

India on way to 3rd biggest economy: PM Modi after Trump's 'dead economy' remark

► Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday made a strong pitch for 'swadeshi' products and reaffirmed the resilience of the Indian economy amid global economic turbulence.

New Delhi . (Agency)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday reaffirmed the resilience of the Indian economy and said the country is on track to become the world's third-largest

US President Donald Trump described India as a "dead economy" while commenting on the country's ties with Russia.

Specifically pointing out the "atmosphere of global instability", the Prime Minister asserted that the government is doing everything necessary to serve the country's best interests.

"There is an atmosphere of global instability. All countries are focusing on their individual interests. India is going to become the third biggest economy in the world and that is why India will have to stay alert as far as its economic interests are concerned," PM Modi said at a rally in Varanasi. He added, "Our government is doing everything it can in the best interest of the country... Those who want the best for the country and want to see India as

the third biggest economy in the world, be it any political party, should leave their differences aside and instil a resolution for 'swadeshi' products".

India, Trump launched a scathing attack on New Delhi's ties with Moscow, dismissing both nations as "dead economies" and bluntly stating that he "does not care" what India does with Russia. "I don't care what India does with Russia. They can take their dead economies down together, for all I care," he posted on social media.

PM WARNS PAKISTAN

At the Varanasi rally, Prime Minister Modi launched a scathing attack on Pakistan and warned terror elements that they would not be spared, even if they sought refuge in pataal lok.

"When there is injustice and terror in front, Mahadev adorns his 'Rudra roop'. The world saw this face of India during Operation Sindoora. Anyone who messes with India will not be spared even in 'pataal lok', " he said.



PM Modi's remarks came just days after

economy, amid global economic turbulence triggered by tariff hikes announced by Donald Trump. The Prime Minister stressed that India must remain vigilant about its economic interests and also made a strong pitch for 'swadeshi' products, calling it the way forward.

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Lok Sabha poll rigged, we've proof: Rahul Gandhi's big charge at Congress event

Rahul Gandhi alleged the 2024 Lok Sabha elections were rigged, claiming the Congress has data proving 1.5 lakh fake voters in one constituency. He also declared the Election Commission is no longer functioning independently.

New Delhi . (Agency)

Rahul Gandhi, at the Congress party's legal conference on Saturday, alleged that the 2024 Lok Sabha elections were rigged and claimed that the Election Commission is no longer functioning independently in India, which has invited the ire of opposition BJP leaders.

"The Lok Sabha election can be rigged and the 2024 Lok Sabha election was rigged," said Rahul Gandhi, saying that his party now has data and documents to prove the allegations. "We are going to prove this, we have data now." Gandhi revealed that in one Lok Sabha constituency, the party examined the voters' list and discovered that out of 6.5 lakh voters, 1.5 lakh were fake.

"In one Lok Sabha constituency, we checked the voter list. We found 1.5 lakh voters turned out to be fake," he claimed.

The Congress leader further claimed the ruling BJP's majority hinged on this alleged fraud. "Had they got 15-20 seats less, he (PM Modi) wouldn't have become Prime Minister."

In a sharp attack on the poll body, Gandhi said, "The Election Commission is dead in India."

Responding to this, Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh defended the Election Commission and criticised Gandhi's remarks. "Leader of the Opposition, Mr Rahul Gandhi, says the Election

Commission is stealing votes. But the Election Commission is a constitutional institution in India with its own credibility," he said.

Emergency in 1975. Such un founded and absurd statements from their leadership are unbecoming," Singh added.

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'Make own facility': Faridabad told to halt Bandhwari waste disposal

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Gurgaon: MCG will not accept waste transported by Faridabad civic body (MCF) at Bandhwari site "after a notified date". It was discussed at a meeting chaired by urban local bodies secretary and commissioner Vikas Gupta on July 27. CG has — in fact — directed MCF to make its own arrangements for waste disposal and cease sending daily waste to the Bandhwari landfill site. MCG commissioner Pradeep Dahiya said, "We have not yet fixed a date beyond which their daily waste won't be accepted at Bandhwari landfill site." MCF has already set up two decentralised waste processing units — one in Mujheri with a capacity to process 150 MT per day and the second one in Pratapgarh with the capacity to process 250 TPD. Another processing facility is being set up at Dabua in Faridabad. MCF commissioner Dhirendra Khadgata said the civic body needs more time since "we have projects of decentralised waste processing in the

pipeline". Khadgata said, "We need time to execute those projects and are currently negotiating on that. We have three waste processing units in Pratapgarh, Mujheri and Dabua. However, their functioning is restricted due to rains. We have six transfer stations where we intend to set up processing units. We will eventually stop sending our fresh waste to Bandhwari. We need to make arrangements before we implement that." According to data accessed by TOI, the MCF currently transports between 4,000 and 1,000 metric tonnes (MT) of fresh waste to the landfill each day, while in July, the MCG's daily fresh waste transported to Bandhwari ranged from 1,100 MT to 1,800 MT daily. In Sept last year MCG



wrote to the urban local bodies (ULB) department, requesting it to direct the MCF to handle its fresh waste within its own jurisdiction rather than transporting it to the Bandhwari landfill site. In a letter to the ULB department, former MCG commissioner Narhari Singh Banger had said the amount of fresh waste sent from

Faridabad to Bandhwari doubled over the past two months, rising from 650 tonnes to a staggering 1,300 tonnes per day in Sept last year. The waste processing at Bandhwari, meanwhile, has stopped since the two agencies working at the site were barred from working by the MCG due to their sluggish pace of work.

TOI reported on July 19 that a new estimated proposal of Rs 2.5 crore for the overhaul of the landfill was prepared, which includes the construction of a 15m wide and 400m long cement concrete road alongside the view cutter at the landfill site. Construction of a road will facilitate the smooth movement of the trucks carrying waste. Along with the road, the construction of a reinforced cement concrete drain is also proposed.

Two 3-lane flyovers soon to decongest key chowks in Gurgaon

Gurgaon.(Agency)

As the design of two new flyovers proposed at Ambedkar Chowk and Dadi Sati Chowk is finalised, GMDA is planning to float tenders for their construction within two weeks. These congested intersections will get 11m-wide flyovers with three lanes in each direction and two-lane service roads. Ambedkar Chowk, a junction connecting sectors 45, 46, 51, and 52, sees around 6,100 passenger car units (PCUs) during peak hours every day. With major residential societies including Ardee City and Mayfield Garden, along with schools, and hospitals in the vicinity, the 700-metre flyover proposed here will provide a much-needed relief from frequent traffic jams. Estimated to cost Rs 52 crore, the project will also improve the traffic flow to and fro Sohna Road.

The second flyover is planned at Dadi Sati Chowk, a major intersection connecting sectors 85, 86, 89, and 90. These sectors have witnessed rapid development in recent years, with several high-rise residential projects, commercial establishments, and a growing population adding to the traffic in the area. It sees around 9,400 PCUs and this figure is expected to cross the 10,000-mark by the time the construction of the flyover begins. The 840-metre flyover, estimated to cost Rs 59 crore, is expected to streamline traffic movement between Dwarka Expressway and Manesar. "Traffic at Dadi Sati Chowk is a nightmare to navigate through in the evenings. With schools and new societies coming up, the road can no longer handle the volume of cars that plight on it. At times, when the traffic signal doesn't work, the roundabout gets completely choked. The construction of the flyover, which is long due, should be taken up by the authorities on priority," said Vivek Prakash, a resident of New Town Heights. Both projects received administrative approval in July last year. With detailed project reports (DPRs) now finalised, GMDA officials said the focus was on completing the tendering process. Once construction begins, the flyovers are expected to take around two years to complete.

HRera orders builder to refund amount with 11% interest in resto unit dispute

Gurgaon. (Agency)

The Haryana Real Estate Regulatory Authority (HRera) directed a developer to refund the amount, which was paid by a buyer to open a restaurant in Sector 109, but upheld the cancellation of booking the unit as an agreement was not signed between the two parties. The complaint was filed by Atombridge Networks, which had booked a restaurant unit in Neo Square project in Sector 109 and paid a booking amount of Rs 2.5 lakh as an advance on Sept 2, 2018.

The firm made more payments, totalling Rs 42.5 lakh, though a builder-buyer agreement was not executed. The complainant alleged that the builder continued to raise demands for payment without executing the agreement or showing progress of the project. Neo Developers in Dec 2022 cancelled the booking, citing the company's failure to clear its dues. The builder also told Rera that payments worth Rs 42.5 lakh were made against total dues of Rs 2.97 crore for the unit, and this was a "blatant violation" of Section 19(6) of Rera Act. HRera, in its order, found that the builder had issued a welcome letter for the booking in 2018, but the complainant failed to comply with payment demands. The contention that construction was incomplete was dismissed as unsustainable in light of the occupation certificate being obtained in Oct 2024.

Man gets 10 years in jail for raping minor girl in 2019

Ghaziabad . (Agency)

A special Poco court in the city sentenced a 26-year-old man to 10 years of rigorous imprisonment for kidnapping and sexually assaulting a Class 11 student in 2019. Special public prosecutor Utkarsh Vats said that the incident occurred on Nov 14, 2019. A complaint was registered by the girl's father on Nov 19, 2019, following which the accused was arrested, and the statement of the survivor was recorded by the police. Based on the minor's statement, police included rape charges under Section 376 IPC.

The prosecution presented six witnesses, including the victim and the complainant in the case. The court found substance and congruity in the girl's statement given at the police station, recorded before the magistrate under section 164 CrPC, and her examination-in-chief in the court. Her statement was supported by the medical report and the statement of the doctor who carried out the test. The victim informed the court that she was friends with the accused on Facebook, and on Nov 14, when she was in emotional distress after a fight with her mother, the accused offered her to travel with him to his relative's place. "Though I refused initially, he pressured me, and there at his aunt's home, despite my objections, he established a physical relationship," the 16-year-old informed the court. The medico-legal report confirmed penetrative sexual assault, but no injury mark was found. Citing two different judgements of the apex court, the judge noted that if the statement of the prosecutrix is found to be worthy of credence and reliable, it requires no corroboration, and the court may convict the accused on the sole testimony of the prosecutrix". It cited two more Supreme Court judgements to assert that even a medical report is not required to establish the commission of rape if the statement of the victim is beyond doubt. "In this case, the statement of the victim and corroboration by the doctor is enough to establish the fact that the accused committed rape on the body of the victim and is liable to be pronounced guilty under section 376 IPC," the court held on July 30. The convict was found guilty and charged under section 4 of the Poco Act, kidnapping under section 363 IPC, and abduction for illicit intercourse under section 366 IPC. The court ruled that sentences awarded under each section would run concurrently, and an amount of Rs 10,000 from the net fine amount would be handed over to the survivor for her rehabilitation.

Maximum temperature goes up by 5°C in Gurgaon, more rain likely

Gurgaon. (Agency)

The city woke up to overcast skies as India Meteorological Department (IMD) issued a "yellow alert" for heavy showers from Aug 1 to 5 in isolated parts of Haryana. Meanwhile, a minimum temperature of 26.5°C was recorded on Friday, nearly 0.8°C lower than the previous day, and the maximum temperature reached 31.8°C, which was five notches higher than Thursday. According to IMD, light to moderate showers are expected in most parts of the state in the coming week, with some areas including Gurgaon and nearby districts receiving more rainfall.

"The rainfall activity is being driven by multiple systems. The monsoon trough at mean sea level currently runs across Sri Ganganagar, Rohtak, Shahjahanpur, Gorakhpur, and into the northeast Bay of Bengal," an IMD official said.

"Additionally, an upper air cyclonic



circulation over Haryana and its neighbourhood, extending up to 3.1km above mean sea level, continues to feed moisture into the region. A western disturbance is also present at higher altitudes (around 5.8km), aligned along 72°E north of latitude 32°N," the official added. "These overlapping systems are likely to trigger recurrent spells of rain, especially in southern and eastern Haryana," an official with IMD

Palam and Ridge stations saw traces of rainfall. Rainfall is classified as light when it is up to 15.5 mm, moderate when it is between 15.6 and 64.4 mm, heavy when between 64.5 mm and 115.5 mm, and very heavy when it is over 115.5 mm in a 24-hour window.

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Merger plan dropped after protest, 10 Noida schools reopen

Noida.(Agency)

A total of 10 primary schools in the city that have been closed since July 1, following a govt merger plan, have now reopened. The decision comes after weeks of protests by teachers and concerns raised by parents and students over the increased distance to the merged schools. TOI had previously reported that over 1,200 students were left without easy access to education as schools were merged with upper primary institutions located more than 1km away. The closures were part of a resource rationalisation initiative aimed at shutting schools with low enrolment, but the move drew widespread criticism for potentially pushing children, especially girls, out of school due to travel difficulties.

The list of affected schools included Primary School (PS) Parohi, PS Budha Gharbari, PS Chakrasenpur, PS Chakrasenpur Ki Madhiya, PS Raghuveer Garhi, PS Sainthi Ki Madhiya, Dhund Khadera, Chholas Ki Madhiya, Ambedkar Nagar, and Gurukul Kheri. These institutions will now resume



operations at their original locations starting Monday. Last week, education minister Sandeep Singh said that no school in the state was merged permanently and that govt can resume classes in the closed schools if the need arises. The ongoing

school pairing initiative aims to improve education quality without shutting down schools or cutting posts. The complaints from certain districts regarding the initiative have been taken seriously, and necessary action has been taken, including restoring operations in certain schools where required. The children's access to paired schools has been planned to be simple, convenient, and safe," the minister said. Praveen Sharma, district president of the Teachers Association, told TOI, "It is a great relief for several students, as well as teachers, that the schools will reopen. Otherwise, the enrolment would have gone down, and many children would suffer an out-of-school scenario." Meanwhile, basic education officer Rahul Panwar confirmed that the schools will operate at their original locations. "Work will be done in the interest of the students. No student will be allowed to face inconvenience," Panwar added.

Illegal liquor outlets thrive in protected forests in Faridabad

Faridabad .(Agency)

Liquor vends and taverns are operating openly on Aravali forest land and protected greenbelts across Faridabad, some hidden behind thick vegetation, others right in the middle of residential zones, in clear violation of environmental laws. At least four vends have come up on forest land, and over 35 more in green belts in areas like Bhatola, Mangar, Surjkund Road and Lakkarpur.

Many of these locations fall within buffer zones of the Aravalis, where any construction or commercial activity is either restricted or banned under the Punjab Land Preservation Act (PLPA), 1900. The vends are not small kiosks. In most places, there are permanent structures -- double-shutter shops with paved courtyards, tin-roofed seating areas and boundary walls. Ahatas attached to them offer open-air drinking spaces with plastic chairs, wooden benches and food counters. In some cases, drains around the premises were clogged with empty bottles, plastic cups, leftover food items and liquor sachets.

One of the outlets in Bhatola lies on protected forest land, which is owned by the irrigation department. Another store

in a forest area is located close to the Manav Rachna University, and a third in Lakkarpur is on Aravali land owned by the tourism department. A fourth outlet is carved out of a green belt in Mangar, with a parcel of Aravali land likely flattened to make space for the shop. The store's owners also installed floodlights here. On Friday, most staffers at these stores refused to talk or show any permits.

But an employee of a wine shop along Surjkund Road told TOI the store has been at the spot for years. "No one came to say that it is illegal," he said. Another staffer at the wine shop in Mangar said he wasn't aware that this was forest land.

An excise department official on Friday refused to comment on the legality of these shops. "The matter is sub-judice. A verification survey can be initiated soon," a district excise official said.

A forest department official said on Friday that they had issued notices to these vends last week. "These are old structures, but we issued notices last week. One of them, which is near Surjkund Road, has around 20% of its structure in PLPA area. We will carry out



a demarcation and issue a notice. The Mangar one is in section 4 of PLPA. We will carry out appropriate action against these units," said Vipin Kumar Singh, divisional forest officer, Faridabad. The matter of liquor vends operating illegally in protected forests had reached the National Green Tribunal (NGT) in Dec last year. Faridabad-based activist Narendra Sirohi had filed a petition, alleging that the state govt has allowed rampant commercialisation of protected Aravali land. "These outlets are polluting forest land and green belts, creating constant nuisance and encouraging illegal commercial activities in areas

where only afforestation or open land use is permitted. Despite multiple complaints, no action was taken. That's why I approached the tribunal," Sirohi told TOI. He said that these shops were not "accidental violations", these laid bare "regulatory apathy".

"Entire green belts are loaded with heaps of garbage... Such activities are not only causing degradation of the environment, but are also affecting public health at large," he added. For now, NGT has sought responses from the forest department, Haryana State Pollution Control Board (HSPCB), excise department, district administration and the Union environment ministry. A hearing is expected by Oct. Environmentalists said such commercial operations in forest areas were "environmental vandalism".

"Govt talks of preserving green belts, but liquor outlets are being allowed to thrive in the very areas meant for reforestation and ecological buffers," said Sunil Harsana, an ecologist and activist.

