

90k saplings to form green barrier along KMP Expressway

Gurgaon.(Agency)

In celebration of Van Mahotsav, the district administration will conduct a mass plantation drive along KMP Expressway on Aug 11. The initiative aims to plant over 90,000 saplings, including 40,000 bamboos, along the 16km stretch from Pachgaon Chowk to Farukhnagar road crossing on the expressway. "The plantations will create a lasting green shield for the region," said Subhash Yadav, chief conservator of forest, South Haryana. The site has been earmarked to serve as a permanent green buffer, aimed at improving air quality, curbing dust, and restoring habitat for local biodiversity. The drive follows the inauguration of Matri Van in Gurgaon last Saturday, which will focus on native flora, officials said. Matri Van will feature indigenous species like bargad, peepal, gullar, and Aravali-specific trees such as dhauk, kullu, and

Solace in strangers & knowing one is not alone: Rise of support circles

Gurgaon.(Agency)

My mind goes from 0 to 100 in a few seconds, said someone in the circle. "Mine goes from 0 to 1,000!" another reacted. Everyone laughed.

In a session where a group of anxious strangers had gathered in a room to share, the laughter was just the relaxing stimulus that we 'overthinkers' needed to poke a bit of fun at ourselves. This writer — at her first such support circle meetup at a venue in Gurgaon — realised she was not alone. There was a whole tribe of overthinkers out there, struggling to live because of the anxiety-inducing situations their imaginations create. And here, they found each other.

"My mother has been a little unwell. I quit my job and moved cities to live with her. My mind just goes to the extreme and I act on my first instinct," a fellow participant shared.

An advertising professional at the session sounded relatable when he said: "If everything is going well in my life and I'm happy, I start thinking about all the worst-case scenarios, everything that could potentially go wrong. It's like a calculation in my head so that I can prepare myself for the worst. I always need to have a plan B." A copywriter said, "Even if I'm doing great at work, if I don't get praise from my boss or the best performance award, I assume that it's time to start looking for a new job." "I fear I will never be able to find my purpose in life," said a software engineer, "I keep trying the next exciting thing and then quit in the middle, for fear of failing."

It's so tiring, the constant mental grind, the mind working its way through imagined scenarios at warp speed (while the world wonders why I space out so often). But the burden lifts when you know you're not alone. I came out feeling 10 kilos lighter.

With increased awareness and more conversations about mental health since the Covid-19 pandemic, Delhi-NCR has seen a number of support circles come up in the last couple of years, attended by many in the 20-40 age group.

khairi. Moreover, themed spaces, including bodhi vatika, medicinal plant grove, and a butterfly park, will come up as part of the project, which was launched under the govt's 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' initiative. The KMP plantation drive, meanwhile, will utilise Haryana Forest Development Corporation (HFDC) funds earmarked for compensatory plantation linked to the RRTS project and will be led by Haryana industries, environment and forest minister Rao Narbir Singh as chief guest. Moreover, HFDC and HSIIDC are likely to sign a memorandum of understanding to identify and provide plantation sites. As part of the plan, Miyawaki plantations will be developed at cloverleaf junctions along KMP Expressway through NGOs, with funding sourced from corporate social responsibility initiatives. Under the proposed arrangement, HSIIDC will

provide the land, while HFDC will be responsible for fencing and protection as part of the contract. The plan also includes



activating the existing central verge drip irrigation system, digging two borewells—one at each end—and laying drip lines to meet irrigation needs.

Officials said the KMP corridor was chosen for multiple reasons — its open stretches are major dust and pollution hotspots, and a dense plantation here will help trap

particulate matter. The highway's buffer zones also offer continuous govt-controlled land, making large-scale planting easier and more secure from future encroachment. Its location near Aravalis allows the plantation to function as an ecological corridor for small wildlife and pollinators. High visibility to commuters, they added, will also keep public attention on the plantation's upkeep. The KMP corridor, according to Yadav, is a "strategic site for large-scale greening" that will contribute to climate resilience and wildlife movement. "These plantations will act as a carbon sink and help reclaim degraded stretches," he said. The drive, organised by Gurugram forest department with support from HFDC and HSIIDC, will start at noon with symbolic plantations by dignitaries, gram panchayats, NGOs, schoolchildren, and volunteers.

Tribunal orders Rs22 lakh for kin of 2020 Gurgaon road crash victim

Gurgaon. (Agency)

The family of a two-wheeler rider who died in a 2020 road accident has been awarded Rs 22 lakh in compensation by a Motor Accident Claims Tribunal. The victim was returning home when a tractor trolley carrying onions collided with his bike. The tractor driver fled the scene, abandoning his vehicle. The tribunal ordered the tractor driver and the insurance company to jointly pay the compensation. The accident took place on July 24, 2020, around 9.45pm at Kadipur Chowk. The victim, Prince Malhotra, was taken to a hospital, where he died during treatment. An FIR was registered the next day at Sector 10 police station against the tractor trolley driver, identified as Parveen, and Liberty General Insurance Company under IPC sections 279 (rash driving) and 304A (causing death by negligence). The criminal case is still under trial. The tractor driver claimed he had a valid licence and argued that the

compensation sought by the petitioner was excessive. However, Poonam, Prince's mother and a resident of Rajendra



Park, said her son died due to the tractor driver's negligence. "The accident was caused by the rash and negligent driving of the tractor trolley driver," S K Deswal, counsel for the petitioner, said the vehicle was recovered from the accident site and

taken into police custody. "The tractor's involvement in the crash is proven. This is sufficient to get the claim," he said.

S K Verma, counsel for the insurance company, said that the driver had violated the terms and conditions of the policy knowingly, and that the deceased was under the influence of alcohol and riding on the wrong side of the road at the time of the accident. However, the court held that the accident occurred due to the rash and negligent driving of the tractor trolley driver. Photographs of the accident site taken by police helped establish the involvement of the vehicle.

Puneet Sehgal, judge of the Motor Accident Claims Tribunal, Gurgaon, awarded a compensation of ₹22.22 lakh along with 9% annual interest. "The petitioner is entitled to receive ₹22.22 lakh in compensation. The liability to pay shall be joint and several between the driver of the offending vehicle and the insurance company," the court said in its order.

On Rakhi, rain leaves commuters in a tight knot

Noida. (Agency)

The city experienced continuous light rain from 5am on Saturday, bringing relief from the heat but leading to widespread waterlogging and disruption of daily life.

The rain lowered the minimum temperature to around 25 degrees Celsius, about 2.5 degrees Celsius below the recent average, offering a cool respite but also exposing the city's fragile drainage system yet again. The maximum was 27 degrees Celsius, which was 8.3 notches lower than the previous day. Despite the light rain, specific roads in several sectors were flooded by morning. Residents said the waterlogging began within hours of the first drizzle. "It is good to finally get some relief from the heat, but the waterlogging in sectors 9, 10, and 15 is making commuting a nightmare," said Anil Kumar, a resident.

Pooja Yadav from Basai said water collected in low-lying areas near her home, making it difficult to step outside. "It started raining in our area at 7am, and specific roads in our

sector, especially the 18m main sector road, are flooded as usual," said Bhavani Shankar Tripathy, general secretary, RWA of Sector 23A, questioning the official claim that excessive rainfall, not drains,



causes flooding. Light rain continued until noon before receding to a drizzle. The district rainfall report showed Gurgaon tehsil logged 7 mm of rain, Kadipur and Harsaru 5 mm each, Wazirabad 6 mm, Badshahpur 3 mm, and Sohna 12 mm.

Manesar, Pataudi, and Farukh Nagar saw no rain in that period. The picture changed sharply during the day.

Between 8am and 5pm, the tehsil picked up an additional 36 mm, taking its total to 43 mm for the day. Kadipur and Harsaru ended at 25 mm, Wazirabad at 27 mm, Badshahpur at 19 mm, and Sohna at 20 mm. Manesar, dry in the morning, recorded 22 mm, while Pataudi got 15 mm and Farukh Nagar 5 mm. On average, the district saw around 18 mm till 5pm on Saturday. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the monsoon trough at mean sea level currently passes through Bhatinda, Rohtak, Delhi (Ridge), Hardoi, Barabanki, Dehri, Bankura, Contai, and extends east-southeastwards to the northeast Bay of Bengal. An upper air cyclonic circulation over west Uttar Pradesh and neighbourhood persists, extending up to 3.1 km above mean sea level.

6 months gone, e-bus project in Gurgaon yet to get green light

Noida. (Agency)

Despite years of planning and promises, the city reels under an inadequate bus network. Six months after the city was promised 100 e-buses, things have not moved an inch. And residents' woes know no bounds. Take the case of Sonia Kohli. Every morning at 7.15am, she steps out of her home in Sector 69, praying the app cab she booked actually shows up. It often doesn't because the driver usually cancels — sometimes without a word.

Reaching Millennium City Centre metro station, just a few kilometres away, has become the most exhausting part of her two-hour journey to Noida, where she works as a

project officer at a PSU. Sonia's situation isn't an exception — it's the norm in a city that continues to expand vertically with highrises but fails to move its people horizontally. Over the years, numerous plans were made to augment new buses. Yet, most of them remained stuck in files. Then came a glimmer of progress earlier this year. In Feb 2025, Convergence Energy Services Ltd (CESL) finalised a concessionaire to procure, operate and maintain 450 electric buses across Haryana. Gurgaon was to receive 100 of those buses — a long-overdue step towards rebuilding the public bus network. But six months later, the project has hit a familiar bureaucratic roadblock. The Haryana transport department has not yet signed the final agreement with the selected operator, delaying the rollout indefinitely. Meanwhile, residents wait. And walk. Or pay up. Sonia says, "Even when autos are available, they charge exorbitantly during peak hours. There are days

when I have to take help from my neighbour just to reach the metro. And if I have an audit or a critical meeting, I leave an hour earlier than usual. There's simply no reliable public transport to count on in Gurgaon." A senior GMDA official confirmed to TOI that Gurugram Metropolitan City Bus Limited (GMCBL) has already written to the Haryana transport department to expedite the agreement. The official said, "Of the 450 e-buses, 100 each are for Gurgaon and Faridabad, while the remaining will serve other cities in the state. We are now awaiting govt approval." The gross cost of the contract has already been finalised by CESL. However, the proposal is awaiting govt approval. Only after that can GMCBL sign the agreement and initiate the rollout. Earlier, it was expected that the first batch of buses would arrive by June — a deadline that has already passed. Sources told TOI that certain observations were raised during the finalisation of the process, which is taking time to address. While

officials have remained tight-lipped about the nature of these observations, they maintain the delay has been entirely procedural. The lack of connectivity hits the hardest in new sectors, where residents have no last-mile link to the metro or nearby employment hubs. "The lack of adequate buses has made daily commuting a nightmare. Even for small distances, we have to either rely on private vehicles or cabs as there are no autorickshaws available. We need more buses, especially in new sectors along Dwarka Expressway, where transport options are almost non-existent," said Monisha Bhatnagar, a resident of Joyville in Sector 102. When GMCBL was launched in 2018, it was seen as the solution to the city's growing mobility mess. Backed by the GMDA, MCG and HSIIDC, the service was meant to provide a dependable, affordable city bus network across key sectors, with last-mile integration to metro stations. Initially, there was hope.

News box

RTI reveals Agra Metro cut trees on MG, Mall Road without permission; FIR filed



AGRA. (Agency)

An RTI by an environmentalist has revealed that the Uttar Pradesh Metro Rail Corporation (UPMRC) felled trees along MG Road and Mall Road dividers without approval from the Social Forestry Division.

Divisional Director Rajesh Kumar confirmed, "No permission was granted to UPMRC for cutting/felling/transplantation of any tree on MG Road & Mall Road dividers for Metro work." A case (No. 05/Agra City/2025-26) has been registered, but the exact number of trees cut was not disclosed. A TOI ground check suggests several hundred may have been removed. The revelation comes after the Supreme Court tightened restrictions on felling trees within 5 km of the Taj Mahal in the Taj Trapezium Zone.

UPMRC's Joint GM Panchanan Mishra claimed the trees were ornamental and planted after the Metro DPR was finalised, adding they had permission for all trees cut. RTI applicant Sharad Gupta alleged the felling violated SC orders and excluded these dividers from approved areas. The Agra Metro currently operates a 6-km section from the Taj Mahal to Mankameswar, with two corridors planned to serve 26 lakh residents and over 60 lakh tourists annually.

