

Opposition Leaders Protest Outside Parliament Against Voter List Revision

The opposition leaders stood together under the Mahatma Gandhi statue in the Parliament complex, carrying posters with 'SIR' written on them.

New Delhi. (Agency)
 Opposition MPs, including Congress leaders Mallikarjun Kharge, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi, protested and raised slogans against the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) being carried out in Bihar. The opposition leaders stood together under the Mahatma Gandhi statue in the Parliament complex, carrying posters with 'SIR' written on them. As a symbolic rejection of the voter list revision move, the opposition leaders threw the posters in a dustbin. Several MPs in the Rajya Sabha have also moved Suspension of Business notices today, urging a discussion on the SIR during the ongoing Monsoon Session of Parliament.

"There should be transparency. All political parties should have access to the data provided by the Election Commission of India, so why has it not

been provided?" said Priyanka Gandhi. Opposition parties have accused the Election Commission and the Centre of deliberately timing the voter list revision to disenfranchise specific voter groups



ahead of the upcoming Assembly polls in Bihar. "They (Centre) intend to deprive the poor of their voting rights and let only the elite vote. They are not abiding by the Constitution," claimed Mr Kharge.

According to data released by the Election Commission on Wednesday, 56 lakh names have been marked for deletion from Bihar's voter rolls. The 56 lakh names include 20 lakh dead voters, 28 lakh who have moved permanently to another state, 7 lakh individuals registered in more than one location and 1 lakh uncontactable voters.

Earlier, Rahul Gandhi warned the Election Commission that the opposition would not let them get away with the SIR. "I want to send a message to the Election Commission: If you think you are going to get away with it, if your officers think they are going to get away with it, you are mistaken.

You are not going to get away with it, because we are going to come for you," the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha said outside Parliament, just after the Lok Sabha was adjourned.

Differences ironed out, Lok Sabha to see smooth functioning from Monday

New Delhi. (Agency)

The Lok Sabha is likely to see smooth sailing from Monday onwards after a consensus was reached between the government and the opposition, which has been protesting over several issues, at an all-party meeting. The meeting, chaired by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, was attended by floor leaders of all parties. With the Lok Sabha failing to transact any meaningful business on the first five days of the Monsoon session, Birla urged the opposition leaders to have meaningful discussions while maintaining decorum during Question Hour. While the sudden resignation of Jagdeep Dhankhar as Vice President on Monday caused a momentary flutter, the last couple of days saw opposition parties ratcheting up their protests over the electoral roll revision in Bihar and a demand for a discussion over Operation Sindoar.



The government has, however, agreed to hold a discussion on Operation Sindoar, the three-day hostilities with Pakistan in May in the aftermath of the Pahalgam attack. Both Houses have been allotted 16 hours for a special discussion on the operation. However, sparks are set to fly, with the opposition likely to corner the government over US President Donald Trump's repeated claims that he mediated the ceasefire with Pakistan and the threat of cutting off trade brought an end to the hostilities. India has rejected his claims, saying the ceasefire was forged directly with Pakistan.

- **Opposition MPs protested against the Special Intensive Revision in Bihar voter lists**
- **Congress leaders raised slogans under Mahatma Gandhi statue in Parliament complex**
- **Rajya Sabha MPs filed Suspension of Business notices for SIR discussion in Monsoon Session**

Opposition Plans Farewell Dinner For Jagdeep Dhankhar After Shock Resignation: Sources

The 74-year-old did not get a chance to deliver a farewell speech -- an issue taken up by Opposition leaders.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Opposition parties have invited former vice president Jagdeep Dhankhar for a farewell dinner days after his shock resignation, sources have said. Mr Dhankhar's resignation, publicly attributed to health reasons, followed a week of political turbulence. The 74-year-old did not get a chance to deliver a farewell speech -- an issue taken up by Opposition parties who have demanded a speech in the Rajya Sabha Working Advisory Committee meeting.

To give more weight to the issue, the Opposition parties have organised a dinner to give Mr Dhankhar a proper send-off. Sources, however, say that it is unlikely that the former vice president will accept the offer.

The chain of events leading to the resignation began with a controversial decision taken by

Sabha. Signatures from opposition MPs had already been

Mr Dhankhar in his capacity as Chairman of the Rajya Sabha. On Monday, Mr Dhankhar accepted a motion from opposition MPs seeking the removal of Justice Yashwant Varma, a High Court judge at the centre of a corruption investigation after large sums of cash were recovered from his residence.

The Centre had prepared a separate motion to initiate proceedings against Justice Varma in the Lok

secured, and it was the government's intention to lead the charge on the issue to maintain narrative control. Mr Dhankhar's acceptance of the opposition-led



► **Former Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar resigned citing health reasons after political turmoil**

► **Opposition parties invited Dhankhar for a farewell dinner and requested a Rajya Sabha speech**

► **Dhankhar accepted an opposition motion on Justice Yashwant Varma, pre-empting**

Rajya Sabha motion appeared to preempt that effort. Government

sources revealed that the Prime Minister was immediately briefed. A high-level meeting was held that evening involving senior ministers. The MPs were then asked to sign a counter-motion and to remain stationed in Delhi for the next four days. Shortly after being informed of the government's response plan, Mr Dhankhar submitted his resignation.

The Election Commission on Friday appointed Rajya Sabha Secretary

General PC Mody as the returning officer for the election to the office of the vice president.

According to Article 68(2) of the Constitution, there is no fixed timeline within which the Vice Presidential election must be held in the event of a resignation. The provision mandates that the election be conducted "as soon as possible."

Over Rs 67 crore was incurred on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to five countries, including the US and France, in 2025, while the total expenditure figures related to his foreign trips from 2021 till 2024 stood at nearly Rs 295 crore, according to data shared by the government.

As per the country-wise and year-wise data, the corresponding figures for PM Modi's visits to Mauritius, Cyprus, Canada and Croatia, and Ghana, Trinidad & Tobago, Argentina, Brazil and Namibia this year were not available.

For these visits, the column for 'total expenditure' in the data shared by Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh on Thursday, in his written response to a query by Trinamool Congress MP Derek O'Brien in Rajya Sabha, said -- "Bills under settlement. Total expenditure not yet available." Of these visits, the costliest one was to France, which incurred over Rs 25 crore, while the one PM Modi undertook to the US in June 2023 incurred over Rs 22 crore. On March 20, the ministry had shared data in Rajya Sabha, according to which nearly Rs 258 crore was incurred on 38 foreign visits of PM Modi between May 2022 and

December 2024. In 2025, PM Modi had travelled to France and the US from February 10-13.

In Paris, he held bilateral talks with President Emmanuel Macron and attended an AI

Summit, while in the US he met and held talks with President Donald Trump, among



other engagements.

According to the data shared, the country-wise figures for these five countries PM Modi visited in 2025 are -- Rs 25,59,82,902 (France); Rs 16,54,84,302 (US); Rs 4,92,81,208 (Thailand); Rs 4,46,21,690 (Sri Lanka) and Rs 15,54,03,792.47 (Saudi Arabia). The cumulative figures for the preceding four years are -- about Rs 109 crore (2024) spanning 16 countries including Russia, Ukraine, the US and Brazil; nearly 93 crore (2023); Rs 55.82 crore (2022) and about Rs 36 crore (2021).

"Confident" Of India-US Trade Deal, Says Piyush Goyal Amid Tariff Deadline

New Delhi. (Agency)

Indian Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal said he was optimistic that his country could reach an agreement with the US ahead of an Aug. 1 deadline to avert threatened tariffs of 26%.

"I'm always confident," Mr Goyal said in an interview Thursday with Bloomberg TV in London, when asked how he was feeling about the prospects for a pact. "I've had some wonderful engagement with my friend and colleague from the US," he said, calling US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick and US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer "very dear friends." Mr Goyal insisted there weren't any sticking points in the US-India relationship or in current trade talks, and clarified that immigration rules - including those around H-1B visas for skilled workers - had not come up in this year's talks.

Still, the two countries have been locked in negotiations for an interim trade agreement for months already, having made a commitment to



Karnataka Congress leadership questions resurface: Will Siddaramaiah complete full term as CM?

NEW DELHI. (Agency)

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah is once again at the centre of political speculation, with questions lingering over whether he will complete his full five-year term. The veteran leader is currently on his third visit to Delhi since June, joined by his deputy and political rival, D K Shivakumar (commonly referred to as DKS).

In his second term, Siddaramaiah is poised to become the state's longest-serving elected CM. This would surpass former CM Devaraj Urs' record

of over 2,700 days in office. However, rumours persist about a rotational leadership agreement with DKS. And this, according to reports, involves handing over power halfway through the term. However, Congress party has never officially confirmed this claim.

New Delhi trip fuels leadership buzz

Though the stated reason for their visit is to attend the "Bhagidari Nyay Sammelan" organised by the AICC Backward Class unit, there is speculation that Siddaramaiah may

meet Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. A similar meeting had been scheduled during his last visit earlier this month, but did not take place.

The Congress high command has issued a

gag order, resulting in public silence from both camps. Yet, senior leaders admit internal strategies and quiet negotiations are underway as the government nears the halfway mark of its tenure in November.

Bihar elections dictate Karnataka Congress's leadership

Congress insiders suggest the party is cautious about any leadership change before the Bihar polls. Siddaramaiah is the only OBC CM the party has at present, and removing him could alienate backward caste voters.

"You Betrayed The Tamil People...": Udhayanidhi Stalin Rips Into AIADMK

Chennai. (Agency)

Tamil Nadu Deputy Chief Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin on Thursday accused arch-rival Edappadi K Palaniswami of "trying to pave the way for the BJP... to gain ground" before next year's election.

Mr Stalin, son of Chief Minister MK Stalin, said the AIADMK boss had "betrayed" the Tamil people by aligning with the BJP after claiming he would not, and warned the saffron party, which has historically struggled for traction in the state, it "can never touch the heart of the Tamils".

Mr Stalin also framed the context of the forthcoming election; "... this is not just political... it is a battle to protect our land, pride, and mother tongue," he said, underlining two issues - delimitation and 'Hindi imposition' - that are likely to

dominate poll rhetoric on all sides.

"The AIADMK is desperately trying to pave the way for the BJP... but as long as there are cadres in black and red (the DMK's

and secretly struck a deal. This betrayal must be uprooted. The BJP can never touch the heart of Tamil people," the Deputy Chief Minister said.

The BJP and AIADMK were allies for two major recent elections - the 2019 federal and 2021 state polls - but were beaten by the DMK-Congress combine on both occasions. They broke up in 2023 after snide attacks on AIADMK icons by K Annamalai, then the BJP's state unit boss. The split was welcomed by the AIADMK, which called it their "happiest moment". They contested the 2024 Lok Sabha election solo but the DMK and its allies won that too. In June that year, despite a crushing defeat in the election, EPS insisted there could be no alliance with the BJP, or any national party, since they could not understand the problems of the Tamil people.

► **The AIADMK is desperately trying to pave the way for the BJP... but as long as there are cadres in black and red (the DMK's colours), saffron will never gain ground..."**



colours), saffron will never gain ground in Tamil Nadu," Mr Stalin said. "Edappadi K Palaniswami once confidently said there would be no alliance with the BJP. But he has switched lanes... he went into hiding

Electrocution deaths fail to jolt KSEB out of slumber

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM (Agency)

The recent electrocution deaths -- though they shook the state -- have not had much effect on the KSEB, it would appear. A drive through the city's roads, major or interior, reveals a troubling sight: tree branches dangling dangerously over live electric lines, even those passing in the front of schools or at busy junctions and key public areas.

The entrance of Government LP School in Kanjirampara is one such spot where the branches are looming directly over the wires. "Safety audits and other similar measures are just gimmicks. If the authorities were serious, why haven't they cleared this obvious danger that is lurking in front of a school," asked T Sudhakaran, a resident.

The situation is no different at the road behind the Government Vocational HSS in Vattiyoorkavu. Here too, tree branches from a poorly kept, locked property owned by the Survey of India dangerously hang over electric lines.

"There's no use complaining to the KSEB. How can they even access locked Union government properties? The issue can only be solved if the state government holds a joint meeting

Differently-abled student found dead in Bhubaneswar; family alleges harassment, police probe abetment

BHUBANESWAR (Agency)

The body of a 21-year-old differently-abled woman was recovered from her rented house in Damana area of the city on Thursday.

According to the police, the deceased, an ITI student from Rayagada district, was reportedly living alone. While preliminary investigations suggest it was a case of suicide, police are yet to confirm the motive behind the incident. "Initial findings indicate it to be a case of suicide. However, a thorough investigation is underway to ascertain the exact cause," said DCP Jagmohan Meena.

Police said a distress call led personnel from the Chandrasekharpur police station to the residence. Upon arrival, they broke open the door and found the girl dead. Her body was sent for postmortem to Capital Hospital and later handed over to her family.

The victim's family, however, alleged abetment and claimed that the woman was being harassed by a man, which they believe drove her to take the extreme step. "The parents of the deceased have filed a complaint, alleging that their daughter was being harassed by a youth. We are examining all angles and the investigation is ongoing," the DCP added.

Maharashtra government to extend curricular support to Marathi schools in US: Ashish Shelar



Mumbai (Agency)

The Maharashtra Government will officially extend curricular support to Marathi schools operating in the United States, Minister for Information Technology and Cultural Affairs Ashish Shelar said Thursday as he visited the Bay Area in California's San Francisco as part of a US tour.

There are over 50 Marathi schools across the United States, operated voluntarily by members of the community. During the meeting, representatives of the Mandal noted that if the Maharashtra government provides an official recommendation and curriculum, it would significantly ease the process of teaching Marathi language, conducting examinations, and issuing certificates to students.

Shelar assured the Mandal that he would consult Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and School Education Minister Dada Bhuse, and stated that the government will "extend full support", including official recommendations, and the "provision of a formal curriculum for Marathi schools across the US".

The development comes after a recent row in Maharashtra over the three-language system under the National Education Policy. Following opposition, the state government withdrew resolutions mandating the teaching of Hindi in schools from Class 1.

Shelar met office-bearers of the Maharashtra Mandal, which runs Marathi schools in the region. These schools, run by Marathis, teach the language, culture, history and folk traditions of Maharashtra to the next generation. The school in the Bay Area has been operational since 2005 and currently teaches Marathi to around 300 students.

Though the Marathi schools in the US are operated by the Mandal, the state government's reassurance conveys a larger message, reiterating its commitment to the Marathi language and institutions.



"This is an issue that resurfaces every monsoon," said M K Gopal, a retired KSEB official and resident of Palayam. "The KSEB must undertake a comprehensive inspection before

involving forest, education and Union government officials," said Simon Antony, a retired central government employee and resident. Even at prominent city locations like Baker Junction, SS Kovil Road and behind the Kanakakunnu Palace, similar risks are evident.

the next monsoon and be provided with modern tools and specialised vehicles. In many places, workers are still using outdated equipment that are useful only for trimming small branches," he said. Residents and civic experts have called for coordinated interdepartmental strategy,

greater public accountability and better resourcing for the KSEB to prevent further tragedies.

A senior KSEB official acknowledged the operational challenges they face. "We need more ground-level staff to handle such cases. Also, we can't remove branches without the forest department's permission. Cutting down branches or trees on private or centrally-owned land often invites objections," the official said, on the condition of anonymity.

"When dealing with private owners is hard, imagine the complications with central agencies. We have become easy scapegoats while the root issues remain unaddressed," the official said.

'Direct affront to Sikhism': Punjab Govt's musical event on Guru Teg Bahadar's martyrdom anniversary in Srinagar sparks row

Amritsar (Agency)

An event organised by the Punjab Government to mark the 350th martyrdom anniversary of Guru Teg Bahadar, the ninth Sikh guru, in Srinagar on Thursday evening has sparked controversy as Sikh bodies said the musical programme went against Sikh religious values.

A section of social media users also raised strong objections to the entertainment programme hosted by the government's Language Department (Bhasha Vibhag) that saw the audience grooving to the tunes of singer Bir Singh.

They questioned the decision to organise entertainment performances in the name of Guru Teg Bahadar, and asked why government funds were used for cultural events rather than solemn remembrance. The issue comes amid ongoing tensions between the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) and the Punjab Government regarding the organisation of events related to the martyrdom centenary.

SGPC president Harjinder Singh Dhami on Friday strongly condemned the nature of the programme. "The event held by the Punjab Government's Language Department goes against the sanctity of the Guru's supreme sacrifice. It is a direct affront to Sikh religious values and the philosophy of Sri Guru Teg Bahadar," he said in a statement.

Dhami stated that the event misrepresented the solemnity of the occasion and that Sikh traditions must be followed when marking such historical events. He added that Sikh Gurbirs and martyrdom anniversaries are spiritual occasions that involve Gurbani recitation, Kirtan, and community service. "Singing and dancing violate Sikh principles," he pointed out.

Dhami also urged the Punjab Government to apologise publicly and issue clear guidelines to prevent recurrence. He



reiterated SGPC's stand that only Sikh institutions are supposed to organise the anniversary events of Sikh gurus. The Shiromani Akali Dal (Badal) on Friday stated that cultural performances, including singing and dancing at the event, amount to sacrilege and demanded a public apology from Education Minister Harjot Singh Bains, who is in charge of the Language Department, for the act, which amounted to making a mockery of the Guru's supreme sacrifice.

As heavy rain sweeps Mumbai, police urge citizens to remain indoors

Mumbai (Agency)

After a brief lull, Mumbai woke up to yet another rainy day Friday as heavy showers resumed and lashed the city amid an orange alert in place in the region, triggering traffic snarls in several areas. Authorities have closed the Andheri subway due to 1 to 1.5 feet of waterlogging, and the Mumbai traffic police have routed traffic via Gokhale and Thackeray bridges.

With torrential downpour lashing Mumbai and its neighbouring districts, the city police issued an advisory urging citizens to avoid venturing outdoors unless necessary, as well as avoid coastal areas.

"Due to heavy rainfall in Mumbai and nearby districts, citizens are advised to stay indoors unless absolutely necessary, avoid coastal areas, and drive cautiously. Our officials and staff are on high alert and ready to assist Mumbai,"



said the police in a statement.

After receiving light showers throughout Thursday, rain gathered pace overnight and intensified Friday morning. Data furnished by the Brihamumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) showed Mumbai's Santacruz station in the suburbs received only 24 mm of rainfall between Thursday and Friday until 8.30.

However, between 8 am and 11 am on Friday, the western suburbs received an average of 44 mm of rainfall, followed by an average of 36 mm in the eastern suburbs.

According to records from the civic body's automatic weather station, between 8 am and 11 am, the heaviest showers were recorded near Jogeshwari with 67.3 mm of rainfall, followed by 66 mm in Andheri, and 65 mm in Santacruz. In the eastern suburbs, the heaviest rain was recorded in Ghatkopar at 59 mm of rainfall, followed by 57 mm in Bhandup, and 52 mm of rainfall in Powai.

Owing to the possibility of heavy to very heavy rainfall, Mumbai, as well as neighbouring districts of Thane and Raigad, have been placed under an orange alert Friday. Meteorologists have attributed the ongoing surge in rain activity to a strong low-pressure system which has developed over the Bay of Bengal.

Local BJP leader's son killed in Haryana's Jind; kin refuse to claim body in protest

Chandigarh (Agency)

A 30-year-old doctor, the son of a local BJP leader, died after being stabbed in Haryana's Jind district late on Thursday night while returning home with two others, the police said. The incident took place in Safidion and has led to protests by the victim's family, who have refused to claim his body until the culprits are caught.

Vikas Sharma, a prominent doctor in the city, was returning home with his brother-in-law and a friend, also a doctor, when they were attacked by unidentified people near his residence.

According to the police, when the trio reached Rambur Road, a group of men allegedly stopped their car, misbehaved with them, and attacked them with sharp weapons. All three sustained injuries in the attack and were rushed to a private hospital in Panipat. While Vikas succumbed

to injuries, the two others are undergoing treatment, the police added.

Vikas's father, Shiv Kumar Sharma, had been associated with the BJP for a long time and was a former mandal adhyaksh in Jind,

hospital, Anuj Multispecialty Hospital, in Safidion. Vikas sustained three stab injuries, including one that punctured his heart. He died due to excessive bleeding. The other two are out of danger," one of the police officials investigating the case said.

"The family is suspecting some professional rivalry behind the attack. We are also scanning the area's CCTV footage to ascertain the assailants' identities. Special teams have been constituted to identify and nab the culprits," the official added.

Shiv Kumar Sharma told the media that the incident raised concerns over the law and order situation in the state. "It is shocking how people can kill anybody on the roads in Haryana. If a BJP leader's son can be killed in this manner, how will a common man feel safe?" he asked.