NFR Signs MoUs with Pollution Control Board of Assam and IIT Guwahati

The Sikh Times

Maligaon, 2nd August: Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) reaffirmed its commitment to sustainability by signing two significant Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) on 1st August 2025 at the General Manager's Conference Hall, NFR Headquarters, Maligaon. The event, chaired by Shri Chetan Kumar Srivastava, General Manager of NFR, witnessed participation from senior officials along with all DRMs and CWMs via video conferencing, including representatives from the Pollution Control Board, Assam (PCBA), Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IITG) and M/s Kusum Udyog. Under the first MoU, a tripartite agreement has been established among NFR, PCBA, and M/s Kusum Udyog to develop Guwahati Railway Station into a 100% plastic recycling hub. A dedicated six-member task force led by the Station Superintendent, Guwahati, has been constituted to steer the initiative. Efforts include improving garbage storage infrastructure, operationalizing a compost-making plant and organizing frequent passenger awareness drives. With the expertise of PCBA and the operational role of M/s Kusum Udyog, a PCBA-authorized recycler, a robust recycling

ecosystem initiative that aims towards establishing a sensitization campaign. The second

MoU, signed with IIT Guwahati, focuses on the introduction of biodegradable and compostable bags to replace the existing packets used for bedroll distribution in AC coaches. The pilot will begin with the Brahmaputra Mail operating between Kamakhya-New Delhi, with plans to scale the same initiative across all Guwahati and Kamakhya-based trains and eventually to the entire NFR network. This ini-



tiative merges collaborative research with field-level implementation, targeting a shift towards eco-friendly, passenger-conscious alternatives. The occasion reflected NFR's unwavering commitment to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of "Transformation by Transportation" for the Northeast region. By integrating environmental sustainability into its operational framework, NFR continues to lead in creating a cleaner and greener railway ecosystem for the zone.

National sentiments hurt by sports relations with Sindoor's killers

Jammu: Restoration of sports relations with Pakistan, which has been playing the dirty game of terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir for the last 4 decades, including Pulwama, Pahalgam attacks, will be an act that hurts the public sentiments of the nation, betting money during the match nourishes terrorism, when water, air space can be stopped, why sports relations? , stated by Manish Sahni, President Shiv Sena(UBT) Jammu and Kashmir unit. Led by party state chief Manish Sahni, demonstrated vigorously near the Muthi state office in Jammu, holding placards that read "Sports relations with the killers of Sindoor are intolerable", "Water and airspace stopped, why Cricket?", "Nurturing terrorism through match betting", etc. Sahni said that any kind of relations with the enemies of Sindoor cannot be tolerated. After being humiliated and pleading during Operation Sindoor, Pakistan has once again started infiltrating the border and nurturing terrorists. 98 terrorist incidents took place in

Jammu and Kashmir from January to July this year (2025) and 32 terrorists were killed. After Operation Sindoor, 13 terrorists were killed in 13 terrorist incidents in May, 4 terrorists were killed in 12 incidents in June and 3 terrorists were killed in 8 incidents in July. On the very first day of August, a terrorist was killed in Kulgam, Kashmir, while the encounter is still going on. Sahni said that the tail named Pakistan will never straighten up. During the Indo-Pak cricket match, betting kingpin Dawood Ibrahim Kaskar and his henchmen hiding in Pakistan's lap become more active. Because the most betting is done when these two countries come face to face. A large part of this money is used to nurture terrorists. Sahni has also accused BCCI of

Inauguration of Reconstructed Memorial at Maharani Jind Kaur's Cremation Site in Nashik

Nashik (Maharashtra)/Amritsar: A tribute ceremony was organized at Ganga Ghat, Panchvati, Nashik (Maharashtra) on the banks of the Godavari River in memory of Maharani Jind Kaur, the wife of Sher-Punjab Maharaja Ranjit Singh and mother of Maharaja Duleep Singh. Sikh leaders and speakers paid heartfelt tributes to Maharani Jind Kaur during the ceremony. The highlight of the event was the inauguration of the newly reconstructed memorial at her cremation site, which became possible after 14 years of persistent efforts by the local administration and the Sikh community of Maharashtra. The ceremony was jointly organized by the Maharashtra Sikh Community Coordination Committee, Punjabi Literary Academy Maharashtra, Nashik District United Gurdwara Committee, and other Sikh organizations. Speaking on the occasion, S. Jaspal Singh Sidhu, Chairman of the Maharashtra Sikh Community Coordination Committee, stated that Maharani Jind Kaur was not only the queen of the Sikh Empire and the mother who inspired her son, Maharaja Duleep Singh, to reclaim the pride of Sikh heritage, but also a brave woman who stood firmly against British rule with a strong sense of nationalism, a woman feared by the British themselves. She passed away on August 1, 1863, in London at the age of just 48. In accordance with her last wish, her mortal remains were brought to India, but the British authorities denied permission to take them to Punjab, resulting in her cremation at Nashik on the banks of the Godavari River. Later, her ashes were brought from Nashik to Lahore by her granddaughter Princess Bamba and placed next to the Samadhi of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Sidhu explained that originally there was a small memorial at this site, which was removed during the Godavari beautification project. Now, under the leadership of Maharashtra Chief Minister Mr. Devendra Fadnavis, and with the government's support, a magnificent memorial has been constructed at this sacred location. Sikh leaders expressed gratitude to the Maharashtra Government for this effort and described the memorial as an inspiration for Sikhism and national spirit. Sidhu further announced that an annual Gurmat Samagam (spiritual congregation) will be held every March in the memory of Maharani Jind Kaur. Additionally, on the five acres of land allocated near the Godavari in her name, a grand memorial complex equipped with facilities for the congregation will be developed. He emphasized that Maharani Jind Kaur not only reconnected her son Maharaja Duleep Singh with Sikhism but also instilled in him a deep sense of pride for his heritage. Through her unshakable determination, sharp intellect, and unwavering courage, she stood as a living symbol of not just the glory of Sikhism but also the resilient spirit of India.

Amritsar: K.S.BEDI MLA from Central Assembly constituency Dr Ajay Gupta today inaugurated the installation of a tubewell in Andarun Lahori Gate. MLA Dr Gupta said that people in this area were facing some problem of drinking water. Now with the start of this tubewell, the people of Lahori Gate's gali number 1, 2, 3 and Shekha Wali Gali will get clean and continuous water. He said that the people of the Central Assembly constituency will not be allowed to face any kind of shortage. MLA Dr Gupta said that the Central Assembly con-

stituency will be made the best in the whole of Punjab. He said that the problems of the people will be heard by going door to door in the Central Assembly constituency and their solution will be found. He said that the contract for sewerage desilting and water supply maintenance is being allotted in the Central Assembly constituency at a cost of about Rs 1 crore. The company to which the contract is being allotted will get any problem related to sewerage desilting, tubewell and water supply pipes fixed by that company. MLA Dr Ajay Gupta



MLA Dr Ajay Gupta inaugurated the installation of a tubewell: solution will be found by going door to door and listening to the problems of the people

said that if any problem related to the central assembly constituency is taken to Aam Aadmi Party convener Arvind Kejriwal, Punjab in-charge Manish Sisodia and Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann, then that problem is resolved soon. He said that there is no shortage of funds for this. He said that the Municipal Corporation has issued tenders for cleaning the city, till the tenders mature, the number of tractor trolleys and other machinery is being increased for garbage collection. MLA Dr Ajay Gupta said that a camp of 'Sarkar Aayi Apake Dwar' is being organized in the central assembly constituency. He said that this camp will be organized on August 1 at DAV Senior Secondary School Hathi Gate. He appealed to the people that if they have any pending work related to Municipal Corporation, District Administration, Health Department, Police Department and other Government departments, they should join that camp and discuss their problems and get it resolved on the spot. He said that all the senior officers of the district and he himself will be present in that camp. On this occa-

sion, councilors Vicky Kumar, a large number of Aam Aadmi Party volunteers and Municipal Corporation officials were present.

Haryana Government issues posting/transfer orders of 4 HCS officers

Chandigarh: The Haryana Government has issued orders for postings and transfers of 4 HCS officers with immediate effect. As per the orders, Sh. Satinder Siwatch, District Development Authority, Kurukshetra, has been posted as Sub Divisional Officer (Civil), Barara. Sh. Bharat Bhushan, Joint CEO, Panchkula Metro polita n Development Authority, has been appointed as Deputy Municipal Commissioner, Kurukshetra, has been posted as Sub Divisional Officer (Civil), Barara. Sh. Bharat Bhushan, Joint CEO, Panchkula Metro polita n Development Authority, has been appointed as Deputy Municipal Commissioner, Kurukshetra. Harpreet Kaur, Joint Director (Admn.), Information, Public Relations and

Languages, and Deputy Secretary, Information, Public Relations and Languages Department, has been appointed as Joint Director, Model Sanskriti Schools, against a vacant post.

SUPPLY OF SPECIAL FITTINGS & SUPPLY OF SELF NUTS
E-Tender Notice No.: 72/W-2/
APDJ Dated: 31-07-2025.
E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works:
E-Tender No. 30-AP-I-2025. Name of work: Supply of special fittings, supply of self nuts and rail clamps under the jurisdiction of Alipurduar Jn. Division. Tender Value: ₹2,58,00,060/-, Earnest Money: ₹2,79,000/- Date & Time of closing of tender: 15:00 hrs. of 21-08-2025 & opening at 15:30 hrs. of 21-08-2025. The complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available in website www.ireps.gov.in. DRM (W), Alipurduar Jn. **NORTH EAST FRONTIER RAILWAY**
Serving Customers With A Smile

Court upholds order for FIR against cop for assaulting dog

New Delhi: A Delhi court has upheld a magisterial court order directing FIR against a police official for allegedly hitting a stray dog with a stick in northeast Delhi in January 2022. Principal district and sessions judge Sukhvinder Kaur observed the Delhi Police sub-inspector could not claim protection of law to public servants for discharging their duties as "the act of beating a dog is not covered under the official duty". The judge was hearing the revision plea of assistant sub-inspector Ravindra from Jaffrabad police station, against the February 2023 order of a magisterial court. Ravindra challenged the

order on several grounds, including he acted in self-defence after being bitten by the dog. He argued the alleged incident occurred when he was performing his official duty and there was no maiming of the stray dog, besides the alleged video of the incident on social media being "selective and incomplete". On July 18, the court said, "It is apparent from the status report given by the assistant commissioner of police (ACP) concerned and the report of public grievances (PG) cell that under the garb of police inquiry the police has conducted investigation by recording statements of local residents, com-

plaintants, accused, doctors, which appears to have been done only to save the revisionist (Ravindra) who is a police personnel." Ravindra's plea seeking protection for a public servant under law was held to without merit. "The plea of the revisionist (Ravindra) to the effect that the stray dog has not received any grievous injury or was not maimed, is also not sustainable since the police have not even conducted the medical examination of the dog," the court said. The police, the order said, instead of medically examining the dog, themselves concluded that the dog was not maimed. "I do not find any error in the finding of the metropolitan

magistrate to the effect that the police has conducted investigation under the garb of inquiry and the police had chosen to give clean chit to the proposed accused in inquiry proceedings despite reaching the conclusion that the victim dog was indeed assaulted by the proposed accused who is deployed in the very same area where the incident took place," the court said.

ENGINEERING WORKS IN KATHIAR DIVISION

Tender Notice No.: KIR/Engg./45 of 2025; Dated: 24-07-2025; E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work:

Tender No. 1: Brief Description of Item

At Kathiawar Division-Providing and fixing Single Piece Spring Inserted Reusable Self Locking Steel nuts (M-27). **Tender Value:** ₹3,02,36,816.01/-; **Bid Security:** ₹3,01,200/-; **Tender No. 2: Brief Description of Item**

At Kathiawar Division-In

cluding

Recreation/Meditation facility at Balurhat, N.F. Railway. **Tender Value:** ₹3,02,36,816.01/-; **Bid Security:** ₹3,01,200/-; **Tender No. 3: Brief Description of Item**

At Kathiawar Division-Providing and fixing Single Piece Spring Inserted Reusable Self Locking Steel nuts (M-27). **Tender Value:** ₹1,54,72,160/-; **Bid Security:** ₹2,27,400/-; Date & time of closing of above tenders at 15:00 hrs. on 25-08-2025 and opening at 15:30 hrs. on 25-08-2025. For complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available upto 15:00 hrs. on 25-08-2025 in website www.ireps.gov.in.

DRM (W), Kathiawar

NORTH EAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

Serving Customers With A Smile

Place : Kolkata

Date : August 1, 2025

For PAGARIA ENERGY LIMITED

Sd/- Arpan Singh Roy, Managing Director

DIN: 10983936

Haryana Right to Service Commission Imposes Rs. 1,000 fine on electricity department Officer for delay

Chandigarh: The Haryana Right to Service Commission has imposed a fine of Rs.1,000 on an employee of the electricity department for delay in providing a service. The amount will be deducted from the officer's salary and paid to the complainant as compensation. The complainant, a resident of Radaur, had submitted a complaint to the Commission stating that he had requested the disconnection of his NDS electricity connection in August 2024. At the same time, he had asked the department to adjust the security deposit of that connection into another active account at his home. However, despite repeated requests and several visits to the office, no action was taken. Later, he applied online in March 2025, after which he was informed in July that the security amount had been adjusted in the June bill. The complainant demanded com-

pensation for the nearly nine-month delay and action against the responsible officer. The spokesperson of the Commission said that it was found during the hearing that both account numbers were clearly mentioned in the consumer's application. Still, due to a clerical mistake, the consumer clerk issued PDCO for the residential connection instead. Although the error was later corrected, a new PDCO for the correct account was never issued.

Diocese of Amritsar, Church of North India, holds candlelight prayer for targeted nuns

AMRITSAR: Expressing solidarity with Sister Preethi Mary and Sister Vandana Francis, the Catholic nuns, who were arrested in Chhattisgarh on charges of religious conversion and human trafficking, the Diocese of Amritsar, Church of North India (CNI), has expressed its unwavering support and unity with them. In a show of unity and prayer, the Diocese organized a special candlelight prayer during a youth camp, demonstrating its commitment to standing with these dedicated servants of God. Terming the arrest of the two nuns as 'unjust' The Right Reverend Manoj Charan, Acting Deputy Moderator, Church of North India, and Bishop, Diocese of Amritsar, CNI, said a nun's calling embodies compassion and selfless service to the marginalized sections.

Punjab Governor Holds Meeting with Vice Chancellors to Mobilize Youth for 'Viksit Bharat Yuva Connect Program'

Chandigarh: Punjab Governor and Administrator, UT Chandigarh, Shri Gulab Chand Kataria, today convened a meeting with the Vice Chancellors of various universities of Punjab to discuss the implementation of the Viksit Bharat Yuva Connect Program, launched by the Government of India to actively engage youth aged between 15 and 29 years. As part of this nationwide initiative, the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, will address the youth of the country on International Youth Day, 12th

August 2025, and interact with them to gather their aspirations and inputs for building a Viksit Bharat @2047. Addressing the Vice Chancellors through video conference, Shri Kataria said that the Government of India has been consistently working to empower the youth. With the New Education Policy and a strong focus on skill development and start-ups, the youth have become vital partners in building Viksit Bharat @2047. He expressed confidence that the youth of Punjab will lead the way in contributing to this vision of a developed and

empowered India across all sectors.

The Governor highlighted the pivotal role of universities in mobilizing youth participation and urged the Vice Chancellors to ensure timely registration of their institutions and students on the My Bharat App, the official digital platform for this initiative. He further instructed universities to actively organize and promote the activities listed on the My Bharat App. These include debates, declamations, youth parliaments, poster-making competitions, and other engagement programs. Shri Kataria emphasized that sincere

efforts should be made to engage, enable, encourage, and inspire maximum student participation in these Youth Connect initiatives, as envisioned by the Prime Minister.

The Governor also urged the universities to implement the New Education Policy focusing on Skill Development and fostering Democratic Values among youth. The Vice Chancellors assured the Governor that preparations are already underway and that various activities under the Youth Connect Program are being planned and implemented across their institutions.

For complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available upto 15:00 hrs. on 25-08-2025 in website www.ireps.gov.in.

The above Financial Results have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors on 1st August, 2025.

NEWS BOX

Manhunt continues after four killed in shooting at a Montana bar in US

World . (Agency)

A shooting at a Montana bar left four people dead Friday, prompting a lockdown in a neighborhood several miles away as authorities searched for the suspect in a wooded, mountainous area. The shooting happened around 10:30 a.m. at The Owl Bar in Anaconda, according to the Montana Division of Criminal Investigation, which is leading the investigation. The agency confirmed four people were pronounced dead at the scene. The suspect, who was identified as 45-year-old Michael Paul Brown, lived next door, according to public records and bar owner David Gwerder.

The bartender and three patrons were killed, said Gwerder, who was not there at the time. He believed the four victims were the only ones present during the shooting, and was not aware of any prior conflicts between them and Brown. "He knew everybody that was in that bar. I guarantee you that," Gwerder said. "He didn't have any running dispute with any of them. I just think he snapped." Brown's home was cleared by a SWAT team and he was last seen in the Stump Town area, just west of Anaconda, authorities said.