Will respond legally if Noida moves for takeover or termination: DND operator

Noida.(Agency)

With nearly a decade gone since Allahabad high court scrapped toll collection at DND Flyway, its operator NTBCL on Saturday put a series of FAQs and its perspective on them in a public letter to stakeholders along with latest financial results. The FAQs related to legal and administrative questions about the Flyway that arose from the scrapping of the toll, an order that was later upheld by Supreme Court. NTBCL said Supreme Court, while doing so, did not terminate its concession agreement with Noida Authority and that it remains bound by the contract and will respond legally if Noida seeks termination or takeover of the project. It also said it had been maintaining DND Flyway, which lakhs of commuters use to travel between Noida and south Delhi daily, without a toll and would spend another Rs 5 crore on its maintenance. On Oct 26, 2016, Allahabad HC barred NTBCL from collecting toll, delivering its judgment in a petition filed by an RWA federation. The company approached Supreme Court, which on Dec 20, 2024, upheld HC's judgment.

The stopping of toll, NTBCL said in its letter to shareholders, resulted from a "skewed assessment" based entirely on one aspect of a Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report and "undermines the confidence of investors in long-gestation infrastructure projects." "The CAG mandate was to look into the independent auditor's report and ascertain if the company has made project returns in accordance with the terms of concession agreement. However, we understand that while implementing the mandate — especially to determine the unrecovered project cost and returns — instead of using actual costs, expenses and income — certain assumed or adjusted figures were used and the shortfall in returns or recovery was then calculated based on these figures," it said.

Noida daycare attendant accused of biting toddler is a minor herself

Noida. (Agency)

An attendant accused of torturing a 15-month-old child and biting her in the thighs at a daycare facility in Sector 137 is a minor, who should be attending school instead of working in one. Just 16 years old, the attendant and the owner of Blippi Pre-School and Day Care, which operated from a 3BHK flat in Paras Tierera, were named in the FIR lodged on a complaint by the toddler's parents. The teenager, according to police, was hired at the facility only 10 days ago without any formal training. Her parents work as house helps in the same sector.

Monica and Sandeep Kumar, the baby's parents, had been sending their daughter at the daycare since May 21. Sandeep, who works in the IT department of a UK-based multinational company, had ensured the daycare's safety by checking the installation of 5 CCTV cameras. Charu, its owner, had also assured them of their child's safety. "Before sending our daughter, we had checked all safety measures at the daycare. There were five CCTV cameras in all rooms, the hall, and kitchen areas. The owner assured us during admission that it's the daycare's responsibility to keep every child safe," Sandeep told TOI. Initially, the toddler attended the daycare for an hour daily, but Charu later requested a two-hour stay so that she got acquainted with the environment there. On the day of the incident — on Monday — Sandeep dropped off his daughter at 10.30am, while Monica picked her up after a couple of hours. Unlike other days, all teachers came to the gate, saying that the child had been crying all day long. When she returned home, Monica discovered bite marks on her daughter's thighs.

THE SIKH TIMES

Edited, Printed, Published
Owned by Surinji Babbbar
N-31, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar
Delhi-110069
Printed at: Quamri Patilika Printing
Press, A-4/A-114, Tronica City
(Loni), Gurgaon (Haryana)
Corporate Office:
5, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg,
Press Area, T.O., New Delhi
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RNI No. DELENG/2008/25465

On trail of PO, police uncover murder mystery, nab accused

The Sikh Times

New Delhi: A routine exercise to find the whereabouts of a proclaimed offender (PO) in the national capital led the police to ultimately find and solve a brutal murder mystery where a woman, with the help of her lover, eliminated her husband, Pritam Prakash (42), and dumped his body in a drain. The police arrested the woman identified as Soniya (34), a resident of Alipur, Delhi, and her boyfriend Rohit (28), a resident of Sonapat. Another accused, Vijay, brother-in-law of Soniya's sister, remains at large. The rented house in Alipur where both husband and wife lived remains deserted after the arrest of Soniya. Akshay, one of their neighbours, revealed that they thought Pritam, who was declared a PO, must be missing or may be hiding from the police and his wife, Soniya, might be making up stories to evade his arrest. It came as a shock to them that she was co-conspirer in her husband's death, he added. Since both Pritam and



Soniya married against the will of their family members, the neighbours never saw the parents or any relative visiting them. Pritam was a known history-sheeter in Alipur and had more than 10 cases registered against him,

the whereabouts of Pritam. His mobile phone signal was traced to a village in Sonapat, Haryana. During the raid, the police detained a man named Rohit, who initially misled them but later confessed to having an illicit relationship with Pritam's wife. He admitted that she had given him Pritam's mobile phone, the police said. The police also nabbed Soniya, who disclosed that in July 2024, she had given a contract for the killing of her husband to her relative Vijay, who killed him. Soniya said Pritam was a drug addict and often used to beat her up. After their marriage, she often used to fight with Pritam about his addiction. Pritam had been to jail several times for illegal possession of weapons, robbery, theft, kidnapping and other cases. In 2023, she came in contact with Rohit, a taxi driver in Delhi, and they became friends. Rohit has also been to jail several times. They wanted to marry, but her husband was an obstacle. On July 2 last year, she had a fight with Pritam and went to her sister's house in Gannaur, Sonapat. She asked Rohit to kill her husband, but he demanded Rs 6 lakh, saying that he needs to hire other men, the DCP said.

said Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime) Harsh Indora. Cases under the Arms Act, NDPS Act and various sections of the IPC were registered against him. "He was also declared a proclaimed offender by the court," Indora added. The police were investigating

Caretaker exploits phone access to dupe elderly woman of Rs 14 lakh, arrested

New Delhi: The Delhi Police have arrested a man from Rajasthan for allegedly defrauding an elderly woman of over Rs 14 lakh while working as her caretaker in southwest Delhi's Dwarka, an official said on Sunday. The accused, identified as Deepak Kumar Saini (31), hails from Chokdi village in Rajasthan, he said. According to the police, Manjusha Rani Gupta, a resident of Royal Residency in Dwarka, filed a complaint that her former caretaker had accessed her mobile phone without permission and transferred money from her bank account to his account using Paytm between January 30 and June 6. Saini, who had been working in Gupta's house since March 2020, exploited his occasional access to her phone to install financial applications, retrieve OTPs, and carry out all unauthorised transactions without her knowledge, police said. He stole a total of Rs 14.35 lakh from Gupta's mobile phone. During the investigation, the police identified the accused by analysing call records, customer application forms, bank transactions, and IP logs. "It was also discovered that he was involved in online gambling," the officer said. According to the officer, Saini was arrested from Sikar, Rajasthan, and his mobile phone, containing evidence of the fraudulent transactions and gambling activity, was seized. During interrogation, he told the police that he had lost most of the stolen money in gambling, while the remaining amount was spent in clubs and hotels.

Staff member dies, two hurt as fire breaks out at hospital

New Delhi: A devastating fire broke out at a private hospital in the Anand Vihar area, East Delhi, on Saturday afternoon, leaving one staff member dead and two others injured. The fire was so intense that patients and staff members had to be evacuated by breaking the glass windows of the hospital. According to the Delhi Police, a PCR call was received at 12:20 pm regarding the fire at a private hospital. The blaze broke out in the server room on the ground floor of the three-storey hospital. Thick smoke engulfed the building, prompting an urgent rescue operation. Eight fire tenders, along with teams from the Delhi Police, were rushed to the spot. Eight patients, including those in critical condition, and three staff members, Amit, a housekeeping staff, Har Devi and Naresh, dialysis room employees, were rescued and shifted to Pushpanjali Hospital, where Amit was declared dead. The police said Amit was initially on the roof. He later locked himself in a bathroom on the third floor. "We had to use oxygen cylinders to enter the building filled with smoke. Visibility was almost zero, and staying inside for even a few minutes was making it hard to breathe," said fire officer Ashok Kumar Jaiswal. The fire was brought under control after nearly two hours. A case under Sections 287 and 106(1) (negligent conduct concerning fire or combustible matter, and causing death by negligence) of the BNS had been registered against the owner of the hospital. Further investigation was underway, said an official.

Woman, two daughters found dead in Delhi's Karawal Nagar

New Delhi: A 28-year-old woman and her two daughters, aged 7 and 5, were found dead in their home in Northeast Delhi's Karawal Nagar area in the wee hours of Saturday, the police said. The husband of the deceased, who is suspected to have killed them, is absconding, they added. As per the police, a call regarding the death of a woman and her two daughters was received at Karawal Nagar police station. On reaching the spot, a police team found the bodies of a woman and her two daughters in their room, an official said. Crime and FSL teams reached the spot to collect evidence and examined the crime scene to gather clues, the official added. The bodies of the deceased have been sent to GTB Hospital for post-mortem and police teams have been formed to trace the husband of the deceased, he said. A case under Section 103(1) (murder) of BNS has been registered at Karawal Nagar police station and further investigation is under way, the official said.

Wanted criminal nabbed after encounter in Gurugram

New Delhi: The police arrested a wanted criminal after a brief encounter near Pachgaon in the early hours of Friday. The accused, who police say conducted reconnaissance before last month's attack on Haryanvi singer Rahul Fazilpuria, is also suspected of involvement in the recent murder of property dealer Rohit Shaheen. During the exchange of fire, the accused sustained a gunshot wound to his leg and was taken to hospital for treatment. According to police, the accused has been identified as Ramandeep alias Petrol (24), a resident of Kherka village in Sirsa district. He is wanted in over a dozen serious criminal cases, including murder, attempt to murder, robbery and dacoity.

No research behind overage vehicle ban, Commission for Air Quality Management

The Sikh Times

New Delhi: The Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) has admitted it has not conducted any research or study on pollution caused by diesel vehicles older than 10 years and petrol vehicles older than 15 years that form the basis of the overage vehicle ban in Delhi-NCR. The CAQM shared this in a reply to an RTI application filed by environmentalist Amit Gupta. Asked if there was any other research that formed the basis of the ban, the commission said the restrictions on "end-of-life" (EoL) vehicles stem from the

National Green Tribunal's (NGT) order in Vardham Kaushik vs Union of India & Ors and the Supreme Court's order in M C Mehta vs Union of India & Ors. Last month, the CAQM put on hold until October 31 the enforcement of its earlier directive that fuel stations in Delhi should not supply petrol or diesel to overage vehicles. The decision came after the Delhi government cited "operational and infrastructural challenges" in implementing the measure from July 1. EoL vehicles include diesel vehicles older than 10 years and petrol vehicles older than 15 years,

irrespective of the state reaction won't help.



they are registered in. "The fight against pollution cannot be won in a day, it needs proper planning and action. Vehicle pollution is a big reason so is dust but a knee-jerk

Maximum cities in NCR do not have proper public transport and even in Delhi it's not up to the mark. First, we need to improve public transport and need strong action on

dust, construction and industry pollution as well," Gupta said. According to official data, Delhi has 62 lakh such vehicles, including 41 lakh two-wheelers. Across the NCR, the number is around 44 lakh, mostly concentrated in Gurugram, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, Gautam Budh Nagar and Sonapat. The July order said the fuel ban in Delhi would be launched simultaneously in these five high-vehicle-density NCR districts from November 1, after installation of Automated Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras. The mechanism will be extended to the rest of the NCR

districts from April 1 next year. The Delhi government told the CAQM that the ANPR system, meant to identify EoL vehicles by checking number plates against the VAHAN database, was facing software glitches, problems with camera placement, malfunctioning sensors and incomplete integration with neighbouring states' vehicle databases. In the past, the Supreme Court and the NGT have pulled up authorities over poor progress in removing old and polluting vehicles from the NCR despite repeated directions. The Delhi government has also filed a review application in the apex court, seeking reconsideration of the 2018 ban on overage vehicles.

Korean restaurateur alleges harassment by Gurugram mall

New Delhi: A South Korean woman, Hyang Lee, has accused the management of Global Foyer Mall on Gurugram's Golf Course Road of harassment over the operation of her restaurant, MISO. The matter drew police attention after her video alleging repeated disruptions by the mall went viral on social media. In the video, released on Friday, Lee claimed despite paying rent and maintenance charges, the mall authorities had repeatedly disconnected her restaurant's water and electricity supply. The Gurugram police, acknowledging the civil nature of the dispute, stated on Saturday they would facilitate a meeting between both parties on Monday. "I have been running my restaurant legally

for 14 years, complying with all Indian laws and licenses. For the past three years, the mall management and builder have harassed me by illegally cutting essential services. If no action is taken, I'll be forced to return to my country with a bitter experience," Lee said in her statement. She has also lodged a complaint with the Gurugram police and written to the South Korean Embassy. In her letter, Lee alleged the mall's actions were aimed at coercing her to vacate the leased premises. She said the disruptions have caused significant financial losses and urged authorities to safeguard her right to conduct business. According to an official

police statement, a complaint was registered at the Sushant Lok police station on August 7. The following day, a meeting was held at the police station between Lee and the mall management, during which it was

established that Lee had been operating her restaurant in the mall for approximately 14 years.

