of the world's top six players. Sinner has pulled out to prioritise his health, Djokovic is recovering from a groin issue picked up during his Wimbledon semi-final, while Draper continues to battle an arm injury. In addition, American Sebastian Korda and Poland's Hubert Hurkacz have also withdrawn due to leg and knee injuries respectively, further depleting the men's draw.

ENG vs IND: Aakash Chopra questions Indian team management over Kamboj-Rana confusion

Aakash Chopra criticised India's Test team for unclear pace bowling decisions

Harshit Rana was preferred initially despite Kamboj's better India A performance

Multiple injuries have hit India's pace bowling ahead of the Manchester Test

New Delhi. (Agency)

Former India opener Aakash Chopra has questioned the Indian men's Test team management for what he described as a glaring lack of clarity in their handling of pace bowling options, particularly in the case of Anshul Kamboj and Harshit Rana. Rana, who made his Test debut against Australia earlier this year, and Kamboj, who is yet to be capped, were both part of the India 'A' squad that played against the England Lions ahead of the ongoing

Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy. While Kamboj outperformed Rana in those matches, it was the Delhi pacer who was initially retained with the main squad as cover for injured players. Kamboj was sent home, only to be recalled ahead of the fourth Test at Old Trafford in Manchester. With India grappling with a series of injuries in their pace department, the sudden switch in preference has raised eyebrows — with Chopra at the forefront of the criticism. "It's very interesting. There was a lot of chatter about Anshul Kamboj. He did well for India A as well, but when there was an opportunity earlier, the team management chose Harshit Rana first. Anshul was sent back home, and now we are learning about his name again," Chopra said on his YouTube channel. India's bowling stocks have been severely depleted ahead of the Manchester Test, scheduled to begin on

Wednesday, 23 July. Nitish Kumar Reddy has been ruled out of the series with a left knee injury, while Arshdeep Singh — who impressed in the third Test at Lord's — sustained a blow to his left thumb during a net session and has been ruled out of the upcoming match. Akash Deep, too, is recovering from a groin strain he picked up during the Lord's Test. As a result, the selectors have brought back Kamboj from India to join the squad in Manchester, with reports suggesting he is in line to make his Test debut. Chopra, however, was left unconvinced by the rationale behind the call-ups. "Harshit Rana is not there. Now you have to wonder, what actually goes on? How do you determine who to keep and who to let go of? If you talk about performances for India A, Anshul's performance was better, but you kept Harshit Rana looking at continuity," he said.

Paris Olympics gold medallist Zheng Qinwen pulls out of US Open after elbow surgery

Pakistan Cricket Board expects revenue of 8.8 billion rupees this fiscal year

Asia Cup scheduling and venue remain uncertain due to board disagreements

PCB Chairperson Mohsin Naqvi did not attend the ICC meeting in person

New Delhi. (Agency)

Paris Olympic gold medalist Zheng Qinwen has officially withdrawn from the 2025 US Open, tournament organisers announced on Monday, July 21. The World No. 6 recently underwent elbow surgery and had already announced a break from the WTA Tour. The

22-year-old Chinese star revealed she had been experiencing persistent pain in her right elbow during practices and matches, leading her to consult medical specialists. She subsequently opted for arthroscopic surgery. Zheng has not competed since her first-round loss to the Czech Republic's Katerina Siniaková at Wimbledon. In a message posted to Instagram, the 2024 Australian Open runner-up assured fans that she is focused on recovery and vowed to return as a stronger version of herself.

"After consulting with elbow specialists and discussing thoroughly with my team, we decided that arthroscopic surgery was the best option to fully resolve the issue. Yesterday, I underwent the procedure successfully, and I'm grateful to have it behind me," Zheng wrote. "Now begins the recovery journey. Over the next



few weeks and months, I'll be focusing entirely on rehab — doing everything I can to come back stronger and healthier. This is just a short break, and I see it as a necessary

step toward a better version of myself on court. Thank you all for your continued support and encouragement. I can't wait to be back — see you soon!" Zheng added.