More than a dozen officers from local and state police converged on that area, locking it down so no one was allowed in or out. A helicopter also hovered over a nearby mountain side as officers moved among the trees, said Randy Clark, a retired police officer who lives there. Brown was believed to be armed, the Montana Highway Patrol said in a statement.

As reports of the shooting spread through town, business owners locked their doors and sheltered inside with customers. At Caterpillars to Butterflies Childcare, a nursery a few blocks from the shooting scene, owner Sage Huot said she'd kept the children inside all day after someone called to let her know about the violence.

"Take Precautions": India Issues Advisory After Attack On Citizens In Ireland

Dublin. (Agency)

The Embassy of India in Ireland on Friday advised Indian nationals to take reasonable precautions for their personal security and avoid deserted areas, especially at odd hours. In the advisory issued on X, the Embassy noted the rise in the instances of physical attacks reported against Indian citizens in Ireland recently. The Embassy also shared its contact details, including email and mobile number, for Indian nationals. "There has been an increase in the instances of physical attacks reported against Indian citizens in Ireland recently. The Embassy is in touch with the authorities concerned of Ireland in this regard. At the same time, all Indian citizens in Ireland are advised to take reasonable precautions for their personal security and avoid deserted areas, especially in odd hours," the Indian Embassy in Ireland posted on X. The advisory from the Indian Embassy comes after an Indian national was violently assaulted in Tallaght - a southwestern outer suburb of Dublin, on July 26. Following the incident, the Indian Embassy in Ireland said on Wednesday that it is in touch with the victim and the victim's family and is providing all assistance. In a post on X, the Indian Embassy in Ireland had stated, "Regarding the recent incident of physical attack on an Indian national that happened in Tallaght, Dublin, the Embassy is in touch with the victim and his family. All the requisite assistances are being offered. Embassy is also in touch with the relevant Irish authorities in this regard."

3-Year-Old Boy In China Miraculously Survives Fall From 18th-Floor Apartment

World . (Agency)

A 3-year-old boy in China miraculously survived a fall from the 18th floor of his apartment. According to the South China Morning Post, the incident occurred on July 15 in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, when the little boy was left in the care of his grandparents. Believing that the child was asleep, the grandparents briefly left home to buy groceries, locking the door of the flat to ensure that the toddler stayed inside. However, the child woke up and went to the bathroom, where he climbed onto the toilet and out of an unlocked window that had no safety bars, plunging down. According to the SCMP, the boy's fall was broken by a tree, and he miraculously survived. The toddler was found on the ground by a resident from the same community who filmed the scene and posted the footage in the property management group. It was only after seeing the message that the child's father, identified as Zhu, learned that his son had fallen. "At first, I could not believe he had fallen from the 18th floor until surveillance footage from the property management group confirmed it," the father said, per the outlet. He added that during the fall, his son had likely been "obstructed" by an open window on the 17th floor, which caused a "deviation" in his trajectory. This led him to land directly on a tree before hitting the ground. "Otherwise, the child would have landed directly on the concrete," Zhu said. A surveillance footage also showed the child brushing past an open window and landing in the branches of a tree before plunging face-first into a bush on the ground, rather than directly on concrete. After being discovered, the boy was immediately rushed to the hospital. Doctors described his survival as a "miracle," The Independent reported. The little boy sustained a fractured left arm, spinal strain and damage to internal organs. But his head remained uninjured, and he was fully conscious throughout. Astonishingly, the boy even asked the medical team to "ask daddy to buy me a Bumblebee" toy shortly after the incident. As a mark of gratitude, the boy's father later adorned the "life-saving tree" with a large red flower - a traditional Chinese symbol of honour and celebration.

The predicament of the Sobhs, who live in a seaside refugee camp west of Gaza City after being displaced multiple times, is the same for families throughout the war-ravaged territory.

SAN SALVADOR . (Agency)

Every morning, Abeer and Fadi Sobh wake up in their tent in the Gaza Strip to the same question: How will they find food for themselves and their six young children? The couple has three options: Maybe a charity kitchen will be open and they can get a pot of watery lentils. Or they can try jostling through crowds to get some flour from a passing aid truck. The last resort is begging. If those all fail, they simply don't eat. It happens more and more these days, as hunger saps their energy, strength and

hope. The predicament of the Sobhs, who live in a seaside refugee camp west of Gaza City after being displaced multiple times, is the same for families throughout the war-ravaged territory. Humanitarian workers say hunger has grown throughout the 22 months-long war because of aid restrictions. But food experts warned earlier this week the "worst-case scenario of famine is currently playing out in Gaza."

Israel enforced a complete blockade on food and other supplies for 2½ months beginning in March. It said its objective was to increase pressure on Hamas to release dozens of hostages it has held since its attack on Israel on Oct. 7, 2023. Though the flow of aid resumed in May, the amount is a fraction of what aid organizations say is needed. A breakdown of law and order has also made it nearly impossible to safely deliver food. Much of the aid that does get in is hoarded or sold in markets at exorbitant prices. Here is a look at a day in the life of the Sobh family: A morning seawater bath. The family wakes up in their tent, which Fadi Sobh, a 30-year-old street



vendor, says is unbearably hot in the summer. With fresh water hard to come by, his wife Abeer, 29, fetches water from the sea. One by one, the children stand in a metal basin and scrub themselves as their mother pours the saltwater over their heads. Nine-month-old Hala cries as it stings her eyes.

The other children are more stoic. Abeer then rolls up the bedding and sweeps the dust and sand from the tent floor. With no food left over from the day before, she heads out to beg for something for her family's breakfast. Sometimes, neighbors or passersby give her lentils. Sometimes she gets nothing. Abeer gives Hala water from a

Corporation for Public Broadcasting to shut down after being defunded by Congress, targeted by Trump

WASHINGTON . (Agency)

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a cornerstone of American culture for three generations, announced Friday it would take steps toward its own closure after being defunded by Congress — marking the end of a nearly six-decade era in which it fueled the production of renowned educational programming, cultural content and even emergency alerts. The demise of the corporation, known as CPB, is a direct result of President Donald Trump's targeting of public media, which he has repeatedly said is spreading political and cultural views antithetical to those the United States should be espousing. The closure is expected to have a profound impact on the journalistic and cultural landscape — in particular, public radio and TV stations in small communities across the United States. CPB helps fund both PBS and NPR, but most of its funding

is distributed to more than 1,500 local public radio and television stations around the country.

The corporation also has deep ties to



much of the nation's most familiar programming, from NPR's "All Things Considered" to, historically, "Sesame Street," "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" and the documentaries of Ken Burns. The corporation said its end, 58 years after being signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson,

would come in an "orderly wind-down." In a statement, it said the decision came after the passage through Congress of a package that clawed back its funding for the next two budget years — about \$1.1 billion. Then, the Senate Appropriations Committee reinforced that policy change Thursday by excluding funding for the corporation for the first time in more than 50 years as part of a broader spending bill.

"Despite the extraordinary efforts of millions of Americans who called, wrote, and petitioned Congress to preserve federal funding for CPB, we now face the difficult reality of closing our operations," said Patricia Harrison, the corporation's president and CEO. A last-gasp attempt at funding fails

Democratic members of the Senate Appropriations Committee made a last-ditch effort this week to save the CPB's funding.

Collapse at Chile's major copper mine kills one worker and leaves 5 missing

The U.S. Geological Survey reported a magnitude 5 earthquake in an area of central Chile where Codelco's El Teniente mine is located, at 5:34 p.m. local time on Thursday.

SANTIAGO . (Agency)

A collapse at a copper mine in Chile killed one worker and left five trapped underground, authorities said Friday, forcing Chile's state mining company to suspend operations in affected areas of the world's largest underground copper deposit. Nine other mine workers suffered injuries, said Chile's National Copper Corp., known as Codelco, describing the incident as the result of "a seismic event." The U.S. Geological Survey reported a magnitude 5 earthquake in an area of central Chile where Codelco's El Teniente mine is located, at 5:34 p.m.

local time on Thursday. Codelco reported the tremor had a magnitude of 4.2. Authorities said they're still investigating whether it was a naturally occurring earthquake or whether mining activity at Codelco's

flagship El Teniente mine caused the quake. Chilean prosecutors also launched a criminal investigation to determine whether any safety standards were violated. Chile's national disaster response service, Senapred, said that the tremor struck the Machalí commune in the O'Higgins region, about 100 kilometers (62 miles) from the capital, Santiago.

Codeco identified the deceased as Paulo Marín Tapia and said he had been working on the Andesita project, a new 25-kilometer (15-mile) tunnel complex extending from the El Teniente mine on the western slopes of the Andes Mountains. That expanded section had only recently started to produce copper. The company said that search-and-rescue teams had determined the exact location of the partial collapse but could not communicate with the five trapped workers. As the mountain shook, mounds of rocks and dirt caved in, falling into the tunnel where the five miners were working and blocking all access routes to the site 900 meters underground. It was not clear whether the workers were alive or dead, but Codelco emphasized it was treating its efforts as a rescue operation. The names of the trapped miners were not released. "We are making every effort to try to rescue these five miners," said Andrés Music, general manager of El Teniente, detailing rescue operations involving 100 experts.



flagship El Teniente mine caused the quake. Chilean prosecutors also launched a criminal investigation to determine whether any safety standards were violated. Chile's national disaster response service, Senapred, said that the tremor struck the Machalí commune in the O'Higgins region, about 100 kilometers (62 miles) from the capital, Santiago.

Academics warn Columbia's \$200M Trump deal could set blueprint for wider assault on universities

In the short term, there is little prospect of the Netanyahu government giving way with its mass killing, let alone entering talks for two states. Notably, neither Israel nor the US took part in the conference.

WASHINGTON . (Agency)

Columbia University's \$200 million agreement with US President Donald Trump's administration marks the end of a months-long showdown, but academics warn it is just the first round of a government "assault" on higher education. Academics from Columbia and beyond have expressed concerns that the deal -- which makes broad-ranging concessions and increases government oversight -- will become the blueprint for how Trump

brings other universities to heel. The New York institution was the first to be targeted in Trump's war against elite universities, for what the US president claimed was its failure to tackle anti-Semitism on campus in the wake of pro-Palestinian protests. It was stripped of hundreds of millions of dollars of federal funding and lost its ability to apply for new research grants. Labs saw vital funding frozen, and dozens of researchers were laid off. But Columbia last week agreed to pay the government \$200 million, and an additional \$21 million to settle an investigation into anti-Semitism.

According to Ted Mitchell, president of the American Council on Education, the lack of due process -- with the government slashing funding before carrying out a formal investigation -- left Columbia in an "untenable position." Columbia law professor David Pozen agreed, saying the "manner in which the deal was constructed has been unlawful and coercive from the

start" and slamming the agreement as giving "legal form to an extortion scheme." Federal oversight

The deal goes beyond addressing anti-



significant incursions onto Columbia's autonomy," said Pozen. "What's happened at Columbia is part of a broader authoritarian attack on civil society," he said, pointing to similar pressures on law firms and media organizations to fall in line. According to the law professor, the deal "signals the emergence of a new regulatory regime in which the Trump administration will periodically and unpredictably shake down other schools and demand concessions from them."

In the coming weeks, Pozen said he expected the "administration will put a lot of pressure on Harvard and other schools to follow suit." Harvard University has pushed back against the government, filing a lawsuit in a bid to reverse sweeping funding cuts. But Steven Levitsky, a professor of government at Harvard, said that "in terms of academic freedom and in terms of democracy, the (Columbia) precedent is devastating."

From dawn to dusk, a Gaza family focuses on one thing: finding food

baby bottle. When she's lucky, she has lentils that she grinds into powder to mix into the water. "One day feels like 100 days, because of the summer heat, hunger and the distress," she said.

A trip to the soup kitchen

Fadi heads to a nearby soup kitchen. Sometimes one of the children goes with him. "But food is rarely available there," he said. The kitchen opens roughly once a week and never has enough for the crowds. Most often, he said, he waits all day but returns to his family with nothing "and the kids sleep hungry, without eating." Fadi used to go to an area in northern Gaza where aid trucks arrive from Israel. There, giant crowds of equally desperate people swarm over the trucks and strip away the cargo of food. Often, Israeli troops nearby open fire, witnesses say. Israel says it only fires warning shots, and others in the crowd often have knives or pistols to steal boxes. Fadi, who also has epilepsy, was shot in the leg last month. That has weakened him too much to scramble for the trucks, so he's left with trying the kitchens.

Trump removes official overseeing jobs data after dismal US employment report for July

WASHINGTON . (Agency)

US President Donald Trump on Friday removed the head of the agency that produces the monthly jobs figures after a report showed hiring slowed in July and was much weaker in May and June than previously reported. Trump, in a post on his social media platform, alleged that the figures were manipulated for political reasons and said that Erika McEntarfer, the director of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, who was appointed by former President Joe Biden, should be fired.

He provided no evidence for the charge. "I have directed my Team to fire this Biden Political Appointee, IMMEDIATELY," Trump said on Truth Social. "She will be replaced with someone much more competent and qualified." Trump later posted: "In my opinion, today's Jobs Numbers were RIGGED in order to make the Republicans, and ME, look bad."

The charge that the data was faked is an explosive one that threatens to undercut the political legitimacy of the US government's economic data, which has long been seen as the "gold standard" of economic measurement globally. Economists and Wall Street investors have for decades generally accepted the data as free from political bias. Trump's move to fire McEntarfer represented another extraordinary assertion of presidential power. He has wielded the authority of the White House to try to control the world's international trade system, media companies, America's top universities and Congress' constitutional power of the purse, among other institutions. McEntarfer's firing was roundly condemned by a group that included two former BLS commissioners, including William Beach, who was appointed by Trump to the position. They particularly objected to the charge that the data was altered for political reasons.

This rationale for firing Dr. McEntarfer is without merit and undermines the credibility of federal economic statistics that are a cornerstone of intelligent economic decision-making by businesses, families, and policymakers," the statement from the group, the Friends of BLS, said.

In addition to Beach, the statement was signed by Erica Groshen, BLS commissioner under former President Barack Obama. "Firing the Commissioner ... when the BLS revises jobs numbers down (as it routinely does) threatens to destroy trust in core American institutions, and all government statistics," Arin Dube, an economist at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, said on X. "I can't stress how damaging this is." After Trump's initial post, Labor Secretary Lori Chavez-DeRemer said on X that McEntarfer was no longer leading the bureau and that William Wiatrowski, the deputy commissioner, would serve as the acting director.

20-year-old drowns off Juhu's Silver Beach; body found 14 hours later; friend rescued by lifeguard



Mumbai. (Agency)

A 20-year-old youth who went missing after drowning off Silver Beach in Juhu on Friday morning was found dead nearly 14 hours later, late in the night at 10.30 pm, by local fishermen and the Juhu Police.

The deceased, identified as Vighnesh Murgesh Devendram, was declared brought dead at Cooper Hospital around 10.30 pm, according to civic authorities. His body was recovered approximately 200 metres from the shoreline, where the drowning incident had occurred in the morning.

The incident was first reported at 10.24 am on August 1 by the Mumbai Fire Brigade. Two young men had entered the sea at around 8.30 am near the Godrej Gate of Silver Beach when they began struggling against the current. One of them, 22-year-old Rajkumar Govind Subba, was rescued in time by lifeguard Jitendra Tandel from the Drishti Lifesaving team, even before the fire brigade could reach the spot. However, Vighnesh could not be located despite an immediate search operation. His body was eventually discovered late in the night.

'Stay home to avoid rape': Sexist posters sponsored by Gujarat traffic police draw public fury; removed after backlash



AHMEDABAD. (Agency)

'Attending late-night parties could invite rape or gang rape'. 'Do not take your friend to dark, isolated areas. What if there is a rape or gang rape?' This is what posters on 'women's safety' sponsored by the city traffic police say in big bold letters.

Their sexist, alarmist and fear-mongering nature has invited widespread anger and raised questions about city traffic police's judgment and accountability.

The posters in Gujarati were seen plastered on dividers in areas like Sola and Chandodia, with several of them carrying the name of a group called 'Satarkta', and mentioning Ahmedabad traffic police as a sponsor. Top police officers, including Neeta Desai, DCP (Traffic West) and Shailesh Modi, ACP (Traffic Admin) confirmed that permission was indeed granted to Satarkta to put up posters "for traffic awareness".

But when the contentious content of the posters went viral on social media and backlash erupted, police distanced themselves from the controversy. "The posters have now been removed," said Modi, admitting they appeared "indecent".

N N Chaudhary, additional commissioner of police (traffic), also clarified that Satarkta Group, reportedly run by a local scribe, was allowed to put up traffic awareness posters, not messages laced with threats of sexual violence. "We never approved such language. It is unacceptable," he said.

AMC's poor planning halts city's longest flyover

Ahmedabad.(Agency)

In what has become a recurring pattern of poor planning and execution, the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) has once again stumbled in delivering critical infrastructure. This time it's the city's longest flyover, the 2.5-km Naroda Patiya flyover, which now mired in delays due to unresolved land and environmental clearance issues.

Progress on the project, hailed as a major development for eastern Ahmedabad, has been halted by the forest department, which has refused to allow further construction until compensation for 1.3 hectares of forest land is provided.