NAME CHANGE

I, Salmuddin/ Salmu S/o Nabba R/o Tabala Mohalla, Ghosera (1611) Ghosera, Mewat, Haryana-122103 have changed my name to Salmuddin.

NAME CHANGE

I, Radhakant Poddar S/o Arjun Poddar R/o Bhigana Mendol Tola, Bhogkariat, Purnia, Bihar-854337 declare that Radhakant Poddar and Radhey Shyam both are same person i.e myself

NAME CHANGE

It is for general information that I, NEETU GOSWAMI W/O GIRD, HARI LAL R/O F-268/21, GALI NO-21, PUL PEHLADPUR PO, BADARPUR, DISTRICT SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044, declare that name of mine has been changed to NEETU GOSHWAMI in my minor daughter's name TWINKAL aged 16 years in her 10th class educational documents. The actual name of mine is NEETU GOSWAMI which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE

I, LAXMAVVA Mother of No. 2620457M Rank-SEP Name-PAN-DURANG L SIDDANNAVAR residing at SIDDANNAVAR STREET MADAMAGERI, TEH-SAUDNAT-12, DISTRICT KARNATAKA, KARNATAKA-591129, have changed my name from LAXMAVVA to LAXMAVVA LAXMAPPA SHIDDANNAVAR for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 09/08/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, SAHIDUL HAQUE Father of TOUJID ALAM HAQUE R/O FLAT NO-95, UG/FLOOR, A-BLOCK, GALI NO-12, ROAD NO-4, MAHIPALPUR, PO-GURGAON ROAD, DIST-SOUTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110037, have changed my name from SAHIDUL HAQUE to SAHIDUL HOQUE for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, GADDAIAH Father of No. 2618551X Rank-L/NK Name-VAJRAPU DURG RAO residing at DOOR NO 24-98-1/1, GONTHI, NAVANIPALEM PEDDAGANTY-DA (P.O), GAJUWAKA (T.O) (P.S) (T.K), VISAKHAPATNAM (DIST), ANDHRA PRADESH-530026, have changed my name from GADDAIAH to VANJARAPU GADDAIAH for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 09/08/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

It is for general information that I, PRATEEK SINGH S/O KRISHAN VIR SINGH R/O M-247, SECTOR-12, PRATAP VIHAR, GHAZIABAD, UP-201009 declare that name of my father has been changed to PRATEEK SINGH S/O KRISHAN VIR SINGH in my 10th and 12th educational documents. The actual name of my father is KRISHAN VIR SINGH which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, SADIA W/o AMIRUL HUSSAIN, R/o 1375, Y-BLOCK, Mangol Puri North West Delhi Delhi-110083 declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as SAYEDA in my minor son namely RIHAN, aged 16 years in his school record. The actual name of mine is SADIA, which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE

It is for general information that I, ASHISH SHARMA S/O OM PRAKASH SHARMA R/O J-1/1, PHASE-1, RAM MANDIR, BUDH VIHAR, SULTANPURI C-BLOCK, NORTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110086, declare that name of my wife and my minor son has been wrongly written as PREETI and ABHIMANYU in my minor son ABHIMANYU SHARMA aged 13 years in his School Record. The actual name of my wife and my minor son are PRITI SHARMA and ABHIMANYU SHARMA, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

GENERAL PUBLIC IS HEREBY INFORMED THAT ORIGINAL POSSESSION CERTIFICATE, ORIGINAL ALLOTMENT LETTER, ORIGINAL LEASE DEED DT. 28.03.2012 (DOC. NO. 6340) ALL ISSUED BY GR. NOIDA IN FAVOUR OF MR. ATAM PARKASH ARORA AND ORIGINAL TRANSFER DEED DT. 29.03.2014 (DOC. NO. 10885) EXECUTED BY MR. ATAM PARKASH ARORA IN FAVOUR OF MR. RAJANISH ALL DOCUMENTS EXECUTED FOR FLAT NO. 417, GROUND FLOOR, BLOCK B, SECTOR SWNR1, SWARN NAGAR, GR. NOIDA, U.P. HAVE BEEN LOST BY THE CURRENT OWNER MRS. RAJ KUMARI SHARMA S/O MR. PRADEEP SHARMA, R/O, L-4011, ASSOTECH SPRINGFIELD, NEAR AMRAPALI GRAND, SECTOR-ZETA-1, GR. NOIDA, U.P. AND SAID OWNER MRS. RAJ KUMARI SHARMA PURCHASED THE SAID PROPERTY VIDE TRANSFER DEED DT. 21.09.2016 (DOC. NO. 25810). NOW MRS. SARIKA GUPTA IS GOING TO PURCHASE THE SAID PROPERTY, FROM OWNER / SELLER MRS. RAJ KUMARI SHARMA, WHICH WILL BE MORTGAGED WITH IFL HOME FINANCE LIMITED AS SECURITY AGAINST HOUSING LOAN FOR PURCHASING OF SAID PROPERTY. PLEASE SUBMIT THE SAID ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS IF FIND BY ANY PERSON. ALSO PLEASE CONTACT WITH WRITTEN OBJECTION LETTER WITH RELEVANT DOCUMENTS WITH UNDERSIGNED IF HAVING ANY OBJECTION IN RESPECT OF SAID PROPERTY/SALE DEED WITHIN 7 DAYS OF THIS PUBLICATION. ITS USE BY ANYONE IS ILLEGAL.

ADITYA VERMA, ADVOCATE

E-16, MANSAROVAR PARK, SHAHDARA, DELHI-110032 MOBILE NO. 9999042521

NAME CHANGE

It is for general information that I, HEERA LAL S/O BHAWAR LAL R/O 310, B.SS Near Bharat Sewak Society, Rajokari Patari, South West Delhi, Delhi-110038, declare that name of mine, wife and my minor son has been wrongly written as HIRA LAL, LALI and SAHIL in my minor son namely SAHIL KUMAR aged 15 years in his school record. The actual name of mine, my wife and my minor son are HEERA LAL, LALI DEVI and SAHIL KUMAR Respectively which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE

It is for general information that I, SHIMLA W/O MAHENDER R/O 310, FPS Wali Gali, Rajokari Pahadi, A F Rajokari, South West Delhi, Delhi-110038, declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as SIMLA DEVI in my minor son namely RAHUL aged 13 years in his school record. The actual name of mine is SHIMLA which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE

I, SEBESTHI AMMAL Mother of No. 2615208K Rank-HAV Name-JOSEPH VINOTH S residing at DOOR NO-3391, VPO-MATTYARENDI, TEH-MUDIKULATHUR, DIST-RAMANATHAPURAM, TAMIL NADU-623533, have changed my name from SEBESTHI AMMAL to SEBASATHIYAMMAL for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 09/08/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, SOOSAI IYNDU KAYAM Father of No. 2615208K Rank-HAV Name-JOSEPH VINOTH S residing at DOOR NO-3391, VPO-MATTYARENDI, TEH-MUDIKULATHUR, DIST-RAMANATHAPURAM, TAMIL NADU-623533, have changed my name from SOOSAI IYNDU KAYAM to SUSAI AINDHUKAYAM for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 09/08/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, RANGAVVA Mother of No. 2611475N Rank-HAV Name-BASAVARAJ HUNAGUNDI residing at VPO-NEELAGUND, TEH-BADAMI, DIST-BAGALKOT, KARNATAKA-587201, have changed my name from RANGAVVA to RANGAVVA HUNAGUNDI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 09/08/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, SUVARNA KUDACHI Mother of No. 2620452N Rank-SEP Name-BHEEMARAJ SHANKAR KUDACHI residing at TALUK-KAGAWAD NEHARU CHOUK AINAPUR, AINAPUR, BELGAUM, KARNATAKA-591303, have changed my name from SUVARNA KUDACHI to SUVARNA SHANKARLING KUDACHI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 09/08/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, SHANKAR KUDACHI Father of No. 2620452N Rank-SEP Name-BHEEMARAJ SHANKAR KUDACHI residing at TALUK-KAGAWAD NEHARU CHOUK AINAPUR, AINAPUR, BELGAUM, KARNATAKA-591303, have changed my name from SHANKARLING KUDACHI to SHANKARLING SHIVLING KUDACHI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 09/08/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NEWS BOX

Astronauts return to Earth with SpaceX after 5 months at the International Space Station

world. (Agency)

Four astronauts returned to Earth on Saturday after hustling to the International Space Station five months ago to relieve the stuck test pilots of Boeing's Starliner.Their SpaceX capsule parachuted into the Pacific off the Southern California coast a day after departing the orbiting lab. "Welcome home," SpaceX Mission Control radioed.

Splashing down were NASA's Anne McClain and Nichole Ayers, Japan's Takuya Onishi and Russia's Kirill Peskov. They launched in March as replacements for the two NASA astronauts assigned to Starliner's botched demo.

Starliner malfunctions kept Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams at the space station for more than nine months instead of a week. NASA ordered Boeing's new crew capsule to return empty and switched the pair to SpaceX. They left soon after McClain and her crew arrived to take their places. Wilmore has since retired from NASA.This image provided by NASA shows, from left, NASA's SpaceX Crew-10 members JAXA (Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency) astronaut Takuya Onishi, NASA astronauts Anne McClain and Nichole Ayers, and Roscosmos cosmonaut Kirill Peskov posing for a portrait inside the SpaceX Dragon crew spacecraft that carried them to the International Space Station and will return them back to Earth.This image provided by NASA shows, from left, NASA's SpaceX Crew-10 members JAXA (Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency) astronaut Takuya Onishi, NASA astronauts Anne McClain and Nichole Ayers, and Roscosmos cosmonaut Kirill Peskov posing for a portrait inside the SpaceX Dragon crew spacecraft that carried them to the International Space Station and will return them back to Earth.(Photo | AP)Before leaving the space station on Friday, McClain made note of "some tumultuous times on Earth" with people struggling.

"We want this mission, our mission, to be a reminder of what people can do when we work together, when we explore together," she said.McClain looked forward to "doing nothing for a couple of days" once back home in Houston. High on her crewmates' wish list: hot showers and juicy burgers.It was SpaceX's third Pacific splashdown with people on board, but the first for a NASA crew in 50 years. Elon Musk's company switched capsule returns from Florida to California's coast earlier this year to reduce the risk of debris falling on populated areas. Back-to-back private crews were the first to experience Pacific homecomings.

UK arrests 365 people as pro-Palestine protesters defy new law

world. (Agency)

Police in London arrested at least 365 people Saturday for supporting Palestine Action, at the latest and largest protest backing the group since the government banned it last month under anti-terror laws.The Metropolitan Police said it made the hundreds of arrests, thought to be one of the highest ever at a single protest in the UK capital, for "supporting a proscribed organisation".

It also arrested seven for other offences including assaults on officers, though none were seriously injured, it added.The government outlawed Palestine Action in early July days after it took responsibility for a break-in at an air force base in southern England that caused an estimated £7 million (\$9.3 million) of damage to two aircraft.The group said its activists were responding to Britain's indirect military support for Israel amid the war in Gaza.

Britain's interior ministry reiterated ahead of Saturday's protests that Palestine Action is also suspected of other "serious attacks" that involved "violence, significant injuries and extensive criminal damage".

But critics, including the United Nations and NGOs like Amnesty International and Greenpeace, have lambasted the move as legal overreach and a threat to free speech.A group called Defend Our Juries, which organised Saturday's protests and previous demonstrations against the ban, said "unprecedented numbers" had risked "arrest and possible imprisonment" to "defend this country's ancient liberties".

Bangladesh Elections To Be Held In First Week Of February: Poll Body

WORLD. (Agency)

Bangladesh's poll body chief on Saturday said general elections would be held in the first week of February 2026 but ensuring it in a free, fair and impartial manner remained a major challenge.

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) AMM Nasir Uddin, however, said the exact date would be disclosed two months before the schedule was announced."People have lost confidence in the election system, the Election Commission and the administrative machinery involved in the electoral process," state-run Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) quoted Uddin as saying at a function in northwestern Rangpur district.Uddin said his office, however, was "working tirelessly to restore this lost trust." The CEC's comments come four days after interim government Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus announced that the polls would be held in February next year. Yunus had made the announcement coinciding with the first anniversary of the ouster of prime minister Sheikh Hasina's Awami League regime on August 5.The February 2026 polls would be the 13th Parliamentary elections. Uddin attended a meeting with deputy commissioners and superintendents of police of the eight districts of Rangpur division at the Divisional Commissioner's Office in Rangpur on the issue of law and order.