Zheng Qinwen struggled in 2025. She had a challenging run in the 2025 Grand Slam season. She began the year with an early exit at the Australian Open, falling to Laura Siegemund in the second round. At the French Open, she reached the quarterfinals but was defeated by World No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka. Her struggles continued at Wimbledon, where she suffered a first-round loss. The 2025 US Open is set to take place from August 24 to September 7. Aryna Sabalenka returns as the defending champion in the women's singles, while Jannik Sinner holds the title in the men's singles.

RBI proposes stricter digital banking rules: What it means for you

New Delhi. (Agency)

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has put out a draft of new rules to make digital banking safer for everyone. The fresh guidelines cover internet banking, mobile banking, and any other online services that banks offer.

CLEAR CHOICES FOR CUSTOMERS
Under the new rules, banks must give customers clear choices, they can pick just to 'view only' their accounts or use full transaction services. Banks cannot force people to use digital banking if they just want a simple service like a debit card.

CONSENT AND TRANSPARENCY

The RBI also wants banks to get clear permission from customers before signing them up for any digital service. Every customer must be told exactly what fees apply, how to get help if there's a problem, and must get alerts about transactions by SMS or email. Another important point is that banks cannot push third-party products, like insurance or investment schemes, on their apps or websites without the RBI's green light.

STRONGER FRAUD CHECKS

To keep online fraud in check, all banks must use proper fraud detection tools and keep an eye on unusual transactions. They should also study how customers usually spend money so that any odd activity can be spotted quickly. These draft rules were shared by the RBI on Monday. The central bank has asked banks, experts, and the public to share their suggestions by August 11, 2025.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU

If these rules come into force, people using online banking can expect tighter safety measures and fewer unwanted surprises. They'll have the freedom to pick only the digital services they actually want.

No one will be forced to sign up for something they don't need, making banking simpler and fairer for everyone.

Government receives plea to cut 28% GST on aerated drinks

New Delhi. (Agency)

The Centre has received a formal request to slash the Goods and Services Tax (GST) on aerated beverages, which currently attract a 28% tax along with a 12% compensation cess, taking the effective rate to 40%. Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar has urged the Finance Ministry to rationalise the tax burden on carbonated drinks, according to government sources. Industry groups, including the Indian Beverage Association (IBA), have also made representations, arguing that the current tax regime is "unfair" and hampers both innovation and affordability in the non-alcoholic beverage sector. The matter is likely to be taken up at the upcoming 56th GST Council meeting, expected to be held in mid-August. The meeting is already set to review a broader rate rationalisation framework, with officials indicating that certain slabs and cesses may be simplified or merged.

Carbonated drinks fall under the so-called "sin goods" category—alongside tobacco and pan masala—which invites the highest GST rate and a cess. Industry players have long argued that such classification is outdated, especially for low-sugar and fruit-based carbonated products.

Recent court rulings have also put pressure on the current tax structure. The Gauhati High Court had ruled that certain fizzy fruit drinks, if primarily juice-based, should be taxed at 12% instead of 28%. However, this has not led to a broader reclassification. While some states may resist the change due to the revenue implications of scrapping the cess, the Centre is reportedly open to exploring alternatives as part of a wider reform to make the GST system more predictable and investment-friendly.

Why parliamentary panel pushes for 'Income' over 'Receipts' while taxing NPOs

New Delhi. (Agency)

The Select Committee of Lok Sabha scrutinising the proposed Income Tax Bill, 2025, has recommended a crucial amendment to Clause 335, urging the reintroduction of the term "income" instead of "receipts" when defining "regular income" for registered non-profit organisations (NPOs). This change is aimed at ensuring that only the net earnings of these entities are subject to taxation and accumulation rules, a concept currently absent from the Income-Tax Act, 1961. Clause 335 of the new Bill seeks to introduce a definition for "regular income" for NPOs, a move intended to streamline their taxability. However, during its deliberations, the Committee voiced significant concerns over the Bill's use of "receipts" where the existing 1961 Act referred to "income." The committee has emphasised that taxing "receipts" contravenes the fundamental principle of real income taxation. Representations received by the committee in this regard argue that "Receipts" can encompass capital recoveries or gross inflows, which do not necessarily represent a net profit or surplus. For instance, if an NPO sells an asset for Rs 10,00,000 that was acquired at 29,50,000, taxing the entire 21,00,000 as a receipt would be incorrect; only the Rs 50,000 gain should be considered taxable. The panel firmly believes that for the purposes of taxation and accumulation, rules should apply to net income, not gross receipts.