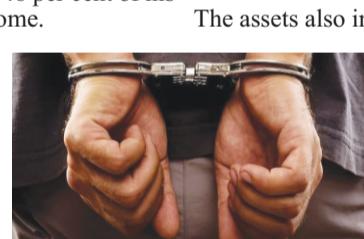
The police said. Vikas ran a private hospital in Safidion. He got married about 18 months ago and is survived by his wife and a five-month-old daughter, the police added.

"The family hails from Muana village in Safidion in Jind district. Vikas was running a private

BMC engineer held for amassing assets 148% above income; antlers, firearm seized during raids

Bhubaneswar (Agency)

The Vigilance on Thursday arrested the executive engineer of Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) on charges of possessing disproportionate assets to the tune of 148 per cent of his known sources of income.



The accused Jagannath Pattnaik has also been booked under provisions of Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, for illegal possession of a pair of antlers.

The anti-corruption agency unearthed over Rs 3 crore worth assets in Pattnaik's and his family members' name during raids carried out at four places on Wednesday. The assets include a three-storey building and two high-value plots in Bhubaneswar's Badagada area, one plot in Khandagiri and two double-storey buildings in Gunupur.

Pattnaik began his career as a junior engineer with Gunupur NAC in November 1992. He joined the BMC as an assistant engineer in 2011, was promoted to assistant executive engineer in 2016, and became an executive engineer in 2024. He has around five years of service remaining, according to officials.

According to the police, when the trio reached Rambur Road, a group of men allegedly stopped their car, misbehaved with them, and attacked them with sharp weapons. All three sustained injuries in the attack and were rushed to a private hospital in Panipat. While Vikas succumbed

to injuries, the two others are undergoing treatment, the police added.

Vikas's father, Shiv Kumar Sharma, had been associated with the BJP for a long time and was a former mandal adhyaksh in Jind,

Thousands offer 'bali tharpanam' in Thiruvananthapuram

Despite light rain and strong waves, devotees poured in large numbers than in the previous years.

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM (Agency)

Thousands of people offered bali tharpanam for ancestors at various places in the state capital, as part of the annual Karkkidakam Vavu on Thursday. The rituals started as early as 2 am at some places.

In spite of coastal erosion posing threat, many went to Papanasam and Shankumukham to offer bali for the departed souls. "Over 1 lakh people offered bali tharpanam on the Papanasam beach in Varkala," municipal deputy chairperson Kumari Sudersini A told.

Despite light rain and strong waves, devotees poured in large numbers than in the previous years. "However, Wednesday evening was not as busy as the usual eve of Vavu Bali," said Papanasam ward councillor Ajayakumar C.

Thiruvallam Parusurama Swami Temple, a key place for bali tharpanam too witnessed major rush from the morning. Marking one of the highest devotee counts for Vavu Bali, the temple saw close to 47,000 people offering bali. "The crowd was heavier than last year. Extensive arrangements were made with the collaborative efforts of multiple departments, including the fire and rescue,



the police, and the KSRTC," said Thiruvallam ward councillor Sathyavathi V. Arrangements were made at nine bali mandapams at the temple so that close to 3,500 people could perform the rituals simultaneously. The bali offerings, which began at 2.30 am here, went on till 1.30 pm. Minor inconveniences, including health

issues of devotees, were resolved immediately with the help of officials from the health department. Despite experiencing rogue seas on Wednesday, the waters remained relatively calm at Shankumukham on the day of Vavu Bali. People from different walks of life, including youngsters and the aged, were seen immersing in the rituals. In view of rough seas, the authorities had made arrangements to accommodate pilgrims coming to offer bali. Lifeguards were also deployed at the beaches.

"With two houses being severely damaged, issues of sea wrath were there even on Wednesday," said ward councillor Seraphine Fredy. She added that necessary electric lines have been cut to avoid accidents at the site of bali offerings. However, this didn't affect the number of devotees, with the offerings getting completed by 1 pm. Around 5,000 people performed the rituals at two sites in Aruvikkara. "MLA G Stephen and Nedumangad revenue.

THE SIKH TIMES

Edited, Printed, Published
Owned by Simmi Babbar
N-31, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar
Delhi-110009

Printed at Qammi Patrik Printing
Press, A4/A144, 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: 96407723, 9971359517

Website: www.thesikhtimes.in

Email: sikhtimesindia@gmail.com

RNI No. DELENG/2008/25465

UP sets benchmark in Ease of Doing Business

The Sikh Times

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh is emerging as a national model for Ease of Doing Business (EoDB), thanks to a series of groundbreaking reforms introduced under the leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. The state has created a business-friendly environment marked by administrative efficiency, digital services, timely approvals, and strong inter-departmental coordination—making it easier, faster, and more transparent for investors and entrepreneurs to do business in UP. At the core of this transformation is Invest UP, the state's nodal investment agency, which has implemented investor-centric initiatives that have positioned Uttar Pradesh among the top states in India for recent business reforms. The reforms implemented under the Business Reform Action Plan have ensured a favorable environment for MSMEs, startups and FDI, while digital and responsive governance has also increased investor confidence. Under the leadership of CM Yogi, the government of Uttar Pradesh has implemented more than 4,675 reforms

to improve Ease of Doing Business. Out of these, 524 services have been integrated into a digital single-window system, making processes faster and

which has not only connected investors and entrepreneurs with government schemes, but also made the approval process simpler and time

grated and trackable. Over 200 business-related services have been included under the Public Service Guarantee Act, with clear timelines set for issuing approvals, NOCs, and licenses. The Chief Minister's Office is now monitoring all services in real-time through an integrated dashboard. This has significantly reduced delays and corruption while increasing accountability across departments. To further simplify investments and project implementation, Invest UP has linked the Single Window Portal with more than 524 services, allowing investors to access all approvals and processes from one platform. Services such as land allocation, NOC issuance, project approvals, and permits are now fully online, ensuring greater transparency and reducing the scope for corruption. This system has especially helped startups and new businesses by ensuring time-bound approvals, faster land allocation, and improved infrastructure connectivity. With strong political will, inter-departmental coordination, and the efficiency of Invest UP, Uttar Pradesh has emerged as a preferred destination for investors across the country and abroad.



easier for businesses. The state's strong commitment and efficient approach have helped Uttar Pradesh become one of the leading investment destinations in India. A key role in this success has been played by Invest UP,

bound. Notably, the state government has connected 45 departments to this initiative. As a result, key services related to industries, environment, electricity, pollution control, housing, and irrigation have now become inter-

No Shortage of Fertilizers in Haryana for Kharif 2025 - Agriculture Minister

Chandigarh: Haryana Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister, Sh. Shyam Singh Rana, has strongly dismissed reports regarding fertilizer shortage in the state, asserting that there is no shortage of essential fertilizers like Urea and DAP during the Kharif 2025 season. Responding to a media report that claimed shortage of fertilizers, the Minister termed the report misleading and clarified that the state government, with support from the Union Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, has ensured timely and adequate supply of fertilizers to farmers. He further said that the figures mentioned in the report pertain to the Rabi season, whereas the current allocation of DAP is meant for the Kharif season. The Agriculture Minister informed that as per official records, Haryana requires a total of 10.07 lakh metric tonnes of Urea for the Kharif 2025 season. From April 1 to July 19, the estimated demand was 5.91 lakh metric tonnes. During this period, the central government supplied 8.54 lakh metric tonnes of Urea, of which 7.5 lakh metric tonnes have already been sold to farmers. Currently, 1.04 lakh metric tonnes of Urea are in stock across the state, and an additional 16,307 metric tonnes will arrive soon, making the total available quantity approximately 1.20 lakh metric tonnes. Regarding DAP, Sh. Shyam Singh Rana further clarified that the state requires 2.83 lakh metric tonnes during the Kharif season. Between April 1 and July 19, the demand was 1.37 lakh metric tonnes. So far, 1.46 lakh metric tonnes of DAP have been supplied, of which 1.10 lakh metric tonnes have been sold. At present, 36,000 metric tonnes are in stock, and 5,467 metric tonnes will be arriving soon, bringing the total available DAP to around 41,000 metric tonnes. Sh. Shyam Singh Rana stated that the government has intensified monitoring and enforcement actions to curb black marketing, hoarding, adulteration, and illegal tagging of fertilizers. As of now, 1,974 inspections have been conducted across the state. These actions have resulted in the registration of 8 FIRs, suspension of licenses of 26 dealers, cancellation of 1 license, and issuance of 96 show-cause notices. The Agriculture Minister emphasized the government's commitment to providing quality fertilizers to farmers in a timely manner and at fair prices.

NAME CHANGE

I, SHAHANA KHATOON W/O KASHIF JAMIA, H/8/19, 4TH FLOOR R/S BATHHOUSE NR SHAHAB MASJID JAMIA NAGAR OKHLA DELHI PIN 110025 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SHAHANA JAMIA

NAME CHANGE

I, SURAJRAJ ALAM S/O MOHD SHOEB, R/O R-214, GALI NO.9 RAMESH PARK LAXMI NAGAR EAST DELHI-110092 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SARFRAZ ALAM

NAME CHANGE

I, SANTOSH KUMAR SINGH S/o RAJENDRA PRASAD SINGH R/o QTR. NO 2/2, PANCARIA LINE, SADAR BAZAR, DELHI CANTT, DELHI-110010 Permanent Address ORAP, THANAP-2011, PASAHARA, BUXAR, BIHAR-302119, have changed the name of my minor daughter BARSHA KUMARI aged 15 years and she shall hereafter be known as VARSHA KUMARI.

NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as POONAM CHOPRA daughter of Shri RAJINDER SINGH and wife of Shri VIKAS PATHNEY, residing at 110H, Pocke K, Sheikh Sarai Phase-2, Malviya Nagar, PO: Malviya Nagar, District: South Delhi, Delhi-110017, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as POONAM PATHNEY.

NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as TUSHAR S/o HARI KRISHAN, R/o H.NO.39, Extension-3, Nangoli, West Delhi, Delhi-110041, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as TUSHAR GOYAL.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, GUFRAN MIRZA S/o RIAZ MIRZA R/o 2377, KUCHA MIR HASHIM TURKMAN GATE, MATTYA NAROL, DELHI-110006, declare that name of my minor son has been wrongly written as LABIB MIRZA in my minor son name RAYYAN MIRZA aged 11 years in his School Records. The actual name of my minor son is RAYYAN MIRZA, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, AMREEN NAAZ, D/o YUSUF R/o House No-1744, Gali Tehsil, Behind Moti Mahal Restaurant, Kucha dakhni Rai, Darya Ganj, Central Delhi, Delhi-110002, declare that name of my father has been wrongly written as MOHDYUSUF KHAN aged my 10th class educational documents and as name of my father has been wrongly written as MD. YUSUF KHAN Graduation educational documents. The actual name of my father is YUSUF which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, M. DIPAK MAKAWANA wife of N. DIPAK RAO, residing at F-66, CHAMUNDI NAGAR, B/S KUMBAHSI CHALLI, N.R. RAMESHWAR, MAHADEV, BHARGAV R.D., MEGHANI NAGAR, AHMEDABAD, GUJARAT-380016, have changed my name from DIPAKA MAKAWANA to RATHOD DIPAKA for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 25/07/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, No-2615208K Rank-HAV Name- JOSEPH VINOTH S/o Door no 3/91, VILL-MATTIYAPENDAL, POMATTIYAPENDAL, TEHSIL-MUDUKULATHUR, DIST-RAMANA THAPURAM, TAMIL NADU-623533, have changed my minor son's name from J DHISHA-JOVITH TO DHISHA-JOVITH J for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 25/07/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, No-2615208K Rank-HAV Name- JOSEPH VINOTH S/o Door no 3/91, VILL-MATTIYAPENDAL, POMATTIYAPENDAL, TEHSIL-MUDUKULATHUR, DIST-RAMANA THAPURAM, TAMIL NADU-623533, have changed my minor son's name from J DHISHA-JOVITH TO DHISHA-JOVITH J for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 25/07/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, DIPAK MAKAWANA wife of N. DIPAK RAO, residing at F-66, CHAMUNDI NAGAR, B/S KUMBAHSI CHALLI, N.R. RAMESHWAR, MAHADEV, BHARGAV R.D., MEGHANI NAGAR, AHMEDABAD, GUJARAT-380016, have changed my name from DIPAKA MAKAWANA to RATHOD DIPAKA for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 25/07/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, DIPAK MAKAWANA wife of N. DIPAK RAO, residing at F-66, CHAMUNDI NAGAR, B/S KUMBAHSI CHALLI, N.R. RAMESHWAR, MAHADEV, BHARGAV R.D., MEGHANI NAGAR, AHMEDABAD, GUJARAT-380016, have changed my name from DIPAKA MAKAWANA to RATHOD DIPAKA for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 25/07/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Information is given to general public at large that our client Mr. D.P. Upadhyay S/o Late Mr. J.N. Upadhyay is the owner of Freehold Residential Built-Up Upper Ground Floor (without roof right) Built on Property Bearing Plot No. 51, Area measuring 30 Sq. Yds., out of Khasra no. 64/241, Situated in the revenue Estate of Village Hastaab, Delhi, State Delhi, in the Colony known as Gram Sabha, Mohan Garden Ultam Nagar, New Delhi-110059, by virtue of GPA along with DLT Bill dated 28.01.2024, now our client is declaring that any other person does not have any right over the said property, and same property is held by Mr. Rakesh Kumar Sharma & Mrs. Rekha Devi and same has been financed by SMFG India Home Finance Company Limited Branch: LAXMI NAGAR, DELHI. If any person(s) have any objection(s) or claim(s) with respect to the right, title or interest in the said property or any part thereof by way of inheritance, assignment, mortgage, charge, possession, lien or otherwise, are hereby required to make the same known in writing within 7 days with the documentary evidence from the date of publication, failing which the said claim of the person/s, if any will be considered waived and settled.

NAVEEN KUMAR VERMA

Advocate F-211-sector-3 Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201010, Contact at 0956871432

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, AMREEN NAAZ, D/o YUSUF R/o House No-1744, Gali Tehsil, Behind Moti Mahal Restaurant, Kucha dakhni Rai, Darya Ganj, Central Delhi, Delhi-110002, declare that name of my father has been wrongly written as MOHDYUSUF KHAN aged my 10th class educational documents and as name of my father has been wrongly written as MD. YUSUF KHAN Graduation educational documents. The actual name of my father is YUSUF which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, GUFRAN MIRZA S/o RIAZ MIRZA R/o 2377, KUCHA MIR HASHIM TURKMAN GATE, MATTYA NAROL, DELHI-110006, declare that name of my minor son has been wrongly written as LABIB MIRZA in my minor son name RAYYAN MIRZA aged 11 years in his School Records. The actual name of my minor son is RAYYAN MIRZA, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, AMREEN NAAZ, D/o YUSUF R/o House No-1744, Gali Tehsil, Behind Moti Mahal Restaurant, Kucha dakhni Rai, Darya Ganj, Central Delhi, Delhi-110002, declare that name of my father has been wrongly written as MOHDYUSUF KHAN aged my 10th class educational documents and as name of my father has been wrongly written as MD. YUSUF KHAN Graduation educational documents. The actual name of my father is YUSUF which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, GUFRAN MIRZA S/o RIAZ MIRZA R/o 2377, KUCHA MIR HASHIM TURKMAN GATE, MATTYA NAROL, DELHI-110006, declare that name of my minor son has been wrongly written as LABIB MIRZA in my minor son name RAYYAN MIRZA aged 11 years in his School Records. The actual name of my minor son is RAYYAN MIRZA, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, AMREEN NAAZ, D/o YUSUF R/o House No-1744, Gali Tehsil, Behind Moti Mahal Restaurant, Kucha dakhni Rai, Darya Ganj, Central Delhi, Delhi-110002, declare that name of my father has been wrongly written as MOHDYUSUF KHAN aged my 10th class educational documents and as name of my father has been wrongly written as MD. YUSUF KHAN Graduation educational documents. The actual name of my father is YUSUF which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, GUFRAN MIRZA S/o RIAZ MIRZA R/o 2377, KUCHA MIR HASHIM TURKMAN GATE, MATTYA NAROL, DELHI-110006, declare that name of my minor son has been wrongly written as LABIB MIRZA in my minor son name RAYYAN MIRZA aged 11 years in his School Records. The actual name of my minor son is RAYYAN MIRZA, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, GUFRAN MIRZA S/o RIAZ MIRZA R/o 2377, KUCHA MIR HASHIM TURKMAN GATE, MATTYA NAROL, DELHI-110006, declare that name of my minor son has been wrongly written as LABIB MIRZA in my minor son name RAYYAN MIRZA aged 11 years in his School Records. The actual name of my minor son is RAYYAN MIRZA, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, GUFRAN MIRZA S/o RIAZ MIRZA R/o 2377, KUCHA MIR HASHIM TURKMAN GATE, MATTYA NAROL, DELHI-110006, declare that name of my minor son has been wrongly written as LABIB MIRZA in my minor son name RAYYAN MIRZA aged 11 years in his School Records. The actual name of my minor son is RAYYAN MIRZA, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, GUFRAN MIRZA S/o RIAZ MIRZA R/o 2377, KUCHA MIR HASHIM TURKMAN GATE, MATTYA NAROL, DELHI-110006, declare that name of my minor son has been wrongly written as LABIB MIRZA in my minor son name RAYYAN MIRZA aged 11 years in his School Records. The actual name of my minor son is RAYYAN MIRZA, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, GUFRAN MIRZA S/o RIAZ MIRZA R/o 2377, KUCHA MIR HASHIM TURKMAN GATE, MATTYA NAROL, DELHI-110006, declare that name of my minor son has been wrongly written as LABIB MIRZA in my minor son name RAYYAN MIRZA aged 11 years in his School Records. The actual name of my minor son is RAYYAN MIRZA, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, GUFRAN MIRZA S/o RIAZ MIRZA R/o 2377, KUCHA MIR HASHIM TURKMAN GATE, MATTYA NAROL, DELHI-110006, declare that name of my minor son has been wrongly written as LABIB MIRZA in my minor son name RAYYAN MIRZA aged 11 years in his School Records. The actual name of my minor son is RAYYAN MIRZA, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, GUFRAN MIRZA S/o RIAZ MIRZA R/o 2377, KUCHA MIR HASHIM TURKMAN GATE, MATTYA NAROL, DELHI-110006, declare that name of my minor son has been wrongly written as LABIB MIRZA in my minor son name RAYYAN MIRZA aged 11 years in his School Records. The actual name of my minor son is RAYYAN MIRZA, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, GUFRAN MIRZA S/o RIAZ MIRZA R/o 2377, KUCHA MIR HASHIM TURKMAN GATE, MATTYA NAROL, DELHI-110006, declare that name of my minor son has been wrongly written as LABIB MIRZA in my minor son name RAYYAN MIRZA aged 11 years in his School Records. The actual name of my minor son is RAYYAN MIRZA, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, GUFRAN MIRZA S/o RIAZ MIRZA R/o 2377, KUCHA MIR HASHIM TURKMAN GATE, MATTYA NAROL, DELHI-110006, declare that name of my minor son has been wrongly written as LABIB MIRZA in my minor son name RAYYAN MIRZA aged 11 years in his School Records. The actual name of my minor son is RAYYAN MIRZA, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, GUFRAN MIRZA S/o RIAZ MIRZA R/o 2377, KUCHA MIR HASHIM TURKMAN GATE, MATTYA NAROL, DELHI-110006, declare that name of my minor son has been wrongly written as LABIB MIRZA in my minor son name RAYYAN MIRZA aged 11 years in his School Records. The actual name of my minor son is RAYYAN MIRZA, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, GUFRAN MIRZA S/o RIAZ MIRZA R/o 2377, KUCHA MIR HASHIM TURKMAN GATE, MATTYA NAROL, DELHI-110006, declare that name of my minor son has been wrongly written as LABIB MIRZA in my minor son name RAYYAN MIRZA aged 11 years in his School Records. The actual name of my minor son is RAYYAN MIRZA, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, GUFRAN MIRZA S/o RIAZ MIRZA R/o 2377, KUCHA MIR HASHIM TURKMAN GATE, MATTYA NAROL, DELHI-110006, declare that name of my minor son has been wrongly written as LABIB MIRZA in my minor son name RAYYAN MIRZA aged 11 years in his School Records. The actual name of my minor son is RAYYAN MIRZA, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, GUFRAN MIRZA S/o RIAZ MIRZA R/o 2377, KUCHA MIR HASHIM TURKMAN GATE, MATTYA NAROL, DELHI-110006, declare that name of my minor son has been wrongly written as LABIB MIRZA in my minor son name RAYYAN MIRZA aged 11 years in his School Records. The actual name of my minor son is RAYYAN MIRZA, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, GUFRAN MIRZA S/o RIAZ MIRZA R/o 2377, KUCHA MIR HASHIM TURKMAN GATE, MATTYA NAROL, DELHI-110006, declare that name of my minor son has been wrongly written as LABIB MIRZA in my minor son name RAYYAN MIRZA aged 11 years in his School Records. The actual name of my minor son is RAYYAN MIRZA, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, GUFRAN MIRZA S/o RIAZ MIRZA R/o 2377, KUCHA MIR HASHIM TURKMAN GATE, MATTYA NAROL, DELHI-110006, declare that name of my minor son has been wrongly written as LABIB MIRZA in my minor son name RAYYAN MIRZA aged 11 years in his School Records. The actual name of my minor son is RAYYAN MIRZA, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, GUFRAN MIRZA S/o RIAZ MIRZA R/o 2377, KUCHA MIR HASHIM TURKMAN GATE, MATTYA NAROL, DELHI-110006, declare that name of my minor son has been wrongly written as LABIB MIRZA in my minor son name RAYYAN MIRZA aged 11 years in his School Records. The actual name of my minor son is RAYYAN MIRZA, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, GUFRAN MIRZA S/o RIAZ MIRZA R/o 2377, KUCHA MIR HASHIM TURKMAN GATE, MATTYA NAROL, DELHI-110006, declare that name of my minor son has been wrongly written as LABIB MIRZA in my minor son name RAYYAN MIRZA aged 11 years in his School Records. The actual name of my minor son is RAYYAN MIRZA, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, GUFRAN MIRZA S/o RIAZ MIRZA R/o 2377, KUCHA MIR HASHIM TURKMAN GATE, MATTYA NAROL, DELHI-110006, declare that name of my minor son has been wrongly written as LABIB MIRZA in my minor son name RAYYAN MIRZA aged 11 years in his School

NEWS BOX

6.6 magnitude earthquake hits South Pacific near Samoa, no damage reported

MELBOURNE . (Agency)

A magnitude-6.6 earthquake struck in the South Pacific near the island nation of Samoa on Friday, but caused no apparent damage. The quake occurred 440 kilometers (273 miles) southwest of the capital Apia at a depth of 314 kilometers (195 miles), the U.S. Geological Survey said. Jarrett Malifa, a staff member at the Samoa Observer news website, said no damage or injury has been reported. Malifa said in an email Samoa Meteorological Services had confirmed there was no tsunami threat. The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center in Honolulu also assessed there was no tsunami threat. Samoa sits on the "Ring of Fire," an arc of seismic faults around the Pacific Ocean where earthquakes and volcanoes are common. In 2009, two large earthquakes struck midway between Samoa and American Samoa, a U.S. territory. The earthquakes generated tsunami waves that killed at least 192 people in Samoa, American Samoa and Tonga.