In addition, 143 trees located on the designated land cannot be felled until re-plantation land is allocated, in accordance with state forest regulations. This bureaucratic stand-off, stemming from the AMC's failure to secure the necessary clearances before starting construction, now threatens to derail the project timeline and inconvenience thousands of commuters.

The flyover — from Naroda Patiya to Galaxy Char Rasta — was approved on Aug 23, 2021, by the AMC's road and building committee at an estimated cost of Rs 197.98 crore. It was conceived as a merger of three earlier proposed flyovers in the eastern

corridor.

Construction began on July 17, 2023, with a 36-month deadline set for July 2026. But as of March 1, 2025, only 36.8% of the work had been completed.

"The bridge alignment cuts through forest land near Devi Cinema, and without fulfilling the re-plantation and land compensation clauses, the forest department has rightly refused to permit further work," an AMC official admitted. While work continues on other sections, the deadlock over forest land casts serious doubt on whether the project will be completed on time.

The Naroda Patiya debacle is far from an isolated case. Over the past decade, AMC and AUDA (Ahmedabad Urban Development Authority) have routinely failed to deliver flyovers, underpasses, and railway bridges on schedule. Cost overruns, design changes mid-construction, and inter-agency coordination failures plague nearly every project. The Income Tax flyover was delayed

due to post-approval design changes, inflating costs by Rs 10 crore. The Ranipokhari flyover was held up for two years due to issues with railway land acquisition. The Ajit Mill Junction flyover faced a year-long delay

and design.

Each project follows a similar script — work begins with much fanfare, foreseeable issues are overlooked, deadlines are missed, budgets balloon, and commuters are left to suffer the consequences.

Box: Sinking credibility

Infrastructure Start Date Proposed Duration Progress (%)

Sattadhar Flyover Bridge Aug 28, 2023 26 months 55

Naroda Patiya Junction Flyover July 17, 2023 36 months 37

Boothawani Railway Overbridge Aug 8, 2023 26 months 53

Makarba-SG Highway Bridge Sep 30, 2022 26 months 89

Hebatpur Railway Overbridge Feb 13, 2023 26 months 60

Vadaj Junction Flyover Bridge July 28, 2023 30 months 23

Panjrapol Junction Flyover Bridge Mar 16, 2024 26 months 0.75

Vandemataram Railway Underpass Mar 16, 2024 18 months 2

Ellisbridge Repair and Rehabilitation Sep 11, 2024 12 months 26



due to flawed design. The Pallav Crossroads and Dahegam Circle flyovers were both delayed by over two years due to utility and land clearance hurdles. The Panjrapol flyover suffered a late start and ongoing delays due to changes in direction

Dengue, chikungunya cases in Mumbai see 500% spike in a month

Mumbai.(Agency)

Hospitals reported a significant surge in vector-borne diseases over the past month compared to June. Across the city, malaria cases topped, while dengue and chikungunya surged alarmingly compared to last month. Private hospitals, too, are seeing a rise in leptospirosis cases. In July, compared to June, malaria cases jumped from 884 to 1,294 (46.38% increase), dengue from 105 to 708 (over 500% increase), chikungunya from 21 to 129 (over 500% increase), leptospirosis from 36 to 143, and hepatitis from 78 to 176. In the same month last year, city had reported 797 cases of malaria, 535 of dengue, and only 25 of chikungunya. "Chikungunya was not an issue in Mumbai until some years ago. Most senior doctors saw chikungunya as a rarity, largely in patients coming from outside. Now, however, it is a common occurrence," said Dr Anita Mathew, Internal Medicine Specialist at Fortis



Hospital. She added that OPDs are flooded with dengue patients, but most are rushing to the hospital out of fear rather than serious illness. "Dengue can be managed at home if there is adequate fluid intake unless patients have specific serious symptoms. Lepto patients used to be less at private hospitals before, but they

have surged now," said Dr Mathew. While she is witnessing younger patients with vector-borne diseases turn serious, Dr Anupama Sardana, Critical Care Expert at Holy Family Hospital in Bandra, said older patients are the ones landing on ventilators at their hospital. "Malaria is still topping the chart, but dengue increased a lot over the last month with a dramatic fall in platelets," the doctor said. A doctor from Nair Hospital said the admissions surged for both dengue and malaria. "There have been serious cases for both, but no mortality so far," said the doctor. Dr Gautam Bhansali, a consultant physician and infectious disease specialist at Bombay Hospital, said, "There has been a surge in patients, but quick response and tests on part of the general public also increased. Most are treated on an OPD basis." BMC officials said the early onset of rain from May this year created a favourable environment for vector- and water-borne diseases.

Bengaluru chemists write to DCGI, CCI against online drug sellers



BENGALURU.(Agency)

The Bangalore District Chemists and Druggists Association (BDCDA) has written to both the Competition Commission of India (CCI) and the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI), raising concerns related to the fast-growing digital pharmacy sector. In separate letters, the association alleged that a number of online platforms and health-tech startups are violating drug regulations, repackaging prescription medicines and misleading consumers with psychologically manipulative advertisements.

The complaints name several digital medicine sellers including health-tech startups like Blupack and PillUp and alleged that these companies are advertising prescription medicines without proper safeguards, encouraging unsafe buying habits, and in some instances, tampering with medicine packaging in violation of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.

B D C D A President B Thirunavukkarasi highlighted how online pharmacy chains and unregulated sellers are using social media and apps to advertise prescription drugs. Some of the examples include ads with messages like "Stop spending your retirement fund on medicines" or "Order now, 50% off on antibiotics."

These kinds of promotions, they say, push senior citizens and chronic patients, into risky behaviours like switching their medications based on price, skipping pharmacist consultations, or treating prescription drugs like over-the-counter items.

Smart City to re-tender Palayam market redevelopment

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM.(Agency)

In a major development, Smart City Thiruvananthapuram Ltd (SCTL) and the city corporation have decided to re-tender the long-delayed redevelopment of the century-old Palayam Connemara Market. The decision comes after the existing contractor, RDS Projects, demanded cost escalation, triggered by prolonged delays.

The project, awarded in 2021, has been plagued by delays owing to relocation and rehabilitation of the traders from the market. A top SCTL official told that a decision has been taken to re-tender the project rather than make financial revisions in the existing project. "The current contractor is demanding rates in line with the new schedule as the cost of construction materials has gone up. The higher authorities have decided against reaching a resolution with the

contractor," the official told TNIE. SCTL has earmarked around 88 crore for the redevelopment of the Palayam market and the construction of the temporary structure to



rehabilitate the displaced traders. "We will invite fresh tenders by next week," the official said. SCTL and the civic body had initiated

steps to demolish the market. "Once awarded, the new contractor will be able to begin work immediately as preparatory works are already in the finishing stages," the official said.

Despite stiff protests and court cases against the temporary rehabilitation block, the corporation has relocated the fish and vegetable markets and other traders to the block constructed on land owned by the Trivandrum Development Authority (TDA). As many as 400 traders have been relocated to facilitate the construction of the market. The Kerala Vyapari Vyavasayi Ekopana Samiti (KVVES) and the local trade union had moved to court, raising flaws in construction and pollution in the temporary block built in proximity to a legacy dumpsite. KVVES state president S S Manoj alleged the traders were evicted from the market using force only to hand over the area to anti-social elements.

Amid prayers and pleas, jailed Kerala nuns cling to hope as NIA Court reserves bail verdict

KOCHI.(Agency)

It has been a week since Sr Vandana Francis and Sr Preethy Mary of the Assisi Sisters of Mary Immaculate (ASMI) were jailed on charges of forced religious conversion and human trafficking. On Friday, their hopes of getting bail were crushed when prosecutors vehemently opposed their petition in the National Investigation Agency (NIA) court, to which the case was referred by a sessions court citing jurisdictional issues. This, even after Union Home Minister Amit Shah's assurance that the Chhattisgarh government would not oppose the plea. However, according to people's representatives from Kerala, there is hope that the court would grant them bail when it issues its judgment on Saturday. Despite the legal uncertainty, the two remain calm and continue to hold on to

the hope that a positive outcome will emerge soon, Angamaly MLA Roji M John said. He visited the nuns in jail on Friday, and, according to him, they appeared calm and collected. "The nuns know they have not committed any crime and would be exonerated," he told TNIE.

Roji pointed out that there are many loopholes in the case. "When the nuns' lawyer pointed out that no custodial interrogation papers had been filed, the prosecution couldn't rebut it. To date, police have not questioned them. This shows that they don't have anything to ask. All the charges have been fabricated. Hence, we have great hope that the nuns will get bail on Saturday," the MLA said.

He accused the BJP of duplicity. "They said that the state government won't be pursuing the case and that the prosecution won't oppose the bail plea. But that is not what happened in court on

Friday.

Joining ranks in prayer

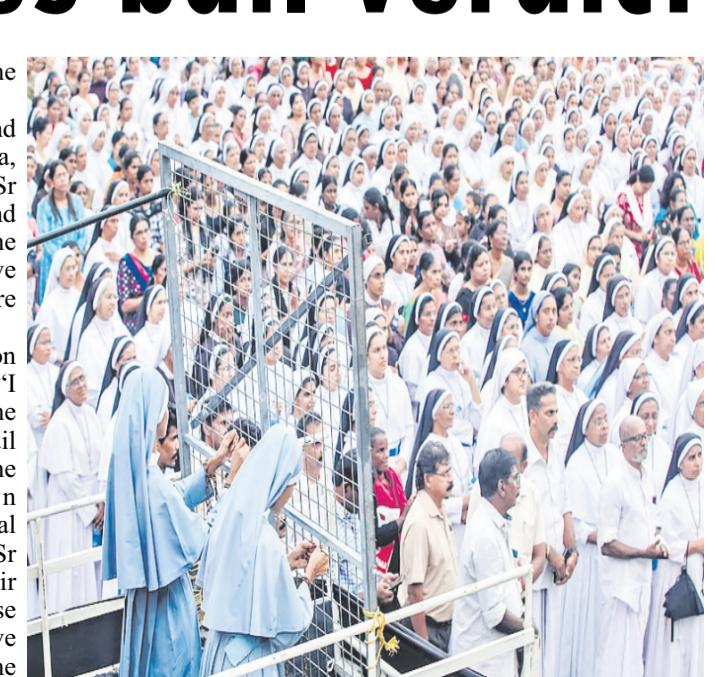
These have been difficult days for Sr Vandana and Sr Preethy's fellow nuns of the ASMI order. "But they are not alone," Sr Isbel Francis, superior general of the ASMI generalate of Green Gardens, Cherthala, told TNIE. "Nuns all over the country and even outside have joined ranks. They are observing fast and praying for their fellow sisters," she said.

Sr Isbel is presently at the convent in Narayanpur, Chhattisgarh, to extend her support to the jailed sisters. "This is our mission convent, with the Assisi Shanti Health Centre, which was started in Narayanpur in 1976, being the focal point. The health centre was later developed into a hospital in 2015. It is the only healthcare facility providing medical and surgical care to the downtrodden and underprivileged in the

area. The two sisters had worked at the hospital," she said.

"Sr Vandana worked as a pharmacist and was the superior at the hospital in Agra, while Sr Preethy is a qualified nurse. Sr Preethy did her nursing course and training with us in Cherthala. Since the day they donned the habit, they have been working tirelessly for the welfare of the poor," she said.

This is the first time that the congregation has faced such a crisis, Sr Isbel said. "I will be staying here till my sisters come home. I believe that they would get bail very soon," she added. As for the continuation of their work in Narayanpur and the fate of the hospital following the nightmarish incident, Sr Isbel said they will continue with their work and won't back out. "If we close this hospital, the poor won't have anywhere to go for medical help," she added.



Bihar SIR: Setting state for everlasting electoral angst

The Election Commission of India's special intensive revision (SIR) in Bihar constitutes nothing less than a systematic deconstruction of universal suffrage, the sine qua non of democratic legitimacy. This mechanised disenfranchisement, masquerading as bureaucratic rectitude, represents a constitutional trespass. Its jurisprudential malignancy demands not mere critique, but forensic evisceration. The bedrock of India's electoral democracy is Article 326 of the Constitution. Its language is unambiguous and deliberately restrictive: "The elections... shall be on the basis of adult suffrage; that is to say, every person who is a citizen of India and who is not less than 18 years of age... and is not otherwise disqualified under this Constitution or any law made by the appropriate legislature on the ground of non-residence, unsoundness of mind, crime or corrupt or illegal practice, shall be entitled to be registered as a voter." The term 'shall be entitled' creates an indefeasible constitutional right, placing the burden of disproving eligibility squarely on the State. This formulation crystallises four immutable principles. First, suffrage is the default constitutional status of citizenship. Second, disqualifications form a closed hermeneutic universe (expressio unius est exclusio alterius). Third, each disqualification requires judicial imprimatur—court declarations (unsoundness), legislative disqualification (corrupt practice), or quasi-judicial residency determination. Fourth, other agencies possess zero delegated authority to invent new exclusion criteria. The SIR commits constitutional lèse-majesté by substituting this framework with a documentary inquisition, transforming suffrage from a constitutional right into an administrative privilege. The Representation of the People Act, 1950 (RPA) and the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960 operationalise Article 326. They provide the machinery for roll preparation and revision, but they do not—and constitutionally cannot—expand the grounds for disqualification beyond those in Article 326. Section 16 of the RPA parrots Article 326's disqualifications verbatim, creating an impregnable statutory fortress. The Election Commission, through SIR, has created a rather spurious ground of 'documentary insufficiency' through executive ukase. Section 19 of the RPA conditions registration solely on citizenship, age and 'ordinary residence'. Section 20 defines 'ordinarily resident' as a factual determination based on intention and continuity of stay; it explicitly states temporary absence does not break residence. Nowhere does it mandate continuous documentary proof or empower the electoral registration officer to demand specific documents as a precondition for maintaining registration. Section 21, under which the commission is carrying out SIR, empowers the preparation and revision of rolls. Revision inherently implies updating and does not empower a blanket re-verification of all existing voters.

This exercise has converted the due process into a Kafkaesque gauntlet where the people are presumed guilty until proven innocent. This violates not just precedent but the spirit of the law—the ideal that separates civilisation from savagery, the fundamental jurisprudential principle that the burden of proof lies upon the one who declares, not the one who denies. Rule 21A of the Registration of Electors Rules is the critical statutory pathway for deletion of names. Deletion can only occur if the ERO is "satisfied" an entry is to be deleted under Section 22 (correction due to error). It establishes a tripartite process: notice, summary inquiry and hearing. The rule implies the burden lies on the ERO to be satisfied of the grounds.

AFTER wasting four months negotiating a trade deal with US President Donald Trump and his team, India is back to square one—25 per cent tariff imposed by him on July 30 against 26 per cent threatened on April 2. In fact, it is worse than where it all started. Trump has threatened to impose penal tariffs, not specified as of now, unless India stops buying Russian oil and defence equipment. He called India's tariffs the highest in the world and non-monetary trade measures "most strenuous and obnoxious".

What does Trump's shenanigans mean for India's merchandise trade with the US? How should India take it forward from here? Call off all negotiations or surrender? Trump's objectives in this bilateral trade deficit elimination game started by him are crystal clear, however unpalatable these might be for the partner countries. He wants these countries with merchandise trade surplus with the US to close that gap by doing four things—(a) allow full market access for all US products at zero tariff; (b) accept tariffs of 15-25 per cent on most of their exports to the US; (c) buy additional US stuff—aircraft, energy, etc. to close the trade gap; and (d) invest in the US to manufacture goods.

The world exports to the US for two reasons: one, it is a big market (roughly 15 per cent of the total global exports), and two, the exporters do make profits.

If the imposition of commercially insane US tariffs on their exports kills US markets for the exporters or makes their profits disappear (in case they choose to or are forced to absorb the cost of additional tariffs), it makes no sense for them to continue exporting. Indian exporters do not have the kind of margins to absorb additional tariff costs. Therefore, the government cannot, and should not, accept additional 25 per cent plus penal US tariffs. While it makes eminent sense for India to liberalise agricultural trade by permitting imports of GM edible oil (no scientific study to prove GM oil has any adverse health impact) or dairy products (days of milk mountains and European subsidies are long gone) or poultry products (American chicken legs will improve consumer welfare) and the like, India has boxed itself in a corner so badly on this front in the name of protecting its domestic constituency that it cannot and will not offer concessions to the US on

farm products.

Forcing India to buy American F-35 jets or crude oil, which do not meet India's defence needs or are otherwise costlier, is plain blackmail. Giving in to such blackmail will expose India as a weakling.

India primarily is a foreign direct investment (FDI) receiving country and not an FDI exporting one. India's outward FDI is small. Committing even \$50 billion investment in the US over 5-10 years is not a doable preposition for India. India cannot meet any of the four Trump asks. Neither does it make commercial or political sense for India to meet any of the demands. A trade deal with Trump, therefore, is an impossibility.

President Trump is digging a grave of US consumerism and dollar exceptionalism. A few nations—Vietnam, Japan, Indonesia and the EU—have accepted all four of

actually stand to gain. Their acceptance of zero tariffs, therefore, does not make much difference.