'Uneasy coalition': After busy first 100 days, Germany's Merz faces discord at home

Merz's heavy focus on global events has earned him the moniker of "foreign chancellor" -- but trouble looms at home, where his SPD allies have often felt overshadowed or sidelined.

BERLIN (Agency)

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz has driven sweeping changes in security, economic and migration policy during his first 100 days in office, but faces widening cracks in his uneasy coalition.

On election night in February, a jubilant Merz promised to bring a bit of "rambo zambo" to the post -- using a colloquialism that can evoke a wild and joyous ride, or chaos and mayhem.Having achieved his life's ambition at age 69 to run Europe's top economy, Merz lost no time to push change, mostly in response to transatlantic turbulence sparked by US President Donald Trump."Germany is back," Merz said, vowing to revive the economy, the military and Berlin's international standing after what he labelled three lacklustre years under his centre-left predecessor Olaf Scholz.Even before taking office, Merz's Christian Democrats (CDU/CSU) and their governing partners from Scholz's Social Democratic party (SPD) loosened debt rules and unlocked hundreds of billions of euros for Germany's armed forces and its crumbling infrastructure.

Merz vowed to build "Europe's largest conventional army" in the face of a hostile Russia and keep up strong support for Ukraine in lockstep with Paris and London. A promise to ramp up NATO spending endeared Merz to Trump, who greeted him warmly at a White House meeting in June, only weeks after a jarring Oval Office showdown with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky.When Israel bombed Iranian targets, Merz, with a penchant for strong and often controversial one-liners, praised it for doing the "dirty work" -- but last Friday he took the bold step of freezing arms exports to Israel over its Gaza campaign.Migration crackdown

On the home front, Merz has pressed a crackdown on irregular migration, a sharp departure from the centrist course of his long-time party rival Angela Merkel.

He has said he must address voter concerns about immigration to stem the rise of the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party, which won a record 20 percent in February's election.Merz's heavy focus on global events has earned him the moniker of "foreign chancellor" -- but trouble looms at home, where his SPD allies have often felt overshadowed or sidelined.

To many of them, Merz's right-wing positions have been hard to swallow in the marriage of convenience they entered following the SPD's dismal election outcome of 16 percent.German voters have not yet fallen in love with Merz either. His personal approval rating slipped 10 points to just 32 percent in the latest poll by public broadcaster ARD.udge row

In an early sign of trouble, Merz's inauguration on May 6 turned into a white-knuckle ride when rebel MPs opposed him in the first round of the secret ballot. He was confirmed in the second round, but the debacle pointed to simmering resentment in the left-right coalition.Many have chafed at his hard line on immigration, his vow to slash social welfare and his limited enthusiasm for climate protection.Merz also sparked controversy when he dismissed plans to hoist an LGBTQ rainbow flag on the parliament building by saying the Reichstag was "not a circus tent."



Armenians caught between hope and distrust after accord with Azerbaijan

YEREVAN (Agency)

The streets were almost deserted in Yerevan Saturday because of the summer heat, but at shaded parks and fountains, Armenians struggled to make sense of what the accord signed a day earlier in Washington means for them.The leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan, two Caucasian countries embroiled in a territorial conflict since the fall of the USSR, met Friday and signed a peace treaty under the watch of US President Donald Trump.

In Yerevan, however, few of the people asked by AFP were enthusiastic.

"It's a good thing that this document was signed because Armenia has no other choice," said Asatur Srapyan, an 81-year-old retiree.He believes Armenia hasn't achieved much with this draft agreement, but it's a step in the right direction."We are very few in number, we don't have a powerful army, we don't have a powerful ally behind us, unlike Azerbaijan," he said.

"This accord is a good opportunity for peace."Maro Huneyan, a 31-year-old aspiring diplomat, also considers the pact "acceptable", provided it does not contradict her country's constitution.

"If Azerbaijan respects all the agreements, it's very important for us. But I'm not sure it will keep its promises and respect the points of the agreement," she added.'Endless concessions'But Anahit Eylasyan, 69, opposes the agreement and, more specifically, the plan to create a transit zone crossing Armenia to connect the Nakhchivan region to the rest of Azerbaijan."We are effectively losing control of our territory. It's as if, in my own apartment, I had to ask a stranger if I could go from one room to another," she explains.

She also hopes not to see Russia, an ally of Armenia despite recent tensions, expelled from the region.

Anahit also criticizes Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan for "making decisions for everyone" and for his "endless concessions to Azerbaijan".

"We got nothing in exchange, not our prisoners, nor our occupied lands, nothing. It's just a piece of paper to us," she fumes.Shavarsh Hovhannisyan, a 68-year-old construction engineer, agrees, saying the agreement "is just an administrative formality that brings nothing to Armenia."

"We can't trust Azerbaijan," Hovhannisyan asserted, while accusing Pashinyan of having "turned his back" on Russia and Iran.

"It's more of a surrender document than a peace treaty, while Trump only thinks about his image, the Nobel Prize."

'More stability...in the short term'

According to President Trump, Armenia and Azerbaijan have committed "to stop all fighting forever; open up commerce, travel and diplomatic relations; and respect each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity."

For Olesya Vartanyan, an independent researcher specializing in the Caucasus.



Israel faces growing condemnation over military expansion in Gaza

Russia said Israel's plan will aggravate the "already extremely dramatic situation" in Gaza.

DEIR AL-BALAH (Agency)

International condemnation grew Saturday over Israel's decision for a military takeover of Gaza City, while tens of thousands of Israelis rallied in what local media called one of the largest anti-government protests in recent months following 22 months of war.Ceasefire efforts appeared to be reviving with Israel's announcement. U.S. special envoy Steve Witkoff was expected to meet with Qatar's prime minister in Spain on Saturday to discuss a new proposal to end the war, according to two officials familiar with the talks, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to speak with the media.

Mediators Egypt and Qatar are preparing a new ceasefire framework that would include the release of all hostages — dead and alive — in one go in return for the war's end and the withdrawal of Israeli forces, two Arab officials have told The Associated Press.Health officials said that 20 Palestinians seeking aid were shot dead Saturday and 11 adults died of malnutrition-related causes in the past 24 hours, as the criticism of Israel came with pleas to allow far more food to reach people in the besieged enclave.Shut the country down'Hostages' families pressured Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government amid new fears for the 50 remaining hostages, with 20 of them thought to be alive and struggling.

Einav Zangauker, whose son Matan is held in Gaza, called on Israelis including the powerful Histadrut labor union to "help us save the hostages, the soldiers and the state of Israel" and appeared to call for a general strike: "Shut the country down."A joint statement by nine countries including Germany, Britain, France and Canada said that they "strongly reject" Israel's decision for the large-scale military operation, saying it will worsen the "catastrophic humanitarian situation," endanger hostages and further risk mass displacement. They said any attempts at annexation or settlement in Gaza violate international law.A separate statement by more than 20 countries including ceasefire mediators .

European leaders urge more 'pressure' on Russia ahead of Trump-Putin summit

European leaders issued a joint statement overnight Saturday to Sunday saying that "only an approach that combines active diplomacy, support to Ukraine and pressure on the Russian Federation to end their illegal war can succeed."They welcomed Trump's efforts, saying they were ready to help diplomatically -- by maintaining support to Ukraine, as well as by upholding and imposing restrictive measures against Russia."The current line of contact should be the starting point of negotiations," said the statement, signed by leaders from France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Britain, Finland and EU Commission chief Ursula Von Der Leyen, without giving more details.They also said a resolution "must protect Ukraine's and Europe's vital security interests," including "the need for robust and credible security guarantees that enable Ukraine to effectively defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity."

"The path to peace in Ukraine cannot be decided without Ukraine," they said.

National security advisors from Kyiv's allies -- including the United States, EU nations and the UK -- gathered in Britain Saturday to align their views ahead of the Putin-Trump summit.French President Emmanuel Macron, following phone calls with Zelensky, Starmer and German



Gaza civil defence says 37 killed by Israeli fire

GAZA (Agency)

Gaza's civil defence agency said at least 37 people were killed by Israeli fire on Saturday, including 30 civilians who were waiting to collect aid.

Civil defence spokesman Mahmud Bassal told AFP that 12 people were killed and nearly 200 wounded when Israeli forces opened fire on them as they gathered near a border crossing in northern Gaza that has been used for aid deliveries.Six more people were killed and 30 wounded after Israeli troops targeted civilians assembling near an aid point in central Gaza, he said.

Strikes in central Gaza also resulted in multiple casualties, according to Bassal, while a drone attack near the southern city of Khan Yunis killed at least three people and wounded several others.

Media restrictions in Gaza and difficulties accessing swathes of the territory mean AFP is unable to independently verify the tolls and details provided by the civil defence and the Israeli military.

Thousands of Palestinians congregate daily near food distribution points in Gaza, including four managed by the US- and Israeli-backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation.Since launching in late May, its operations have been marred by almost-daily reports of Israeli forces firing on those waiting to collect aid.

Israeli restrictions on the entry of supplies into Gaza since the start of the war nearly two years ago have led to shortages of food and essential supplies, including medicine and fuel, which hospitals require to power their generators.Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu faces mounting pressure to agree to a ceasefire to bring the territory's more than two million people back from the brink of famine and free the hostages held by Palestinian militants.But early Friday, the Israeli security cabinet approved plans for a major operation to seize Gaza City, triggering a wave of outrage across the globe.Despite the backlash and rumours of dissent from Israeli military top brass, Netanyahu has remained defiant over the decision.

In a post on social media late Friday, he said "we are not going to occupy Gaza -- we are going to free Gaza from Hamas".



Two arrested for ‘snatching’ senior citizen’s gold chain in Vadodara



Vadodara . (Agency)
The Vadodara city Detection of Crime Branch (DCB) Saturday arrested two persons for alleged snatching chain from a senior citizen after luring her to board an auto-rickshaw. The two accused are part of a gang, which also includes women, involved in committing theft of gold ornaments, police said. The arrested have been identified as Ravi Tartiya and Sunil Chudasma, both aged 27. According to Vadodara DCB, the accused stole a chain worth around Rs 2 lakh from the woman when she travelled on the auto-rickshaw on August 7. With help of the CCTV footage, the DCB nabbed the two accused and seized the auto-rickshaw they were using to lure and rob passengers.

“The gold chain has been recovered from the accused. Two mobile phones and a cutter were also recovered from them. Two women, who are part of the gang, are wanted in the case,” the DCB said in a statement. Both the arrested accused have been previously involved in four cases of theft in Gujarat as well as in other FIRs lodged against them in Haryana. The two accused have been booked under Section 303 (theft) of the BNS.

Pune: Armed robbery at jewellery shop, 2 arrested within 24 hours

In his speech, Ajit Pawar had even praised the new building of Chandan Nagar police station. He said that the new police station building was constructed so well that people should go there at least once to see it.

Pune . (Agency)
Within 24 hours of three men robbing a jewellery shop in Wadgaonsheri in broad daylight on Friday afternoon, Pune Police arrested two of the robbers, while a search was underway for the third suspect. The robbery took place in the jurisdiction of Chandan Nagar police station a few minutes after its new building was inaugurated virtually by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar on Friday. In his speech, Ajit Pawar had even praised the new building of Chandan Nagar police station. He said that the new police station building was constructed so well that people should go there at least once to see it. However, within a few minutes, three persons robbed Ashapura Jewellers at Sainath Nagar in Wadgaonsheri, located in the jurisdiction of Chandan Nagar police station. After receiving information about the incident, a police team went to the spot to investigate. Police said three men carrying sharp weapons entered the jewellery shop around 1 pm. They threatened the shop owner and his brother. The shop owner threw a stool at the robbers while trying to resist them. But the robbers looted three grams of gold ornaments worth Rs 30,000 and escaped from the spot on a two wheeler. The shop owner lodged the first information report (FIR) in this case at the Chandan Nagar police station under sections 309(2)(4), 311, 333, 3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

Ahmedabad’s unique snack shop run by prisoners of Sabarmati Central Jail

Ahmedabad .(Agency)
It all began with a kite festival in 1995-96, where a fair was organised at the police headquarters in Ahmedabad and jail inmates had a stall where they sold bakery products, farsan (fried snacks) and bhajiyas (fritters). The first store run by convicts of Sabarmati Central Jail was later opened close to the prison on an experimental basis. Thus was born Jail Bhajiya House. Arvind Parmar, the Sabarmati Central Jail factory manager under whom Jail Bhajiya House falls, says, “In 1997, the jail authorities allotted a place near RTO Circle to a jail convict who knew how to make farsan to start the selling of bhajiya on an experimental basis. The director-general of prison then was Vijay Singh Guman. It started in a small room on the property of the jail. The outlet got a good response and so, a shade with tables and chairs for customers was erected. As the shop started getting good response, we started putting 8-10 more prisoners on the job at the shop,” Parmar

added. The bhajiyas became so popular that they now do business up to Rs 1 crore, says Director-General of Prisons K.L.N Rao. About the secret recipe for the bhajiyas, Parmar said, “We have a fixed scale according to which the bhajiyas are being made. Skilled prisoners make the bhajiya, and under them other prisoners also get trained before the departure of the former. We strictly take care of the quality of the ingredients used. The officials of the food and drugs department regularly visit the shop and till date there is no quality-related complaint.” According to Parmar, in 2009, the place where the shop stood was acquired for road widening and a new place was allocated nearby. The jail authorities built a new ground+one storey building there and started a live counter of bhajiya. At the same building, the jail authorities also opened a



room where various jail products were also sold. “That shop functioned till around six-month months back. And now it has been dismantled and a new building is being built for Jail Bhajiya House with a heritage look. Currently, the sale of bhajiya has been temporarily shifted near Sabarmati Central Jail till the renovated building is ready,” Parmar said.