"Another Russia Hoax": Trump Blames Democrats For "Epstein Scam", "Con Job"

Washington . (Agency)

US President Donald Trump has once blamed "Radical Left Democrats" for the ongoing controversy over the case file related to sex offender and late financier Jeffrey Epstein, calling it a "SCAM" and a "CON JOB." In a Truth Social post on Friday, a furious Trump claimed that by calling for the so-called "Epstein files", the Democrats were trying to "distract and obfuscate" people from his administration's first "GREAT six months of service to America ... the results of which many are saying is the BEST six months in Presidential history." "The Radical Left Democrats are doing everything in their power to distract and obfuscate from our GREAT six months of service to America, results of which many are saying is the BEST six months in Presidential history. They have gone absolutely CRAZY, and are playing another Russia, Russia, Russia Hoax but, this time, under the guise of what we will call the Jeffrey Epstein SCAM," he said. As things are revealed and, I hope will take place quickly, you will see that it is yet another Democrat CON JOB. Hopefully, the Grand Jury Files will put an end to this HOAX. Everyone should see what is there, but people who are innocent should not be hurt. MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!" the Republican added.

Trump's core Make America Great Again (MAGA) base has erupted in anger over the White House's handling of the so-called "Epstein files," viewing it as a betrayal by the President and his allies who have long championed the unfounded theory that powerful elites orchestrated a massive child sex trafficking cover-up. Calls for the release of those files have intensified after a US media report on Wednesday said Trump's name was among hundreds found during an official review of documents on Epstein, a claim the White House has denied. Trump, 79, was once a close friend of Epstein, and The Wall Street Journal reported that the president's name was among hundreds found during a DOJ review of the so-called "Epstein files," though there has not been evidence of wrongdoing. Trump filed a \$10 billion defamation suit against the Journal last week after it reported that he had penned a sexually suggestive letter to Epstein for his 50th birthday in 2003.

Elon Musk Gives One-Word Reply To Sundar Pichai's Post On Alphabet's Quarterly Results

Washington . (Agency)

Google's parent company, Alphabet, recently reported its quarterly results that exceeded expectations. The company earned \$28.2 billion during the second quarter, a nearly 20% increase from the previous year. The company's overall revenue also grew 14% to \$96.4 billion, exceeding the 10.9% growth Wall Street had expected. Soon after the earnings calls, Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai took to X to share the good news. In his post, he also spoke about Alphabet's 10-year milestone.

"Just got off the earnings call - great quarter and it was our (and my) 40th call as Alphabet. August will mark 10 years since we announced Alphabet. Been thinking about the incredible growth in our new businesses since then - Cloud, YouTube, Play, Subscriptions etc," he wrote. "To give a sense of progress, in 2015 all of Alphabet's revenue added up to \$75B. YouTube and Cloud alone ended 2024 at an annual run rate of \$110B," the Indian-origin CEO added. Mr Pichai's post quickly caught the attention of social media users, with many praising the tech CEO on Google's quarterly results. Tesla CEO Elon Musk also reacted to the post with one word. "Impressive," he wrote. The conversation between the two tech titans did not end here as Mr Pichai responded to Musk's comment with a folded hands emoji. "Serious money," the Tesla chief wrote in another comment. Notably, Alphabet's blockbuster earnings report has catapulted Sundar Pichai into the billionaire ranks. According to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, the Indian-origin CEO is now worth \$1.1 billion, driven largely by Alphabet's rally and years of steady compensation. Mr Pichai also reached another key milestone this month by becoming Alphabet's longest-serving CEO. He joined Google in 2004 as the head of product management and development. Over the years, he led the company to focus on several innovative products and services. Mr Pichai became Google CEO in 2015, and then, when Google became a subsidiary of Alphabet Inc., he took on the additional role of CEO for the parent company.

'They are walking corpses': UNRWA says one in five Gaza children malnourished, over 100 died of starvation

Children arriving at UNRWA clinics are skeletal, listless, and dangerously close to death. Without urgent nutritional treatment, they won't survive, an official said.

world . (Agency)

People in Gaza are neither dead nor alive. They are walking corpses." This was the haunting message from a UNRWA staff on the ground this morning, " UNRWA chief Philippe Lazzarini said in a post on X. In the heart of a war-ravaged enclave, the situation has spiraled into a catastrophic emergency. According to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), one in every five children in Gaza City is now malnourished, with the number growing by the day. More than 100



people, most of them children have already died from hunger." UNRWA's frontline health workers are now fainting on duty. They survive on a single, meager meal a day, often just lentils, if that. "When the caretakers collapse, so does the entire system," Lazzarini said. Children arriving at UNRWA clinics are skeletal, listless, and

dangerously close to death. Without urgent nutritional treatment, they won't survive, he said. "This is not a crisis. It's a collapse," said the UNRWA official.

"Families are no longer coping, they are breaking. Parents are too hungry to feed their children. They can't even follow basic medical instructions. Their very existence

is under threat." The agency said that it has 6,000 trucks loaded with food and medical supplies waiting in Jordan and Egypt. But they remain stalled as Gaza continues its freefall into famine. "Allow humanitarian partners to bring unrestricted & uninterrupted humanitarian assistance to Gaza," he said. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres recently condemned the "accelerating breakdown of humanitarian conditions" in Gaza. "The last lifelines keeping people alive are collapsing," his spokesman Stephane Dujarric said in a statement. The United Nations chief "deplores the growing reports of children and adults suffering from malnutrition." The Secretary-General notes that the intensification of hostilities in recent days comes as the humanitarian system is being impeded, undermined and endangered," Dujarric said. "A new evacuation order in parts of Deir el-Balah -- home to tens of thousands -- pushes people into more desperate conditions and further displacement and restricts the United Nations' ability to deliver life-saving aid."

French President Macron says France will recognize Palestine as a state

WASHINGTON. (Agency)

PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron announced Thursday that France will recognize Palestine as a state, in a bold diplomatic move amid snowballing global anger over people starving in Gaza. Israel denounced the decision. Macron said in a post on X that he will formalize the decision at the U.N. General Assembly in September. "The urgent thing today is that the war in Gaza stops and the civilian population is saved," he wrote. The mostly symbolic move puts added diplomatic pressure on Israel as the war and humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip rage. France is now the biggest Western power to recognize Palestine, and the move could pave the way for other countries to do the same. More than 140 countries recognize a Palestinian state, including more than a dozen in Europe. The Palestinians seek an independent state in the occupied West Bank, annexed east Jerusalem and Gaza, territories Israel occupied in the 1967 Mideast war. Israel's government and most of its

political class have long been opposed to Palestinian statehood and now say that it would reward militants after Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, attack. "We



strongly condemn President Macron's decision," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in a statement. "Such a move rewards terror and risks creating another Iranian proxy, just as Gaza became. A Palestinian state in these conditions would be a launch pad to annihilate Israel -- not to live in peace beside it." Arifical Inteligence uses Arifical Intelligence uses The Palestinian

Authority welcomed it. A letter announcing the move was presented Thursday to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in Jerusalem. "We express our thanks and appreciation" to Macron, Hussein Al Sheikh, the PLO's vice president under Abbas, posted. "This position reflects France's commitment to international law and its support for the Palestinian people's rights to self-determination." There was no immediate reaction from the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump. With Europe's largest Jewish population and the largest Muslim population in western Europe, France has often seen fighting in the Middle East spill over into protests or other tensions at home. The French president offered support for Israel after the Oct. 7 Hamas attacks and frequently speaks out against antisemitism, but he has grown increasingly frustrated about Israel's war in Gaza.

"Reckless, Shameful": US, Israel On France's Recognition Of Palestine State

Washington . (Agency)

The United States and Israel have condemned French President Emmanuel Macron's decision to formally recognize a Palestinian state during a UN meeting in September. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio called France's move a "slap in the face to the victims of the October 7 attack." Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the recognition of a Palestinian state "rewards terror" and poses an existential threat to Israel.

France--the most powerful European nation to announce such a move-- is among 142 countries that now recognise or plan to recognise Palestinian statehood. The move comes amid international concern over the intensifying plight of the more than two million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, where the Israeli military's actions have triggered a dire humanitarian crisis and warnings of mass starvation. Israel has rejected accusations it is responsible for Gaza's deepening hunger crisis, which the

World Health Organisation (WHO) calls "man-made" and France blames an Israeli "blockade".

What The US Said

Opposing Macron's move, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio called it a "reckless decision (that) only serves Hamas propaganda." The United States strongly rejects @EmmanuelMacron's plan to recognise a Palestinian state at the @UN general assembly. This reckless decision only serves Hamas propaganda and sets back peace. It is a slap in the face to the victims of October 7th," he wrote on X, alluding to the Islamist group's attack on Israel in 2023 that triggered the war in Gaza.

Israel's Reaction

Macron's announcement also drew anger from Israel, with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu saying the move "risks creating another Iranian proxy, just as Gaza became", which would be "a launch pad to annihilate Israel -- not to live in peace beside it". Israel's Deputy Prime Minister Yairi Levin

also slammed France's move, calling it "a black mark on French history and a direct aid to terrorism". Levin, who is also justice minister, said France's "shameful decision" meant it was now "time to apply Israeli sovereignty" to the West Bank, which Israel has occupied since 1967.

Hamas Welcomes Move

Senior Palestinian Authority official Hussein al-Sheikh welcomed the move, saying it "reflects France's commitment to international law and its support for the Palestinian people's rights to self-determination and the establishment of our independent state". Hamas hailed Macron's pledge as a "positive step in the right direction toward doing justice to our oppressed Palestinian people and supporting their legitimate right to self-determination". We call on all countries of the world--especially European nations and those that have not yet recognised the State of Palestine -- to follow France's lead," it added.

From Tea To Espresso: Coffee Culture Grows In Tea-Loving Nepal

world . (Agency)

The Himalayan country is a major tea producer, as well as a major consumer. When people greet each other in the morning, they don't ask "how are you." They say "have you had your tea?" Tea - usually served as a sweet, milky beverage in a piping hot glass tumbler - is as much a part of Nepal's culture as rice, a constant presence at homes, meetings and social gatherings. But a growing number of Nepalis are warming up to coffee, as trendy cafes spring up street corners in cities and towns across the country. One cafe in the capital, Kathmandu, is widely seen as the pioneer.

Gagan Pradhan began Himalayan Java as a single cafe in an alley, and it's grown to a chain with 84 locations in the country. Pradhan estimates there are around 7,000 cafes across the country, although so far international brands like Starbucks aren't in Nepal.

"There are lot of tea shops throughout the nation, but the kind of set up they have is still kind of old fashioned," Pradhan said. "I think with investors and people like us, when it comes to coffee shop we are more serious not only with machines, we are serious with everything like the lighting, the set up, the furnishings, the location. Pradhan said tea shops usually offer just black tea or tea with milk, whereas a typical coffee menu has 10-15 hot beverages and about 10-15 cold beverages, he said.

Pradhan said it's an appealing business because the initial investment to open a cafe is very low, they're clean and simple enough for a single family to run, and customers are willing to pay more for coffee.

Several of eastern Nepal's tea plantations in the mountains of east Nepal, famous for the tea, are joined by coffee plantations now.

Nepal is part of a regional trend. Coffee consumption has soared across traditionally tea-drinking countries in Asia as members of growing middle classes seek out novel flavors and adopt international trends.

Coffee is a premium drink in Nepal: it costs about \$2 at Himalayan Java, which is enough to buy a meal at a local cafe in Kathmandu, or five cups of tea. Still, cafes bustle with officers workers on breaks and students looking for places to study. "I think the idea of drinking coffee (in Nepal) was first triggered with people thinking it would elevate their standard of living, but then once they tasted coffee many people just liked it and continued to drink it," said Deep Singh Bandari, a social worker who is a regular visitor to the coffee cafes. Most of the coffee drunk in Nepal is imported, but in the country's famous eastern tea-growing regions coffee plantations are springing up. According to Nepal's National Tea and Coffee Development Board, about 400 tons of coffee was produced in fiscal year 2021-22, the most recent for which data is available.

Former Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn launches new UK political party

The party called for a "mass redistribution" of wealth and power and said they would keep demanding an end to all arms sales to Israel. They also committed to a free and independent Palestine.

LONDON . (Agency)

Former Labour party leader Jeremy Corbyn announced Thursday he was forming a new political party alongside another ex-member of Britain's ruling party, as the UK's political landscape continues to splinter. Corbyn, who lost two elections as Labour leader in 2017 and 2019, and fellow independent MP Zarah Sultana referred to the new left-wing outfit as "Your Party", but later said its name still had to be decided. "It's time for a new kind of political party. One that is rooted in our communities, trade unions and social movements," they said in a joint statement.

In their announcement, they called for a "mass redistribution of wealth and power" and said they would "keep demanding an end to all arms sales to Israel." They also committed to a "free and independent Palestine." Prime Minister Keir Starmer, who has pulled Labour to the centre since succeeding Corbyn as leader, faces growing calls within his party to recognise a Palestinian state. Corbyn, 76, stepped down as Labour leader after overseeing its worst result in decades, when it was trounced in the 2019 general election by the Conservatives, then led by Boris Johnson. Labour under Starmer suspended him in 2020 after he refused to fully accept the findings of a rights watchdog's probe into claims that anti-Semitism had become rampant within Labour's ranks under his leadership. The Equality and Human Rights Commission ruled the party had broken equality law when Corbyn was in charge. Corbyn said anti-Semitism had been "dramatically overstated for political reasons." Last year Corbyn announced he would stand as an independent in the July

2024 general election after Labour failed to put him forward as a candidate. He was expelled from the party but still went on to win comfortably his Islington North seat in London, which he has represented for more than 40 years. Sultana, an MP since 2019, was suspended by Labour last year after she and several other members of parliament voted to scrap a controversial cap on child benefits. Challenging two-party dominance While it remains to be seen whether the new movement will take off, its formation appears to confirm a trend in British politics towards a multi-party system. British politics has long been

dominated by Labour and the Conservatives, but three other parties are challenging that order.

The centre-left Liberal Democrats won 72 seats in the 650-seat parliament in July 2024, while Nigel Farage's anti-immigrant Reform UK party won about 14 percent of the vote. It picked up five seats, an unprecedented breakthrough for a hard-right party in Britain. Farage's Eurosceptics swept dozens of council and mayoral seats in local elections in May and are leading national opinion polls, although the next general election is not expected until 2029.

While Reform are picking up support on the right, Labour is also losing votes to the Greens on the left. Starmer, a former chief state prosecutor who is seen as too right-wing for some left-wingers in his party, recently suspended four lawmakers who rebelled over his attempts at reforming welfare. They currently sit as independents and Westminster watchers will be keeping a close eye on whether they are tempted to join Corbyn's new party.



Buddhist circuit in focus, UP looks to strengthen tourism, investment ties with Japan

Lucknow .(Agency)

The Uttar Pradesh government is exploring ways to strengthen business ties with Japan as the state Tourism Department is making extensive plans to start a tourism exchange and showcase investment opportunities with the East Asian country during the Japan Tourism Expo in September with a focus on the Buddhist Circuit.

Meanwhile, a delegation led by state Finance Minister Suresh Khanna is meeting investors in Japan. Tourism Department officials said besides the Buddhist Circuit, the state is preparing an elaborate plan to showcase investment opportunities in meditation centers, hotels, and cultural infrastructure under public private partnership (PPP) mode. The foundation of the ties was laid last year during the visit of Yamanashi prefecture Governor Kotaro Nagasaki, who was accompanied by leading Japanese business delegates. They not only signed MOUs for industrial cooperation but also discussed opportunities in tourism exchange with a joint promotion of Mount Fuji and hot springs in Japan, and Buddhist and cultural destinations such as Sarnath, Shravasti and Kushinagar in Uttar Pradesh.

"Familiarisation trips from Japan are being regularly organised by the state Tourism Department to showcase the Buddhist Circuit in Uttar Pradesh, which is deeply intertwined with the life of the Buddha. The idea is to showcase the significant role of UP in the global Buddhist pilgrimage trail and encourage tourism exchange with Japan," said a senior government official.

Tourism and Culture Minister Jaiveer Singh said, "The state has seen a three-fold rise in tourist footfall the last eight years, and this reflects our focused strategy and global engagement. Our vision is to transform the Buddhist Circuit into a world-class spiritual and cultural gateway by integrating infrastructure, international connectivity and community involvement. We are welcoming countries like Japan to partner with us in building Buddhist temples, meditation centres, wellness retreats, and hospitality projects under PPP mode."

Keep prices of essentials under check: NTR District Joint Collector

VIJAYAWADA. NTR District Joint Collector S Ilakkia has directed officials to closely monitor the prices of essential commodities and vegetables to protect consumer interests and curb black-market trade.

Speaking at the District Level Price Monitoring and Control Committee meeting held at her office on Thursday, Ilakkia stressed the need for regular analysis of production patterns, price fluctuations, and future trends to ensure affordability. She called for frequent inspections at farmers' markets, wholesale outlets, and retail stores across the district.



The committee reviewed recent price trends of vegetables and essentials like rice, dal, and palm oil, and noted disparities between farmers' markets and retail shops in Vijayawada.

In light of a price spike of Bengal gram, she instructed officials to hold discussions with dal millers and traders, and to promote peas as a cost-effective alternative. The officials also reported a slight rise in tomato prices. The Joint Collector ordered direct procurement from Chittoor to ensure tomatoes are available at reasonable rates through farmers' markets.

Colonel, son assault case: 4 absconding Punjab Police inspectors rejoin duty, get posting

Chandigarh .(Agency)
The four absconding inspectors of Punjab Police, among 12 accused of having assaulted a serving Army officer and his son in Patiala in March, have joined their places of posting under suspension and have further been transferred to Bathinda and Ludhiana ranges.

Police sources informed that Inspectors Harjinder Dhillon, Harry Boparai, Ronnie Singh and Shaminder Singh joined their places of posting on Wednesday at Sangrur, Barnala and Malerkotla and were Thursday posted out from these places. Inspectors Harjinder Dhillon and Shaminder Singh have been posted to Bathinda range while Ronnie Singh and Harry Boparai have been posted to Ludhiana range.

The district SSPs and the DIG Patiala Range Kuldeep Chahal maintained a cryptic silence over these developments and did not respond to media queries. The four Inspectors had been absconding ever since

the incident March 13 and joined duty only after the case was handed over to the CBI. It is being speculated that they rejoined duty fearing that they would be declared proclaimed offenders. The Punjab Police had failed to arrest them from the day an FIR was registered against them pertaining to the assault.