Experts/stakeholders seeking the amendment highlighted that the existing 15% accumulation limit for NPOs under Section 11(1)(a) is calculated based on income, not gross receipts. Applying this limit to "receipts" would unfairly reduce the amount NPOs can retain and carry forward, potentially hindering their long-term financial stability and charitable objectives.

Astronomer now household name: New CEO's first statement after kiss-cam scandal

Former CEO Andy Byron stepped down days after a video of him and Chief People Officer Kristin Cabot appearing on a 'kiss cam' at a Coldplay concert near Boston went viral.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Data and AI startup Astronomer has appointed co-founder Pete DeJoy as interim CEO after its former chief executive stepped down following a controversy involving a Coldplay concert. Andy Byron stepped down as CEO of AI company Astronomer, days after a video of him and Chief People Officer Kristin Cabot appearing on a 'kiss

cam' at a Coldplay concert near Boston went viral. 'Surreal spotlight': From quiet startup to centre of attentionIn a public note posted on LinkedIn, Pete DeJoy acknowledged the "unusual and surreal" attention the company has received over the past few days. "The events of the past few days have received a level of media attention that few companies—let alone startups in our small corner of the data and AI world—ever encounter," he wrote. "While I would never have wished for it to happen like this, Astronomer is now a household name." DeJoy, who co-founded Astronomer and has been a key figure in shaping its direction since the beginning, said he stepped into the role of interim CEO "over the weekend." He said his focus will be on supporting the team and ensuring customer trust remains intact. A company built through challengesFounded in Cincinnati, Ohio, Astronomer started out as a platform helping organisations make the most of Apache Airflow, an open-source tool used



to manage complex data pipelines. Over time, the startup has grown into a major player in the DataOps space, working on backend data infrastructure for everything from sports analytics and AI chatbots to autonomous vehicle training. DeJoy said that the company had survived tough moments before, from banking crises to scaling during a pandemic, and that the current moment was just another

test of resilience. "At Astronomer we have never shied away from challenges; a near-decade of building this business has tested us time and time again, and each time we've emerged stronger," he wrote.

DeJoy hinted at a renewed focus on values and internal trust. "Astronomer is built by people who live to solve hard problems, stay late to fix what's broken, and care deeply about doing things the right way," he said. The company has reportedly taken internal steps to reinforce its culture and support employees following the media storm. Several team members have expressed support for the transition, highlighting DeJoy's long involvement in shaping Astronomer's growth story. DeJoy said that despite the noise around the leadership change, Astronomer's mission remains intact. "Our opportunity to build a DataOps platform for the age of AI remains massive. And our story is very much still being written," he said.

SBI to approach CBI after tagging Anil Ambani and RCom as 'fraud'

SBI's exposure to Reliance Communications includes a fund-based principal outstanding of Rs 2,227.64 crore, along with interest and expenses since August 26, 2016. In addition, there is a non-fund based bank guarantee exposure of Rs 786.52 crore.

New Delhi(Agency)

State Bank of India (SBI) has declared Reliance Communications (RCom) and its promoter director Anil D Ambani as 'fraud' and is now in the process of filing a complaint with the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), reported news agency PTI.

This was stated in Parliament on Monday, according to the report.

Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary, in a written reply to the Lok Sabha, said that the classification was made on June 13, 2025, following the Reserve Bank of India's guidelines on fraud risk management and SBI's internal policy. Chaudhary informed that the bank reported the fraud classification to the RBI on June 24, 2025, and is now taking steps to lodge a formal complaint with the CBI.

On July 1, 2025, the Resolution Professional for RCom informed the Bombay Stock Exchange about SBI's decision as part of the company's disclosure obligations. SBI's exposure

to Reliance Communications includes a fund-based principal outstanding of Rs 2,227.64 crore, along with interest and expenses since August 26, 2016. In



NCLT is still awaited. Chaudhary also said that SBI has initiated personal insolvency proceedings against Anil Ambani under the same insolvency law, and the case is being heard by the NCLT in Mumbai. This is not the first time the bank has classified the account as fraud. SBI had earlier tagged RCom and Ambani as 'fraud' on November 10, 2020, and had filed a complaint with the CBI on January 5, 2021. However, that complaint was returned due to a status quo order issued by the Delhi High Court on January 6, 2021. Following a Supreme Court ruling on March 27, 2023, in the case of State Bank of India & Others Vs Rajesh Agarwal & Others, lenders are now required to give borrowers a chance to respond before labelling their accounts as fraud. Based on that ruling, SBI had withdrawn the fraud tag on September 2, 2023. However, after restarting the process and adhering to the RBI's updated rules from July 15, 2024, the bank has once again classified the account as 'fraud'.