Three-storey building with a heritage look

Jail Bhajiya House is being rebuilt into a three-storey building with a “heritage look” at the same spot. The renovation is likely to be over in the next six-eight months, says Rao, adding that the shop has become a landmark in the city. The revamped building of Jail Bhajiya House will be a three-storey structure comprising a bhajiya selling point, a display unit of products manufactured in jail, a banquet hall and restaurant serving Gandhi Thali, and a photo gallery with historic pictures. The estimated cost of the construction of the renovated building is Rs 2.4 crore. Parmar said that for the past around 10 years, prisoners of Sabarmati Central Jail also go to Kartik Purnima Fair in Somnath to sell the bhajiya in a stall provided by Somnath Temple Trust. Similarly, Jail Bhajiya House also sell the bhajiya at the food zone during the biennial Vibrant Gujarat event organised by Gujarat government

GCC reiterates intent to secure jobs, says protesters joining private firm

CHENNAI .(Agency)
The Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) on Saturday said conservancy staff who are staging protest against outsourcing of solid waste management are gradually joining CESPL, the firm which has bagged the contract in Royapuram and Thiru Vi Ka Nagar. A release from the GCC has come even as a section of the conservancy staff continued their protest on Saturday. In the release, GCC reiterated that it has been taking adequate measures to ensure job security of the workers from self-help groups (SHGs) who were working there earlier. Pointing out that CESPL, which is a part of Ramky group, has so far recruited 1,770 of the 3,809 workers it needed in the two zones, GCC said that, as per its advice, the company has reserved the remaining 2,039 jobs for the temporary workers from the SHGs. It added that from Saturday, the SHG workers have begun joining CESPL by submitting letters expressing their interest. Meanwhile, the protest that is under way since August 1, continued near Ripon

Buildings, with workers stating that they were awaiting clarity on the key issue of whether they would continue to receive their existing pay of Rs 23,000 a month. While the GCC



release did not comment on this, senior corporation officials told TNIE that they were considering revising the pay offered at Thiru Vi Ka Nagar. “Initially, workers in these zones will receive Rs 580 per day, excluding deductions

for PF and insurance. However, a phased increase can be implemented. Meanwhile, a one-time welcome bonus of Rs 3,000 will be provided by the contractor as compensation,” an official said. Negotiations between officials and workers continued until late on Friday. LTUC state secretary K Suresh alleged that the ruling party councillors and a few officials had begun approaching protesters individually, urging them to join CESPL or face job loss. HR & CE minister PK Sekarbabu, responding to a query from the media late on Friday, said the DMK had not promised regularisation of employment of conservancy staff before coming to power. The workers had been demanding the DMK to keep its poll promise. Sekarbabu’s curt refusal to answer a question from a staff of Neelam Social, which was covering the protest, attracted criticism from the Chennai Press Club. The minister had said that he was responding “only to media” and not others.

Roaring lion, galloping horse and more: 10 new sculptures made from scrap metal to feature in Ahmedabad’s beautification drive

Ahmedabad .(Agency)
TA gigantic statue of a roaring Asiatic lion and a galloping horse are among the new sculptures made from scrap to be added to the city’s landscape soon, The Indian Express has learnt. Each of these is crafted entirely from discarded metal sourced from the city’s urban waste. This initiative blends public art with sustainability, giving scrap a second life while telling stories rooted in culture, identity, and imagination. In the open-air studio of sculptor Sunil Shridhar, one can see an athlete in blue throwing the javelin, presumably to honour Neeraj Chopra, a flag sculpture representing the five Olympic rings and one titled ‘Gravity of Love’ featuring a couple in a dance pose, suspended mid-motion inside a metallic ring. Then there is Weapon of Wisdom, where a pencil spirals around a finger like the Sudarshan Chakra. Other planned installations include a yoga posture, a figurative abstract sculpture that disrupts urban monotony with mythic proportions, and the ‘Wheel of Peace,’ representing the five elements—earth, water, fire, air, and space—in a flowing,

interconnected form. Across Ahmedabad, 22 sculptures have already found their place in the city’s ever-evolving urban landscape, each one forged from discarded scrap metal, and each telling a story of resilience, identity, and transformation. Now, 10 more are set to rise,



promising to add new layers of meaning and imagination to the city’s streets. This initiative is being executed in collaboration with artists contracted by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC). One of them, Sunil Shridhar, told The Indian Express, “I have worked abroad and received several opportunities to continue there. But my heart

has always been set on contributing to India; that is the thought that drives me.” “Ahmedabad is my hometown, and when you are working for your own city, you give it your absolute best. If possible, I would like to extend this kind of artistic contribution to all of Gujarat, and eventually, to the entire country.” The use of scrap metal to create public art has a dual function: it is a cost-effective way to beautify the city, and it sends a strong message about reuse and resourcefulness at a time when cities across India are grappling with the challenges of urban waste. Municipal Commissioner Banchhanidhi Pani said repurposing scrap metal into public sculptures is part of Ahmedabad’s broader ‘waste to wealth’ initiative. “The metal used in these installations is sourced from urban waste collected in and around the city,” he said. He added that Ahmedabad’s recent recognition with the Clean City award in the over 10 lakh population category reinforces this vision. “Our focus on recycling, reusing, and reducing aligns seamlessly with the ethos of the Waste to Wealth mission,” he said.

Cattle markets at a standstill, farmers leaving animals on road: The fallout from Maharashtra butchers’ strike over cow vigilantism

Cattle traders in Maharashtra allege that cow vigilantes are damaging their vehicles and confiscating their animals illegally.

Pune .(Agency)
Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar earlier this week instructed the police to prevent cow vigilantes from boarding or inspecting vehicles transporting animals. This directive comes in response to the ongoing strike by the Qureshi community, which has been protesting since July 22 against what they describe as an increase in harassment by cow vigilantes. With over 10 lakh butchers from the Qureshi community in Maharashtra going on strike, cattle markets in Akluj and Sangola taluka of Solapur district have virtually stopped operations. It, in turn, has impacted farmers who have now started leaving their unproductive animals loose across the countryside. Afsar Qureshi, member of the All India Jamiatul Quresh and the union of cattle traders, said their decision to stop trade was taken in the face of increased cow vigilantism. “Even with proper

documentation, we face violence from self-declared cow vigilantes. There is no protection for us who are carrying out trade in the legal manner,” he said. Qureshi said the local police, at times, apply stringent sections of the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act, 1999. “Bribes are asked of us for freeing animals despite the court’s ruling in our favour,” he said. Afsar said when their members transport animals, the vigilantes stop vehicles on highways. “Even if we have proper papers, they confiscate our animals. Our vehicles are damaged intentionally,” he said. The Qureshi community, Afsar said, is spread across the state with a population of over 25 lakh , with a sizable portion of them being involved in the trade of cattle and meat. Since 2015, when the Devendra Fadnavis-led BJP-Shiv Sena government amended the Maharashtra Animal Preservation Act, 1976, to ban the slaughter of cow progeny, the trade in oxen



and barren animals has completely collapsed, he said. Afsar noted that this single action has put over 5 lakh traditional butchers out of business. He said cattle traders are easy targets for many. “When we are transporting the animals, many cow vigilantes frame us in false cases. They

impound our vehicles and take away our animals. By the time we get court orders, we have lost business,” he said.

Afsar said that while the Constitution has assured the right to livelihood, in the present environment, they are not allowed to practice the same. Senior cabinet leaders

have called for action against cattle traders. Afsar said almost everyone associated with the cattle trade is targeted because of their religion, with little support from anyone. Currently, this strike has severely impacted the operations of cattle markets that handle animals for slaughter. In the cattle market located in Akluj taluka of Solapur, farmers would typically bring their non-productive male buffaloes for sale every Monday. Rajendra Kakade, secretary of the market, said the market saw business of around Rs 50 lakh on Mondays. “Around 400-500 animals are sold with traders coming from every corner of the state,” he said. The market has completely shut down since the strike, leaving many farmers with no choice but to leave their animals on the roads. Similarly, the market in Sangola, located in the Solapur district, has also seen all activities come to a standstill. “We hope for a quick resolution to the matter,” said Kakade.

How young activists won a climate fight for the world

July 23 was a landmark day in the global fight for affixing legal responsibility on all nations for inaction to contain the harmful impact of climate change on people around the world. That day, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) at the Hague delivered an unequivocal judgement that governments are legally accountable for failure to act in accordance with the commitments they made while pledging support to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, which the Conference of Parties adopted in 2015. A panel of 15 judges gave their verdict in the form of an advisory opinion to the UN. The ICJ was responding to a referral by the UN General Assembly of a case initiated by several countries in 2023. While this verdict cannot be enforced by the ICJ, it provides a strong legal basis for international and national litigation against governments that are lax in fulfilling their commitments towards climate change mitigation. Under international law, even countries that have not signed the Paris Agreement or have exited from it, like the US, will now be open to legal scrutiny for acts of omission and commission that run counter to the global agenda for containing climate change. The verdict is a tribute to ICJ’s wisdom in identifying the International and inter-generational harm being caused by governments that are unresponsive to the threat of climate change. The case presents a remarkable story of how young climate activists combined audacity of imagination with astute activism at the global level, to invoke ICJ’s intervention by engaging the UN. It was initiated by law students from low-lying Pacific islands that face an imminent danger of their homes, fields and heritage being submerged by rising sea levels due to global warming. In 2019, a law student from Solomon Islands came up with the idea of approaching the UN for legal action. Cynthia Houniuihi was alarmed at the devastation caused by climate change in her home country. She proposed the idea in a classroom discussion. Undeterred by skepticism from some adults, she persuaded law students from other Pacific islands to unite in a fight for climate justice. Under her leadership, 27 law students across the islands formed an organisation called Pacific Island Students Fighting Climate Change (PISFCC). The Islanders had reason to be alarmed and energised for action. Sea levels had risen 3.5 cm across their countries over a decade. NASA estimates that in the next 30 years, Pacific island nations such as Tuvalu, Fiji and Kiribati will experience at least 15 cm of sea level rise. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s estimates, large portions of Tuvalu’s main island could get completely flooded and become totally uninhabitable by 2050.

Due to this existential threat, Tuvalu is taking steps to become the world’s first ‘digital nation’, and has initiated the ‘Future Now Project’, which involves creating its digital twin in the metaverse—preserving its culture and ensuring that its legal status and statehood survives in the case of its geological disappearance. Other small island nations are at grave danger too, as global temperatures rise in the Caribbean and Indian Ocean regions. The PISFCC has campaigned vigorously to build a global coalition of endangered island nations. Houniuihi enlisted the support of Vanuatu’s minister for foreign affairs. The government of Vanuatu garnered diplomatic support from other countries while PIFCC mobilised youth activists across the world. In March 2023, 132 governments co-sponsored a resolution in the General Assembly urging the UN to seek the ICJ’s legal opinion on the liability of countries for climate inaction.

Trump ko gussa kyon aata hai

THE GREAT GAME: Nations are lining up to cut deals with America, but India is reacting differently.