On March 13, Colonel Pushpinder Singh Bath and his son Angad were allegedly assaulted by 12 Punjab Police personnel, including four inspectors, over a parking dispute at a roadside eatery near Rajindra Hospital in Patiala.

The attack left Colonel Bath with a fractured arm and his son with head injuries. The family alleged that the assault was unprovoked, involved threats of a "fake encounter," and that the police

snatched Colonel's ID and phone. Punjab Police faced criticism for an eight-day delay in registering an FIR, initially filing one under "affray" based on a third-party complaint. After public outcry and intervention by the Punjab Governor and Army, a proper FIR was registered on

March 22. Twelve personnel were suspended, and a Special Investigation Team (SIT) was formed under ADGP SPS Parmar to probe the case. Later ADGP AS Rai headed the SIT following Parmar's transfer as Chief Director Vigilance.

Colonel Bath later moved Punjab and Haryana High Court, seeking a CBI probe due to distrust in the Punjab Police. The court questioned the FIR delay and police conduct. On April 3 the investigation was transferred to Chandigarh Police, with a new SIT led by SP Manjeet Sheoran, excluding Punjab cadre officers, to ensure impartiality. The SIT was tasked to complete the probe within four months.

However, due to dissatisfaction with the Chandigarh Police SIT's slow progress and perceived bias, the High Court transferred

HC pulls up Haryana judge for contradictory bail orders in forgery case, calls for probe

Chandigarh .(Agency)

The Punjab and Haryana High Court has pulled up a Faridabad additional sessions judge for passing two contradictory bail orders on the same day, raising questions about procedural integrity in a forgery case.

Justice Sandeep Moudgil, hearing a plea by a petitioner, Rakhi, to cancel anticipatory bail granted to Priyanka Kumari, flagged the discrepancy in additional sessions judge Jyoti Lambha's November 19, 2024, rulings in a forgery and counterfeiting case (FIR No. 0105, Bhupani police station, Faridabad).

Court records show judge Lambha initially directed Priyanka during the morning hearing to join the investigation within three days. Later that day, she issued a written order granting her "absolute anticipatory bail," allowing liberty "without having undergone any period of custody."

The High Court formally sought an explanation, observing: "In the light of these

two orders of even date, this Court called for the explanation of Judicial Officer Ms. Jyoti

noted: "A perusal of the said explanation would make it ample clear that the judicial officer has pronounced an oral order having of the opinion that accused at the first instance be directed to join the investigation but later on she reached to an opinion that it is a case to be allowed and accordingly the order dated 19.11.2024 (Annexure P-6) came to be passed granting the accused absolute anticipatory bail at the first instance itself."

An affidavit by assistant commissioner of police

Rajeev Kumar Hari underscored the contradiction: "During the hearing ... the court orally issued directions ... but in the afternoon when SI Kamal Chand got the order typed, he found that the ASJ had granted anticipatory bail."

Calling for appropriate probe into the conduct



Lambha, Additional Sessions Judge, Faridabad vide order dated 09.12.2024 which was received by this Court vide memo No. 825 dated 16.12.2024 in the form of explanation qua the order dated 19.11.2024 (Annexure P-6) through the Registrar of this Court."

Calling out the irregularity, Justice Moudgil

of the additional sessions judge, Justice Moudgil ruled, "As far as conduct of the Judicial Officer is concerned, which is not only to be deprecated but demands thorough investigation ... accordingly, the Registrar General is directed to place the case file along with a copy of the order before the Administrative Judge, Faridabad, for consideration and necessary action as deemed appropriate." The court also cancelled the anticipatory bail granted to Priyanka Kumari and said the Investigating Officer would be at liberty to take appropriate legal remedial measures in accordance with law.

The bail challenge stemmed from allegations that Priyanka, with co-accused Shatrughan Pandey, forged an agreement dated April 20, 2023, to obtain an electricity connection on land owned by the petitioner's family. Police say forged stamps and signatures were used to claim rights over the property and custodial interrogation is necessary to recover the original forged agreement and pursue further leads.

Gujarat ATS arrests Meerut man from Noida mobile shop over alleged Al-Qaeda links

New Delhi. (Agency)

A 25-year-old youth, who worked as a helper at a mobile phone shop in Noida's Chhijarsi village, was among four people arrested by the Gujarat Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) on Tuesday night for alleged links to the banned outfit Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS).

The accused was identified as Zeeshan Ali, a native of Meerut. In a statement, the Gujarat ATS claimed that they identified the four individuals who were using social media to radicalise and recruit vulnerable people and incite them to adopt extremist ideologies.

Noida Police officials confirmed Zeeshan was arrested by the Gujarat ATS after alerting them. They, however, had no prior intelligence about him, the officers said. Zeeshan was picked up from the mobile repair shop on Chhijarsi road. The shop owner, Mohammad Asad, currently visiting family in Meerut, told The Indian Express that he had no idea about Zeeshan's alleged activities. "I hired him because he belonged to a village near my maternal village in Meerut. He didn't talk much," he said.

Fardeen, from an adjacent shop, said: "He was coming to the shop for 20-25 days. He first visited to get his phone fixed, became friends with the owner since both were from Meerut. He started working here, but didn't do much. He was mostly playing games on his phone. He looked normal, so no one asked questions."

Another shopkeeper said, "He said he was from Ashram Road, Meerut. He would sit at the shop all day, play on his phone. The owner was also from Meerut, so they got along. He told us he had another job too, but it seems unlikely because he would drop in at random hours."

According to locals, Zeeshan initially stayed in Chhijarsi, but on July 7, he rented a room in Chotpur, just across the road near the Hindon river. Khurseedha, the woman who rented him the room, said: "He paid Rs 2,500 in advance. I asked for his Aadhaar, to which he said he will bring it. He came only two or three times and wasn't sleeping here. He came once to collect his fan for repair. He never really stayed so we had no idea what he was involved in."

Amreli bank employee arrested for false address verification in Rs 4.65 crore cybercrime: Police

Ahmedabad.(Agency)

A private bank employee in Amreli district has been arrested for allegedly conducting a false physical address verification of a bank account that was subsequently used in the transaction of Rs 4.65 crore worth of illegal proceeds of crime, said police on Thursday.

The State Cybercrime Cell of CID identified the accused as Sumit Parsotam Savalia who was working as a relationship manager at the bank. The false verification by the accused misled the police officials investigating the paper trail of cybercrimes, said the police.

In a statement issued on Thursday, the State Cybercrime Cell stated, "A bank account was opened in the name of Shiv Corporation in a private bank in Amreli with account number 50200100229712. Investigation into this account found illegal transactions of Rs 4.65 crore, so a police team was sent to Amreli for investigation." The

police statement stated, "During the investigation, one Mayur Khodidas Cholera was found using this account and all the transactions in it were carried out through him. He was receiving a commission for



transferring the illegal proceeds of cyber fraud."

Cholera was subsequently arrested and legal action was taken against him, said the police.

During further investigation, the Shiv Corporation was found to be situated at Hudco

Society in Amreli's Savarkundla taluka, said the police. This address was given to the bank at the time of opening the account. However, when the police reached the address, they found no such firm at the address, said the officials. Instead, they found Shiv Corporation to be located at APMC Market. "Notably, during the police verification of the information provided by the bank, a photograph of the firm with a closed shutter was attached to it. On questioning the owner of the firm, Deepak Kumar Dhirajlal Mashru, it was found that the said photograph was taken in his absence," said the police.

During further investigation, many errors were found in the verification of this bank account, said the police. On checking with the bank in Amreli, the police said it found that relationship manager Savalia had carried out the verification of Shiv Corporation while opening the bank account.

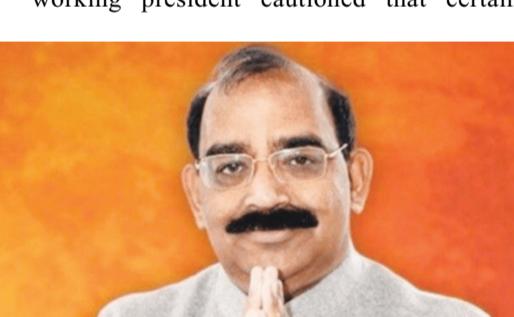
Will go it alone in next Assembly polls, says Ashwani Sharma

Ludhiana .(Agency)

Although Punjab BJP president Sunil Jakhar had recently expressed willingness to revive ties with the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), not all within the state unit seem to be on the same page as newly appointed working president Ashwani Sharma has asserted that the party will go it alone in the 2027 Assembly elections. "BJP has been consistently contesting elections independently. We fought the 2022 Assembly polls and the recent Lok Sabha elections on our own. The same will happen in 2027," said Sharma while addressing media persons at Bathinda on Wednesday.

He reiterated his point while addressing party workers at Guru Nanak Bhawan in Ludhiana on Thursday evening. "If we look at various schemes like the public distribution system, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, and grants for building toilets, all of them are being run by Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led NDA government. So, why not have Modi's leadership in the state as well?" he asked.

Asserting that "in 2027, the ruling AAP will collapse like a pack of cards", Sharma alleged



that a conspiracy is currently underway against the BJP in Punjab, yet the people remain aware of who is truly working for their welfare. The working president cautioned that certain political parties are attempting to disturb communal harmony in Punjab. "Even militancy couldn't shake the communal fabric of the state. But in the present scenario, what Punjab needs is a BJP government — one that can bring development, ensure harmony, and frame policies for the betterment of the people," he said. Reflecting on the BJP's past alliance with the SAD, which began in 1996 and lasted until September 2020, Sharma said: "At that time, we played the role of the younger brother in the alliance because it was necessary. It was, in fact, more of a social alliance than a political one, as Punjab was emerging from the shadow of militancy." He acknowledged that while the BJP paid a heavy political price for that alliance, the context has now changed. "Punjab has moved on, and the people now want the BJP because they believe in it and support it."

will collapse like a pack of cards", Sharma alleged that a conspiracy is currently underway against the BJP in Punjab, yet the people remain aware of who is truly working for their welfare. The working president cautioned that certain political parties are attempting to disturb communal harmony in Punjab. "Even militancy couldn't shake the communal fabric of the state. But in the present scenario, what Punjab needs is a BJP government — one that can bring development, ensure harmony, and frame policies for the betterment of the people," he said. Reflecting on the BJP's past alliance with the SAD, which began in 1996 and lasted until September 2020, Sharma said: "At that time, we played the role of the younger brother in the alliance because it was necessary. It was, in fact, more of a social alliance than a political one, as Punjab was emerging from the shadow of militancy." He acknowledged that while the BJP paid a heavy political price for that alliance, the context has now changed. "Punjab has moved on, and the people now want the BJP because they believe in it and support it."

According to locals, Zeeshan initially stayed in Chhijarsi, but on July 7, he rented a room in Chotpur, just across the road near the Hindon river. Khurseedha, the woman who rented him the room, said: "He paid Rs 2,500 in advance. I asked for his Aadhaar, to which he said he will bring it. He came only two or three times and wasn't sleeping here. He came once to collect his fan for repair. He never really stayed so we had no idea what he was involved in."

Another shopkeeper said, "He said he was from Ashram Road, Meerut. He would sit at the shop all day, play on his phone. The owner was also from Meerut, so they got along. He told us he had another job too, but it seems unlikely because he would drop in at random hours."

According to locals, Zeeshan initially stayed in Chhijarsi, but on July 7, he rented a room in Chotpur, just across the road near the Hindon river. Khurseedha, the woman who rented him the room, said: "He paid Rs 2,500 in advance. I asked for his Aadhaar, to which he said he will bring it. He came only two or three times and wasn't sleeping here. He came once to collect his fan for repair. He never really stayed so we had no idea what he was involved in."

the case to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on July 16. The court also criticized the Chandigarh Police SIT for creating "loopholes" to protect the accused and noted no arrests had been made despite the evidence.

Meanwhile, a petition was filed in the High Court demanding a time-bound Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe into what it termed the "staged encounter" of 22-year-old Jaspreet Singh, a Canadian student, by Punjab Police in Patiala on March 13. The petition has been filed by Gurtej Singh Dhillon, the brother-in-law of Colonel Bath, who was allegedly assaulted by the same police team on the same night. Dhillon has contended that the Punjab Police cannot be expected to conduct an impartial investigation into its own officers' role and alleged that the killing violated Jaspreet's right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution.



Another Yalta moment for a new world order

A correct and up-to-date electoral roll is sine qua non for a free and fair election in a democracy. However, given the size, diversity, and geographical dispersion of population in India, we must also accept that a perfect, 100 percent correct electoral roll is an impossibility. Nonetheless, this cannot and should not detract us from continually 'cleaning' the electoral roll. Viewed in this context, the Election Commission of India's special intensive revision (SIR) of the Bihar electoral roll, announced on June 24, cannot be faulted. However, life is hardly ever so simple. The three documents issued by the ECI that day raise a number of questions, creating confusion. Some of these questions are legal, and some procedural and practical. One of the major legal issues is the 'disenfranchisement' of all those citizens who were registered as voters by the ECI itself, following the laid down legal procedure, since January 1, 2003. There are two parts to this.

First, in their June 24 order, ECI says that for those on the electoral roll as on January 1, 2003, there is "probative evidence of eligibility, including presumption of citizenship". This implies that this "presumption of citizenship" is not there for those registered as voters after January 1, 2003. This is grossly unfair because it amounts to depriving these people of their rights as citizens. It is correct that Article 326 of the Constitution says that only citizens of India can vote in elections. But this Article is not the only stipulation on this matter. Section 19 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950 titled 'Conditions for registration' states, "Every person who (a) is not less than 18 years of age on the qualifying date, and (b) is ordinarily resident in a constituency, shall be entitled to be registered in the electoral roll for that constituency." Form 6 of the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960 also requires only a self-certification by the applicant that s/he is a citizen of India for registration as a voter. The irony is that a person in any state other than Bihar can get registered as a voter with a self-certification about citizenship today, whereas a person in Bihar has to provide one of 11 documents! The second issue with this en masse disenfranchisement is that it violates the existing legal procedure for deletion of names from electoral rolls, specified in Section 22 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950. This states, "...before taking any action... on the ground that the person concerned has ceased to be ordinarily resident in the constituency or that he is otherwise not entitled to be registered in the electoral roll of that constituency, the electoral registration officer shall give the person concerned a reasonable opportunity of being heard in respect of the action proposed to be taken in relation to him". This is valid as of today, but the irony is that the names of lakhs of registered voters in Bihar have been deleted by a simple administrative order in complete disregard of the existing law.

The procedural and practical issues are far too many for all of them to be listed, not to speak of discussing them. The timing of the exercise in terms of the proximity of the state assembly elections, during the rainy season when large areas of Bihar suffer annual floods, the non-availability of specified documents to a large proportion of the population, and the extremely short period provided for completing the mammoth exercise are just a few of them. The issue that seems to have been completely underestimated by the ECI is that of migrants. A very large proportion of people from Bihar—the estimates vary between 20 percent and 50 percent—migrate to other states in search of livelihood. The bulk of them work as daily-wage labourers in large cities in a variety of jobs including a major chunk in the construction industry. Another major section works as agricultural labourers in Punjab and Haryana, where entire families migrate. Most of these people are not educated (some are even illiterate) and are economically and socially deprived.

IN every generation, nations must ask not just what they remember, but how they choose to remember. When memory becomes vendetta, it shackles the future in the chains of the past. No doctrine illustrates this more starkly than Pakistan's post-1971 obsession with revenge. Fifty-three years after the surrender in Dhaka, one truth remains immutable: the partition of Pakistan in 1971 was not India's doing—it was Pakistan's undoing. It was not just the end of a war; it was the unravelling of a flawed national imagination. The tragedy of East Pakistan was authored by those who refused to see that unity cannot be enforced through coercion, nor identity denied through silence. Yet rather than reckon with this truth, the Pakistani state, particularly its military establishment, chose a different path: one not of reflection, but of retaliation. From the embers of defeat, it forged a doctrine of revenge. One that substituted course correction with conspiracy, and repurposed national pain into institutional permanence. That doctrine has since metastasised—from doctrine to dogma, from defence to delusion. In the decades since 1971, Pakistan's military has inserted itself into every arena of public life: economy, education, media, foreign policy and even religion. Textbooks glorify aggression and erase introspection. Civilians are elected, but generals decide. Economic autonomy has been exchanged for strategic rent-seeking. And when the world stopped paying, others—China, Gulf powers, even non-state proxies—filled the void, not as partners, but as puppeteers. To sustain this structure, enemies were essential. If India did not exist, this doctrine would have had to invent another enemy. And so, the war never quite ended—only moved from battlefields to narratives. Kargil, the IC-814 hijacking in Kandahar, the Mumbai attacks, Pulwama and now Pahalgam—each act was an attempt to project control, recover stature or rewrite humiliation. Each time, the fallout was worse for Pakistan than for its intended target. The cost of this doctrine is internal decay and external isolation. And what has this revenge achieved?

- Terrorism has become a double-edged sword—once wielded for strategic depth, now turning inward with impunity. Economic ruin deepens— inflation, energy

collapse, sovereign default. Diplomatic fatigue sets in—even traditional allies now extract terms before offering sympathy. Civic erosion is complete—journalists silenced, minorities persecuted, dissent criminalised. This is not national security. It is national self-harm disguised as doctrine. The army that once claimed to be the "guardian of ideology" now guards real estate and media channels. It has become, in effect, the author and captive of its own incapacitation. And then came Asim Munir! Just when it seemed the embers of revenge were dimming, a man arrived who rekindled them with fury. Gen Munir, loath to the idea of failure, could not abide the quieting of Pakistan's post-1971 script and certainly not the abrogation of Article 370 in J&K. He did not just

power, stifling opposition and rewriting dissent as disloyalty. Bangladesh now risks becoming what was once a cautionary tale it overcame. The irony is deep. The region watches—quietly, but not blindly. Here again is South Asia—immune to learning. Yet Pakistan's military remains locked in a zero-sum delusion—mistaking headlines for strategy and decline for dignity. And in doing so, it drags its citizens deeper into insecurity and disillusionment. It is worth asking: what good is a doctrine that strengthens none of the state's institutions, heals none of its wounds and secures none of its people? Revenge is a poor tutor. It teaches nothing but repetition. The world is not waiting for Pakistan to collapse, and it is not waiting for it to recover either.

The choice ahead is stark:

- Continue the doctrine of revenge and remain hostage to a myth of victimhood that feeds only the military's coffers.
- Or rewrite the doctrine—not with denial, but with dignity. A doctrine that accepts past follies, disengages from proxy adventurism, reorients from defence to development and recovers the moral agency of the people. India, for its part, need not—and must not—relish its neighbour's decline. Restraint remains India's civilisational compass. But clarity is not cruelty. The region's future cannot be hostage to one doctrine's decay.

The hardest mirror to face is one that reflects the self, not the adversary. Pakistan's greatest defeat was not Dhaka. It was the refusal to learn from Dhaka. The pain of 1971 could have birthed a more inclusive, democratic, federal imagination. Instead, it became the alibi for an authoritarian one. Now, even the mirage of strategic parity with India has faded. What remains is the opportunity—still faint, still fragile—for a new script. But it cannot be written by those who have benefited from the old one. Common enemies make good friends, until you become your own worst enemy. Then the other friend plays you. That's not strategy; it's surrender in slow motion. It is time, perhaps past time, to get it right.

And so, if there is one lesson South Asia must now learn—and teach—it is this: blunder begets blunder, but when the blunder begins to wound the blunderer more than the intended adversary, it is time to break the chain.

Let SAARC evolve into the South Asian Concord—a voluntary, values-aware platform of cooperation, connectivity and civility—open to all nations rooted in the shared geography, civilisational memory and forward-looking intent of the region. It is built not on uniformity, but on understanding.



relight the embers—he reigned the entire doctrine. Munir's rhetoric invoked the Two-Nation Theory with a vengeance, emboldened extremism and attempted to mobilise both street and state in renewed hostility. But this time, the region responded differently.

Operation Sindoar marked not just India's military clarity but its diplomatic restraint. For Munir, the cost became clear—not just in deterrence but in isolation. Ironically, it was the very civilians he empowered for electoral gains who now must reckon with the blowback. The doctrine that once promised prestige has returned as burden.

Bangladesh, born in blood and once a symbol of stoic reconstruction, now walks a troubling path. It mirrors the very impulses once turned against it—consolidating

Justice for the women of Dharmasthala

The Dalit worker, seeking protection under the Witness Protection Act, 2018, arrived at the police station with his lawyers and a bag containing exhumed skeletal remains.

If a former sanitation worker's spine-chilling tale of mass burials in the temple town of Dharmasthala in Karnataka is indeed true, then it's time for a reckoning.

The worker, who was employed by the Dharmasthala Manjunathaswamy temple and was in hiding for 11 years, claims his conscience does not allow him to stay silent any longer. His complaint to the police, that he was 'forced' to burn and bury the bodies of hundreds of women and men between 1995 and 2014, has the ingredients of a macabre crime saga—serial rapist-killers preying on women who vanished without a trace. Their bodies are buried in the forests along Nethravathi river and the perpetrators are allegedly persons of significant influence.