NOIDA is now tax-free. Check who benefits and how

New Delhi. (Agency)

NOIDA has just earned itself a new label, i.e., 'tax-free'. But what does this really mean for the city, its businesses, and its people? The news has already stirred up interest among builders, shopkeepers, and investors alike. The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) recently notified that the New Okhla Industrial Development Authority (NOIDA) will enjoy tax-free status under Section 10(46A) of the Income-tax Act, beginning from the assessment year 2024-25. CA (Dr) Suresh Surana points out, however, that there's more to this than meets the eye. In its press note dated 17 July 2025, the CBDT clarified, "This notification shall be effective from the assessment year 2024-2025, subject to the condition that the assessee continues to be an authority constituted under the Uttar Pradesh Industrial Area Development Act, 1976 (U.P. Act No.6 of 1976) with one or more

of the purposes specified in sub-clause (a) of clause (46A) of section 10 of the Income-tax Act." Surana pointed out, "It is important to note that this exemption is limited solely to income tax and may not extend to other



statutory levies." He further explains that this special relief comes with conditions: "The so-called 'tax-free' status should not be misconstrued as a blanket exemption from all forms of taxation. It is a specific fiscal relief aimed at supporting NOIDA's public infrastructure and developmental responsibilities by relieving it from the

burden of income tax, provided it continues to fulfil the statutory conditions outlined in the notification."

SO, WHAT'S TAX-FREE, AND WHAT'S NOT? In simple terms, only NOIDA's income tax burden is waived. Surana clarifies, "This exemption is limited solely to income tax and may not extend to other statutory levies." So, while NOIDA will continue to collect fees and charges, it no longer needs to pay income tax on the money it earns from rents, fees, or grants, as long as it sticks to its main job of urban planning and development for the public good.

HOW BUSINESSES COULD GAIN
Though the tax break applies directly only to the authority, businesses in NOIDA could feel a welcome ripple effect. With more money left in its kitty.

HOW THE WEALTHY PLAY IT DIFFERENTLY

So how do India's richest keep winning? Kapoor says they follow what she calls the Value Migration Model. Instead of waiting for years to get the keys, they buy early, exit before the crowd, and reinvest wisely. "The Top 5% Think Differently. They don't wait for handover. They rotate capital," Kapoor explains. According to her, the smart ones enter early at around Rs 12-14K per square foot, exit fast when rates touch Rs 18-20K per square foot, reinvest in better assets like shop-cum-offices (SCOs), branded spaces, or rented floors and repeat every 2-3 years to keep returns above 25%.

Kapoor added that early investors in DLF made Rs 3-4 crore before they even got possession of their flats. But those who bought late were stuck with fewer gains and less flexibility. "Same project. Different capital IQ," she says.

Why Tesla's ride into India's EV market won't be a smooth one

New Delhi. (Agency)

Tesla has finally made its entry into the Indian market, opening its first showroom at Maker Maxity Mall in Mumbai's Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC) on July 15. But even as the global electric vehicle (EV) giant begins its journey in the world's third-largest auto market, experts warn that the road ahead will be anything but easy. The entry comes at a time when Tesla is facing its biggest drop in global sales to date. Its domestic sales in the US fell 6.3% in the second quarter of 2025, the third straight quarterly decline. Sales in China dropped nearly 12% in the same period. In Europe, Tesla has seen a steady five-month fall in deliveries, partly due to political backlash and rising competition from cheaper Chinese EVs. In fact, Tesla's market share in Europe slipped to 1.2% in May, down from 1.8% a year earlier. Nearly 50% of Tesla's revenue comes from the US, while over 20% is from China. The remaining 30% is spread across other global markets. With shrinking numbers in its top markets, India now holds fresh

promise, but also serious challenges.