DONALD Trump has had a busy week. He has thrown the tariff gauntlet at India, doubling the tariff hike from 25 to 50 per cent. He has cancelled all trade talks with New Delhi. He has threatened India with secondary sanctions if it continues to buy cheap oil from Russia. He has ordered the deportation of several Bhutanese immigrants from the US. He has introduced a bond requiring some tourists to pay \$5,000-15,000 to be eligible for a US visa. He has ordered the collection of race and gender data, along with test point averages, from applicants applying to US colleges. You may well ask, US President ko itna gussa kyon aata hai. Why is he angry all the time. Deepak Chopra, the happiness guru, puts it down to Trump’s constant and desperate need for love, even adulation. He may well be right. Trump’s attention-seeking behaviour has not just turned the world upside down, it has had the dramatic effect of nations lining up to cut deals with America. Only India is reacting differently. Modi has said he won’t compromise on the interests of India’s farmers and is ready to pay the price for standing up to America. NSA Doval rushed to Moscow a few days ago, brought Vladimir Putin out of his quarters in the Kremlin for an arm embrace and a public promise to visit Delhi soon. The PM will soon visit China for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit. This week Modi seems to have fully understood the meaning of atmanirbharta, self-reliance, non-alignment — call it what you will. The idea that India remains within a self-imposed lakshman rekha while dealing with the outside world. The next few months promise to be interesting. The Quad summit is expected to be held in November, which means it’s Trump’s turn to come to India. A Russia-India-China trilateral, which India has been holding off for some time because Delhi didn’t want to unduly antagonise the Americans, may also be held. The key question that arises is, whether a new Cold War is in the offing. Also, what is the major foreign policy lesson New Delhi has learnt at this week’s burns

ward. For the last decade, Modi has been wooing the Americans assiduously. Nothing wrong with that, of course — half of Punjab which has already emigrated to US-Canada understands the inordinate power of America, as do large parts of the rest of the country which still, desperately, want that green card. This is as true for the Indian elite as well as those less fortunate, who sell their assets in order to get their child into the land of milk and honey. But Modi has gone many steps further, no doubt in the belief that allying with a powerful nation will bring in the benefits of that alliance — just like Japan did



after the Second World War. Question is, does India want to be like tiny Japan — a great and incredible country — or does it want to be itself, a unique, civilisational power. The current spat with the US is a good time to answer that question. In fact, India’s foreign policy has seemed more than a bit confusing in recent years. The extraordinary attention towards America came at the same time Chinese troops crossed the Line of Actual Control in the middle of Covid-19 — throwing both Modi and India off guard. Sino-Indian relations went into a low dip. Four years later, the rank inequality between India’s and China’s economies forced a rethink — India is far too dependent on cheap

Chinese goods and the lack of trade was hurting. So when Modi went to Kazan for the BRICS summit last year, the Russians brokered a deal, allowing Modi and Xi Jinping to meet. Later this month, the PM will go to Tianjin for the SCO summit, where he will meet Xi again. Now this short history lesson is only useful if you employ the following perspective. Which is that while India makes nice with China on the one hand, it refuses to speak to Pakistan on the other. It bears repeating that the intimate China-Pakistan relationship was on offer as recently as during Op Sindoor, when Chinese missiles aided Pakistan in striking Indian aircraft — as none other than CDS Anil Chauhan recently admitted. So if the China-Pakistan patron-client tie stretches all the way from Karakoram to Karachi, what good is it if Modi refuses to dialogue with Rawalpindi? Moreover, Trump has just invited Pakistan’s Field Marshal Asim Munir for another meeting to the White House — rubbing salt into India’s wounds. Here’s the second question this week. Should all this global recalibration mean that India should return to the arms of Vladimir Putin, in a latter-day version of the Cold War, when Hindi and Russi were bhai-bhai? The catch here is that if Modi does do that, he will already find Xi Jinping there — Xi and Vladimir are cool comrades who understand each other well. Remember, both have been schooled as Communists.

That’s why atmanirbharta is important. Modi — as well as all the PMs, from Nehru to Vajpayee — have known that India needs to be a strong and independent pole if it wants to be taken seriously. But how to do that when the big powers are turning somersaults in the sun and weaker nations are being buffeted around in the windstream that charges their wake? The key is to marry both Chanakya and Confucius so that you can suit the metaphor to your circumstance. (Cross the water by touching the stones. Saam, daam, dand, bhed. It doesn’t matter if the cat is black or white as long as it catches the mice.) The economic reforms were once instrumental in sidestepping the Hindu rate of growth and allowing us to grow at unprecedented rates in our lifetimes — they gave India its distinctive spirit.

Once again, differences in religion, caste, class, creed, colour cannot be allowed to divide and rule us. PM Modi must return to the middle path where all boats rise together. That is his and India’s strength — a strength that is everything.

Good intent goes half way for gender justice

The Tamil Nadu government's recent policy unfortunately subsumes the problems of intersex persons into a larger policy, failing to provide sufficient attention to that community's specific problems and contributing to the conflation of both communities in the public view

The Tamil Nadu government recently released a state policy for transgender and intersex persons. The problem, however, begins with the title, which only mentions transgender persons; the Tamil version only mentions ‘transwomen’. The issue has been flagged before the Madras High Court as part of a case from which many progressive directions for the LGBTQIA+ community have emerged. This in itself is evidence that good intentions, as the state government may indeed have, are not enough without real understanding and empathy. As a result, the policy speaks the right words but remains vague on details and framework for implementation. A key miss, much to the disappointment of the community, is that the policy, while assuring representation in employment and education, makes no mention of a 1 percent reservation in both areas, as has been demanded by the community at the national and state levels for some time. The policy also does not go into details of health interventions that the community may need access to, based on international



guidelines. It does, however, speak of amending succession laws so that trans persons may be able to inherit property, counselling services to help with intra-family disputes and a 24/7 helpline to support the community. The policy acknowledges that the trans community is

extremely marginalised and faces multiple forms of oppression, including discrimination in education and employment. Further, it unfortunately subsumes the problems of intersex persons into a larger policy, failing to provide sufficient attention to that community’s specific problems and contributing to the conflation of both communities in the public view. The creation of a special policy for transgender and intersex persons was a demand by the community as, initially, the state had planned a policy for the larger LGBTQIA+ community. A section of trans persons raised the need for a separate policy on the grounds that their community is particularly marginalised and impoverished. Given that background, it is unfortunate that the policy that emerged has failed to respond to some of their key needs. It is hoped that the state remedies the issue in its action plan to be released to ensure implementation of the policy. The state must also release at the earliest its policy for the LGBTQIA+ persons, as it has assured the Madras High Court.

Redefining cool in AI era

When the world was reborn in the 1960s, new technologies like solid-state electronics, plastics and the pill were at hand with transformative cultural and political movements to make it possible. Today’s secret spice is artificial intelligence, whose colonial tendency threatens to flatten culture

Jaguar Land Rover CEO Adrian Mardell, who has served three years at the helm and 35 years with the automaker, will retire in November-December, yielding to P B Balaji, chief financial officer of JLR owner Tata Motors. Seventeen years after the Tatas took over the iconic British marque, Jaguar will be headed by an Indian. But celebrating reverse imperialism is not cool. What’s cool is that finally, amid ongoing anxieties about AI, the change of guard provides tangible proof that for better or worse, machines have become smarter than humans. Mardell announced his departure after the epic failure of a ‘woke’ advertising campaign which focused on excessively individualistic human figures amid bright colours, with desperately progressive slogans like ‘copy nothing’ and ‘break moulds’, and without any reference whatsoever to automobiles or luxury. The Jaguar brand lost face and value, like Tesla did after Elon Musk’s political antics.

The humans on Mardell’s watch, including the CEO himself, had failed to appreciate that an auto ad without a car may not be read as an auto ad. But AIs get it right. Here’s the response of Copilot on being asked to look at the images and consider nothing else: “Based solely on the visual elements—ignoring all text and prior knowledge—the advertisement appears to be promoting a fashion or clothing brand.”

This was just one job lost to human frailty. Entrepreneur and venture capitalist Vinod Khosla said last week that AI is becoming so integral to workflows that large-scale corporate restructuring is inevitable, and society will just have to adjust. He predicts that the Fortune 500 list will be upended and that people will lose 80 percent of the current jobs to machines. Perhaps he was talking

about tech-heavy industries and we should adjust for the whole human domain? Let us include all workers whose roles rely on manual dexterity, emotional intelligence and other human qualities—farmers, shopkeepers, plumbers, sculptors, dancers, boatmen, cooks, politicians, yoga teachers, pickpockets... Even then, in an industrialised economy, one suspects the toll would not come down drastically. Tech attrition is already visible. TCS, India’s biggest IT firm, is culling over 12,000 jobs worldwide. It attributes this to restructuring—junking legacy layers of management as workflows and targets change—and dismisses the suspicion that AI has a hand in anything. But as Khosla observes, AI has a hand in everything. Workflows are being reoriented because attitudes to knowledge, ethics, politics, value, language, culture and perhaps even human life are changing rapidly, technology is reorienting to new goals, and AI is available to be embedded into roles in which it performs faster than humans.

The last time the world wished hard to be reborn and new technologies were at hand to make it possible was in the 1960s, when colonialism gave way to a fresh wave of globalisation and the progressive liberal ethic, Cold War polarisation deepened and traditional ideas of nationhood, community and family fell apart amid giant strides in technology and culture like moonshots, plastics, solid state electronics, the pill, political pop music, noir, avant garde cinema, modern media, non-alignment, women’s lib and minority rights. Together, they changed the world.

AI seems to be the secret spice which could forge a new world order out of the current chaos, which it is itself deepening by taking over jobs. Its typical roles entail crunching data into information and information into meta-information-like reading reams of reports and producing a summary. Workers in the lower echelons, who perform functions like writing backgrounders and



keeping minutes of meetings, are more likely to be displaced by machines, leaving behind a few experienced workers who stand on thin air. What would happen when they move on, without subordinates trained to step into their shoes? In consulting, AI integration is changing work processes. The sector has been infamous for sandwiching wads of

industry studies between PowerPoint presentations and efficiency sermons, feeding the client this dubious sandwich and running with the money. Now, since the client can make sandwiches with their own AI tools, hand-holding and public education publishing are being highlighted for consultants to remain relevant. McKinsey is trying to lose its ‘suit with PowerPoint’ image and actually work with clients, uses an AI toolkit to remain relevant, and publishes general-access newsletters for outreach and brand recall. Now, something truly sobering: earlier this summer, Dhruv Agarwal, Mor Naaman and Aditya Vashistha of Cornell University reported finding ‘AI colonialism’—when non-Western writers use predictive text and AI writing assistants, we unwittingly fall into American patterns of expression. Do we restructure our thoughts accordingly? Do we turn to Western idioms, as so much English writing from Asia has done in order to be intelligible to Western audiences?

If AI colonialism is pervasive, it would hasten the ongoing flattening of culture, in which every public place feels impersonal like an airport concourse, transitorily peopled by humans who look and dress the same, and you can’t really talk to anyone because their responses are formulaic—wow, awesome, cool. Will assisted word processing iron out language? Will ‘chalta hai’ give way to ‘we’re good’, or even the newly-minted ‘bigly good’? Really, the maker of that Jaguar ad which said ‘copy nothing’ and ‘break moulds’ didn’t get how standard and uncool everything is becoming.

GHMC to engage R&D institutions, IITs, NITs for quality checks on civic works

Tests must follow IS, IRC, MORTH and CPHEEO standards, with random sampling done in the presence of contractors and department representatives.

HYDERABAD (Agency)

The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) has announced that it will engage educational societies, universities, R&D institutions, IITs and NITs for third-party quality control of civic works during 2024-25 across all 30 circles, divided into 12 slices, for projects above Rs 5 lakh.

The aim is to improve public infrastructure quality, crack down on defective materials and ensure accountability. This will cover cement concrete pavements, bituminous roads, culverts, bridges, underground drainage, stormwater drains, and footpaths, but excludes works under the Comprehensive Road Maintenance Programme (CRMP), Strategic Nala Development Programme (SNDP), housing projects and those with Project Management Consultants (PMCs).

Officials said each agency will be allotted one slice, provided all slices receive bids.

Agencies must set up quality control systems,

Children's park, affiliated institutions handed over to Ernakulam CWC



KOCHI (Agency)

ndira Priyadarshini Children's Park and other affiliated institutions near Marine Drive were handed over to the State Child Welfare Committee (CWC) as per a High Court order on Saturday.

The park was illegally occupied by an Ernakulam-based independent organisation, claiming to be the CWC, for around 25 years. The CWC approached the HC as the organisation was mismanaging the huge income generated from the facility. "We demanded to hand over the administration of the park to the District CWC. Though the government had renovated the park, several areas are currently lying uninhabited due to a lack of proper maintenance," said State CWC general secretary GLArun Gopi.