While the whistleblower's timeline partly corresponds with the unusually high 416 cases of missing persons and unnatural deaths registered in the region since the 1980s, the unresolved question over the killers is creating turmoil, especially among the political classes. There is also the damning story of Sujata Bhat, who has turned up after 22 years to seek justice for her medico daughter Ananya, who



had vanished in 2003; Sujata claims she was attacked by the temple authorities. Now, several families are alleging that the local police did not properly investigate the missing cases and are demanding that all of them be reopened. News reports and posts were systematically brought down with court orders. No doubt, influence was exerted at several levels.

Aritifical Intelligence uses The worker, a Dalit, sought protection for himself and his family under the Witness Protection Act, 2018 before turning up at the police station with his advocates and a bag containing exhumed skeletal remains. The government has formed a team to investigate his complaint, but has excluded the controversial Soujanya case, which was closed by the Karnataka High Court in 2024 without convicting anyone. There could be a link, though, to 17-year-old Soujanya's rape and murder on her way home from college in October 2012. Her family has maintained that a religious leader shielded the criminals and that the case was deliberately weakened.

BJP leaders, while welcoming the probe, have cautioned against falsely implicating the temple authorities. Some have termed the case an attempt to defame the sacred town. Whether the killers are ordinary people or religious leaders, the investigators should be free to do their job thoroughly and professionally. Civil society must keep up pressure and demand justice for Soujanya, Ananya and all the other missing daughters of Dharmasthala.

Custodial deaths: The police line we need to cross

Custodial deaths in India are often linked to caste, class and community. We need a legal system to deliver justice to those on the margins, not shield the perpetrators.

The brutal custodial death of 27-year-old temple security guard Ajith Kumar in Tamil Nadu last month forced the country to confront an uncomfortable truth: custodial torture is not an aberration, but a systemic feature of policing in India. According to the autopsy report, there were more than 40 injuries on his body, pointing to sustained and deliberate assault. In a moment of judicial candour, the Madurai bench of the Madras High Court described it as "police-organised crime" and concluded that "a state has killed its own citizen". That tone is necessary and speaks to the scale of the rot. The state acted swiftly in the immediate aftermath. Five policemen were arrested, six others were suspended and a judicial inquiry was ordered under strict timelines. The Tamil Nadu government offered compensation: 25 lakh and a government job for Ajith's brother, and a parcel of land. The case was also handed over to the CBI. Yet, for all the official gestures, Tamil Nadu's record on custodial violence remains deeply troubling. Between 2016 and 2021, there were 478 custodial deaths, with perpetrators not convicted in the vast majority of cases. In 2022 alone, at least 12 more cases surfaced. The accused cops behind the infamous 2023 Ambasamudram custodial torture case, in which detainees were reportedly assaulted with iron rods and had their teeth smashed, are on active duty. The national figures paint an even grimmer picture. According to the National Human Rights Commission, there were over 2,300 custodial deaths—2,152 in judicial custody and 155 in police custody—in India in 2021-22. Over the last six years, Uttar Pradesh alone has reported 2,630 custodial deaths, the highest in the country, while Tamil Nadu recorded the highest cases among the southern states. Overall, there were 11,650 deaths in custody in India between 2016 and 2022, a staggering figure for a



democracy.

Aritifical Intelligence uses What is most disturbing is the near-total absence of justice. A 2023 analysis of NHRC and government data reveals between 2017 and 2022, only 345 magisterial inquiries were ordered nationwide into custodial deaths, resulting in just 123 arrests. Charges were filed only in 79 cases. There were no convictions. In Tamil Nadu alone, 39 such inquiries were conducted during this period, none leading to conviction. The legal machinery, it seems, is built to shield the perpetrators, not to deliver justice. The situation is no better in other states. In Chhattisgarh, the high court recently awarded 72 lakh as compensation to the mother of a young man beaten to death in custody—an act of redress, not deterrence. In Jharkhand,

widespread protests erupted after 35-year-old Meraj Ansari was allegedly tortured to death by a cybercrime unit. These incidents, like countless others, are quickly absorbed into the collective amnesia of public discourse, until the next body surfaces. Custodial violence in India is not merely a law and order issue: it is fundamentally linked to caste, class and community. NHRC data reveals that 71 percent of custodial deaths between 1996 and 2018 involved detainees from poor or vulnerable backgrounds. The over-policing of Dalit and Adivasi communities is no accident—it is rooted in the deeply hierarchical nature of Indian law enforcement. Ajith Kumar's death is no aberration—it followed the institutional script. Taken on mere suspicion, tortured in custody and cremated with alarming haste, his erasure

illustrates the brutal efficiency with which the state can extinguish the lives of those on the margins. It marks the intersection of economic precarity, social discrimination, and unchecked impunity. This custodial death crisis demands more than reform—it requires a rupture. Change must begin at arrest: enforceable detention protocols, constant judicial oversight, recorded interrogations and medical checks must be mandatory. Every custodial death should trigger an FIR and an independent probe, not an internal review. Fast-track courts must replace bureaucratic delay. A public, disaggregated database and regular audits by SC/ST and civil society groups are essential to transparency and oversight. Justice must also be reparative. Victims' families deserve immediate compensation and long-term support. Police training must be rooted in constitutional rights and anti-caste ethics. Institutions like the NHRC need prosecutorial powers and procedural sabotage must attract criminal liability. A democracy cannot sustain itself when fear supplants trust in its guardians. The right to life is not earned through compliance, nor does dignity expire at the threshold of custody. Ajith Kumar's death exposes a state too willing to obscure the truth with silence. Without systemic reform, independent oversight, and a fundamental reimaging of policing, such tragedies will remain fleeting ruptures, memorialised not as reckonings, but as forgotten footnotes. India is at a moral and constitutional inflection point. It can do nothing and aid the normalisation of custodial violence, or it can reaffirm, with clarity and conviction, that the deprivation of liberty must never entail the forfeiture of life. The true measure of a republic lies not in its indulgence of the powerful, but in its unwavering commitment to the dignity and protection of the powerless.

10 Bangladeshis identified at Gurgaon holding centres, to be deported: Police

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Gurgaon: Inquiries into identification documents of people being held at detention centres since last Saturday have so far identified 10 Bangladeshi nationals who were living in the city illegally, police said on Thursday. In each of these cases, according to police, birth or domicile certificates of these 10 men were found to be from different districts of Bangladesh, even though all of them had managed to procure Indian IDs like Aadhaar and voter cards. Sources said the illegals are all first-generation infiltrators who had crossed the border. One of the ten has been living in Gurgaon for years, and is married, making the deportation exercise tricky because it will separate the family.

A police source said a background check is also being done for the wife to ascertain if she too is a Bangladeshi national living illegally here. All 10 will remain at the

holding centres while police upload their fingerprints and documents on the home ministry portal for a central verification, which is part of the deportation protocol. After the ministry's nod, the illegals will be handed over to Border Security Force (BSF). A senior police officer said, "Multiple agencies are involved in gathering documents. Even officials in their native places are involved. Several documents issued in Bangladesh were recovered from these 10 men, following which we have started the next step for deportation. All states have been asked to upload details of illegal migrants on the MHA portal. Govt nod will come in two days, after which we will immediately hand them over to BSF. Most of those found to be illegals worked in the city as scrap dealers." Since last weekend, more than 250 people have been rounded up for



verification and sent to four detention centres. The exercise is based on an MHA May 2 order asking states to identify Bangladeshis and Rohingya living illegally. The police officer said several of those detained whose documents were found to be fake had been released. "The process of checks is on," the officer said, adding police will next look into "how and

where so many fake Indian documents are made". "Illegal migrants pose a risk to our country. Special instructions have been issued to all personnel to treat those being detained respectfully and ensure they get all the necessary things, including timely meals, at holding centres," the officer said. Police are yet to consolidate the number of persons released after verification. However, even after being released, many have left the city fearing harassment.

"We don't want any Indian to be mistreated or suffer, and thus we are being cautious. But we also do not want illegal persons to stay here," the officer said. Sources said the 10 Bangladeshi nationals detected during the identification exercise were prima facie not found to be involved in any illegal activities and were engaged in petty jobs.

Gurgaon's buzzing 'Bengali Market' empties out

Gurgaon.(Agency)

The narrow lanes of Bengali Market near South City, once bustling with life and commerce, now echo with an eerie silence. In less than a week, an estimated 4,000 residents — many who had called this place a home for decades — have vanished, leaving behind their livelihoods and dreams. The exodus began after cops in plainclothes detained some 25 men in a sudden raid to identify Bangladeshi immigrants and Rohingya living illegally here. What followed was a wave of fear and uncertainty that emptied this vibrant settlement — home to drivers, maids, fish sellers, and cooks mainly from West Bengal.

"We are people who work to eat. What will we do back home? We can't do farming. It will be very difficult for us to go back and start a life again," said Mohammed Zulfiqar Ali, a driver who has lived in the NCR city for 25 years.

His story mirrors that of thousands of others who built their lives here, with children enrolled in local schools and steady jobs supporting their families.

Residents alleged that police conducted arbitrary detentions without any proper verification. "They don't ask for IDs. They just pick us up and start beating," said Beauty, a resident for 14 years. She alleged that her teenaged nephew was so severely beaten up that "he cannot even walk". He has since gone back to Bengal. Over the past few days, nearly 250 people have been detained across the city, with four community centres converted into holding facilities in Badshahpur, Sector 10A, Sector 40, and Manesar. "When they asked us to show IDs, we did so. But they just said, 'Brother, just sit in the car and we'll go,'" said Mohammed Zulfiqar Ali.

While some were released from the detention centres in 5-6 hours, others returned home after a day. But those detained alleged torture and humiliation. "His whole skin peeled off," a resident claimed about a neighbour.

Gurgaon RWAs step up to avert exodus of workers as cops ramp up checks

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Amid growing anxiety among domestic workers, housekeeping staff and car cleaners after police have launched intensive verification drives to track illegal immigrants, several RWAs in the city have taken proactive steps to alleviate their fears. Police enforcement measures, according to RWAs, have inadvertently caused panic among the city's informal workforce, particularly those living in unauthorised colonies or slum settlements. As a result, many workers have either stopped coming to work or informed their employers of plans to leave the city, with some even returning to their hometowns out of fear of police detention or deportation threats. In the wake of this, RWAs have initiated outreach efforts to reassure their staff and maintain the continuity of daily services at housing societies. Pooja Anand, RWA president of Tulip Violet in Sector 69, said the association is committed to rebuild trust among domestic staff and other support workers. "We've been encouraging people to come to work and told them there's no need to worry. Most of them have been with us for years and have valid documents," she said. Anand also said



RWA plans to communicate with the administration and police, advocating for a transparent and sensitive approach to the drive. "This exercise is meant to identify illegal immigrants, but Indians should not be harassed. Many are feeling spooked and are running away. Of 45 staff members at the condo, only 15 came to work. This has disrupted basic services," she added. Similarly, Sunil Sharma, RWA president of Palm Gardens in Sector 83, has advised residents against making impulsive decisions. "We've told staff not to panic and to cooperate with police. If they have valid documents, there's no reason to worry," he said, adding that despite police assurances that the drive targets only undocumented immigrants, the lack of clear communication and the spread of unverified audio messages on social media have fuelled confusion and fear among workers. Jaswant Rao, RWA president of Astaire Gardens in Sector 70A, said the situation has caused confusion and unnecessary hysteria among support staff and residents alike. "People are clueless about what exactly is happening."

The administration should involve RWAs in the process to prevent this kind of crisis. Elderly residents need daily support, and many families are struggling," he said. Rao further said most of the housekeeping and security staff in their society have already undergone police verification, yet many remain anxious about whether their verification is still valid or if they will be questioned again. "Clear communication is missing," he added.

The administration should involve RWAs in the process to prevent this kind of crisis.

Elderly residents need daily support, and many families are struggling," he said. Rao further said most of the housekeeping and security staff in their society have already undergone police verification, yet many remain anxious about whether their verification is still valid or if they will be questioned again. "Clear communication is missing," he added.

'Stripped to underwear, left like that for 12 hours, called us Bangladeshis': 2 men allege mistreatment at Gurgaon police station; cops deny claim

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A group of 12 men rounded up for verification of their IDs last Friday was asked to strip down to their underwear at the police station they were taken to and held in lockup overnight before being moved to a holding centre, two of them alleged on Thursday after their release, reports Samad Hoque. Picked up from a slum settlement in Jharsa, the two men — one from Assam's Chirang and the other from Bengal's Uttar Dinajpur — spent four days in detention at the holding centre in Badshahpur and were allowed to go on Wednesday. Gurgaon police spokesperson Sandeep called their allegations "false". "The detainees were taken to the police station only for verification. No detainee was asked to strip," another police officer

told TOI. The man from Assam alleged cops in plainclothes came to the slum dwelling on July 18 around 11pm. They randomly picked up four of us and stuffed us in the police van. Then they took us to Sector 10A police station and said we are Bangladeshis," said the 37-year-old, who works in the city as a ragpicker. They were, he added, put into a lockup where eight men detained from other areas of the city were already lodged. "We pleaded that we had identity proof documents and we are Indians but they repeatedly called us Bangladeshis. Later, they asked us to strip down to our underwear and left us like that for almost 12 hours," he alleged. The detentions are part of an ongoing exercise to identify Bangladeshis and Rohingya staying illegally here, based on May 2

orders of the Union home ministry. The Badshahpur community centre is operating as one of the four 'holding centres' for suspected illegal immigrants who are being rounded up and taken there for verification of papers. The Uttar Dinajpur man who was detained gave a similar account of his detention on July 18. The 26-year-old, who works as a housekeeping staffer for a private firm in the city, claimed cops confiscated the detainees' mobile phones too and ordered them to speak in their local dialects, in this case Bengali and Assamese. The men were allowed to call their families once to ask them to get verification documents, he said. At the detention centre, he said, they were repeatedly asked names, addresses and place of birth..

85 snakes rescued in 24 days as Gurgaon sees rise in sightings, bites amid rains

Gurgaon.(Agency)

The city is seeing a sharp rise in both snake sightings and bites as monsoon rain has driven the reptiles out of their shelters. Areas like Palam Vihar and Dwarka Expressway have emerged as hotspots. Eighty-five snakes have been rescued from homes and buildings across the city this month so far. June had seen 55 such cases. At least half-a-dozen snakebite cases were reported this month. Wildlife divisional officer (Gurgaon) RK Jangra said, "During the monsoon, snake sightings tend to spike sharply and there are several reasons for that. First, heavy rains flood their natural shelters like burrows, tree hollows and crevices, forcing snakes to come out and search for drier ground. In this process, they often end up inside homes, sheds, or buildings purely by accident. The rainy season also brings out frogs, rodents and insects, which are common snake prey. So as their food becomes more active, so do they." The rescued snakes included spectacled cobras, common kraits, rat snakes and common wolf snakes, many of them venomous. Wildlife officials say these reptiles are cold-blooded and more active during the rainy season. Many of these snakes were found inside homes, garden pots, storerooms, construction



RK Jangra said, "We have a three-member team in Gurgaon and we are collecting data on what kind of snakes are sighted in which areas across the district. We are also identifying hotspots."

Humid weather increases snake activity, especially during the cooler hours of the evening and early morning. Overgrown vegetation and poor visibility during rains make it easier for snakes to go unnoticed, raising the chances of human encounters. It's not aggression that brings them closer — it's survival. Meanwhile, in response to the rise in snakebites, the health department on Thursday released a new protocol to guide primary and community health centres (PHCs and CHCs) on how to manage snakebite cases quickly and effectively. This is part of a broader push to reduce preventable deaths. The process begins the moment a patient walks in. Medical staffers are instructed to immediately stabilise the patient using the ABCDE approach: checking for airway blockage, breathing problems, circulatory issues, neurological symptoms (disability) and exposure to venom. The next step is to assess if the patient is stable or showing signs of envenomation — where venom has entered the bloodstream and begun affecting organs. Symptoms can vary. Locally, patients might show pain, swelling, blisters, oozing, or discolouration.

News box

Noida airport's expansion likely to hit 17k families, 4.6k of them to lose land

Noida. (Agency)

The expansion of Noida International Airport is set to uproot more than 4,600 families and force the relocation of seven govt schools. A draft rehabilitation plan — released by the district administration on Wednesday — said more than 17,000 families were likely to be affected directly or indirectly by the acquisition of 1,857 hectares across 14 villages for the airport's third and fourth phases. According to a household survey conducted between May and June, most affected families are small-scale farmers or agricultural labourers, with 58% of them earning between Rs 50,000 and Rs 1 lakh annually. Only 4% earn more than Rs 5 lakh a year. The draft plan, prepared on the basis of the survey, said since a large part of the economy was dependent on farming and animal husbandry, the resettlement area should include the infrastructure like facilities for livestock. The district administration has earmarked 340 hectares near Jawar town — in Alavalpur, Mangaroli, Ahmedpur Chawroli, and Neemka Shahjahanpur — for rehabilitating the families, planning a new community with modern amenities. Plots ranging from 50 to 500sqm will be allocated to the villagers based on family size. Roads, drinking water, sewage systems, power connections, community halls, anganwadis, fair price shops, cremation grounds, and areas for cattle will form part of the new settlement, the plan specified.

The draft also introduced gender parity by recognising unmarried adult daughters as eligible claimants. Like sons in the families, they will also receive separate plots and financial assistance. For the 17,945 affected families in total, the package is likely to include a monthly subsistence allowance of Rs 3,000 for a year, Rs 50,000 as transport compensation, and an additional Rs 50,000 for SC/ST families. There will also be provisions for skill training and job preference in airport-related services for one member from each family. Discontent, however, appears to be brewing among a section of villagers. Only 1% of households in Neemka Shahjahanpur, 20% in Khajipur, and 50% in Thora participated in the survey that preceded the draft plan, seeking better compensation and water security. Apart from households, seven govt schools will have to be relocated from Banwariwas, Kishorepur, Ramner, Neemka Shahjahanpur, Khajipur, Thora, and Jawar Bangar. According to the plan, land will be allotted to these schools at no cost at the new site, although no compensation will be given for the land currently occupied by them. The draft plan is awaiting approval from the state govt. "Once approved, we'll publish the final scheme and formally declare the resettlement area.

Noida man loses Rs 2.9 crore in a stock trading fraud scheme

Noida. (Agency)

A Sector 36 resident was allegedly cheated out of nearly Rs. 2.9 crore in a cyber fraud. The scammers posed as stock traders from a Kolkata-based company. He registered a complaint with the Cyber Crime police, accusing two individuals named Keerti Saraf and Krishna Rath M, of cyber fraud, breach of trust, and investment fraud. They claimed to be wealth management gurus representing a company named "Abbott Wealth Management". They promised lucrative returns on investments, such as 15-30% profit within 24 hours, and convinced him to transfer substantial amounts of money to various bank accounts under the guise of legitimate investment schemes. The complainant said that the accused, particularly Saraf, spent a long time developing a personal relationship with him on WhatsApp. From April to June, he was repeatedly contacted by the accused, who made him transfer funds through RTGS to multiple accounts. The total amount transferred amounted to Rs 2.89 crore. They ultimately told him he had profits of Rs 35 lakh, but he did not see any of it. He further explained that after the initial payments, the accused demanded additional funds under various pretexts, including service charges, processing fees, and taxes. They also shared forged official documents from bodies such as SEBI to persuade him. Despite making all the payments, the complainant did not receive any returns or benefits from the investments. Instead, he realised that he was duped.

'Baron of Westarctica': Harshvardhan Jain a frequent flier to UK and Dubai; has 10 foreign bank accounts

GHAZIABAD. (Agency)

The 'baron of Westarctica' was a globetrotter, having travelled abroad 200 times and visiting 30 countries. STF's investigation into the man who ran a fake embassy in Ghaziabad for nine years has found. Harshvardhan Jain, who bestowed on himself fictitious titles from obscure micronations, installed flags to make his Kavi Nagar bungalow the impression of an embassy and had cars with diplomatic number plates parked on the compound, was a frequent flier to the UK and Dubai. The STF has found 25 shell companies registered by Jain and 10 foreign bank accounts in his name. SP (Noida STF) Raj Kumar Mishra said Jain, during his stay at the UK, had come close to India-born Turkish businessman Ahsan Ali Syed, who was arrested in London on Nov 22, 2022, for perpetrating a million-dollar loan fraud between Sept 2010 and May 2011. You Can Also Check: Noida AQI | Weather in Noida | Bank Holidays in Noida | Public Holidays in Noida Syed, who was later extradited to Switzerland, was sentenced to six-and-a-half years in prison by a local court for fraud and fleeing after collecting brokerage money in the name of securing loans for 16 companies. Together, Jain and Syed had registered several companies abroad, including State Trading Corporation Ltd and East India Company UK Ltd in the UK, Island General Trading Co LLC in the UAE, Indira Overseas Ltd in Mauritius and Cameron Ispat Sarl in Cameroon, Africa. "Together, Jain and Syed had registered several companies abroad, including State Trading Corporation Ltd and East India Company UK Ltd in the UK, Island General Trading Co LLC in the UAE, Indira Overseas Ltd in Mauritius and Cameron Ispat Sarl in Cameroon, Africa," the officer said.