WHAT IS TESLA OFFERING IN INDIA?

Tesla has introduced the Model Y in India, priced at Rs 60 lakh for the rear-wheel drive variant and Rs 68 lakh for the long-range version. These models are being sold as completely built units (CBUs), which means they attract heavy import duties, adding to the cost. In comparison, the same Model Y starts at \$4,990 (around Rs 38 lakh) in the US, 263,500 yuan (around Rs 30 lakh) in China, and 45,970 euros (around Rs 41 lakh) in Germany. This pricing puts Tesla in competition with luxury EV models such as the Mercedes-Benz EQB, BMW iX1, Volvo EC40, and Kia EV6 in India.

TESLA'S STRUGGLE AGAINST HOMEGROWN COMPETITION
Jahol Prajapati, research analyst at SAMCO Securities, believes the Indian EV market is already fiercely competitive. "Tesla's arrival in India has electrified the market, both in terms of buzz and intent. The brand is global royalty. Its design is flawless. Its tech,

unmatched. And yet, here's the truth most people won't tell you: this won't be an easy ride for Tesla in India," he



said. While Tesla's name may carry global appeal, Prajapati pointed out that the company's offering lacks the price-to-performance advantage many Indian buyers seek. The Tesla Model Y is priced close to Rs 60 lakh. In contrast, Mahindra, Tata, and BYD are fielding EVs in the Rs 19-30 lakh range, offering nearly equal, sometimes greater, value on range and performance. Mahindra's BE 6 delivers 557 km, BYD eMAX7 offers 530 km, and Tata Harrier EV and XEV 9e are not far behind. Tesla offers 500 km.

STRUCTURAL CHALLENGES MAY HURT GROWTH

Another major hurdle for Tesla is the lack of local manufacturing. Without setting up a factory in India, the company is unlikely to lower prices or become more competitive in the mass market segment. "India is not a market that falls for logos. It's a market that worships value for money," said Prajapati.

He also flagged the slow rollout of EV charging infrastructure, which could restrict Tesla's growth. While the ecosystem is improving, it is still not developed enough to fully support Tesla's premium offerings.

"Homegrown brands like Tata Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra, and BYD India aren't just selling EVs, they're building ecosystems. These firms have already established service networks, trust, and a deep understanding of price-sensitive Indian customers," he added.

INVESTOR OUTLOOK STILL POSITIVE FOR INDIAN BRANDS
Prajapati stressed that investors in Indian EV stocks need not panic.



Sahiba Bali

Serves Sexy Beach Glam In Montenegro, And We're Not Over It Yet!

Sahiba Bali's vacation pictures are leaving us in awe — and why lie? We're all jealous, sitting in front of our laptop screens, manifesting a getaway like this soon. The actress and sports anchor has dropped a fresh set of pictures, and they are just too hot to handle. In these beautiful bikini pictures, the actress left hearts racing fast.

These pictures from her beach getaway in Budva, Montenegro, are raising the heat on the 'gram. In the click, she can be seen soaking in the coastal bliss while relaxing on the beach, wearing an ooh-worthy bikini outfit. She wore a pink bralette featuring white detailing and tie-up accents at the front, which she paired with solid blue bikini bottoms.

Her beach look wasn't just about a stunning bikini — it was effortlessly chic with the minimal yet stylish accessories she chose. For her appearance, Sahiba decided to wear a minimalistic locket with earrings featuring a heart-shaped pendant. She further added a stack of bracelets, and we kid you not, they just added to her glamorous avatar — and how.

Out of office, she gave some boss-lady vibes by adding stylish shades, and those French-style nails are a total win.

It was recently that Sahiba dropped another postcard from her Montenegro vacation. In the dreamy snapshots, she flaunted her sun-kissed skin in a white balconette-style bikini top printed with delicate yellow florals, paired with solid cobalt blue bikini bottoms. Her beach look was effortlessly chic — minimal jewellery, dark sunglasses, and natural waves cascading down her back completed the vibe. In one of the photos, she smiled over her shoulder with sunlit joy, and in another, she playfully flipped her hair back while basking in the warmth. From brand marketing to Bollywood, Sahiba Bali has had a fascinating journey. The 30-year-old actress is known for her performances in Laila Majnu (2018), Bard of Blood (2019), and most recently, Imtiaz Ali's Amar Singh Chamkila (2024). She also hosted Shark Tank India Season 4 and is currently a sports anchor at Disney Star.