The day-to-day administration of the children's park, theatre and other facilities has now been handed over to the Ernakulam District CWC. Former Ernakulam district collector N S K Umesh issued an order on the same on July 23 based on the interim order of the High Court and the legal advice of the advocate general.

The facility was handed over to the district committee in the presence of State Administrative Committee member Adv Yesudas Parappally, District CWC secretary Adv Sunil Hareendran, vice-president Adv K S Arun Kumar and others.

Meanwhile, Arun made allegations of financial fraud. "We have evidence showing that the independent organisation has been committing financial fraud under the guise of maintaining the children's park for years. An investigation is under way," said Arun, adding that the children's theatre and childcare centre attached to the children's park will be operational within a month.

Dengue on rise, five hotspots marked in Bhubaneswar

BHUBANESWAR (Agency)

With dengue witnessing a gradual spike in the city, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has intensified its source-reduction drive focusing on five hotspots where cases have touched double digits. Sources said, a total of 208 dengue cases have been reported from different parts of the city in the current season so far. Maximum of these cases at around 139 were reported in July with around 55 in June. About 14 cases have been reported till August 8. BMC officials said Patia, Prasanti Vihar, Salia Sahi, Sikharchandi and Nayapalli have been identified as hotspots where intensive source-reduction and awareness drives have been launched. Sikharchandi area has reported the highest number of 15 cases so far and 14 cases each in Patia and Prasanti Vihar. About 13 cases have been reported from Salia Sahi, while another 10 surfaced in Nayapalli.

"Keeping this in view, the anti-larval measures, source-reduction drive and fogging activities have been increased in these areas," said a BMC official. He further added that Sahid Nagar, where nine cases have been reported, is on the radar. The BMC has also initiated the process for bulk purchase of anti-larval chemicals like deltamethrin and malathion to power vector control measures. Around 1,000 litres of deltamethrin and 500 litres of malathion will be purchased for the purpose. Officials said dengue volunteers have also been engaged to sensitise people about source-reduction, while BMC has also pressed two tractor mounted, 20 autorickshaw mounted and 50 portable fogging machines for regular fogging at ward-level.



conduct field and lab tests, inspect works at various stages, highlight issues, and recommend solutions. Tests must follow IS, IRC, MORTH and CPHEEO standards, with random sampling done in the presence of

contractors and department representatives. During inspections, agencies must check adherence to approved drawings, designs and specifications, and immediately report any unapproved changes to officials.

Sepoy Harminder Singh: A Tricolour homecoming for Punjab's braveheart

Ludhiana (Agency)

A hushed sadness prevails in Badinpur, village of Fatehgarh Sahib district of Punjab where dreams of home renovations and marriage now lie beneath a tricolour-draped flag. Sepoy Harminder Singh, aged 27, soldier of the 19 Rashtriya Rifles, paid the ultimate price during Operation Akhal in Kulgam, Jammu & Kashmir, on August 8 when militants lobbed a grenade amid intense gunfire. He was enrolled in army in December, 2016.

His mother, Gurpreet Kaur, spoke to the mediapersons through tears, "Harminder had thought of getting his house renovated and we were also insisting him to get married... he had told me that whenever he will come on holiday, he will surely think about marriage... but who knew that he will come wrapped in a tricolour."

Village sources mention that Gurpreet remains inconsolable, and his father, Jaswant Singh, along with his sister, are both battling serious



health issues for long now deepening the family's sorrow. On the auspicious day of Raksha Bandhan, the family was mourning

over the loss of their son. His uncle, Darshan Singh, said, "Our government should take strict steps to deal

with terrorists... the army should be given a free hand to combat terrorists... our young bravehearts are getting martyred."

And Harminder's friend Gurminder Singh, said, "He used to inspire others to work towards fitness and get enrolled in army... he was an inspiration to all of us... we are proud of his bravery but at the same time we are in grief over losing him."

Harminder will be cremated on Sunday morning in Badinpur, with full military honours.

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, in a heartfelt post on X, solemnly said: "In an encounter with terrorists in Kulgam... the tragic news was received of the martyrdom of soldier Pritpal Singh... and Sepoy Harminder Singh from the village of Badinpur... We express our heartfelt condolences to the families. We salute the spirit and bravery of the soldiers... an ex-gratia of ₹1 crore each will be provided to the families."

Kochi Metro phase 2: KMRL floats open bid for third rail traction system

KOCHI (Agency)

The Kochi Metro Rail Ltd (KMRL) has floated open tenders for supply of a third rail traction system, a key measure in line with its ambitious plan to start train operations in the first reach of the Kochi Metro Phase 2 'Pink Line' by June 30 next year. The successful bidder needs to complete the 'Design Verification, Detail Engineering, Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 750 V DC Third Rail traction electrification' in 24 months from the date of Letter of Award, as per the tender documents issued on August 6.

The Phase 2 project includes the construction of an elevated, electrified metro rail system of 11.2 km and 11 stations along the JLN Stadium-Infopark section. While the original deadline was 2025 end, it was revised to December 31, 2026, after the work suffered a delay due to fund shortage and issues related to utility shifting.

"While the complete section is targeted to

be completed by next year end, we plan to open the first reach up to Padamughal by June 30, 2026. Hence the successful bidder should need to complete the work in that session quickly by March 2026. It requires another three months for purposes like testing and all," a senior KMRL official told.

However, the metro authorities cited that the timely receipt of the Union and state government nods for the quick availing of loan from the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank is vital to realise the same. The first reach of Pink Line includes five stations — Palarivattom Junction, Palarivattom Bypass, Chembumukku, Vazhakkala and Padamughal, besides the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium.

The second reach, including stations Kakkanad Junction, Cochin SEZ, Chittethukara, KINFRA, Infopark 1 and Infopark 2, is expected to be operational in another six months, by December 31, 2026.

Adivasi Maha Sabha flays ST department at golden jubilee fete in Kerala

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, (Agency)

As the Scheduled Tribes development department celebrated its golden jubilee on Saturday, a key group that should benefit from the department protested in Thiruvananthapuram, citing the department's shortcomings.

Close to 60 members of the Adivasi Mahasabha (AMS) protested before the Secretariat, stating that the department is unable to address their basic concerns, including roads, houses and stipend for students.

According to Adivasi Maha Sabha president Mohanan Triveni, even drinking water is unavailable to many of them. "There are people who travel from 5-20 kilometres to get clean drinking water," he said. Highlighting that roads

have been built only on random stretches, he said, "Many of the government schemes are being implemented in our hamlets without getting the nod from the 'oorukoottam'. Backdoor



appointments have become a regular occurrence, where they take the jobs which are rightfully ours." Tribal people, whose traditional homes have been dismantled for the promise of a new home, are now homeless in various parts of the state due to

little progress in the construction work, he said. Speaking about the school education, Mohanan said that the quality of education in model residential schools for ST communities is very low. "While the number of ST students scoring more marks is higher in other government schools, why is it lower in these model schools," he asked.

Mohanan further said, "Stipends, lump sum grants and hostel fees for students studying in government and self-financing institutions have not been disbursed by the government. The certificates of hundreds of students from self-financing colleges had been withheld by their management due to this." He also pointed out that even the hostels for ST students are poorly maintained.

'He has gone while trying to get a better life for us': Married five months ago, Ludhiana soldier dies in Kashmir Op

-"His newly-wedded wife is inconsolable. We have seen too much poverty and our father is a daily-wager. He had joined the Army after passing class 12 so that our family's financial condition could improve."

Ludhiana (Agency)

Married just five months ago, Lance Naik Pritpal Singh, 27, from Manupur village of Punjab's Ludhiana district, was killed in action during an intense gunfight with terrorists in South Kashmir's Kulgam, Friday.

The Army Operation, which started nine days ago at Akhal Forest, is among the longest military operations against terrorists in the Valley in recent years. The Indian Army soldiers are engaged with terrorists in a dense forest.

Back home in Punjab, the wails of mourning villagers filled the air at Manupur in Samrala sub-division Saturday as the news of Pritpal's passing reached his family. Wrapped in tricolor, his mortal remains are expected to reach the village Sunday and the cremation will be performed with full military honours.

Speaking to , Harpreet Singh, his elder brother said: "Parivaar da karde karde aap turr gaya (He has gone while trying to earn a better life for family). He got married just five months ago in February.

"His newly-wedded wife is inconsolable. We have seen too much poverty and our father is a daily-wager. He had joined the Army after passing class 12 so that our family's financial condition could improve." According to the Army statement,

Lance Naik Pritpal Singh from 19 Rashtriya Rifles (Sikh Light Infantry), died "on August 8 during intermittent and intense exchange of fire with terrorists" after he "sustained severe splinter injury when hiding terrorists lobbed a grenade." He later succumbed.

Harpreet said that his brother's only wish was to see



their father Harbans Singh fully cured of the oral cancer he has been suffering from.

"He ensured that my father got the best treatment from the Army hospital. I spoke to him last on August 7, hours before the incident, and even then he told me to take care of my father and others in the family. We had asked him to come home for Raksha Bandhan festivities but he said it won't be possible as he was in the middle of an important

operation and he had to catch those terrorists first. He had promised to take leave after the Operation and come home for Diwali. But now he won't," said Harpreet, crying inconsolably. Harpreet said that even as his brother had taken a bank loan and got their house renovated few months ago around his marriage in February, he himself hardly stayed in it. "He hardly stayed in the renovated house. We were waiting for his arrival on Diwali to celebrate together. Mera bhraa turr gaya (My brother is gone forever)," he said. Harbans Singh, father of the deceased soldier said: "Saade baare sochda sochda chala gaya (He has left the world working for us). He had promised to come home on Diwali. We were waiting."

Pritpal is survived by old parents — father Harbans Singh and sister Kuldeep Kaur, wife Manpreet Kaur, elder brother Harpreet Singh and younger brother Gurdeep Singh. Harpreet, who works at a private factory, says: "What can we demand from the government now. We have lost everything. Everyone knows that terrorists in our country are being sent by Pakistan. Instead of conducting these operations, our government should take full-fledged action against the neighboring country and go all out to teach them a lesson."

No Bihar voter to be removed from rolls without notice: Poll body to top court

Agency New Delhi.

The Election Commission has filed a fresh affidavit in the Supreme Court regarding the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in poll-bound Bihar, saying that no names will be deleted from the list without prior notice to the individual and an opportunity to be heard. The Commission alleged that the petitioners challenging the revisions were attempting to mislead the court and urged the top court to impose "heavy costs" for this attempt. However, the poll body assured that it will strictly adhere to the principles of natural justice in the process. "As a matter of policy and in strict adherence to the principles of natural justice, no deletion of any elector's name from the draft electoral roll, published on 1st August 2025, shall be undertaken without issuance of a prior notice to the concerned elector indicating the proposed deletion and the grounds thereof, affording a reasonable opportunity of being heard and furnishing

relevant documents, and passing of a reasoned and speaking order by the competent authority," the commission said in its affidavit. The electoral roll revision has run into legal trouble, with the Opposition alleging that the process, undertaken ahead of the upcoming state assembly elections, could disenfranchise lakhs of genuine voters, particularly from marginalised communities, by imposing stringent and arbitrary documentation requirements. They call it a 'vote theft' orchestrated by the BJP. The Election Commission submitted that it is taking all possible measures to ensure no eligible voter is excluded from the electoral roll. It added that a two-tier appeal mechanism is in place to provide every voter with adequate recourse against any adverse action. "Even in cases in

which any vulnerable elector does not presently possess any documents, he/she would be facilitated in the process of obtaining such documents," the Commission, also noting that, "Out of 7.89 crore electors, over 7.24 crore submitted their enumeration forms". It added that, to facilitate thorough scrutiny of the draft roll from August 1 to September 1, printed and digital copies

have been provided to political parties, along with an online facility for the general public. The poll body, in its affidavit, outlined a multi-pronged strategy to maximise voter participation, including extensive awareness campaigns, repeated visits by Booth Level Officers (BLOs) to engage local residents, and other targeted initiatives. "To ensure that no eligible elector in Bihar is left behind, awareness campaigns through SMS, meetings, and repeated BLO visits were conducted... To ensure that no temporary migrant from Bihar is excluded, advertisements in Hindi were issued in 246 newspapers... To ensure that no urban elector is left out, special urban camps were organised in all 261 urban local bodies," the Commission told the top court.



Gunbattle erupts as Army corners terrorists in J&K's Kishtwar

Agency New Delhi.