Will they really buy the promised number of planes, energy products or defence equipment? There is a long time frame to do that. Moreover, they can demand reduced prices and/or tire them out with long-drawn product specification negotiations. The concession extracted by Trump on this account might not really materialise or turn out to be a fraction of a promise.

Additional investment should be fine for Japan and others if they can produce in the US at competitive prices and quality. In any case, investment commitment takes long to materialise. While Trump may celebrate that he has browbeaten these countries into conceding what he wanted, the actual outcomes might be vastly different from what he thinks. There are two options before India.

One, it surrenders and crafts a deal on the lines of what Japan, Vietnam, Indonesia and the EU have done and then try to protect Indian interests by employing the tactics outlined above. Two, close all negotiations with Trump's trade team and let him impose whatever tariff he wants to. India should insist on its exporters to offer goods at their normal prices without absorbing any part of the additional tariff. If the US importers buy, it is good enough. If not, sell their products in other countries with no such insane tariffs and in the domestic market. The option to find a middle ground on US import tariffs by conceding selectively on other three fronts is unlikely to take India any far. Choose option two and move on.

Sooner than later (3-6 months at most), the Trump administration will be facing adverse consequences of its tariff actions.

The US imports will slow down (confirmed by April-June quarter numbers). While the US might get a few hundred billion dollars in tariff revenues, most of it would be paid by US importers and consumers, heaping misery on them. A consumer revolt is not far away. The dollar is already facing considerable headwinds (barring India). It is likely to further suffer. Contrary to what Trump wants, his misadventures will hasten world trade away from the dollar. Bond markets may also sell off. As this scenario unfolds, Trump will either roll back most of what he has unleashed or will suffer a severe political backlash.



Trump's demands for the moment. How these deals will pan out is not certain. Will the exporters of these countries reduce prices to absorb additional US tariffs or pass it on to US consumers to bear? Or will it be a mix of the two? If these exporting countries do not absorb or succeed in leaving the bulk of additional cost to be absorbed by US consumers, it is the US and its consumers who will end up losing. Does the US have merchandise to export at zero tariffs? Does it matter to importing partners as their import tariffs were in any case close to zero? Moreover, while the government might lose a bit of tariff revenues, their customers

Malegaon: Justice, truth casualty of delays, lapses

While the long delay underscores one of the main ailments of the country's criminal justice system, the outcome establishes that it has clearly failed the victims and their families

The verdict in the 2008 Malegaon blasts case is a telling example of justice delayed and then denied outright. The special NIA court's acquittal of all seven accused in the case, including former BJP MP Pragya Singh Thakur and army officer Lt Col Prasad Shrikant Purhohit nearly 17 years after a powerful blast killed six people and injured more than 100 raises more questions than providing answers. While the long delay underscores one of the main ailments of the country's criminal justice system, the outcome establishes that it has clearly failed the victims and their families.

On September 29, 2008, a bomb kept in a two-wheeler went off at Malegaon in Maharashtra's Nashik district—a locality with a sizeable Muslim population—during the holy month of Ramzaan. The Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad initially investigated the case and filed two chargesheets. In 2011, the National Investigation Agency was brought into the investigation. The central agency, in chargesheets filed later, reduced the list of accused, recommended dropping the stringent Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act



(MCOCA) provisions against them, and highlighted "lacunae" in the ATS investigation. In 2017, the trial court dropped MCOCA charges. It's evident that the case got weaker during successive

investigations. With the acquittal now, a disturbing shadow has been cast on the entire investigation and trial. The Malegaon blast was flagged as a case of 'Hindu terror', and it's fitting that special court judge A K Lahoti, while pronouncing not-guilty verdict, noted: "Terrorism has no religion, because no religion can advocate violence." The judge said the prosecution has failed to provide cogent and reliable evidence, and failed to establish guilt beyond a reasonable doubt, clearly pointing to lapses in investigation, proof-gathering and other procedures. The judge said there might be a strong suspicion against the accused, but that is not enough to punish them. Fair enough. But the verdict neither provided the closure that the victims' families deserved, nor can it be the end of the matter. The system owes an answer to the nation as to who is responsible for the explosion and they must be held accountable to deliver justice. If the prosecution believes it has done a fair job, there must be an appeal against the verdict. If not, a fair and proper reinvestigation is in order.

Rare earth magnets: Supply link from mine to magnet

Rare earth magnets are crucial for electric vehicles, wind turbines and precision missile systems. Despite having large rare earth reserves, India has no capacity to produce these magnets yet. The govt needs to shoulder the market and revenue risks for the sector to take off

Rare earth magnets are the invisible force behind the world's transition to electric vehicles, renewable energy, and cutting-edge defence systems. At the heart of these technologies lies a small but indispensable component: the neodymium-iron-boron permanent magnet. Without it, electric motors stall, wind turbines falter, and advanced missile systems lose precision. India, despite its sizeable rare earth reserves, has no domestic capacity to produce these critical magnets. We have to address this strategic blindspot that could cripple the country's ambitions in EVs, renewables, and defence unless addressed immediately.

Why the markets won't solve this? The rare earth supply chain is notoriously capital-intensive and high-risk. Developing a mine-to-magnet project can take 5-10 years, with massive upfront costs and no guaranteed cash flows. Traditional project finance models do not work here as banks see too much risk and not enough precedent. Experience shows the market has been flooded to drive down prices and kill off competitors multiple times. No investor will risk capital in a sector where prices can fall below the cost of production overnight due to geopolitical manipulation. Under these conditions, mere funding support engineered through grants and tax concessions may be sub-optimal. Governments must support an enterprise with an assured offtake and price over its lifetime. In effect, the private sector takes on the technology and production risk, and the government takes on the complete market and revenue risks. In 2022-23, Apple signed a multi-year, \$500-million procurement deal with a Nevada-based rare earth miner and processor. Crucially, the tech giant agreed to prepay \$200 million to help the company establish a full-fledged domestic supply chain—from mine to magnet. This wasn't charity; it



was strategic foresight. Apple, whose devices and production lines depend heavily on rare earth magnets, saw the writing on the wall: continued reliance on foreign supplies was a vulnerability. Soon after, the US Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) stepped in with an even more dramatic move. It committed to guarantee a price of \$110/kg for neodymium-praseodymium (NdPr) oxide, a key ingredient in rare earth magnets, at nearly double the prevailing global market price. Why? Because without such assurance, no company would risk building costly infrastructure in a price-volatile, externally-dominated market. India imports nearly all the 900 tonnes of magnets used annually despite holding the fifth-largest rare earth reserves in the world. Not a single commercial magnet factory exists in the country as of

2025. India's only meaningful processing activity is via IREL (India), which produces about 1,500 tonnes of NdPr oxide, most of which is used in R&D or exported. The recent shortage in the supply chain as a result of geopolitical events sent a shockwave through India's automotive and electronics sectors. Factories were caught off guard. A small magnet—worth less than 5 percent of a vehicle's value—threatened to paralyse entire production lines.

That's why the Apple and DARPA approach is so important. Apple broke the 'chicken-and-egg' financing deadlock by acting as an anchor buyer. DARPA solved the viability problem by assuring a fair return on investment, regardless of global price swings. India must respond with the same clarity and urgency that the US demonstrated in the sector. At the core of this

strategy should be a government-backed price guarantee mechanism. Just as DARPA committed to paying nearly double the market price for NdPr oxide to secure a viable domestic industry, India must step in to assure producers that their investments will not be derailed by sudden price collapses orchestrated by foreign suppliers. A stable price fixed for 10-15 years can provide the necessary foundation of certainty. India must identify and empower at least three champions with deep capabilities in metallurgy, forging, and materials science. There are established players to take this forward. This must be complemented by a network of anchor buyers—public and private companies that can enter into structured buying agreements with domestic magnet manufacturers, with financial support covering any cost differential versus imports. These contracts will ensure that the production facilities are optimally used and financially sustainable.

India should also establish a strategic magnet reserve akin to the strategic petroleum reserve, to provide buffer stocks during disruptions and ensure supply continuity for critical sectors like defence and renewable energy. The development of dedicated rare earth industrial parks in mineral-rich regions such as Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, or Tamil Nadu can drive economies of scale and enable shared infrastructure. These clusters can benefit from plug-and-play facilities and integrated logistics. The Apple-DARPA blueprint offers a clear model of a three-pronged support—upfront capital, assured offtake, and price guarantees to enable investments in refining, alloying, and precision magnet production. This is a working model of supply chain resilience in rare earths and magnets that India must emulate.

Corrupt officials misplace records to evade law: Lokayukta special court

BENGALURU. (Agency)

Corrupt public servants of local bodies are deliberately misplacing original records of the scams they are involved in to escape the clutches of law, stated the special court for Lokayukta cases while rejecting the anticipatory bail petition filed by a former assistant executive engineer (AEE), Karnataka Housing Board (KHB), B Sector, Yelahanka Upanagar in the city.

The accused No. 1, Syed Azgar, who was with the KHB Planning Division, has been booked by the Lokayukta police for his alleged involvement in the illegal sale of KHB sites and causing losses of crores of rupees to the exchequer.

In the recent past, the officials from various local bodies like the KHB have been involved in such illegalities without bearing the minimum responsibilities of their position, existing rules, regulations and the law for their own reasons with the help of mediators, anti-social elements and other stakeholders. Most



unfortunate are the acts of corrupt public servants in deliberately misplacing the original records after committing such

Lokayukta police, contended before the special court that his higher officials, after having misplaced the original record, are attempting to shift the blame upon him.

The Lokayukta police have registered a case based on a complaint filed by social worker KS Chandrashekhar Azad against Azgar and two others. He alleged that the residential site No. 271, MIG, A Sector at Yelahanka Upanagar, was allotted to Satish Harini, the third accused.

Azgar, having joined hands with Govindaiah, the second accused, created fake documents with the intention of wrongful gain. Based on those documents, he sold and

illegally executed the sale deed of the site on October 23, 2020, in favour of Govindaiah and caused Rs 10 lakh loss to KHB, Azad stated.

Opposing bail, the prosecution contended that the material on record exposes the direct involvement of the petitioner along with others and demanded his custodial interrogation.

HC gets 5th bench in Kolhapur, it will start functioning from Aug 18

Mumbai. (Agency)

Bombay High Court has now got its fifth bench, located in Kolhapur. The HC bench at Kolhapur will start functioning from Aug 18, as stated in a notification issued on Friday. "Alok Adhikari, Chief Justice of the High Court of Judicature at Bombay, with the approval of the Governor of Maharashtra, appoint Kolhapur as a place at which Judges and Division Courts of the High Court may also sit, with effect from August 18, 2025," the notification dated Aug 1 said. The other benches of the HC are at Nagpur, Aurangabad, and Goa, apart from the principal bench in Mumbai.

Lawyers and bar associations welcomed the development. Bombay High Court is the only HC now with five benches. Madhya Pradesh HC has three benches.

Chief Justice of India Bhushan Gavai, before he became the CJI, while speaking at the inauguration of an advocates' academy last Sept, expressed support for the establishment of a separate Kolhapur bench of the HC. "A Kolhapur bench is the need of the hour. It will offer solace and effective, swift access to justice for far-flung residents of the state."

Advocates Association of Western India (AAWI) president Prashant Relekar and secretary Suresh Sabad said, "The cause of justice is served. This decision is required to be welcomed as a large number of litigants benefit."

There are six districts of Western Maharashtra—Sangli, Satara, Solapur, Kolhapur, Ratnagiri, and Sindhudurg—that will fall under the new bench. Senior counsel Milind Sathe said the Kolhapur bench would also develop a new vibrant bar and prove effective for swifter access to justice for residents of these districts.

Set up 'smoking zones' in hotels, bars or else lose licence: BBMP

BENGALURU. (Agency)

The BBMP health department has sent notices to 412 establishments like bars, hotels and restaurants and has directed the proprietors to set up smoking zones. The notice has also given one week from the date of notice issued, failing which, the trade licence will be suspended.

According to Chief Health Officer (CHO), BBMP, Sirajuddin Madani, the action is following the Supreme Court direction on June 22, 2022 and section 4 of the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act, 2003 (COTPA), in which any establishment like bars, hotels and restaurants with 30 or more seats must have a separate area for smokers and it should be identified as 'Smoking Zone'.

The BBMP Special Commissioner for Health held a meeting with police, excise department and education department on Saturday, and a decision was taken that action will have to be taken against restaurants, bars or hotels violating the rules. The BBMP Health Department officials have been instructed to take action under sections 308 and 314 of the BBMP Act 2020 and suspend the license," Madani said.

The CHO and other officials will revisit the establishments that received notice and if they have not followed the instruction, action will be initiated to place the trade license under suspension and also impose a penalty. As per the BBMP health officials, the owners of these establishments have been told to comply with the order within seven days' time from the time of notice issued.

The officials who held inspections across eight zones to check if the rules are being followed found the highest violation in the South Zone, with 94 violations. Similarly, 72 violations in Bommanahalli, 63 in East were found, and notices were sent to all of them.



Mumbai police order CCTV cameras at medical stores in a month to curb illegal drug sales

Mumbai. (Agency)

To check illegal sale of scheduled drugs, the Mumbai police has asked all pharmacy stores to install CCTV cameras in their premises within a month. Owners of medical stores and chemist shops are unhappy with the move as they believe such measures will not help.

Scheduled drugs refer to medications regulated under the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945, on the basis of how they are manufactured, stored, distributed, and prescribed. For instance, Schedule H includes prescription drugs that cannot be sold without a doctor's prescription and Schedule X refers to prescription drugs that are highly addictive.

The directive, issued under Section 152 of the Indian Civil Security Code, 2023,

by deputy commissioner of police (anti-narcotics cell) Navnath Dhawale, is based on intelligence inputs. The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) and the Commission for Protection of Child Rights, New Delhi, too, had recently raised concerns about the sale of scheduled drugs and inhalants without valid prescriptions.

The Anti-Narcotics Cell and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) found several medical stores in Mumbai sold habit-forming drugs without maintaining proper records. According to the order, every medical shop in Mumbai and its suburban districts will have to install CCTV cameras at all entrances, exits, and sale counters in such a way that the faces of customers and transactions.

Pesticide mixed in government school water tank in Karnataka's Hosanagara

SHIVAMOGGA. (Agency)

In a shocking incident in Hoovinakone village of Hosanagara taluk, miscreants allegedly mixed pesticide into the drinking water tank of a government primary school. The incident came to light on Thursday morning after kitchen staff detected a foul smell and alerted the headmaster.

Shivamogga Deputy Director of Public Instruction (DDPI) Manjunath S R told The New Indian Express that the school has two water tanks, one connected to the kitchen and another outside the kitchen to the outside for washing hands.

"The pesticide was found in the

However, since there was no electricity and the tank was empty, the kitchen staff fetched water from the outdoor tank, boiled it to prepare milk, and served it to students. The school has 18 students and on the day of



the incident one student was absent," he said.

Later, while preparing the midday meal, the staff drew water from

the kitchen tank and noticed it was milky in appearance and emitted a strong odour. Alarmed, they informed the headmaster, who reported the matter to the block education officer (BEO). Officials conducted a spot inspection, and police registered an FIR.

Manjunath added that as the milk had been prepared using water from the uncontaminated tank the students were taken to Hosanagara taluk hospital for a precautionary check-up.

"None of the children was affected," he said. The DDPI also said that the type of pesticide was not identified and a water sample has been sent to the lab for confirmation.

Guardians of the green cure: Kani healers fight to keep forest medicine alive

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. (Agency)

There is a girlish spright in her steps as she sashays into the thick, verdant spread surrounding her mud house, the insides of which reflect a deeply earthy aesthetic—smoking stoves, dim interiors, and a clustered room brimming with mementoes and accolades she has earned over the years. At 81, Lakshmi Amma takes pride in all that she has achieved, especially the Padma Shri, which reached her from Delhi to the remote, reclusive stretch of land nestled in Ponnudi's Kallar forest range. She remains passionately engaged in her occupation, one handed down through generations of her tribe, the Kani, known for their intrinsic knowledge of the Western Ghats. "I have two people coming tomorrow for treatment," Lakshmi exclaims, adding that people seek her help for



Karkkidakam doesn't exist much. For us, every day of life must be spent in harmony with nature, which has immense power to heal you inside and out," says Mallan, while pestling together an assortment of leaves. "We treat people to four days of 'marma' massages using oils brewed from forest herbs. We also prepare 'Karkkidakam' made with forest herbs and organic varieties of rice. There is a dip in demand now, Mallan notes. "The medicinal

leaves have also become scarce. There is a lot of change in nature around now. Still, we treat people three days a week at our clinic. I make the medicines here myself," he adds. Mallikarjun Kani, who was one of the top physicians of the tribe until a stroke and heart attack slowed him down a few months ago, seems upset with how things are now. "There were vast stretches of meadows here. That was the ecosystem. Now look around—there are just trees, most of them planted under forestry initiatives from various departmental projects," he says. "Does it suit the natural ecosystem? This question is hardly asked." Mallikarjun's clinic still functions, though it is a tad less crowded than before, when even ministers queued up for his treatments. "The stroke I had is something rare among us

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Four held for infant abduction, human trafficking suspected

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

The arrest of four persons—including two women from Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar (formerly known as Aurangabad)—in connection with the alleged abduction of a seven-month-old girl has led police to suspect an active interstate human trafficking racket operating in Ahmedabad. The infant, who belongs to a roadside vendor family, was safely rescued following swift action by Dholka town police in coordination with Maharashtra police.