Avoid travel to 7 provinces: India's advisory on Thailand amid clash with Cambodia

The escalating clashes between Thailand and Cambodia along their disputed border have killed at least 14 people, injured several others, and forced mass evacuations.

Agency New Delhi.

The Indian Embassy in Thailand on Friday issued an advisory urging Indian nationals to avoid travel to seven provinces amid escalating violence along the Thailand-Cambodia border. The advisory follows a sharp intensification of armed clashes in long-disputed areas, where tensions have been simmering for months. "In view of the situation near the Thailand-Cambodia border, all Indian travellers to Thailand are advised to check updates from Thai official sources, including the TAT Newsroom," the embassy said in a statement.

The advisory coincided with a stark warning from Thailand's acting Prime Minister Phumtham Wechayachai, who told reporters the situation had worsened significantly.

"The current situation involves acts of

intrusion and aggression that are causing harm to the people's lives. The situation has intensified and could escalate into a state of war. At present, it's a confrontation involving heavy weapons," the Prime Minister said.

Thai authorities have advised against travel to more than 20 locations across several provinces, including Ubon Ratchathani, Surin, Sisaket, Buriram, Sa Kaeo, Chanthaburi, and Trat.

Fierce clashes broke out along the border on Thursday, leaving at least 16 people dead and many more injured. Among the dead were children and a soldier, while 15 soldiers and 30 civilians sustained injuries. Tens of

thousands have been forced to flee their homes. The fighting has involved gunfire exchanges, shelling, and rocket attacks,

multiple engagements across four border provinces.

The Thai army claimed Cambodian forces used heavy artillery and Russian-made BM-21 rocket launchers, prompting what it described as "appropriate supporting fire" in retaliation. According to Thailand's Health Ministry, more than 58,000 people have been displaced in the affected provinces, while Cambodian authorities said over 4,000 people had been evacuated from areas near the border.

This marks the second major armed confrontation since a Cambodian soldier was shot dead in May. The latest flare-up came just hours after both nations downgraded diplomatic ties in the wake of a landmine explosion that injured Thai troops.



with Thailand launching airstrikes on Cambodian territory. On Friday, the Thai military reported

Uttar Pradesh woman found hanging from ceiling, family blames in-laws



Agency New Delhi.

The body of a woman was found hanging from the ceiling of her house in a village, with her family alleging that she was killed by her in-laws for not giving birth to a son, police said on Friday. The woman, Himanshi, lived with her husband and his family in Ghari Sakhvati village under the Budhana police station area.

"Himanshi's body was found hanging from the ceiling in her in-laws' house on Thursday night. Based on a complaint lodged by her father, we have registered a case against her husband Bhagat Singh, his brother Surat Singh, father Lehri, and mother Shakuntala," Station House Officer (SHO) Anand Dev Mishra said.

In his complaint, Himanshi's father alleged that his daughter was consistently harassed by her in-laws for not giving birth to a son and was murdered by them. Himanshi had two daughters with Bhagat Singh, whom she married on December 6, 2020, the SHO said.

He said the body has been sent for post-mortem examination and Lehri has been taken into custody for interrogation.

Kamal Haasan Makes Parliament Debut, Takes Oath As Rajya Sabha MP In Tamil



Agency New Delhi.

Actor-turned-politician and Makkal Needhi Maiam (MNM) chief Kamal Haasan made his parliamentary debut on Friday as he took oath as a Member of Parliament in the Rajya Sabha. He took his oath in Tamil to resounding thumps on the table by fellow Parliamentarians. The 69-year-old politician was elected unopposed to the Rajya Sabha on June 12, with the support of the DMK-led alliance.

Ahead of the swearing-in ceremony, Mr Haasan said, "I am going to take the oath and register my name in Delhi today. I am going to fulfil this duty with honour given to me as an Indian." A day prior, Mr Haasan told that he was "honoured" and conscious of the expectations placed upon him as he embarks on his parliamentary journey. "I am honoured to begin with, I know I've got to do a lot. Something is expected of me - I hope I live up to those expectations. I'll try my best to be honest, earnest and speak for Tamil Nadu and India," he said.

Mr Haasan had launched his party in 2017 with a focus on fighting corruption, rural development, and environmental sustainability. His party secured around 4 per cent of the vote in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. He then contested the 2021 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections, where Mr Haasan narrowly lost the Coimbatore South seat to BJP's Vanathi Srinivasan.

The Kamal Haasan-led party had not contested the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, but instead extended its support to the ruling DMK - calling it a "need of the hour". After DMK's win in Tamil Nadu, the party had adopted Mr Haasan's vision for direct benefit transfers to women and rolled out as its flagship Rs 1,000 monthly assistance to eligible women heads of households. The MNM is expected to contest the 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections as a part of the DMK-led alliance.

Centre Bans OTT Platforms Ullu, ALTT, Desiflix For Obscene Content

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting said the move is aimed at curbing the dissemination of content that is deemed sexually explicit and violative of Indian legal and cultural standards.

Agency New Delhi.

In a bid to crack down on unlawful and obscene content, the government has directed Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to disable public access to 25 OTT platforms, including big and popular names like Ullu, ALTT, and Desiflix. A notification issued by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) emphasised that the intermediaries are responsible for removing or disabling access to unlawful information under the Information Technology Act, 2000, and the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021. It said the move is aimed at curbing the dissemination of content that is deemed sexually explicit and violative of Indian legal and cultural standards. The banned apps include Big Shots App, Boomex, Navarasa

Lite, Gulab App, Kangan App, Bull App, Jalva App, Wow Entertainment, Look Entertainment, Hitprime, Feneo, ShowX, Sol Talkies, Adda TV, HotX VIP, Hulchul App, MoodX, NeonX VIP, Fugi, Mojflix, Triflicks. These have been found in violation of various laws, including Section 67 and Section 67A of the Information Technology Act, 2000, Section 294 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, and Section 4 of the Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986. The

government has explicitly directed Internet Service Providers to disable or remove public access to these websites within India. "MIB has also intimated to the Director (DS-II), Department of Telecommunications, with a request to facilitate compliance by the ISPs," as per media reports, and the action shows the government's commitment to enforcing digital content regulations and ensuring adherence to the laws in the country. In April, the Supreme Court responded to a petition calling for a ban on sexually explicit content on OTT and social media. "It's not our domain, you do something," the SC said. However, the Justices also highlighted the need for executive action, with the Solicitor General indicating existing regulations and further measures under consideration.

Missile Launched From A Drone: Major Boost To India's Military Capabilities

Agency New Delhi.

India has successfully test-fired a drone-launched precision-guided missile at a test range in Andhra Pradesh. The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) carried out the trials of the UAV Launched Precision Guided Missile (ULPGM)-V3 in Kurnool. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, taking to social media, congratulated the DRDO and called the trials a "major boost" to India's missile capabilities.

In a major boost to India's defence capabilities, @DRDO_India has successfully carried out flight trials of UAV Launched Precision Guided Missile (ULPGM)-V3 in the National Open Area Range (NOAR), test range in Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh. Congratulations to DRDO and the industry partners, DcPPs, MSMEs and

Start-ups for the development and successful trials of the ULPGM-V3 system. This success proves that the Indian industry is now ready to absorb and produce critical Defence Technologies," the Defence Minister posted on X.

Earlier, ULPGM-V2 was developed by DRDO's Terminal Ballistics Research Laboratory (TBRL), featuring multiple warhead configurations. The evolution toward UAV-launched,



extended-range munitions, unveiled at Aero India 2025, includes sophisticated enhancements such as imaging infrared (IIR) seekers and dual-thrust propulsion systems, features likely present in the V3 variant.

ULPGM systems are designed to be lightweight, precise, and compatible with various aerial platforms, providing strategic flexibility in combat environments.

The choice of NOAR in Kurnool for the trial is consistent with DRDO's strategy of using the facility to validate cutting-edge technologies. The range has recently hosted successful trials of high-energy laser-based Directed Energy Weapons (DEWs), including systems that neutralised fixed-wing UAVs and swarm drones, demonstrating India's expanding high-tech testing infrastructure.

India's Actions Were Measured, Non-Escalatory: Centre On Op Sindoor

Agency New Delhi.

Operation Sindoor was launched in response to a "barbaric" attack by "Pakistan-sponsored terrorists", and the action focussed on dismantling terror infrastructure and neutralising terrorists likely to be sent across to India, the government said on Thursday.

In a written response to a query in the Rajya Sabha, Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh also said India's actions were "focussed, measured and non-escalatory". The Ministry of External Affairs was asked whether it is a fact that Operation Sindoor was "announced under international pressure", and the "factual position" in this regard.

Rajya Sabha MP Ramji Lal Suman also asked about the impact of "sudden announcement of ceasefire in Operation Sindoor" on the morale of the Indian forces which were "achieving significant success", but suddenly "declaring

ceasefire was against their morale and the sentiments of the people of the country".

Union Minister said Operation Sindoor was launched to respond to a "barbaric cross-border terror attack by Pakistan-sponsored terrorists. It focussed on dismantling terror infrastructure and neutralising terrorists likely to be sent across to India".

Pakistan, however, attempted targeting Indian civilian areas, in addition to some military facilities, he said. "These provocations and escalatory actions by Pakistan were met with a strong and decisive response from the Indian armed forces, inflicting significant damage on the Pakistani military. Subsequently, on 10 May 2025, the Director General of Military Operations of Pakistan approached his Indian counterpart to request cessation of firing and military activities, which was agreed to later that day," the MoS said. Under Operation



Sindoor, India had decimated nine terror camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) on May 7 in pre-dawn precision strikes. It was carried out to avenge the April 22 Pahalgam terror strike.

In a separate query, the MEA was also asked whether the ministry had taken efforts to "alienate" Pakistan in the world forum.

As part of the UN Security Council's routine annual process, the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of its subsidiary bodies and committees are selected from amongst its permanent and elected non-permanent

Justice Varma's impeachment: Speaker to seek BR Gavai's opinion for inquiry panel

Agency New Delhi.

Chief Justice of India (CJI) BR Gavai's recommendations will play a crucial role in forming the inquiry committee to probe the allegations under Justice Yashwant Varma, sources told.

According to people familiar with the matter, once the impeachment motion reaches the House, it is customary for the Speaker to write to the Chief Justice of India seeking suggestions on the names of judges to be included in the panel. In this case, Speaker Om Birla is likely to ask CJI BR Gavai to recommend a sitting Supreme Court judge and a High Court Chief Justice for the three-member committee that will investigate the charges against Justice Varma.

The development comes amid ongoing legal proceedings initiated by Justice Varma to challenge the findings of an earlier in-house probe. On Wednesday, Chief Justice BR Gavai indicated that a special bench would be set up to hear Justice Varma's petition challenging the report of the three-judge committee, which found him culpable after a substantial amount of cash was recovered from his official residence.

The matter came up before a bench comprising CJI Gavai and Justices K Vinod Chandran and Jaymalya Bagchi.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for Justice Varma, along with senior lawyers Mukul Rohatgi, Rakesh Dwivedi, Sidharth Luthra, Siddharth Aggarwal, and others, urged the court to list the petition urgently, citing serious constitutional issues involved.

Ship Turnaround Time At Indian Ports Now Less Than A Day: Minister

Agency New Delhi.

The Indian ports have significantly improved operational efficiency, with the average turnaround time for ships reduced from 4 days to less than 1 day, outperforming many advanced nations, according to Sarbananda Sonowal, Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways. Container capacity at major ports has grown by over 70 per cent, and cargo volumes through coastal and inland waterways have multiplied, he said in an event here. "With 100 per cent FDI permitted in shipping under the automatic route, simplified customs clearance and the strategic advantage of GIFT City IFSC, India now offers one of the most attractive investment ecosystems in the maritime domain. Our goal is clear to make India a global maritime hub not just in trade, but also in finance, shipbuilding and green maritime infrastructure," the minister told the gathering at the 'Maritime Financing Summit 2025'.

Minister of State Shantanu Thakur said, "India's maritime ambitions cannot be fulfilled without reliable, long-term financial foundations". "We are committed to ensuring that enabling policies, business-friendly reforms and international partnerships create an environment where Indian shipping can grow and lead. Our coastline is a gateway to opportunity, and through shared vision and effort, India will emerge as a global maritime leader," Thakur added.

Another key announcement was the proposed Maritime Development Fund (MDF), a dedicated blended finance vehicle aimed at lowering capital costs and attracting long-term investment into shipyards, coastal infrastructure and inland waterways. The MDF has been developed through wide-ranging consultations with over 100 stakeholders, including global investors, shipowners, insurance companies and financial institutions. Policy measures such as recognising large vessels as infrastructure assets, extending the Shipbuilding Financial Assistance Scheme (SBFAS) to overcome the cost disadvantage and provide a long term visibility on the financial incentives available in the sector and enabling ship leasing through GIFT City IFSC were discussed as transformative steps to enhance India's global competitiveness in the maritime and shipbuilding sectors.

India's Actions Were Measured, Non-Escalatory: Centre On Op Sindoor

members. In addition to Russia and France, Pakistan has been selected as one of the Vice-Chairs of the UN Counter Terrorism Committee for 2025, Singh said.

It may be noted that India was the Chair of the UN Counter Terrorism Committee in 2022. Similarly, India was also the Chair of the same committee during its 2011-12 term, the MoS added. "The Government of India has been sensitising all concerned interlocutors on the menace of cross-border terrorism emanating from Pakistan. Due to India's persistent efforts, the global community has a greater understanding of India's concerns on cross-border terrorism," he said. India's efforts over the years have led to the listing of several Pakistan-based terrorists and terrorist entities under the UNSC 1267 Sanctions Committee and the FATF (Financial Action Task Force) "grey listing of Pakistan", the minister said.

NEWS BOX

Need that Virat Kohli mentality: Shubman Gill urged to lead India's series comeback

New Delhi. (Agency)

Michael Vaughan believes that Day 3 of the ongoing Test in Manchester will be the defining moment for India in the series. With England holding a 2-1 lead and in a strong position after Day 2, the former England captain has urged Shubman Gill and his team to bring an aggressive mindset to the field if they are to keep the series alive. England ended the second day on a commanding 225 for 2 in just 46 overs, with Ben Duckett scoring 94 and Zak Crawley making 84. The hosts made full use of favourable batting conditions and now look set for a big first-innings total. India, despite having scored 358 in their first innings, find themselves on the back foot. Vaughan, speaking on Cricbuzz,



said that if India are to bounce back in the match and the series, they have to take control of the third day. He believes it's now or never for Gill and his side. "The series will be decided on Day 3. If England have a great day on Day 3, that's the series done and dusted," Vaughan said. "India and Shubman have to arrive with that Virat mentality, 'We have to win Day 3'. They have to win tomorrow. If they win tomorrow, this game is alive, and India can win this Test match. If they lose Day 3, this series is gone for them." India's bowlers came under heavy scrutiny after a wayward performance on Day 2. Debutant Anshul Kamboj struggled with his lines, and the experienced Jasprit Bumrah was unable to make much of an impact despite the new ball. With little assistance from the pitch and a disciplined English batting display, India's attack failed to apply any sustained pressure. The third day could determine not only the outcome of the match but also the fate of the series. Vaughan's call for a spirited response echoes the high-stakes situation India now finds themselves in — with a win at Old Trafford their only real hope of salvaging the series.

If Rishabh Pant's bravery doesn't lift India in Manchester, nothing will: Ravi Shastri

New Delhi. (Agency)

Ravi Shastri praised Rishabh Pant's brave return in the Manchester Test, calling it a special moment for Indian cricket. The left-handed Pant had retired hurt on 37 after being hit by a yorker from Chris Woakes on Day 1 at Old Trafford. The injury left him in serious pain, but he returned the next day with India in trouble at 314 for six. Despite limping and barely able to run, Pant scored a fighting 54 from 75 balls, including three boundaries and two sixes. His effort helped India reach 58 and gave the team a big lift. The crowd gave him a standing ovation, and even the England players applauded. Shastri said Pant showed what it means to play for the team. His innings was not just about skill—it showed heart, courage, and love for Test cricket. "For him to come back and do what he did—that was something special. What he did today, if that doesn't lift the team up, nothing will," Shastri said in a video uploaded on BCCI's official website.

"The ovation he got while going away, and the



ovation he got coming back and the applause he got from everyone from the England team out there—that's what you live for. That's what you play for. That's what makes heroes." "What he's done now proves he just wants to play. He loves Test cricket. He loves playing for the country. And if anyone ever doubted whether he was a team man—they saw it firsthand today. That kind of commitment requires more than just talent. It takes heart," Shastri added. "Would have played with broken finger." Ahead of the Manchester Test, Ravi Shastri had a short but revealing exchange with Rishabh Pant that shed light on the wicketkeeper's determined mindset. Worried about an injury Pant had picked up at Lord's, Shastri asked if his finger was broken and whether he'd be fit to play. Pant's response was immediate and unwavering—he assured Shastri he would play regardless of the injury.

Aakash Chopra questions India's squad balance: Not a single backup middle-order batter

→ **ENG vs IND, 4th Test: Aakash Chopra raised concerns about India's lack of middle-order depth after Day 2 of the fourth Test. While the visitors struggled with their batting balance, Ben Stokes and Jofra Archer's standout performances helped keep England in the game with a disciplined effort.**

New Delhi. (Agency)

Former India batter and cricket analyst Aakash Chopra has raised concerns over India's squad composition after Day 2 of the fourth Test against England in Manchester. With England closing the day at 225/2 in response to India's 358, Chopra took a hard look at the visitors' team selection, particularly the lack of middle-order depth in their 18-member squad. In his latest video on YouTube, Chopra highlighted how India were forced to field all-rounders at No. 6, 7, and 8 due to a lack of specialist middle-order batters. Ravindra Jadeja, Washington Sundar, and Shardul Thakur all made decent contributions, 20, 27, and 41 respectively,

but failed to convert their starts into something more impactful.

→ **ad "Shardul, Washi, and Jaddu got some runs, but when you rely on three all-rounders to fill your middle-order, you're always living on hope rather than certainty, I'm surprised that with an 18-member squad now 19 with Anshul Kamboj added you still don't have a single backup middle-order batter," Chopra said. Chopra's criticism wasn't just about the runs on the board. He questioned the planning behind India's squad makeup. Referring to past selection decisions, he said, "We've seen this before. When Karun Nair was asked to bat at No. 6, everyone said he was being played out of position that he's a No. 3. Then why do we keep picking players who bat in the top order and expect them to slot in anywhere?" The issue became more evident following Nitish Kumar Reddy's injury, which left India scrambling for a replacement. With no specialist middle-order option available, the team turned to Thakur and pushed Jadeja up the order. Chopra believes that was a risky move especially considering Jadeja had been**

in form but was bound to have a dip.

→ **"Jaddu had four fifties in a row. He was due a failure and it came at a crucial time. You cannot rely on form alone when picking your batting order. India were clearly one batter short," he said. Aakash Chopra hails Ben**



→ **action. "The pitch had a bit more in it on Day 2, and England made full use of it, Ben Stokes deserves massive credit. He bowled 24 overs and never looked tired. He just kept running in. Jofra Archer, who bowled even more, was excellent too," he said. Stokes' figures of 5/72 and Archer's 3/73 helped England peg back India despite a promising start. Chopra was particularly impressed with the way Stokes has embraced his bowling role in the series, especially considering his modest returns with the bat. He hasn't fired much with the bat, but he's more than made up for it with the ball. He's already bowled more overs in a series than ever before in his career and there's still one Test and one innings left. That says a lot about his commitment," Chopra said.**

→ **As the third day approaches, all eyes will be on India's bowlers and English batters, with the game still hanging in the balance. While India's all-rounder-heavy lineup raises questions, England's disciplined attack under Stokes and Archer could tilt the match in their favour.**

Rishabh Pant wasn't even able to walk: Aakash Chopra hails batter's unbreakable spirit

→ **Rashford moves to FC Barcelona on a season-long loan**

→ **He accepts that Manchester United are going through a period of change**

→ **Rashford will wear the No.14 jersey for Barcelona**

New Delhi. (Agency)

Rishabh Pant won hearts in a stirring show of resilience on Day 2 of the fourth Test against England by walking back out to bat despite reportedly suffering a fractured toe. The Indian wicketkeeper-batter, who had retired hurt on Day 1 after under-edging a Chris Woakes delivery onto his foot, returned to the crease in Manchester to add valuable runs for India, drawing praise from across the cricketing world, most notably from former Indian batter Aakash Chopra. Pant, who top-scored with a gritty 54 off 75 balls, looked visibly uncomfortable as he hobbled between the wickets, yet stood firm against

England's bowling attack. Speaking on his YouTube channel, Chopra likened Pant's brave effort to Anil Kumble's iconic spell with a broken jaw in Antigua in 2002 a



option. His response was simple, he wanted to bat.