Vidya Balan

Supports 'Flexible Working Hours' Amid Deepika Padukone's 8-Hr Shift Debate

Vidya Balan recently reacted to the growing debate around reasonable working hours, and juggling motherhood and film schedules. She said that flexible working hours are especially important for women, particularly new mothers and those in the early years of motherhood. This comes in the wake of Deepika Padukone's exit from Sandeep Reddy Vanga's Spirit. Reports claimed that the actress, who recently became a mother, requested an eight-hour workday — a condition that reportedly didn't go over well with the filmmaker.

While speaking with The Hollywood Reporter India, Vidya Balan said, "There is conversation about how mothers need to have an option to work for fewer hours, flexible hours, right? And I think that's fair," she said. The actress further added, "Every industry is adopting those practices so that we don't lose out on new mothers, or women in the early years of them having children, so I think it's very important that we do have flexible working hours for women."

However, while speaking about her own working hours, Vidya Balan stated that since she is not a mother, she can afford to do 12-hour shifts, and does not feel the need to limit herself to an eight-hour workday. "With the kind of films that I do, we cannot afford to shoot only for eight hours,"

she said. "And I am not a mother, so I have all the time in the world to be doing a 12-hour shift."

Several other actors such as Sonakshi Sinha, Neha Dhupia, Soha Ali Khan, Kajol, and others backed Deepika amid the growing debate around reasonable work hours for actors. Meanwhile, on the professional front, Vidya Balan was last seen in the horror comedy film Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3, which was released on Diwali last year. Helmed by Anees



Bazmee, the film also stars Kartik Aaryan, Tripti Dimri and Madhuri Dixit Nene in the lead roles. Backed by Bhushan Kumar, the film was a big hit and even surpassed the lifetime collection of its predecessor, Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2. The actress is yet to announce her next project.

'Excuse Me, I'm Talking': Shweta Bachchan Snaps At Navya During Talk Show; Reddit Says 'Aishwarya Must Be...'



Jaya Bachchan and Shweta Bachchan's candid conversations on Navya Nanda's talk show often go viral on the web. It was during one such moment when Shweta snapped at her daughter for interrupting her while she was trying to make a point. The clip is going viral on Reddit, and as expected, social media users brought up Aishwarya Rai Bachchan into the conversation. The video clip started with Jaya Bachchan expressing her concern over how there is too much information on everything nowadays. Shweta tried to pick it up from there when her daughter, Navya, interrupted her. Shweta sternly told her, "Excuse me, I am talking. Please don't cut me off." Navya immediately apologised.

Jaya, then, cut Shweta too, as the latter went on to say, "I want to say something Mama, now I have lost my thought too. You guys don't let me speak." The Sholay actor then told her daughter, "Because you are speaking too much." The conversation ended with Navya laughing it off. However, Reddit had an opinion on how Aishwarya "must be God's strongest soldier", after the video went viral. Watch the clip first:

However, Reddit users seemed divided. While some commented on how Aishwarya deals with her in-laws, others found the conversation quite normal. "I'm getting anxiety imagining myself as the bahu of that household already. And I am a man," wrote a user, supporting Aishwarya. "Imagine coming out from an physically abusive relationship to get married in a mentally/emotionally toxic max family. Bhagwan ne sundarta di toh sukun nahi diya," wrote another. Other users wrote, "Imagine if this made to the final cut, how much toxicity had to be edited and removed from the entire bit!!!!", "Aish is strong. Strong enough to avoid these 3 completely."

Then there were those who called the altercation a regular, normal situation in every household. Supporting the Bachchans, they wrote, "Why are people pretending like they have never had any arguments like these with their parents or siblings?", "Tbh this seems like pretty much normal family argument like me, my mother and my nani have arguments like that where we all talk at the same time and didn't let other complete the sentence!", "I saw this on insta and was disappointed seeing the comments cos everyone was talking about how toxic this is, but for me this is normal cos this is literally how me and mom talk when we sit together."