Om Prakash Jat, superintendent of police, Ahmedabad rural, said a case of child abduction was registered at Dholka town police station after the infant was taken from the custody of her family by unknown individuals. The incident occurred around 6.45 am on Wednesday, when two of the accused allegedly arrived on a motorcycle and abducted the sleeping child.

Acting on specific intelligence inputs, two separate police teams were dispatched to Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar.

"We suspect this to be a case of human trafficking. With critical assistance from Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar police, all suspects involved were traced, apprehended, and the child was rescued unharmed," said Jat.

According to police, the suspects targeted childless couples and sold the abducted children to them. The accused are

suspected to have conducted reconnaissance of the area before executing the abduction. After fleeing the scene, they reportedly travelled via a private vehicle to Chhatrapati



Sambhaji Nagar, where they met an associate. Preliminary investigations into the group's travel history indicate frequent trips to southern and neighbouring states, strengthening suspicions of their involvement in a wider human trafficking network.

Following the child's disappearance, Ahmedabad rural police immediately formed teams from the local crime branch (LCB), special operations group (SOG), Dholka town police, and the SDPO office. While the identities of the arrested individuals have been withheld to protect the integrity of ongoing investigations, police said further arrests are likely.

Cops shut AIIMS gate to stop faculty protest march over rotatory headship

Despite a directive from the Union Health Ministry making the policy mandatory across all medical institutes two years ago, AIIMS Delhi has yet to enforce it.

Agency New Delhi.

Police on Friday shut the main entry gate of AIIMS to prevent faculty members residing on the campus from marching to Parliament as part of a peaceful protest. The gate, which is also used by emergency patients, remained closed for nearly an hour and a half. It was reopened after the protesting doctors dispersed from the site. "We had not granted permission for the march. To maintain law and order, the gate was closed to dissuade the doctors from leaving the premises," a senior police officer present at the location said.

The march was held to protest the non-implementation of the rotatory headship policy at AIIMS. Despite a directive from the Union Health Ministry making the policy mandatory across all medical



institutes two years ago, AIIMS Delhi has yet to enforce it. "The institute opposite us—Safdarjung Hospital and VMMC—implemented the policy last year. Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital has

also adopted it. Then why is it not being implemented at AIIMS or PGI Chandigarh? Why is the Centre listening to a small vested group instead of the majority of the faculty?" asked Dr

Amarinder Singh Malhi, General Secretary of the Faculty Association of AIIMS (FAIMS). Later, the protesting faculty members met with the AIIMS director for a dialogue.

"Representatives from FAIMS were called by the Director and Additional Deputy Director (Administration) to discuss the way forward.

We conveyed the collective concerns and the urgency felt by the faculty. They assured us that efforts would be made to reach a positive and time-bound resolution," the association said in a statement. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare had issued an official order in July 2023 mandating implementation of the rotatory headship policy by June-July 2024.

Out on bail for rape, Delhi man shoots survivor, arrested

Agency New Delhi.

A man out on interim bail in a rape case was arrested in Delhi on Friday for allegedly attempting to murder the same woman who had accused him. According to the police, Abuzair Safi, 30, was arrested after he allegedly shot the woman in the chest on Wednesday while she was travelling in an auto-rickshaw in South West Delhi's Vasant Vihar. The woman, who works as a salon manager, had lodged a rape complaint against Safi last year, the police said, adding that his accomplice, Aman Sukhla, was also arrested.

Safi was granted interim bail last month.

A police control room call was received at around 9.49 pm on Wednesday about a gunshot near the Poorvi Marg area in Vasant Vihar. When the police rushed to the spot and found an auto-rickshaw, its driver, Ranjeet Yadav, informed the police that a female passenger had been shot and had been taken to AIIMS Trauma Centre by PCR personnel.

At the hospital, the woman was identified as a Safdarjung resident. "The victim, found conscious and medically fit, stated that while she was travelling in the auto and speaking on the phone, two persons on a black motorcycle approached from behind. One of them, Abuzair Safi, who was driving, fired a shot that struck her in the breast," Amit Goel, Deputy Commissioner of Police, South West, said.

Based on her statement, a case was registered at Vasant Vihar police station under sections 109(1) (attempted murder) and 3(5) (common intent) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sahita and sections of the Arms Act. At the hospital, the woman was identified as a Safdarjung resident. "The victim, found conscious and medically fit, stated that while she was travelling in the auto and speaking on the phone, two persons on a black motorcycle approached from behind. One of them, Abuzair Safi, who was driving, fired a shot that struck her in the breast," Amit Goel, Deputy Commissioner of Police, South West, said.

Shots fired in Delhi's Nizamuddin, 1 injured



Agency New Delhi.

A firing incident in the Nizamuddin area of Delhi late Friday night left one man injured. According to the police, a call was received at the Hazrat Nizamuddin police station at 10.08 pm reporting gunshots near the Monish Kada Hotel. Additional calls were received shortly after.

Upon reaching the spot, the police discovered that an altercation had taken place outside a shop named Qibla Perfumes, which is operated by three brothers: Furkan, 32, Waseem, 33, and Abdul Khalid, 30, all residents of Nizamuddin.

"At around 10 pm, a former tenant, Ehsaan, along with a few people, arrived at the spot and began quarrelling with Waseem. One of them was carrying a firearm and fired three shots. Furkan sustained a bullet injury in his leg. He was subsequently taken to AIIMS Trauma Centre, where he is under treatment. Only one person sustained a bullet injury," said Hemant Tiwari, Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), South East.

According to the police, the altercation occurred around 15 days after Ehsaan was asked to vacate his shop. The owner had subsequently rented the shop out to the three brothers for their perfume shop. However, the motive behind the shooting is still being investigated, they added. During the inspection of the scene, the police seized three empty cartridges and two live rounds.

The accused individuals have been identified, and raids are currently underway to apprehend them, the police said. They have initiated legal proceedings in the matter, and further inquiries are in progress to establish the full sequence of events leading up to the firing.

"No Slum Will Be Razed Without Rehabilitation": Delhi Chief Minister



Agency New Delhi.

In a move that could pause ongoing and future slum evictions across the national capital, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Friday ordered all agencies, including the Delhi Development Authority (DDA), Indian Railways, and other land-owning bodies to ensure no slum is demolished without first providing alternate housing to residents.

"No slum dweller in Delhi will be harassed anymore," Ms Gupta said, warning that her government would not tolerate evictions without rehabilitation. Ms Gupta also announced a major housing revival plan - nearly 50,000 long-abandoned flats on the city's outskirts, originally built under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM), will be renovated and allotted to eligible slum dwellers.

"It is a matter of satisfaction that around 50,000 flats built years ago in the outer areas of Delhi will now be allotted to the poor," she added.

These flats, according to officials, have been lying in disrepair for years and were never handed over to beneficiaries. The government now plans to refurbish them using over Rs 700 crore that had remained unused, and distribute them under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban (PMAY-U). The Chief Minister's directive makes it clear: no eviction for infrastructure or development purposes can take place without alternate housing being provided first.

Staff Training, CCTV Monitoring: Delhi Government's Plans To Make Buses Safer



Agency New Delhi.

In response to growing complaints about rash driving, skipped bus stops and misbehaviour by Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) staff, the Delhi government on Friday announced a mandatory training programme for all its bus drivers and conductors.

The initiative aims to improve road safety and restore public trust in the capital's bus system, said Transport Minister Dr Pankaj Kumar Singh. "To improve the public image of Delhi Transport Corporation, the Delhi Government has prepared a master plan," Dr Singh said. "Drivers and conductors will be given regular training, with special focus on ethical values, customer service and safe driving techniques."

CCTV Cameras To Monitor Driver Conduct The reform will be supported by CCTV surveillance inside DTC buses. Cameras already installed across the fleet will now be used to track staff behaviour in real time. "The work and behaviour of drivers and conductors will be monitored, and regular counselling will also be done," Dr Singh said.

Officials added that footage would help identify dangerous practices such as overspeeding, jumping red lights, improper bus stops and driving with doors open, common issues that compromise commuter safety.

49 rabies cases in 2025; over 65,000 stray dogs sterilised in six months: MCD

Officials noted that the civic body is focused on enhancing the efficiency and capacity of the sterilisation network amid rising public concerns over stray dog attacks in various parts of the city.

Agency New Delhi.

Over 65,000 stray dogs have been sterilised and vaccinated over the past six months as part of efforts to control the stray dog population and curb the spread of rabies, according to official data from the MCD. During the same period, the capital has reported 49 rabies cases and 35,198 incidents of animal bites between January and June. To address these issues, an equal number of anti-rabies vaccines (ARV) were administered during this period, an official said.

In comparison, the civic body has projected that 97,994 dogs will be sterilised and vaccinated between April 2024 and December 2025. This follows previous years where 79,959 dogs were sterilised in 2023-2024 and 59,076 in 2022-2023, indicating a consistent increase in efforts. Officials noted that the civic body is focused on enhancing the efficiency and capacity

of the sterilisation network amid rising public concerns over stray dog attacks in various parts of the city.

To further tackle the issue, a meeting of the sub-committee of MCD was held



on Thursday to provide relief to the residents from the growing problem of stray dogs.

It was decided in the meeting that in order to speed up the campaign for dog sterilisation, fresh dialogue would be established with the currently engaged

non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and other capable institutions would also be connected to this process. In addition, other non-governmental organisations would also be invited.

It was further decided to seek the help of the Delhi Government and the Central Government to remove the rules that are coming in the way of providing relief from the problem of stray dogs and that the program of dog sterilisation would be planned constituency-wise. In the previous meeting of the Standing Committee, several councillors had raised the issue of stray dogs.

Meanwhile, CM Rekha Gupta directed officials to treat the matter not merely as an administrative task but as a social responsibility. She stressed the need for a comprehensive and humane approach to address the crisis.

Delhi govt to set up social security fund for unorganised sector workers

In addition, the government plans to open career centres to facilitate employment opportunities for these workers.

Agency New Delhi.

The Delhi government is set to establish a social security fund aimed at providing a financial safety net for workers in the unorganised sector.

According to officials, the fund will be created using fines collected from employers, establishments, institutions, and public sector undertakings for various violations. The amount collected will be used to offer financial assistance and welfare benefits to unorganised sector workers.

In addition, the government plans to open career centres to facilitate employment opportunities for these workers. Until the centres are operational, the directorate of employment will function as a

temporary career centre. Officials said the centre will act as a bridge between



employers and job seekers in the unorganised sector.

To facilitate this, the Delhi Labour Department is making amendments to the draft rules of the Labour Code for Social Security. Over 40 lakh people

are employed in the unorganised sector in Delhi. These include construction workers and those working in shops, establishments, and commercial spaces. Many of them face issues related to job security, wages, and access to basic facilities. To address these concerns, the government has drafted a revised set of social security rules. Under this, employers will be required to report job vacancies to the career centre, which will connect them with potential workers. Meanwhile, officials also said that the Labour Department will establish the Delhi Unorganised Workers Social Security Board to address issues related to the rights, safety, and welfare of workers in the unorganised sector.

55% of DU students opt for fourth year under FYUP

Teaching and learning arrangements are in place for students entering the new programme, says DU's vice chancellor.

Agency New Delhi.

Delhi University's (DU) new academic session began on Friday, which welcomed both first-year students and those advancing into the fourth year under the four-year undergraduate programme (FYUP), which is being implemented in full for the first time.

While orientation programmes were held across various colleges to guide freshers, over 55% of eligible students opted to continue into the newly introduced fourth year. According to DU Vice-Chancellor Yogesh Singh, 31,004 of the approximately 71,000 students eligible for the fourth year have opted out, indicating that more than half of eligible students have chosen to pursue the optional final year under FYUP.

"We have made all possible arrangements for teaching and learning for the new students as well as those entering the fourth year for the first time," said VC Singh. He added, "I want to assure our students that no one should be worried about anything."

This year, Delhi University is offering



71,624 undergraduate seats across 79 programmes in 69 colleges. However, with the introduction of the four-year undergraduate programme, both students and faculty seem to be grappling with

confusion.

Speaking to freshers on their first day, many expressed concerns about a lack of clarity regarding the new structure, syllabus and academic roadmap. "We've only been

told that what used to be a three-year programme is now a four-year programme. We haven't been given any explanation on how it works or what the changes are," said one fresher.

Some students remain optimistic about the change. "If I complete a four-year bachelor's here, I can directly pursue a PhD, which is great," said another student. They pointed out that many international universities prefer applicants with a four-year undergraduate degree, potentially enhancing global academic prospects. However, postgraduate students, particularly those in the sciences, have expressed reservations. Physics honours students raised concerns about the inadequate lab facilities at DU, which they feel hinder their research. "The lab instruments are really old, rusty, and not research-friendly. DU needs serious upgrades before taking on the added responsibility of four-year undergraduates," said Kriti Sharma, a fresher.

NEWS BOX

Ishan Kishan to lead East Zone in Duleep Trophy: Shami back, Suryavanshi on standby**New Delhi. (Agency)**

Ishan Kishan has been named captain of the East Zone squad for the upcoming Duleep Trophy, set to begin on August 28 in Bengaluru. The Jharkhand wicketkeeper-batter, who recently featured in county cricket for Nottinghamshire, will lead a squad that blends youth with experience.

Joining him in the leadership group is Bengal opener Abhimanyu Easwaran, who takes the role of vice-captain. Easwaran has remained a steady presence in India's red-ball setup and brings crucial top-order stability to the side. In a notable boost, India pacer Mohammed Shami returns to domestic red-ball cricket after a long layoff, having been named in the squad. The veteran India pacer is set to return to first-class cricket for the first time in over a year, having last bowled a red ball in early 2024. Shami's return is likely to add serious firepower to a pace attack that also includes Mukesh Kumar and Akash Deep — both of whom have been flirting with regular India Test spots. The squad also features promising talents like Riyant Parag, left-arm spinner Manishi, and consistent



performers such as Virat Singh and Sharandeep Singh.

Among the six standby players is 14-year-old sensation Vaibhav Suryavanshi. The Jharkhand teenager, who recently made headlines with a record-breaking century in youth ODIs against England Lions, has been named as a backup option. While his omission from the main squad might surprise a few, selectors are likely looking to ease him into senior-level cricket without immediate pressure. East Zone begin their campaign against North Zone in Bengaluru on August 28, as the Duleep Trophy returns to its zonal roots with a six-team format.

Lakshya Sen, Tharun Manneppalli bow out in Macau Open semifinals**SINGAPORE. (Agency)**

MACAU: India's campaign at the Macau Open Super 300 badminton tournament came to an end on Saturday after Lakshya Sen and Tharun Manneppalli suffered semifinal defeats in their respective men's singles matches. Lakshya, a 2021 world championship bronze medalist and reigning Commonwealth Games champion, couldn't match the pace and precision of Indonesia's Alwi Farhan, going down 16-21 19-21 in a 39-minute contest to continue his patchy run that has seen him struggle with form and fitness this season. In the other semifinal, India's Tharun Manneppalli went down fighting against Malaysia's Justin Hoh in a gripping three-game contest that lasted an hour and 21 minutes. The 23-year-old Manneppalli, ranked 47th in the world, squandered a strong start to lose 21-19 16-21



16-21 in a match marked by fluctuating momentum and a flurry of unforced errors. Lakshya vs Farhan

It has been a tough season for world number 17 Lakshya, who has had seven first-round exits and two second-round ousters this season. The 23-year-old, who has been affected by shoulder, back and ankle issues this season, had entered the tournament to gain some confidence before heading to the World Championships in Paris.

However, it was Farhan, the 2023 World Junior Champion and a member of Indonesia's bronze-medal-winning Sudirman Cup squad, who produced a dominating performance to knock him out of the tournament. World number 25 Farhan recovered from a 0-3 start to lead 11-7 at the first break in the opening game.

He dictated the pace of rallies with precise drops and powerful smashes, catching the Indian off-guard on multiple occasions.

Though Lakshya produced some eye-catching strokes, he lacked consistency, often erring in execution at crucial moments.