Sport is a small part of life'

Chopra highlighted that such decisions are not forced. "When a player is that badly injured, nobody tells him to go out there. It's entirely up to him. Because, in the end, sport is only a small part of life. But what Pant showed was something extraordinary, the will to fight not just pain, but fear itself." While Pant's batting helped India reach a competitive first-innings total of 358, the home side finished Day 2 in a strong position at 225/2, trailing by 133 runs. Yet, the moment belonged to Pant, who received a standing ovation from the Old Trafford crowd, a rare gesture in a fiercely competitive series. Chopra did not shy away from pointing out the less savoury side of England's tactics. "It was a bit disheartening to see the bowlers aim at his injured foot. Yes, it's part of the game, but still the guy could barely stand. Even then, he managed to hit a few boundaries. That takes guts." In his closing remarks, Chopra touched upon a broader debate in cricket about the absence of runners for injured batters. He suggested the International Cricket Council (ICC) should revisit its stance.

Barcelona legend Xavi applies for coaching role, Indian football body rejects: Report

New Delhi. (Agency)

The possibility of Xavi Hernandez taking charge of the Indian men's football team may sound far-fetched, but recent reports suggest it wasn't entirely out of the question. The former Barcelona midfielder and coach is said to have applied for the head coach role with the Indian national team following the departure of Manolo Marquez earlier this month. According to a report in the Times of India, members of the All India Football Federation's (AIFF) technical committee were left stunned when they saw Xavi's name among the list of applicants. The position is currently vacant, and the search for a new head coach comes at a time of uncertainty in Indian football, with questions still surrounding the future of the Indian Super League. "It's correct that Xavi's name was there," AIFF team director Subrata Paul confirmed in the report. "The application was emailed to the



AIFF." Despite the high-profile interest, the AIFF reportedly did not pursue the possibility further, primarily due to the potential financial implications of hiring someone of Xavi's stature. While fans and observers might have welcomed such an appointment, it appears the federation is leaning towards more practical options. Xavi is widely regarded as one of the finest midfielders in football history and has

already built a notable coaching career. He began his managerial journey with Al-Sadd in Qatar, where he won seven trophies in less than 100 matches. He later returned to Barcelona as head coach and led the club through a difficult period, securing domestic titles and laying a foundation for future progress. Currently, the list of shortlisted candidates is said to include former India head coach Stephen Constantine and Khalid Jamil, the first Indian coach to manage an Indian Super League side full-time.

With the national team's direction still unclear, the decision not to consider Xavi seriously may raise eyebrows. Whether the AIFF's choice to look elsewhere proves to be the right one remains to be seen, but the mere fact that a figure like Xavi expressed interest has added a surprising twist to Indian football's ongoing rebuild.

valor in sports.

A Warrior's Return

On July 23, during India's first innings in the fourth Test at Manchester, Rishabh Pant, batting on 37, attempted a reverse sweep off Chris Woakes' yorker. The ball struck his right foot, causing immediate swelling, bleeding, and a suspected metatarsal fracture, forcing him to retire hurt and leave the field in a medical cart. Scans confirmed a toe fracture, with a recommended six-week rest, potentially ruling him out of the series. Yet, on Day 2, with India at 314-6 and trailing 2-1 in the series, Pant chose to bat despite being unable to put weight on his foot. Taking painkillers and limping to the crease, he received a roaring ovation from the Old Trafford crowd. His 54 off 75 balls, including a six off Jofra Archer, was a masterclass in grit, though Archer eventually dismissed him. Sanjay Manjrekar called it a moment "remembered for 50 years," and Sachin Tendulkar praised his "brave effort," likening it to Anil Kumble's 2002 heroics.

DC Open: Emma Raducanu dominates Naomi Osaka, Venus Williams defeated in pre-quarters

→ **Emma Raducanu beat Naomi Osaka 6-4, 6-2**

→ **Venus Williams' dream return ended in the second round**

→ **Williams was beaten by Magdalena Frech 2-6, 2-6**

MANCHESTER. (Agency)

Emma Raducanu produced a strong performance to beat Naomi Osaka in straight sets and reach the quarter-finals of the Washington Open. The 21-year-old Brit defeated the four-time Grand Slam champion 6-4, 6-2 in what was one of her most impressive wins in recent times.

The result also means Raducanu is set to regain her position as the British number one when the WTA rankings are updated next week, overtaking Katie Boulter. Next up for Raducanu is a quarter-final clash with Greek wildcard Maria Sakkari, who progressed after beating Emma Navarro. Raducanu admitted she was surprised by how comfortably she came through the match, having prepared herself for a much tougher battle against Osaka. "I thought it was going to be a really difficult match. Naomi's won four Slams, she's been world number one, won Masters," Raducanu said, as quoted by Sky Sports. "She's so dangerous, and on hard courts, I think she's particularly comfortable." Raducanu said she was pleased with how she handled her service games and adapted to Osaka's pace as the



match progressed. "I knew I was going to have to play well and manage my own service games, which I'm really proud of how I did. I was making some inroads in her service game after I got used to it a little bit. I'm really pleased with how I handled the ball speed and conditions here in DC."

VENUS WILLIAMS' DREAM RETURN ENDS

Meanwhile, Venus Williams' comeback campaign in Washington ended with a 6-2, 6-2 loss to Poland's Magdalena Frech in the second round. The 45-year-old had made a promising start to the match but Frech reeled off seven straight games to take control and seal the win. Despite the defeat, Williams was in good spirits and happy to be back on court after a long injury layoff.

"Oh, I had so much fun. Definitely not the result I wanted, but still a learning experience," Williams said. "The part about sport — and life — is that you never stop learning." She added, "The fans in D.C. are just epic. I couldn't have been happier with my first week back."

Explained: Why Bajaj Finance shares tumbled 6% despite strong Q1 results

New Delhi. (Agency)

Bajaj Finance shares plunged over 5% in early trade on Friday, even after the non-banking financial major posted a healthy set of Q1FY26 numbers. Investors reacted sharply to signs of rising credit stress and increased provisioning, despite double-digit growth in profit and loan volumes. The stock was down 5.42% at Rs 907 on the BSE at around 9:28 am, while Bajaj Finserv also fell nearly 5%. Bajaj Finance touched an intraday low of Rs 898.10, marking a 6.3% decline. For the June quarter, the company reported a 22% year-on-year jump in consolidated net profit to Rs 4,765 crore, driven by strong loan disbursals and a growing customer base. Net interest income (NII) also rose 22% YoY to Rs 10,227 crore, while total income grew 21% to Rs 12,610 crore. Profit before tax came in at Rs 6,368 crore, up 21% from the previous year. Loan growth remained robust, with 13.49 million new loans booked during the quarter—an increase of 23% from Q1FY25. The customer franchise expanded 21% YoY to 10.6 crore, with 4.69 million new additions in the quarter.

Assets under management (AUM) rose 25% year-on-year to Rs 4.41 lakh crore, up by Rs 24,789 crore sequentially. Pre-provisioning operating profit stood at Rs 8,487 crore, up 22% YoY. However, concerns emerged on the asset quality front. Loan losses and provisions rose 26% YoY to Rs 2,120 crore, and the annualized credit cost for the quarter stood at 2.02% of average assets under finance. Gross non-performing assets (GNPA) rose to 1.03%, up from 0.86% a year ago, while net NPA increased to 0.50% from 0.38%. The provision coverage ratio (PCR) on Stage 3 assets stood at 52%.

Despite the uptick in credit costs, the company's capital adequacy remains solid. The capital to risk-weighted assets ratio (CRAR) stood at 21.96%, with Tier-I capital at 21.19%. While Bajaj Finance continues to demonstrate strong fundamentals in terms of growth and profitability, the market is now closely watching the rising stress on asset quality and elevated provisions. These are likely to remain key monitorables in the coming quarters.

Gold slides slightly as safe-haven demand eases

CHENNAI. (Agency)

Gold prices softened slightly in global markets on Friday amid easing safe-haven demand. Spot gold fell by approximately 0.2–0.3%, trading near \$3,361–\$3,364 per ounce. The decline came as investors responded to improving trade sentiment between the US and EU. However, a weakening US dollar helped cap losses. For the week, gold posted a modest gain of around 0.4%.

Gold prices in India

In the domestic market also, the prices declined slightly today from the previous day. For example, 24K gold was at ₹10,097/g on July 24, which is now down to ₹10,048/g. While 22-carat gold is currently traded at ₹9,210 per gram.

In Chennai, the price of 8 grams of gold (sovereign) dropped by ₹360 to ₹73,860. Key market drivers that aided the slight dip includes trade optimism between the US and EU, which has dampened demand for safe-haven assets like gold; the US dollar weakened, which limited downside pressure on gold by making it cheaper for buyers using other currencies; and investors continued to monitor signals from the US Federal Reserve, with expectations of a potential rate cut in September supporting gold. Outlook

Analysts suggest adopting a "sell on rise" strategy in the short term, given limited upward momentum. The World Gold Council notes that gold gained approximately 26% in USD terms in the first half of 2025. The outlook for the rest of the year remains moderately positive, with upside potential of 0–5%. In case of renewed geopolitical or financial stress, prices could rally another 10–15%. However, if risks subside, gold could fall by 12–17%.

Asian shares retreat after Alphabet and AI stocks nudge Wall Street to more records

MANILA. (Agency)

Asian shares retreated on Friday after Wall Street inched to more records as gains for Alphabet and artificial-intelligence stocks helped offset a steep tumble for EV-maker Tesla.

Japan's Nikkei 225 fell 0.7% to 41,511.09 after two days of gains following President Donald Trump's announcement of a trade deal that would place a 15% tax on imports from Japan. That's lower than the 25% rate that Trump had earlier said would kick in on Aug. 1. Data released on Friday showed the inflation rate in Japan's capital Tokyo rose 2.9% year-on-year in July, down from 3.1% in June. Japanese government efforts to moderate inflation are working, though underlying Tokyo price pressures remain elevated, ING Economics said in a commentary. It expects the Bank of Japan to hold interest rates steady at its July 30–31 meeting, but said the central bank would likely raise its forecast for inflation. In the Chinese markets, Hong Kong's Hang Seng shed 1.1% to 25,383.07 and the Shanghai Composite index slid 0.3% to 3,593.38. On Thursday, China and the European Union issued a joint call to action on climate change during an otherwise tense bilateral summit in Beijing, riven with major disagreements over trade and the war in Ukraine. Next week, U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent has said he will meet with Chinese officials in Stockholm, Sweden, to work toward a deal with Beijing ahead of a tariff truce that expires on Aug.

Filing ITR under old regime Claim these 5 home loan tax benefits

If you are sticking to the old tax regime this year, make sure you don't miss out on the big tax savings your home loan can offer. Here are five home loan benefits you must know for your ITR.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Owning a home is a big milestone, but did you know it can also help you save a good amount of tax? If you are paying off a home loan, there are smart ways to reduce your tax bill when you file your Income Tax Return (ITR) for the financial year 2024–25. Many homeowners often miss out on these benefits simply because they don't know about them or forget to claim them on

Here's a simple guide to five key home loan tax benefits you can claim under the old tax regime while filing your ITR this year.

DEDUCTION ON HOME LOAN INTEREST UNDER SECTION 24(B)

If you live in your own house, you can claim a maximum deduction of up to Rs 2 lakh every year on the interest paid for your home loan under Section 24(b). For properties that are let out, there is no limit on the interest deduction. You can claim full interest paid as a deduction against your rental income. However, you can set off only a Rs 2 lakh loss from house property against other income in one year. The remaining loss can be carried forward for up to eight years. Good news, from this year, you can treat two properties as self-occupied for tax purposes, which makes tax planning easier for families with more than one home.

CLAIM PRINCIPAL REPAYMENT UNDER SECTION 80C For properties that are let out, there is no limit on the interest deduction. You can claim full interest paid as a deduction against your rental income. However, you can set off



only a Rs 2 lakh loss from house property against other income in one year. The remaining loss can be carried forward for up to eight years. Good news, from this year, you can treat two properties as self-occupied for tax purposes, which makes tax planning easier for families with more than one home.

EXTRA DEDUCTION FOR FIRST-TIME BUYERS

First-time home buyers can claim even more savings. If you got your home loan approved during FY 2016–17, you may claim an extra Rs 50,000 under Section 80EE. If you bought an affordable house between April 2019 and March 2022, Section 80EEA allows you to claim up to Rs 1.5 lakh more. But remember,

you can claim only one of these, not both.

SAVE CAPITAL GAINS TAX UNDER SECTION 54

If you sell a house and make a profit, you can avoid paying tax on that profit if you use it to buy or build another house in India. Under Section 54, you can buy the new house within one year before or two years after selling the old one, or build it within three years. You can claim this even if you take a loan for the new house, and still claim other deductions on the loan too.

Who has to file ITR by when All 2025 deadlines explained

New Delhi. (Agency)

Filing your income tax return (ITR) on time is important if you want to avoid late fees and other troubles. The Income Tax Department has given some relief this year by extending the ITR filing deadline for taxpayers. But not everyone has the same due date, it depends on whether your accounts need an audit or not.

NEW ITR DEADLINE FOR SALARIED AND OTHERS

If you are a salaried person, or if you belong to a Hindu Undivided Family (HUF) or any other category where your accounts do not need an audit, you now have more time. The last date to file your ITR for the financial year 2024–25 (assessment year 2025–26) is now September 15, 2025 instead of July 31, 2025.

The government extended this deadline by 45 days because of new changes in the ITR forms and to give people enough time to file correctly using the updated system.

WHO HAS TO FILE BY OCTOBER 31, 2025? If you run a business, own a company, or work as a partner in a firm whose accounts need an audit,



then your deadline is different. First, you must submit your audit report by September 30, 2025. After that, you have time till October 31, 2025 to file your ITR. Right now, there is no news of any extension for these audit-related deadlines, so make sure you plan well in advance.

INTERNATIONAL TRANSACTIONS? YOU GETTILL NOVEMBER-END

Some taxpayers who have international deals or certain special domestic transactions need to submit a report under Section 92E. If this applies to you, then your ITR deadline is November 30, 2025, and your audit report must be filed by October 31, 2025. Again, there is no word on any extension for these dates either, so it's better to prepare all documents early. MISSED THE DUE DATE? THERE'S A BACKUP PLAN! If you somehow miss your main deadline, don't panic.

FAA rules out mechanical failure in June 12 Air India 787 crash

CHENNAI. (Agency)

The US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has reportedly concluded that there was no mechanical fault in the fuel control system of the Boeing 787 aircraft that crashed on June 12, killing 260 people. The agency's statement confirms that the plane's fuel control units and switch mechanisms were functioning normally and showed no signs of failure or inadvertent movement.

Air India Flight 171, a Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner, was en route from Ahmedabad to London Gatwick when it crashed shortly after takeoff from Ahmedabad's Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport. The crash resulted in the deaths of all 241 people onboard and 19 individuals on the ground. Only one survivor, 27-year-old Vishwash Kumar Ramesh, was found in critical condition and remains under medical observation.

The investigation is being led by India's Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB), with support from the US National Transportation Safety



Board (NTSB) and the UK's Air Accidents Investigation Branch (AAIB). Preliminary findings reveal that both of the aircraft's fuel control switches moved from the "RUN" position to "CUTOFF" within seconds of takeoff, causing both engines to lose power. The switches were returned to

"RUN" within 10 to 14 seconds, but the engines failed to regain sufficient thrust. Cockpit voice recordings captured one pilot questioning why the fuel had been cut off, while the other denied having done so. These recordings have raised questions about whether the switches were moved intentionally or by accident. The FAA's inspection confirmed that the switch locking mechanisms were intact and that no mechanical fault led to the fuel cutoff.

Reports quoted FAA Administrator Bryan Bedford stating that the aircraft's systems performed as designed and there is no current plan to issue design changes or additional safety bulletins. Boeing has also confirmed that no systemic issues have been found in the 787's fuel systems based on inspections of its fleet and data supplied by operators, including Air India.

Made to sign documents: Rani Kapoor seeks AGM delay after son Sanjay Kapoor's death

Rani Kapoor has publicly objected to what she calls an "inappropriate and premature" AGM, held during a period of deep mourning, and raised serious concerns over how decisions are being made in the aftermath.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Rani Kapoor, the mother of late industrialist Sunjay Kapoor, has asked the board of auto component firm Sona Comstar to postpone its Annual General Meeting (AGM), citing emotional distress, lack of transparency, and what she calls an attempt to "usurp the family legacy" in the weeks following her son's sudden death. In a detailed letter to the company's shareholders, Rani Kapoor called for at least a two-week deferment

of the AGM, which was scheduled for July 25, reported CNBC-TV18. The letter, accessed by the publication, reflects growing tension within the family-run conglomerate following Sunjay Kapoor's death in England on June 12. Sunjay Kapoor, who was 53, died of a heart attack reportedly triggered by a bee sting while playing polo in the UK. His death came as a shock to the family and the business community. Until then, he served as the non-executive chairperson of Sona Comstar. Days after his death, the board appointed Jeffrey Mark Overly as the new Chairperson on June 23.

But now, less than six weeks later, Rani Kapoor has publicly objected to what she calls an "inappropriate and premature" AGM, held during a period of deep mourning, and raised serious concerns over how decisions are being made in the aftermath.

ALLEGATIONS OF COERCION

In her letter, Rani Kapoor says she was approached multiple times and compelled to sign various documents

during her period of grief, without adequate explanation or opportunity to read them. "I was coerced into signing such documents behind locked doors and though I've requested repeatedly, the contents of such documents have never been revealed to me," she wrote. She added that she has been denied access to her own bank accounts and left to depend on a "select few for survival."

She stated that these developments came within a month of her son's death and alleged that certain individuals were attempting to take advantage of her emotional vulnerability to push through decisions that would allow them to take control of the group. Her lawyer, Vaibhav Gaggar, told reporters that the events that unfolded after Sunjay Kapoor's death "did not seem normal" and said that Rani Kapoor has yet to receive any official explanation or documentation about how her son died. "Highly unsettling facts are coming to light," her letter warns. According to the letter, Rani Kapoor claims to be the majority shareholder of Sona Comstar

by virtue of her late husband Surinder Kapoor's will dated June 30, 2015. She insists she has not consented to any new board appointments or authorised anyone to represent the family's interest in the group.

"I have not given any consent or officially nominated any person to come on the Board of the Company or any other Sona Group Company after my son's demise," the letter reads. She further alleged that certain individuals were misusing the documents she was compelled to sign and falsely claiming to represent the family's interest. Rani Kapoor said she has been kept entirely in the dark regarding board-level decisions and the company's affairs, receiving no internal communication, and relying solely on media reports for information.

Her objections also centre around specific resolutions that were reportedly on the AGM's agenda, including the appointment of certain individuals as representatives of the Kapoor family, without her knowledge or consent.

Rashmika Mandanna's

Airport Look Screams Comfort But Fans Zoom In On Her Bag

Rashmika Mandanna, often dubbed the 'National Crush', never misses a beat when it comes to fashion. Be it red carpet glam, vacation fits, or a simple airport appearance, she knows how to strike a chord with her audience. This time, the Pushpa star was spotted at the Hyderabad airport in a look that was understated yet chic and her bag accessory became an unexpected talking point.

Rashmika Mandanna's Easy-Breezy Airport Look

In a video that's now going viral, Rashmika was seen walking through the airport in a white long kurta, teamed with relaxed-fit blue jeans and a printed scarf thrown over her shoulders. The outfit strikes the perfect balance between traditional elegance and modern-day cool, giving off an effortless vibe. Her hair was tied back in a sleek, low ponytail, and she kept her makeup minimal. The only accessory she wore was a pair of simple earrings. The whole look was grounded in comfort yet carried an undeniable charm, proving once again why Rashmika continues to top fashion mood boards.



Rashmika Mandanna Carries Bag With Labubu Charm

While her outfit kept things subtle, it was her bag that sparked curiosity online. Rashmika carried a beige handbag, likely packed with her travel must-haves, but what truly stood out was a tiny Labubu charm dangling from it. The quirky toy figure, which has become an internet favourite lately, added a fun and playful edge to her otherwise minimal look.

Fans React To Rashmika Mandanna's Airport Look

As soon as the video surfaced, fans were quick to point it out. One user commented, "Rashmika ke bag per kuchh notice kiya," while another gushed over her effortless style, calling her the "Pan-India Lady Superstar."

The third user wrote, "Queen of Blockbusters! Rashmika Mandanna." Another fan added, "National Crush Rashmika Mandanna is a brand now."