Sonu Nigam Unwell, Avoids Posing For Paparazzi At Mumbai Airport



Sonu Nigam, one of the most loved singers in the music industry, was snapped at Mumbai airport. When the paparazzi noticed him, they asked him to wait and pose for the camera, but Sonu revealed that he was not keeping well and swiftly walked inside the airport. On the morning of July 21, Sonu Nigam was clicked at the Mumbai airport. The ace singer looked dashing in a brown T-shirt paired with grey pants and smart black shoes. He was seen carrying a jacket in his hands. As Sonu reached the airport, he interacted with the paparazzi stationed there for a while before making his way inside. When the paparazzi asked Sonu to pose for the camera, he responded saying, "Aaj meri tabiyat bohot kharab hai," and the paparazzi obliged his request and did not bother him further.

Sonu often makes headlines for his clear take on several issues. Recently, he made news after lashing out at the media when a publication falsely quoted him regarding the language row.

Slamming the media house, the singer wrote, "Are you out of your mind? How many times have I declared I am not on Twitter? Spreading misinformation in my name is only going to poison the minds of people who have loved me so much all these years.

Not everyone will have the sense to fact-check your news. I'm truly done with this country's desperate and brutal media. Shame."

Earlier, Sonu had also lashed out at a person from Bengaluru who asked him to sing Kannada songs during his stage performance in the Silicon Valley of India. Following the incident, the singer issued a clarification in light of the allegations against him for making provocative statements and hurting the sentiments of Kannadigas.

This came after an FIR was filed against the singer at the Avalahalli Police Station in Bengaluru. The complaint alleged that the singer had made an objectionable statement. Sonu, on his part, took to his Instagram and issued a clarification, stating that there were only 3-4 fringe elements in the crowd, while the rest of the audience was very respectful. He added that such people need to be dealt with strongly.

Kitchen remedies for a glowing Skin

With the year end festival excitement in the air, everyone like to have a clear skin. Let's take some help from the kitchen and use natural ingredients which will lighten, brighten & even out your skin tone while at the same time reduce dark spots, acne marks, pigmentation & sun tan for your true complexion to stand out.



Fresh fruit
Take one tsp of pineapple juice, one tsp of coconut milk and half a tsp of honey to this. Mix well and apply this for 20 minutes. Wash with normal water.

Turmeric
With its lovely antiseptic properties, it's no wonder that turmeric is part of ceremonies before marriage. Take one tsp of milk cream, a pinch of turmeric and 2 drops of almond oil. Mix well and apply on face avoiding eyes. It is recommended to use ambe haldi (stocked in ayurvedic stores). Wash with lukewarm water when dry.

Lentils
Take 1 tbsp of red masoor or green moong dal powder, add curds and few drops of coconut oil to this. Mix well and apply this on your face, leave till dry. Use lukewarm water and see the glow.

Fruit peels
Take orange and lemon peels and dry them under the sun. Powder them and store them to be used for use as and when required. You can mix a tsp of both these powders with rose water and use it twice a week. Keep it on for 20 minutes and then wash with normal water.



Let your Eyes speak with these Makeup tips

If your eyes are the window to your soul, they deserve to be dressed up. Our selection of the season's favourite eye makeup looks is a good place to start.

The humble eyeliner and mascara are two makeup essentials that you'd find in every woman's makeup bag. But the casually-applied line has now graduated to cat-eyed, winged and blocked. Take your pick and let your eyes do the talking this festive season.



WINGWOMAN
The swinging 60's gave us one of our favourite eyeliner trends--the winged eyeliner. Ever since, this look has seen different versions in every decade. Asha Hariharan, colour consultant for hair and makeup says, "The look can be glamorous or sultry. Keep the look 'Indian' and young for this festive season. The most important part is the angle of the wing." She shares her secrets for nailing the look.

The first step is doing your natural line. A lot of people make the mistake of starting with the wing.

Start with a thin line at the inner corner of the eye. This line should gradually become thicker, being the thickest at the outer corner.

Now, take a 45 degree angle from the bottom lid and create the wing. (We often mistake this angle to be taken from the top lid) The wing can be short or long depending on whether or not you want drama.

Once you've got your desired length, it's a question of attaching the wing to the line on top of your eyelid.

With so many trends to choose from, you'll be spoilt for choice. And even if you're a novice, there's nothing a little practice won't fix.

brows.

WINGWOMAN

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