Sprinter Sha'Carri Richardson arrested for incident at Washington airport involving boyfriend

The police report said an officer at the airport was notified by a Transportation Security Administration supervisor of a disturbance between Richardson and her boyfriend, sprinter Christian Coleman.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Reigning 100-meter world champion Sha'Carri Richardson was arrested last weekend for allegedly assaulting her boyfriend at the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport. Richardson was arrested Sunday on a fourth-degree domestic violence offense, according to the police report obtained by The Associated Press. On Thursday, she ran in the opening round of the women's 100 meters at U.S. track and field



championships in Eugene, Oregon. She has an automatic bye to the world championships in September in Tokyo as the defending champion. The 25-year-old Richardson was booked into the South Correctional Entity (SCORE) in Des



Moines, Washington, at 6:54 p.m. last Sunday and released Monday at 1:13 p.m. "USATF is aware of the reports and is not commenting on this matter," USA Track and Field said in a statement. Richardson's agent did not immediately reply

to an email request for comment. The police report said an officer at the airport was notified by a Transportation Security Administration supervisor of a disturbance between Richardson and her boyfriend, sprinter Christian Coleman. The officer reviewed camera footage and observed Richardson reach out with her left arm and grab Coleman's backpack and yank it away. Richardson then appeared to get in Coleman's way with Coleman trying to step around her. Coleman was shoved into a wall. The report later said that Richardson appeared to throw an item at Coleman, which the TSA indicated may have been headphones.

In the police report, the officer said: "I was told Coleman did not want to participate any further in the investigation and declined to be a victim." Richardson won the 100 at the 2023 world championships in Budapest and finished with the silver at the Paris Games last summer. She also helped the 4x100 relay to an Olympic gold. She had a positive marijuana test at the 2021 U.S. Olympic trials and didn't compete at the Tokyo Olympics.

Just take 5 wickets: Mohammed Siraj on heartwarming Jasprit Bumrah conversation

Siraj picked up four wickets for 86 runs in the first innings

The pacer revealed his chat with Bumrah ahead of his stunning spell

Siraj commented on his mindset during a match

New Delhi. (Agency)

Mohammed Siraj revealed the heartwarming conversation he had with Jasprit Bumrah as the star pacer was released from the squad during the Oval Test. Bumrah, who wasn't picked in the lineup, was allowed to leave the team as part of his workload management with the Asia Cup also on the horizon. Bumrah and Siraj have worked in tandem during the England series, picking up 32 wickets between them. Talking to the BCCI after Day 2 of the Oval Test, Siraj said he asked



Bumrah why he was leaving as he needed him to be there to hug after he picks up a five-wicket haul in the ongoing Test. Siraj revealed that Bumrah told him to go and pick the five wickets and return. "I told Jassi

bhai (Jasprit Bumrah), 'Why are you leaving, bhaiya? If I take a five-wicket haul, who am I going to hug?' So he said, 'I'm right here only. You just take five wickets.' That's the kind of conversation we've had," said Siraj. The pacer said while being the leading wicket-taker is good, he wants the team to win the match so that his efforts do shine through. Everyone loves playing in England because there's more swing and the wickets here are helpful for fast bowlers. Like you said, being the highest wicket-taker — it feels really good. But the more matches we win, the better that will shine through," said Siraj. "Always have one mindset — to give 100 percent." Siraj went on to say that he has always had one mindset right from childhood, which is to give his 100 percent in each game, irrespective of the result. "From childhood till now, there's been a lot of hard work to reach this point. But I always have just one mindset — to give 100 percent, whatever the result may be," said Siraj.

Didn't expect that reaction: Prasidh Krishna on fiery moment with good mate Joe Root

Prasidh Krishna said that he wasn't expecting a big reaction from Joe Root after their verbal spat on Day 2 of the Oval Test on Friday, August 1. Prasidh and Root had a war of words as the umpires had to intervene to solve the matter.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Prasidh Krishna said that he was a bit surprised by the reaction from Joe Root during Day two of the Oval Test as both men were involved in a verbal spat on Friday, August 1. Prasidh and Root were involved in a tense moment during Day two as the usually calm England star was unhappy with some of the words from the Indian pacer. This required the umpires to step in to defuse the situation.

England's batting coach Marcus Trescothick would play down the incident during the press conference. Prasidh commented on

the matter and said that it was just the competitive edge coming out from both players and insisted that they're good friends off the field. "Well, it was a very small thing. I think it was just a



competitive edge amongst us that was coming out. Both of us are good mates off the field. It was just a little bit of a banter and both of us enjoyed it," said Prasidh. The Indian pacer also said riling up Root was part of India's plan, but he didn't expect a big reaction from the England star.

However, the Indian pacer said it is great to have such competitiveness between two players on the field. Yeah, I think that was the plan but I didn't really expect a couple of words that I said to get such a big reaction from him, but like I said, I love the guy. He's a legend of the game. I think it's great when two people are out there wanting to do their best and be a winner at a given moment. Enjoying bowling, even if it means a bit of chatter with the batsman. And it does help me when the batsman also is, I can get under the nerves and get a reaction from him. And I think I was just running in well," said Prasidh.

Shubman Gill's batting will be key in Oval Test: Varun Aaron backs India skipper

New Delhi. (Agency) Former India pacer Varun Aaron believes the spotlight will now fall firmly on skipper Shubman Gill as the fifth and final Test between England and India hangs in the balance at The Oval. With India aiming to level the series 2-2, Aaron has backed Gill to play a defining role with the bat on Day 3.

Speaking to JioHotstar, Aaron said that Gill will be crucial to India's hopes after being dismissed for just 21 in the first innings via a run-out. The former pacer expects the India captain to avoid risky singles and take a more measured approach in the second innings. With 743 runs already in the series — the highest by any batter — Gill's form and temperament, Aaron believes, could be the deciding factors in what has become a tightly fought Test match. "I don't think Gill will be taking any risky singles — that's for sure.

But I hope he plays just like he has throughout this series. He's already broken multiple records and could even surpass Sunil Gavaskar's tally in this series. If he gets a big one tomorrow, India can push for a lead of over 300 — and that would really tilt the game. The key will be how Gill bats — and I think he knows his role is central to India's plans," Aaron said.

India ended Day 2 with a slender yet significant lead of 52 runs, finishing at 75/2. After being bundled out for 224 earlier in the match, India's bowlers — particularly Prasidh Krishna and Mohammed Siraj, who took four wickets apiece — brought them right back into the contest. England's early 92-run opening stand was quickly neutralized as they collapsed to a mere 247. In the second innings, it was Yashasvi Jaiswal who once again brought India back

into the spotlight, hammering a rapid 49-ball fifty to set the tone. However, India also lost KL Rahul and debutant Sai Sudharsan in the



process, prompting the arrival of nightwatchman Akash Deep alongside Jaiswal at stumps.

The pressure on Gill will now be immense.

With the Oval pitch beginning to show variable bounce and overhead conditions expected to favour seam bowling, his innings could serve as the spine of India's push for a match-winning lead. Aaron stressed that if Gill can dig deep and produce another big knock, a lead in excess of 300 is not out of reach — a scenario that could decisively tilt the Test in India's favour.

So far, India's batting has been inconsistent through the series, with only sporadic contributions offering resistance. Karun Nair's gritty 57 in the first innings was the lone standout before the bowlers turned the tide. But now, with Day 3 set to be pivotal, all roads lead to Shubman Gill — the man Aaron believes can turn potential into victory, and pressure into poise.

Looking For Higher FD Returns These Banks Offer Best Rates For 2-Year Deposits— Check List

New Delhi.(Agency)

Fixed deposits (FDs) are a trusted way to grow your savings with low risk and assured returns. While most people think of big public or private banks for FDs, Small Finance Banks (SFBs) are now gaining attention for offering higher interest rates. These banks are banked by the RBI and focus on reaching underserved communities which makes them both secure and rewarding for investors.

If you're looking to earn more from your fixed deposits, some Small Finance Banks (SFBs) are offering the highest interest rates right now. Here's a look at the top rates on two-year FDs (up to Rs 1 crore) for regular, non-senior citizen investors. We'll also show how a Rs 1 lakh investment can grow over this period. The data has been compiled by BankBazaar, as of July 25. While higher FD rates from SFBs are tempting, it's wise to stay within the Rs 5 lakh DICGC insurance limit per bank. Always check if the bank is RBI-registered, understand withdrawal rules, and consider tax on interest. Spreading deposits across banks can help balance safety and returns.

Despite USA Tariff Pressure, RBI Is Expected To Cut Key Rates As India Pushes For Growth

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is expected to announce a 25 basis points (bps) cut in the repo rate during its Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting scheduled from August 4 to 6, 2025, according to a State Bank of India (SBI) report. The report describes this frontloaded rate cut as an "early Diwali" boost that could stimulate credit growth ahead of the festive season in FY26, which is also frontloaded. Historical data shows that a similar 25 bps cut in August 2017 resulted in an incremental credit growth of Rs 1,956 billion by Diwali, with nearly 30 percent of this in personal loans.

Diwali, being one of India's major festivals, typically sees increased consumer spending, and a lower interest rate environment helps drive credit demand during this crucial period. The report highlights that credit growth strongly picks up when an early festive season is preceded by a rate cut. It also notes that inflation has remained within RBI's target band for several months, so maintaining a restrictive policy stance risks causing output losses that are difficult to reverse. Monetary policy effects come with a lag; thus, waiting for inflation to decline further or visible growth slowdown before cutting rates could harm the economy more severely. The report suggests that the cost of inaction is significant, while the marginal benefit from waiting is limited. Furthermore, central banks have a dual mandate to maintain price stability and support output stabilization. The report warns against a Type II error — failing to cut rates now assuming low inflation is temporary — which may prolong low inflation but worsen the output gap. In summary, with factors like tariff uncertainties, GDP growth, CPI forecasts for FY27, and the early festive season in FY26 all frontloaded, RBI's anticipated 25 bps repo rate cut aims to balance inflation control with boosting economic growth and credit expansion before the important Diwali period.

PM Transfers Rs 2000 Each As 20th Installment Of PM-Kisan To Over 9.7 crore Farmers

New Delhi. (Agency)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has, for the second time, released the 20th instalment of the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme from Kashi (Varanasi), transferring direct financial assistance to over 9.7 crore farmers across India. This instalment involves the disbursal of approximately Rs 20,500 crore into farmers' bank accounts through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), ensuring transparency and the exclusion of middlemen.

PM-KISAN is a central sector scheme launched by the Government of India in December 2018, officially inaugurated by Prime Minister Modi in February 2019 in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh. The scheme provides small and marginal land-holding farmers with minimum income support of ₹6,000 annually, delivered in three equal instalments of ₹2,000 each. Funded entirely by the central government, the programme aims to supplement farmers' financial needs for agricultural inputs, reduce dependency on moneylenders, and enhance crop productivity and rural livelihood stability. Originating as an extension of the Telangana government's successful Rythu Bandhu scheme, PM-KISAN is designed to provide direct income support to farmers nationwide. Since its launch, the scheme has disbursed over ₹3.69 lakh crore to farmers through multiple instalments, empowering approximately 12 crore farmer families annually. The initiative is a key component of the government's focus on farmer welfare, rural development, and agricultural prosperity in India's vast agrarian economy. By directly transferring funds to the Aadhaar-seeded bank accounts of eligible farmers, PM-KISAN ensures timely assistance without intermediaries, helping farmers invest in quality seeds, fertilizers, and other essential inputs. The scheme's continued rollout reflects the government's sustained commitment to strengthening the agricultural sector and improving the livelihoods of millions of small and marginal farmers across the country.

US tariff more biased against Indian auto, tyre industries as compared to Asian peers: Study

The increased tariffs could dent the competitiveness of Indian suppliers, especially in off-highway and replacement tyre segments, and across various automotive components, Icra said.

New Delhi.(Agency)

NEW DELHI: The 25 per cent US tariff on Indian exports places domestic auto component industry and tyre makers in an unfavourable position as compared with Asian peers like Japan, Vietnam, and Indonesia, which face lower duties, rating firm Icra said on Saturday. The US administration has announced imposition



of the tariff on all goods coming from India from August 7. "Imposition of a 25 per cent tariff by the US on Indian imports has raised concerns across India's automotive and tyre industries, both of which maintain substantial export

exposure to the US market," it noted. With the US accounting for 27 per cent of India's auto component exports and 17 per cent of tyre exports, the tariff hike places Indian manufacturers at a disadvantage compared to Asian peers such as Japan,

Tesla fined over \$240 million in fatal autopilot crash case

CHENNAI.(Agency)

Even as Elon Musk is strongly pushing for a driverless taxi service in the US cities with Tesla's autopilot cars, the company has been ordered by a federal jury in Miami to pay over \$240 million (about Rs 2000 crore) in damages in connection with a 2019 crash in Florida that involved its Autopilot driver-assist system. The ruling marks one of the largest-ever jury awards related to the company's controversial technology and places renewed scrutiny on Tesla's claims around autonomous driving.

The crash, which occurred in Key Largo, killed 22-year-old Naibelle Nieves Leon and severely injured her boyfriend, Dillon Angelo. The Tesla Model S involved in the incident was reportedly operating on Autopilot when it failed to respond to a T-intersection at the end of a road. The driver of the vehicle, George McGee, admitted to being distracted by his phone at the time of the crash. Although the jury found McGee primarily responsible, it determined that Tesla shared 33% of the blame. Jurors concluded that Tesla's Autopilot

technology failed to alert the driver or prevent the crash and should not have allowed operation on non-highway roads like the one where the accident occurred. They awarded approximately \$243 million in total damages, including about \$200 million in punitive damages and \$43 million in



compensatory damages. Tesla is responsible for roughly \$42.6 million of the total sum. The verdict is especially significant as Tesla faces growing questions about the safety and marketing of its driver-assist systems. During the trial, the plaintiffs argued

that Tesla overstated the capabilities of Autopilot and failed to ensure that data relevant to the crash was properly disclosed. Expert testimony revealed the company had access to telemetry and video data it initially denied possessing. Tesla said it would appeal the verdict, citing a pretrial agreement that may limit punitive damages to three times the compensatory amount. The company maintains that Autopilot is designed to assist attentive drivers and that responsibility ultimately remains with the person behind the wheel.

The ruling comes as Tesla CEO Elon Musk pushes forward with plans to launch a driverless taxi service in multiple US cities. The company has recently stepped up public messaging around the safety and reliability of its Full Self-Driving (FSD) technology.

This landmark decision could influence future legal battles involving semi-autonomous driving systems and raises broader concerns over the regulation and deployment of such technologies on public roads.

Gross GST mop-up rises 7.5 percent to Rs 1.96 lakh crore; refunds jump 67 pc in July

New Delhi.(Agency)

Gross GST collection increased 7.5 per cent to about Rs 1.96 lakh crore in July on higher domestic revenues and taxes from imports.

Gross Goods and Services Tax (GST) mop-up was Rs 1.82 lakh crore in July 2024. Last month, the collection was Rs 1.84 lakh crore. The gross domestic revenue grew 6.7 per cent to Rs 1.43 lakh crore, while tax from imports rose 9.5 per cent to Rs 52,712 crore. GST Refunds shot up 66.8 per cent year-on-year to Rs 27,147 crore. The net GST revenue stood at Rs 1.69 lakh crore in July 2025, recording a 1.7 per cent year-on-year growth.

EE India Tax Partner Saurabh Agarwal said that despite some global

pressures and temporary dips, the overall trend shows a stable consumption pattern and consistent growth trajectory of the economy. "The government's timely refund process is also a great help to businesses, ensuring they have the

working capital they need," Agarwal added. Deloitte India Partner MS Mani said that in July, domestic refunds have more than doubled compared to the same month last year, and during the current year, refunds have increased by 46 per cent.

The growth in state revenues amongst large producing and consuming states has been very low, ranging from 2 per cent (Delhi), 3 per cent (Gujarat), 4 per cent (Rajasthan), 6 per cent (Maharashtra), 7 per cent (Karnataka) and 8 per cent (Tamil Nadu). There are a few bright spots in terms of Punjab and Haryana, West Bengal (12 per cent), AP (14 per cent) and MP (18 per cent)," Mani said.

Indian Oil refiners continue to source oil from Russia

Earlier, US President Donald Trump on Friday claimed that India may cease purchasing Russian oil, calling it "a good step"

Washington DC. (Agency)

Indian oil refiners continue to source oil from Russian suppliers, sources told ANI. Their supply decisions are guided by price, grade of crude, inventories, logistics and other economic factors, the sources revealed. Providing context for India's decision to continue sourcing oil from Russian suppliers, sources said that Russia, the world's second-largest crude oil producer with an output of around 9.5 mb/d (nearly 10% of global demand), is also the second-largest exporter, shipping about 4.5 mb/d of crude and 2.3 mb/d of refined products. Fears of Russian oil being pushed out of the market and the consequent dislocation of traditional trade flows drove Brent crude prices to soar to US \$137 per barrel in March 2022. In

this challenging environment, India, as the world's third-largest energy consumer with 85% crude oil import dependence, strategically adapted its sourcing to secure affordable energy while fully adhering to international norms," added sources. Earlier, United States President Donald Trump on Friday (local time) claimed that India may cease purchasing Russian oil, calling it "a good step" if confirmed, while India has defended its sovereign right to conduct energy policy based on national interest. Earlier on July 31st, Reuters reported, citing its sources, that Indian state-owned refineries suspended Russian oil purchases last week amid threats of tariffs from US President Donald Trump and narrowing price discounts. Providing further historical context to its decision of sourcing Russian Oil, sources told ANI that Russian oil has never been sanctioned; instead, it was subjected to a G7/EU price-cap mechanism designed to limit revenue while ensuring global supplies continued to flow. India acted as a responsible global energy actor, ensuring markets remain liquid and prices stable. India's purchases have remained fully

legitimate and within the framework of international norms. "Had India not absorbed discounted Russian crude combined with OPEC+ production cuts of 5.86 mb/d, global oil prices could have surged well beyond the March 2022 peak of US\$137/bbl, intensifying



inflationary pressures worldwide," added sources to ANI. It is also pertinent to note that Russian oil has never been sanctioned and it is still not sanctioned by either US or EU. Indian OMCs have not been buying Iranian or Venezuelan crude which is actually sanctioned by US. OMCs have always complied with the price cap of \$60 for Russian oil recommended by the US. Recently EU has recommended a price cap of \$47.6 dollars for Russian crude which will be enforced from September. Commenting

Vietnam, and Indonesia, which face lower or preferential duties, Icra said. The increased tariffs could dent the competitiveness of Indian suppliers, especially in off-highway and replacement tyre segments, and across various automotive components, it said. While Indian tyre exporters previously enjoyed a modest advantage over Chinese competitors, that edge may now be offset by the lower tariff rates granted to other Southeast Asian nations.