Rashmika Steps Into A New Role: Entrepreneur

Beyond fashion and films, Rashmika is now exploring a new identity—that of an entrepreneur. Earlier this month, she officially announced the launch of her brand Dear Diary, a perfume label that, as she describes, is "a piece of me." Sharing the promo video on Instagram, the Animal actress wrote, "This one's really really realllyyyyy close to my heart. It's not just a brand, not just a perfume, it's a piece of me. Scent has always been such an important part of my personal life.. and today I share that with you.. I am so grateful I get to do this.. I am so excited but also sooooo nervous.. but I hope I have all your blessings to go ahead with this. Hope you love it as much as I do.. You can check it out (Link in bio)." Fans have poured in with messages of support and excitement. One fan wrote, "Wow! What a reveal! We had a feeling it was going to be something deeply personal, and a 'piece of you' in every scent is just brilliant. So incredibly excited for you, Rashmika! Wishing you endless success and all our blessings," another fan commented, "All the best our sunshine girl! Loads of blessings & love to you."



Nushrratt Bharuccha

Says Guys Get Offers After Delivering One Hit In Bollywood: 'Women Struggle'

Nushrratt Bharuccha does not mince words and has now openly spoken about the kind of everyday inequality actresses still face in Bollywood. In a chat with YouTuber Nayandeep Rakshit, the Chhorri 2 actor shared moments from her career that made her feel how different the treatment can be between male and female actors – even after proving themselves.

Talking about vanity vans on set, Nushrratt revealed she had to ask if she could use a male co-star's van just for the washroom. "There have been times when I went

these things by default." She also recalled a particular international flight where she was booked in economy class, while the male leads travelled business. Despite friends offering her a seat in business to hang out for a while, she stayed where she was. "I tell myself that I will get myself to that point where I get these things by default." That goal, she said, was something she did end up achieving.

Beyond the vanity vans and flights, Nushrratt said the deeper issue is the lack of equal opportunities for women in the industry, especially after delivering a hit

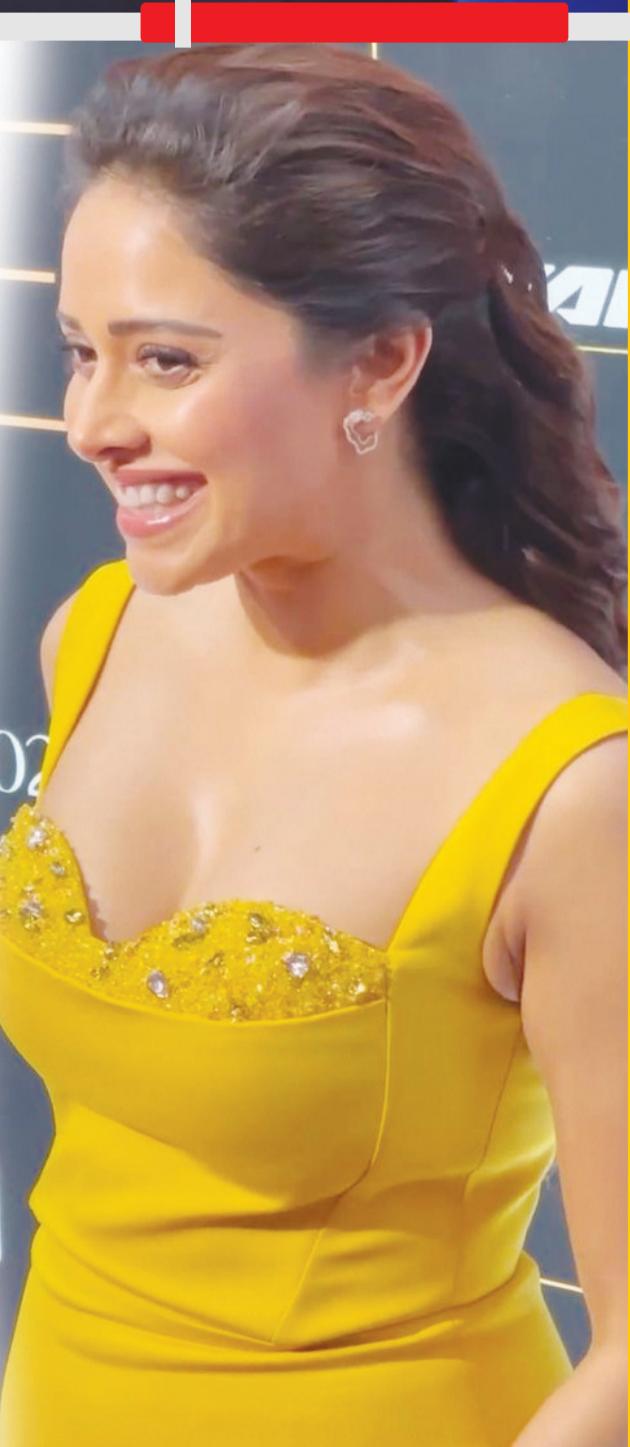
film. "As soon as a guy delivers a hit, no matter if he is an insider or an outsider, he will get five new options immediately. But women have to keep struggling. I have been saying this since the time of Pyaar Ka Punchnama," she said.

She continued, "I am not saying that she has to become an overnight sensation or anything. What does an actor want once their movie is a hit? To get a few options for potential future projects from which they can choose. That's it. They just need

opportunities. We don't get as many (options) as heroes do." Nushrratt was last seen in Chhorri 2, a horror film directed by Vishal Furia, also starring Soha Ali Khan and Gashmeer Mahajani. The film is available on Netflix.



around asking, 'Can I use the hero's vanity van for 5 minutes? He's not here anyway. Can I use the washrooms?' Because they are nicer than mine. However, I won't complain or bicker at that time. I tell myself that I will get myself to that point where I get



Riddhima Kapoor Sahni Celebrates Her 'Doll' Samara's Class 10 Milestone



Riddhima Kapoor Sahni, daughter of Rishi Kapoor and Neetu Kapoor, is on cloud nine as her daughter, Samara, has officially entered Class 10. The fashion designer-turned-actor is celebrating this milestone with love and immense happiness. Taking to Instagram Stories, Riddhima shared a cheerful mirror selfie with her daughter, marking the emotional moment for the Kapoor family. Both dressed casually and flashing smiles, fashion designer and budding actor Riddhima's happiness is clearly visible in the selfie. "Congratulations, my doll! Year 10," wrote proud mom Riddhima Kapoor Sahni.

Riddhima Kapoor Sahni's Previous Post

Riddhima was earlier in the spotlight after she treated fans with a rare throwback photo from her childhood. The debutant actress tugged at fans' hearts as the picture featured her legendary parents—the late Rishi Kapoor and Neetu Kapoor. In the black-and-white snapshot, Rishi Kapoor is seen lovingly kissing a young Riddhima on the forehead. Neetu Kapoor, on the other hand, was seen leaning on her husband's shoulder while looking towards Riddhima and Rishi with warmth and affection.

The touching image was originally shared by one of her parents' ardent fan, Rajeet Deshmukh. The note above the "rare and nostalgic" picture read, "Love only gets deeper each day," a sentiment Riddhima echoed by reposting the photo on her Instagram story.

Riddhima Kapoor's Journey

Despite being born into a Bollywood family, Riddhima Kapoor Sahni spent most of her career outside the film industry. She carved a niche for herself as a successful fashion designer. Her entry into entertainment came only recently, with her debut in Netflix's reality series Fabulous Lives of Bollywood Wives, where she appeared in a guest capacity. Following this, Riddhima will next be seen in the television series, Dining with the Kapoors. It is a family-style reality-meets-fiction format that offers viewers a peek into the famed Kapoor household.

Anupamaa's Adrija Roy Breaks Silence On Casting Couch In TV Industry: 'It's A Real Issue'



Actor Adrija Roy spoke about her experience on Anupamaa sets, addressed controversies, industry challenges like the casting couch, and her bond with Rupali Ganguly.

Anupamaa has remained a fan-favourite since its debut, not just for its compelling narrative but also for the buzz it generates off-screen. While the show continues to grab attention for its plot twists, it has occasionally found itself embroiled in controversies. Adrija Roy, who plays Anupamaa's lead Rupali Ganguly's on-screen daughter, shared her perspective on the chatter surrounding the show, her camaraderie with the latter and also dived into industry challenges such as the casting couch. Adrija Roy spoke about Anupamaa and revealed whether she had faced any difficulties on the sets of the show. She also reflected on its many controversies, and told Pinkvilla, "Every set has its ups and downs – it's like a family, right?" She added, "There can be misunderstandings or stress due to tight schedules, but for me personally, nothing major or controversial. I've always focused on my work and tried to stay away from unnecessary noise. My experience so far has been more of learning and growth."

Having been part of several television shows, including popular Bengali serials, Adrija also spoke about the harsh realities actors face in their early days. On the topic of the casting couch, she didn't shy away from the truth. "Yes, the journey hasn't been a bed of roses. It's a real issue, and I truly hope the industry continues to evolve into a safer space for everyone," she said.

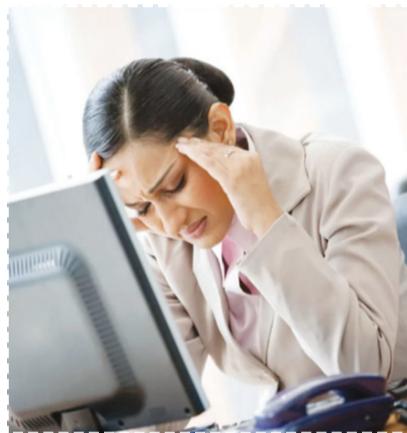
Despite the tense mother-daughter relationship her character shares with Rupali Ganguly's in Anupamaa, their off-screen dynamic is full of affection. Adrija gushed, "Oh, she is an absolute gem. She's like my own! From day one, she made me feel so welcome. There's no ego, no senior-junior energy—just warmth and guidance. Over time, our bond has only grown stronger. We laugh, we chat, we even confide in each other. I'm lucky to have her around, both as a co-actor and a friend."

Talking about the pressures of leading a daily soap, Adrija admitted that not every day was smooth sailing. She said there were definitely days when the body felt tired, the mind was overworked, and emotions were all over the place. She shared that during such times, she would talk to her mom, listen to music, or simply take a quiet moment between shots.

Your fertility could be directly proportionate to how

Stressed

You are



An estimated one in seven couples in India have fertility issues and sadly, more often than not, there is no known medical explanation, say doctors. Case study: Radha, 34 (name changed), an ambitious career-oriented woman, has been trying to conceive, unsuccessfully, for the last three years. She now worries that she might never have a child. Her gynaecologist has told her that she needs to change her lifestyle and be more at ease mentally. However, her highly stressful job doesn't allow her the luxury of relaxing or stay calm.

Physiological effects of stress cannot be ignored

"It has been found that around 10 per cent of the general population suffers from some form of infertility. Researchers say that women who are undergoing high levels of stress are 29 per cent less likely to get pregnant each month, than those women with lower stress levels," says fertility specialist Dr Shobha Gupta. Experts reiterate that the physiological effects of stress cannot be ignored and might play a relatively big role in conception.

Stress is one of the most overused words among the urban population world over. And it's not just the case with women. Gynaecologist and IVF specialist Dr Shweta Goswami, says, "Men who work in night shifts are more affected when it comes to fertility issues as compared to men working in regular shifts since their biological clock is badly disturbed. They sleep during the day and to keep themselves awake during the night, they often smoke, which damages the system further. Stress at the work place and sitting for long hours at work stations is also found to reduce sperm count."

Gynaecologist and IVF specialist Dr Anubha Singh, says, "Stress puts the body in 'fight or flight' mode from an evolutionary perspective and activates the sympathetic nervous system." This leads to the production of fat promoting hormones cortisol and insulin that cause weight gain. It also disrupts the body's hunger regulating hormones causing one to eat more."

Women are affected more

Women are often found to be more stressed than men. "Repeated failure to conceive puts more pressure on already stressed women. But thanks to technology, today, we have treatment for infertility through IVF or IUI. But it is advisable that women as well as men also try stress management

techniques to overcome this problem because natural conception is always the preferred method," adds Dr Anubha.

The psychology behind it

Young working women experience prolonged periods of frustration due to unsuccessful attempts at conception. Clinical psychologist Seema Hingorany says, "Often, this leads to marital stress further translating into personal sense of loss or failure. Infertility is often accompanied by psychological and emotional distress, frustration, sense of incompetency, jealousy, trauma and even depression."

Most women with infertility report symptoms of heightened anxiety, depression, fear that they will never have children. Infertility is associated with negative feeling



of helplessness leading to chronic stress. These symptoms and negative beliefs actually hamper fertility in women.

Constant stress Vs sudden stress

Experts say that there is a difference between constant stress and sudden stress, and it affects fertility in very different ways. Ovulation might still occur despite constant high stress because bodies are likely to acclimatise. However, sudden stress, like a death in the family, might interfere with the ovulation cycle. Doctors add that this may vary from one individual to another — for some women a simple weekend trip can hamper ovulation while a traumatic incident might not affect it at all. Also, negative stress is not the sole bad guy here. In fact, bridal jitters can also interfere with ovulation.

Points to ponder

Fertility experts have stated that there is no scientific proof that relaxation techniques will increase the chances of conception, but then, they can't harm you either.



Couples, who worry about stressing too much, tend to become even more stressed. Elimination of the factors that lead to stress before attempting to conceive, might help. Even something as simple as taking a walk for half an

hour can be de-stressing.

Factors that lead to infertility include

Marital disturbance

High pressure jobs or business stress

Advanced age

Inability to have physical intimacy

Depression

Personal injury or illness

Death of a close family member

Late marriages

Sitting for long hours at work stations

Exposure to environmental pollutants

Tips to cope with stress

Balance your career and home — spend adequate time with your family.

If you can't, take sabbatical if possible to review and introspect your priorities in life. Don't shy away from taking professional help to deal with stress and anxiety if you can't deal with it yourself.

Moderate levels of stress in your life is okay, so do not panic.

Ease your mind by practising yoga and meditation.

Make sure that you are eating meals on time and having the right kinds of healthy, nutritious foods.

Delegate responsibility at work and don't take it all on yourself.

Take small breaks with your spouse/partner to nurture your relationship.

Articulate your feelings and emotions and communicate with others.

DID YOU KNOW?

Of every 100 couples reporting to fertility clinics, 40 per cent are cases of male infertility, 50 per cent are of women, and the remaining 10 per cent of both partners being infertile. India has a population of over 1.2 billion; the number of Indians suffering from infertility is huge.



Why dengue is now an all-season threat

The city has been witnessing an unusual presence of the Aedes mosquitoes and the diseases transmitted by them even though the vectors are usually associated with rainy season.

March and April are considered dry months.

Scientists said this crisis is man-made and caused primarily due to large-scale construction activity and poor upkeep of overhead tanks. "There is a need for introducing heavy fines for mosquito breeding in and around construction sites and overhead tanks," said Dr Neena Valecha, director of National Institute of Malaria Research (NIMR).

A pilot project carried out by NIMR in collaboration with south corporation in 277 localities in west zone from July 2012 to May 2014 found overhead and curing tanks were the key habitats of Aedes mosquitoes during the dry months (December to May).

The incidence of mosquito-borne diseases can be reduced significantly with community participation. This involves putting proper lids on overhead tanks, regular emptying and cleaning of water containers, treatment of coolers and curing tanks with temephos and proper and safe disposal of solid waste, said NIMR scientists.

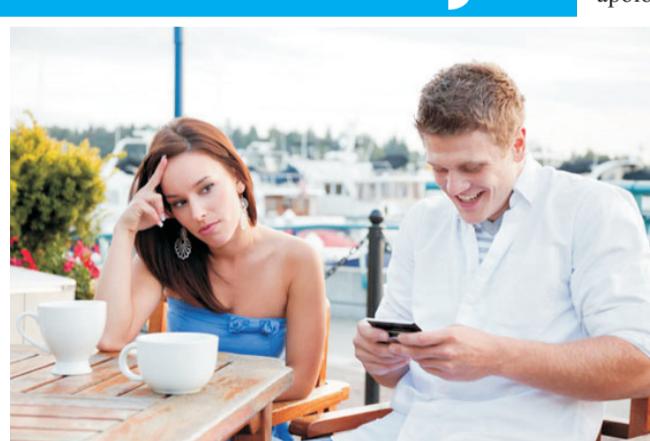
"Only one dengue case was reported in the study area in which fortnightly surveillance and interventions were carried out between 2012 and 2013. In the control area, which followed conventional intervention, 38 dengue cases were reported in the corresponding period," the NIMR study reveals. The results of the study have been published in a recent issue of PLOS One, a reputed medical journal.

Both dengue and chikungunya viruses are spread by Aedes aegypti mosquito that breeds in fresh water collected at construction sites or in the overhead tanks during dry season. In rainy season, stagnation of water can be seen in all empty containers and even potholes.

The average lifespan of an Aedes mosquito is two weeks. Each mosquito can lay eggs about thrice in its lifetime. About 100 eggs are produced each time. Entomologists say eggs produced by an Aedes mosquito can lie dormant in dry conditions for up to nine months after which they can hatch if exposed to favourable conditions, which is water and food. "If the key habitats—overhead and curing tanks—are cleared of these eggs during dry season, the chances of outbreaks during wet months can be reduced significantly. But for this we need active support of the public. The authorities alone cannot tackle the crisis," said Dr D K Seth, director, hospital administration of north corporation. Solid waste management is another area of concern. Due to lack of proper disposal system of solid waste in Delhi, it is indiscriminately dumped everywhere. This is a major threat for the increase in the population density of Aedes mosquitoes in urban and industrial towns. Responsibility of solid waste management remains primarily with the municipal bodies, so reduction in solid waste and its disposal is of utmost importance for reducing breeding of Aedes mosquitoes, said scientists.



Signs your texting habits are unhealthy



Many among us are more confident expressing ourselves over a text than a face-to-face conversation or through a call. Typing whatever is there on your mind and pressing the send button seems to have become the shortcut to an easier communication. Why are millennials shying away from talking over the phone? Why has the calling technology become almost obsolete or intrusive? What's wrong with this epistemological shift?

Why are people texting more than talking?

"Texting allows for communication which is less spontaneous but more 'to the point', avoiding circumstantiality and allowing the person to convey what he/she wants without the fear of being criticized immediately, therefore, reducing the fear of social interaction," says Dr. Jyoti Kapoor Madan, Senior Consultant, Psychiatry, Paras Hospitals, Gurugram.

She adds, "There is slurring, stuttering or trembling in the speech of an anxious person. Writing allows one to rethink while reading what one has written. Socially conscious kids feel they will be able to convey the right thing if they texted rather than just spoke. It is also possible that talking face to face allows the other person to respond and react which may make the person trying to say something more anxious."

Here are a few scenarios in which it may be happening:

- If one does not want to seem vulnerable. In such cases, texting acts as a good cover.

- In order to have a control over the conversation, one may opt for texting. Whether a person feels

intimidated in the presence of another person or if he wants to intimidate the other person, preferring to text over talk can mean either of these.

- To avoid other person's heightened emotional state, such as his crying or anger, a person may not want to talk over the phone.
- Or simply, one may prefer texting to expend lesser energy.

What's wrong with texting more?

The rise in texting has many critics. You must have lost the count of number of times when you wanted to convey a sarcastic remark in good humour but it came across as rude. The instances of misunderstandings over messaging are too frequent and too many and they are much beyond the 'autocorrect fails'.

Here's a whopping fact: Only 7 per cent of human communication happens through the content of

the message. The rest are body language (58 per cent) and vocal tone, pitch and emphasis (35 per cent). This was established by UCLA professor Albert Mehrabian. So, when we are texting each other, we are using only 7 per cent of our total communication potential. This is the reason you may find, for instance, apologizing over a message easier than through talking or through a face-to-face conversation. Typing 'sorry' and hitting send is way more convenient as it doesn't require you to convey an apologetic expression, body language, tone or pitch. The person at the receiving end is less likely to be convinced if the apology comes through a text for the same reason. He wants to see if you feel the apology, if your body language conveys it and if your expressions say it.

There's a common saying these days: 'Face it, Not Facebook'. This is only because texting causes many problems for those dependent on it a little too much.

The pros of texting

However, there are many who believe that it shouldn't be cut down altogether. Many a times, it also offers benefits, such as:

- Saves your time
- Helps you stay in touch with people more who you would otherwise not talk to
- It is better for casual conversations, everyday banter, planning outings on chat groups, saying quick hellos and goodbyes.

Signs it is becoming unhealthy

Look out for these signs to know if you are getting too much dependent on texting.

- If there are critical issues than need talking out but you are avoiding to call
- If you feel that you prefer to text over talk due to any underlying confidence issues
- If you are getting too dependent on it for every kind of conversation
- If you get panicky when the concerned person calls you