Auto component exporters, particularly those heavily reliant on the US market, are expected to diversify their geographies and improve cost efficiencies to lessen the impact, it said. The auto components industry reported a turnover of USD 80.2 billion (Rs 6.73 lakh crore) for FY2025, a growth of around 10 per cent as compared with FY2024. Exports of auto components grew by 8 per cent to USD 22.9 billion (Rs 1,92,346 crore) in FY25 from USD 21.2 billion (Rs 1,75,960 crore) in FY24.

Weekly Review: Indian rupee slides on trade jitters and FII outflows

CHENNAI.(Agency)

The Indian rupee weakened sharply against the US dollar during the week ending August 1, 2025, amid mounting concerns over US-India trade tensions and sustained foreign capital outflows. The domestic currency posted its worst weekly performance in over 18 months, despite late-week support from the Reserve Bank of India. The rupee opened the week at around Rs 86.50 to the dollar and steadily lost ground, slipping to as low as Rs 87.74 during intraday trade on Friday, before recovering slightly to close the week at Rs 87.25. Overall, the currency depreciated by nearly 1.2% through the week, according to data from Reuters and Investing.com.

A key trigger was the announcement of a 25% import tariff on Indian goods by the United States, alongside inflammatory rhetoric from US President Donald Trump, who referred to India as a "dead economy." The developments spooked investors and added to global uncertainty, particularly for emerging markets.



Exacerbating the pressure on the rupee was a sustained selloff by foreign institutional investors. FIIs withdrew over Rs 27,000 crore (about \$3.5 billion) from Indian equities in just nine days, according to reports. The spike in capital outflows increased dollar demand in the market and weighed on the rupee.

The Reserve Bank of India was reported to have intervened on Friday through both the spot and non-deliverable forward (NDF) markets to contain the volatility. This helped the rupee stabilise slightly, trimming some of the week's earlier losses. The RBI's intervention also prompted short-covering by traders, offering further support. Despite the RBI's efforts, sentiment around the rupee remains cautious. Market experts believe that persistent global uncertainties, elevated US yields, and continued portfolio outflows are expected to keep the currency under pressure in the near term.

Indian Oil refiners continue to source oil from Russia

on European Union's import of Russian origin liquified natural gas (LNG) during this period, sources added, "EU was the largest importer of Russian liquified natural gas (LNG) during this period, buying 51% of Russia's LNG exports, followed by China at 21% and Japan at 18%. Similarly, for pipeline gas, the EU remained the top buyer with a 37% share, followed by China (30%) and Turkey (27%)." Sources speaking to ANI rebutted media reports of India halting purchase of Russian Oil and after US President's latest comment echoing the claim in the media report. US President Trump made remarks while answering an ANI question, on whether he had a number in mind for the penalties on India and if he was going to speak with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, "I understand that India is no longer going to be buying oil from Russia. That's what I heard, I don't know if that's right or not. That is a good step. We will see what happens..." Backing their decision to continue sourcing Russian Oil, Sources added that India's energy decisions have been guided by national interest but have also contributed positively to global energy stability.

Surbhi Jyoti

Is Feeling 'Happy Happy' With husband Sumit Suri By Her Side

Surbhi Jyoti is serving major vacation goals. TBH, we are loving it! The actress is currently soaking in the sunshine on a picture-perfect getaway with her husband, Sumit Suri and her latest Instagram post is refreshing. On Instagram, she added yet another dreamy page to her travel album, featuring a series of stunning photos from the streets of what looks like a foreign land. Dressed casually in a white t-shirt and trousers, she added a checkered shirt for an effortlessly cool, off-duty look and the result? Laid-back glam, we can't help but stop and stare. While she looked radiant, carefree and completely in vacation mode in the picture, the album had more to



offer.

Yes, Sumit Suri also makes an appearance in the carousel, striking a series of poses for solo shots. And then came the photo we wanted — a cosy moment of the couple, holding each other close with Sumit resting his hand on Surbhi's shoulder. In her caption of the post, Surbhi simply wrote, "Happy Happy."

Surbhi Jyoti's Billie Eilish Love

In her previous post, Surbhi Jyoti added another chapter to her vacation diaries, and what instantly caught everyone's eye was her cool Billie Eilish T-shirt. The carousel included a laid-back selfie of the actress, lying on the grass in a garden, whereas other images took on a mini visual tour through the picturesque location as she struck some striking, chic poses against picture-perfect backdrops.

Surbhi Jyoti's Marital Life With Sumit Suri

Surbhi Jyoti is currently living her best life with Sumit Suri, but it is far from what you think. Giving a peek into her marital life, the actress earlier told Pinkvilla, "He also works from home, and I'm also at home when I'm not shooting."

Janhvi Kapoor

Crowns Kriti Sanon As 'The OG' Param Sundari

Kriti Sanon, known for her hit dance number Param Sundari in *Mimi*, hopped on the viral trend featuring *Pardesiya*, a song from the upcoming movie *Param Sundari* starring Sidharth Malhotra and Janhvi Kapoor. Kriti shared her excitement and support for the film by making a reel with the trending track. In the Instagram reel, Kriti is seen enjoying a breezy day by the ocean, dressed in a pink and white outfit. She captioned the post, "Can you live on the ocean? I think I can..." followed by, "P.S. Param Sundari is loving this song from Param Sundari." The video went viral quickly, crossing over 1.2 million views in just one hour.

The 'Real Param Sundari'

In the video, Kriti is seen standing on a yacht, soaking in the sea breeze and sunshine. Her hair flows with the wind, and she is wearing a pink swimsuit layered with a breezy white cover-up. The calm ocean and blue sky add to the relaxed holiday vibe. In another part of the video, she looks straight at the camera, smiling softly as the waves sparkle behind her.

Janhvi Kapoor Reacts, Calls Kriti 'The OG'

Fans showered praise on Kriti in the comments, with many calling her the real Param Sundari. But it was Janhvi Kapoor's comment that stood out; she wrote, "The OG", referring to Kriti's iconic status from the original song.

Other users commented things like, "Param Sundari is vibing" and "Song is approved by Param Sundari."

Kriti's Upcoming Films and the Story of Param Sundari

Param Sundari, directed by Tushar Jalota, is a romantic drama about a North Indian boy and a South Indian girl whose cultural differences set the stage for a heartfelt love story. The film marks the first on-screen pairing of Sidharth Malhotra and Janhvi Kapoor and will release in theatres on August 29 this year. On the work front, Kriti Sanon has several projects lined up. She will be seen opposite Dhanush in *Tere Ishk Mein*, directed by Aanand L Rai. She is also reportedly joining *Don 3* with Ranveer Singh and has *Cocktail 2* in the pipeline, co-starring Shahid Kapoor and Rashmika Mandanna.



Ali Fazal Helps Wife Richa Chadha With Her Bag At Mumbai Airport



Bollywood's beloved couple Ali Fazal and Richa Chadha were spotted at Mumbai airport, turning heads with their effortless and coordinated airport style. The duo, known for keeping things fuss-free, made a brief stop to pose for the paparazzi. A video of the moment captures the couple in a relaxed mood. But one heartwarming moment where Ali is seen helping Richa adjust her bag, went viral.

Ali Fazal And Richa Chadha's Airport Look

The duo kept things easy and relaxed for their travel day. Ali sported a navy-blue oversized Bronx jersey paired with faded denims, white sneakers, and a green cap worn backwards, adding a sporty touch to his look. He completed the outfit with brown-tinted sunglasses, staying true to his cool-boy persona.

Richa, on the other hand, opted for an oversized black graphic tee and cropped denim culottes. Her statement cap added to the streetwear aesthetic, while dark sunglasses kept the look airport-appropriate. She looked calm and composed, letting her no-fuss travel style do the talking.

Ali Fazal And Richa Chadha's Personal Life

Ali and Richa tied the knot on October 4, 2020. They welcomed their daughter, Zuneyra Ida Fazal, in July last year. The couple was earlier seen at the airport with their little one for their first family vacation. The moment went viral, especially when Ali gently requested the photographers, "thoda sa dekh lena aap log please. Sorry han bache ki photo mat lena (Please manage and sorry but don't click the baby's photo)."

Ali Fazal And Richa Chadha's Projects

Beyond acting, the couple has stepped into production with their banner, Pushing Buttons Studios. Their upcoming project, *Secrets of a Mountain Serpent*, directed by Nidhi Saxena, is currently in the works.

71st National Film Awards: Karan Johar Says He's 'Ecstatic And Overwhelmed' After Rocky Aur Rani's Win



It's a moment of celebration for Bollywood's master storyteller Karan Johar as his directorial comeback, *Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani*, clinches two prestigious honours at the 71st National Film Awards (Feature Films Category). The vibrant romantic drama was recognised in the Best Popular Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment category and also took home the award for Best Choreography for the exuberant number "Dhindora Baje Re" — a visual and rhythmic marvel that has become one of the most iconic sequences in recent Hindi cinema. Reacting to the win, an emotional and elated Karan Johar said, "I am ecstatic and overwhelmed to win the national award for a film exceptionally close to my heart — *Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani*. I am grateful to the jury and continue to be humbled by the enormous love the film continues to receive."

This win also marks a hat-trick for Dharma Productions, which bagged National Awards for *Sershaah* (2022) and *Brahmastra* (2023), solidifying its reputation for creating content that is both commercially successful and critically lauded.

For Johar personally, it's a full-circle moment — *Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani* follows in the footsteps of his 1998 debut *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai*, which won him his first National Award and helped redefine the emotional grammar of Hindi popular cinema.

A rich, colourful love story set against a tapestry of clashing ideologies, *Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani* stars Ranveer Singh as the flamboyant Rocky Randhawa and Alia Bhatt as the fiercely intellectual Rani Chatterjee. What begins as a passionate romance soon turns into a cultural showdown between two polar-opposite families. With themes of gender roles, family legacy, identity, and modern love threaded through song, humour, and emotion, the film balances larger-than-life Bollywood flair with surprising emotional depth.

At its heart, *Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani* is not just a love story — it's a celebration of what happens when old meets new, when tradition is questioned, and when love dares to bridge divides. With this National Award win, the film takes its rightful place in the canon of modern Hindi cinema classics.



Improve Your business presentation skills

Making a presentation can give anyone jitters, more so, when you are asked to pitch your products and services to potential clients and customers. In most corporate cases, the content presented is usually well researched. However, lack of presentation skills spoil the deal. The mantra here is: Presentation skills are just as important as the information collected. Here are six reminders that will help you present better: Know your audience. While preparing a business presentation, the most important thing to be kept in mind is who the 'target audience' will be. Find out everything you can about the audience - their age group, interests, profiles, and what they expect from your presentation. Frame the presentation as though you were a part of the audience. Once you know the audience, you can sell the benefits of your idea smartly.

Extensive research, detailed knowledge and a clear thought process will help you to present better. Confidence matters.

A butterfly in one's stomach is no excuse of getting away with a bad presentation. Consider a presentation as a formal conversation. When on a mission to sell, do not try to use fancy language, for that complicates things for you as well as the audience. Speak about the product, service or business idea, instead of introducing yourself. Do not read from a text. When doing so, make sure you have read the text multiple times to understand better. "No one will ever want to listen to a non-confident speaker. His/ her confidence levels are apparent in the usage of words and effective body language. So, plan

well," suggests

Radhi Nair, corporate trainer. The best way to improve confidence levels is to stand in front of a mirror or a group of people and speak about various issues and interests. Always remember, the better you know your content and aim, the less nervous you will be. Limit the use of

text

Bombarding the audience with slides full of text is the biggest mistake a presenter can make. Unless absolutely necessary, avoid the use of large text paragraphs. Excess of text will confuse you as well as the audience. Instead, illustrate key points, use visuals and charts, and provide bullet points wherever necessary. Hand over a detailed printed copy of the presentation to the audience. The audience always prefers listening, than reading and writing. Keep check of your



10 ways to make your life more Romantic



Here are tips to bring back some fun into your relationship.

Sometimes we get so busy with our work that we don't get time to express our love to the most important person of our life. So here are some tips to bring back the romance into your marriage.

Spend quality time

Sometimes you may be in the same room for hours but not talk to each other simply because you are busy with your own work. If you are alone with your husband make sure you spend the time talking to him.

Arrange for a date

If you have kids, arrange for a baby sitter and go out on a date. If he enjoys dancing then you can hit a nice place where you can shake a leg. If your man would like to indulge in some games take him to a

bowling parlour. Believe it this will work like a charm.

Be the chef

Food is the easiest way to a man's heart. So, cook a great meal comprising of the dishes he likes. But if you aren't convinced about your culinary skills don't try and experiment, order food from his favourite restaurant and then set up some candles for a romantic candlelight dinner.

Leave love notes

Whether it's leaving some love notes around the house or SMSes or email, write him a lovey-dovey note. Men may pretend to be tough but they do like to know that they are on your mind.

Express it loud

Though you may have sent him a love note or email, there's nothing like professing your love every now and then. Do let him know that after all the years as a married couple you are still very much in love with him.

Shower him with attention

Dote on him once in a while. Praise him for his hard work. Men love attention though they may claim otherwise. Praise him for his taste in clothes or perfumes, he's sure to like it a lot.

Plan a surprise vacation

If you are not likely to get any alone time in the city,

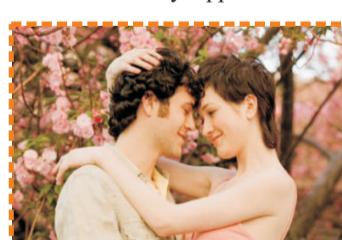
plan a vacation. Depending on the kind of time you both can spare, take a long or short trip. You could take him out to the place he's always wanted to go.

Find ways to spend time together

It could be while travelling to or from work or just going shopping together or even a long drive after dinner. If you can't head out to be in each other's company.

Let him spend time with his gang

Yes, you should spend some time together, but your man will really appreciate it if



you let him spend an evening with his buddies. Ensure that you don't call him during the time when he is with his friends.

Appreciate things he does

Even if it's something simple, try and tell him how much you appreciate his help around the house. More the praise and attention that you shower on him, it's this appreciation that will make him fall in love with you all over again.

These traits can make you stand out in a crowd.

Decisiveness: A lot of women either don't want to make decisions, or then have a really hard time being decisive on a date. So, when you are asked for your opinion, don't be afraid to express yourself and tell people what you want.

Independence: We all know how men love women who are independent. When you are dependent on someone not only do you end up feeling like a burden on someone, but somewhere

down the line, you might lose your own identity.

Confidence: Confidence always makes it easier for you to approach everything in life. When you are confident about yourself, you automatically come across as someone who is sure about herself.

Sense of humour: Not taking yourself seriously is a great quality to have, but not something that could definitely set you apart. As for men, they prefer women who have a mind-blowing sense of humour, along with intelligence.



Traits that can set you apart

language when you script the presentation. Backing this thought, Nair says, "Language is the only nonambiguous medium of communication and exchanging ideas, and hence is of paramount significance." Time it right

While scripting and presenting a business idea is manageable, timing the presentation is where the challenge lies. The audience has a short attention span. Keeping this in mind, we cannot miss out on presenting important information. So the challenge is to deliver all the information tactfully, within the given time frame. With time, one must learn to modify the time limit of the presentation last minute. Keep the end in mind

Introduce the presentation with a short brief. Let the audience know what to expect. The audience believes in profit and benefit, and not continuous promises and commitments. "Deliver what you promise. Track record of some of the most successful companies. They live up to customers' consumers promises. If you don't deliver what you promise they will move on—they have plenty of choices," quips Nair. At the end of your presentation, ask for audience feedback. Post the formal question answer session, stick around the venue for an hour prepared for a 30 minute presentation,

know the content so well that you can cut it down to 15 minutes without missing on important points. Explains Nair, "Time management is an all time premium. In business communication, we believe in KISS - Keep It Short and Straight." Always remember, a good presentation is never a stroke of luck. It requires a lot of hard work, research and timeliness.

Business presentation skills are just as important as the content of the presentation.
Anishaa Sahijwala lists down reminders that will help you develop your skills.