In the early hours of Sunday, Indian Army troops came under fire while conducting an intelligence-based operation in the Dul area of Kishtwar, the Army's White Knight Corps said. According to sources, two to three Pakistani terrorists are believed to be hiding in the area, and a fierce gunfight is currently underway. Sharing the update on X, the White Knight Corps said that alert Indian Army troops launched an intelligence-based operation in the Dul area of Kishtwar in the early hours of August 10, and came in contact with terrorists and the operation is currently underway. The encounter in Kishtwar comes as security forces remain engaged in Operation Akhal, one of the Valley's longest-running anti-terror offensives. Two soldiers — Lance Naik Pritpal Singh and Sepoy Harminder Singh — were killed in an overnight exchange of fire on Friday. Two more personnel were injured, taking the total number of wounded to 10 since the operation began. Operation Akhal was launched on August 1 after specific intelligence inputs indicated the presence of terrorists in a forested area in Akhal, South Kashmir. Over five terrorists have been killed so far in the operation. The Kishtwar encounter adds to a string of recent clashes in Jammu and Kashmir, highlighting intensified counter-terror measures aimed at eliminating remaining militant strongholds. Security agencies say the operations will continue until all threats are neutralised. Security forces have stepped up anti-terror operations in Jammu and Kashmir in the wake of the April 22 Pahalgam terrorist attacks, in which Pakistan-based terrorists killed 26 civilians, most of them tourists. Operation Akhal was launched after troops neutralised the Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists responsible for the massacre during Operation Mahadev near Srinagar's Dachigam area. A day later, on July 29, the Army carried out Operation Shiv Shakti, eliminating two more terrorists.

Top court forms panel to manage Mathura's Banke Bihari temple, stays UP's plan



Agency New Delhi.

The Supreme Court has formed an interim committee to oversee the management of Vrindavan's Shri Banke Bihari temple. Headed by retired Allahabad High Court judge Justice Ashok Kumar, the panel will function until the Allahabad High Court rules on the UP government's ordinance on temple management. The court stayed the provision of the ordinance, allowing the state to form a trust for the temple. Justice Kumar will receive Rs 2 lakh per month, and committee member retired judge Mukesh Mishra will get Rs 1 lakh per month, both from temple funds. The panel will operate from Mathura, with office space provided free of cost by the district administration. It will also plan the temple's development, including land acquisition if required. Apart from four nominated Goswami representatives, no other Goswami or Sevayat will be allowed to interfere in management, though they may perform worship and offer prasad. Committee members include a serving district or civil judge of Mathura, the district magistrate, SSP, municipal commissioner, vice-chairman of the Mathura-Vrindavan Development Authority, a renowned architect, an ASI representative, and two members each from both Goswami groups.

Pedestrian Dies After Speeding Thar Hits Him, Driver Says He Had Dozed Off

Agency New Delhi.

A pedestrian has died and another is battling death after a speeding Thar hit them in New Delhi's high-security diplomatic enclave, Chanakyaपुरi, this morning. The accident occurred just about two kilometres from Rashtrapati Bhavan, but the pedestrian's body lay on the road in the high-security area for hours before police arrived and took it away. The injured person has been hospitalised. Police have arrested the 26-year-old driver and seized the SUV. According to sources, liquor bottles have been recovered from the car and forensic teams are at work to find more clues. The driver has told the cops that the car belongs to his friend and he had borrowed it. He has also said that he dozed off and lost control of the vehicle, leading to the accident, but

police are checking if he was drunk. Visuals showed that the five-door Mahindra Thar Roxx has suffered damage on its left front side. The car is registered in Uttar Pradesh's

huge hit, thanks to its commanding look and off-roading capabilities. The Indian automobile manufacturer later launched a five-door version named Thar Roxx, with prices starting at Rs 13 lakh and going up to Rs 23 lakh. The SUV is a social media sensation, often featuring in reels and short videos. But cases of rash driving, sometimes to shoot reels, have brought Thar in the news for the wrong reasons. Last week, a video of a young woman sitting on the roof of a moving Thar in Gurugram and recording herself went viral. The video raised questions about road safety and showed how people were risking their and others' safety to shoot reels. Last month, a chilling video from Jammu showed a Thar hitting a scooter. The driver then reverses the SUV to run over the scooterist, leading to serious injuries.



Ghaziabad. The accident has again put the spotlight on the popular SUV. Launched in 2010, the Mahindra Thar became a

Incessant downpour wreaks havoc in capital

Agency New Delhi.

Heavy rainfall lashed Delhi from late Friday night and continued through Saturday afternoon, triggering widespread waterlogging, severe traffic congestion, and disruptions in air travel across the city. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a red alert for most parts of Delhi-NCR, forecasting intense rainfall accompanied by thunderstorms and lightning throughout the day. The alert applies to several districts, including North, West, South, South East, and Central Delhi. Areas such as Panchkuian Marg, Mathura Road, Shastri Bhawan, RK Puram, Moti Bagh, and Kidwai Nagar were among the worst affected, with vehicles moving at a snail's pace due to water accumulation

on the roads. Meanwhile the Delhi Airport issued a travel advisory urging passengers to use the metro and arrive early due to waterlogging near the airport. "Delhi is currently experiencing inclement



weather, including heavy rainfall resulting in waterlogging near the airport. Passengers are advised to

arrive early and consider alternate modes of transport such as the Delhi Metro to avoid delays," the advisory stated. Traffic Police also issued an alert warning of traffic snarls across several areas. Roads such as New Rohtak Road, Zakhira Railway Underpass, GTK Depot, Jahangirpuri, and Adarsh Nagar reported significant congestion due to flooding. In addition, a building collapse was reported in the Hari Nagar area of Jaitpur in South East Delhi. The Delhi Fire Services dispatched two fire tenders to the spot to conduct rescue and relief operations. No casualties have been reported yet. Meanwhile, a significant traffic disruption has occurred near Vasant Kunj due to the collapse of a wall at the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation's underground construction site.

Delhi University bags A++ grade from NAAC; 'a big leap in teaching, research', says Vice-Chancellor

This prestigious A++ grade is valid for the next five years, until 2029, underscoring DU's dedication to quality education, research and governance.

Agency New Delhi.

The University of Delhi (DU) has secured the highest possible grade—A++—from the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) in its Cycle 2 Institutional Assessment and Accreditation. The announcement was made on August 8, 2025, marking a historic milestone in DU's journey towards academic excellence. With a remarkable Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of 3.55, the University has set a new benchmark for itself. This prestigious A++ grade is valid for the next five years, until 2029, underscoring DU's dedication to quality education, research and governance. For DU's Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Yogesh Singh, this achievement is both a recognition of the University's growth and a testament to its tireless pursuit of excellence. Reflecting on the progress made, Prof. Singh noted that in the



previous NAAC cycle in 2018, the University had earned an A+ grade with a CGPA of 3.28. "The leap to an A++ grade signifies an extraordinary improvement

in various aspects, including teaching methodologies, research initiatives, and institutional governance," he said. King George's Medical University,

Lucknow, has also secured the highest possible accreditation grade, A++, in the latest NAAC assessment cycle. In its Cycle 2 evaluation, Delhi University was awarded a CGPA of 3.55, reaffirming its stature as one of India's premier central universities. The recognition was officially announced today. "This achievement reflects the collective dedication of our faculty, students, staff, alumni, and stakeholders," the university said in an official release, adding that it marks a "proud moment" for the institution. Separately, Berhampur University in Odisha was awarded an "A" grade in its third NAAC accreditation cycle, which will remain valid for five years. NAAC, an autonomous body under the UGC, assesses institutions based on parameters including curriculum, research, innovation, infrastructure, and student support systems. Participation in the process is voluntary.

Give two-month notice before ending mohalla clinics staff contracts: Delhi High Court

Agency New Delhi.

The Delhi HC has asked the government to give two months' notice to the staff members of Aam Aadmi Mohalla Clinics (AAMC) in case it proposes to terminate their services before March 31 next year. The High Court's order came while dealing with a petition by AAMC staff, who were hired on a contractual basis by the previous Aam Aadmi Party government, seeking directions against their termination and replacement with other contractual employees. Justice Prateek Jalan disposed of the petition with the direction, "In the event the respondents (Delhi government) propose to terminate the petitioners' engagement before March 31, 2026, on the ground that new manpower has been engaged..., they are directed to give two weeks' notice to the concerned... (staff)," the court said in its August 6 order. The court passed a similar order on Tuesday on a plea by doctors, who were engaged on a contractual basis to work in AAMCs and their engagement was extended from time to time between 2016 to 2015, seeking to restrain the authorities from illegally terminating them. In the present case, the petitioners are working as pharmacists, mohalla clinic assistants and multitask workers on a contractual basis in AAMC under the Delhi government. They sought directions against their termination and replacement with other contractual employees.

DUSU poll candidates to sign Rs 1L anti-defacement bond

Agency New Delhi.

In a decisive move to curb defacement during student elections, the University of Delhi has mandated that every candidate contesting the Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU) elections must sign a Rs 1 lakh anti-defacement bond. This new measure, inspired by the existing anti-ragging affidavit required at admission, binds candidates to strictly follow the election code of conduct and refrain from damaging or defacing university and college property. The initiative aims to promote responsible campaigning and preserve the cleanliness and integrity of DU's campuses. The notification, released on Friday, emphasises discipline, accountability, and adherence to legal standards, based on relevant Acts, court orders, and Lyngdoh Committee recommendations. Students must now submit an anti-defacement affidavit at the time of admission, similar to anti-ragging declarations. Colleges will organise orientation programmes on discipline and the protection of public property during campaigns. Two "walls of democracy" will be designated in each institution for campaign posters. An online portal at both the university and college levels will allow students to report violations. Each candidate must sign a '1 lakh bond when filing nominations, pledging not to deface property. The use of false names must be reported to police within 24 hours. Violations can lead to fines of up to '25,000, suspension, rustication, expulsion, or disqualification. Campaigning restrictions include a ban on posters, rallies, roadshows, loudspeakers, and vehicles, while encouraging electronic outreach. Candidates may only use names from their secondary and senior secondary certificates, with changes permitted only through official government processes. Each college will form a College Committee for Prevention of Defacement of Property, while a university-level committee will monitor compliance. Candidate debates will be hosted and uploaded online. Outsider entry will be strictly controlled, with possible biometric checks.

NEWS BOX

Babar Azam on a tightrope: Pakistan batter must raise his game vs West Indies

PARIS.(Agency)

When Babar Azam unleashed that flawless cover drive off Romario Shepherd in the 19th over of the first ODI against the West Indies, it felt like a brief glimpse of the star Pakistan desperately needed. But heartbreakingly, just four overs later, a reckless charge down the track to Gudakesh Motie ended in a stumping—a careless mistake that has become painfully routine.Pakistan managed to scrape through with a five-wicket win, taking a 1-0 lead in the series, but Babar’s failure to convert what looked like a certain half-century left fans exasperated. Once the unstoppable force who could pile up hundreds at will, Babar is now trapped in a frustrating cycle of near-misses and wasted talent.It’s been nearly three years since he last scored an international century against a full-member nation. His last hundred, back in August 2023 against Nepal in the Asia Cup, now feels like a distant memory.Since then,



over 50 innings have passed without a single hundred—and with each one, the pressure mounts, and the questions grow louder. For a player once hailed as Pakistan’s batting backbone and future legend, this slump is more than just numbers—it’s a painful reminder of promise slipping away.Babar losing his grip, steadily Once the undisputed king of T20 cricket, Babar Azam’s absence from the shortest format in 2025 is both shocking and deeply frustrating. Not long ago, Babar stood as the world’s No.1 T20I batter, boasting an average over 50.He has three T20I centuries to his name and ranks as the second-highest run-scorer in T20 Internationals globally, a testament to his consistency and class. Yet this year, he hasn’t played a single T20I match.The silence on the field is deafening. For a player once considered Pakistan’s most reliable match-winner, the absence raises painful questions.

German soccer club defends pulling out of buying Israeli player Shon Weissman over his Gaza posts

DÜSSELDORF.(Agency)

The chairman of Fortuna Düsseldorf has defended the German soccer club's decision to pull out of signing Israeli player Shon Weissman after fan backlash over his contentious social media posts about Gaza, and said it's "absurd" to accuse the second-division team of antisemitism. Düsseldorf announced Tuesday that it would not sign Weissman from Spanish team Granada despite having been in advanced negotiations.Fans had opposed the planned signing of the 29-year-old Weissman because of his social media posts expressing support for Israel's conduct in Gaza following the Hamas-led attacks on southern



Israel on Oct. 7, 2023. Weissman's Instagram account was set to "private" on Saturday.In the social media post on Tuesday announcing the decision, the club did not say why it had called off the transfer. But Fortuna issued a statement on Friday saying Weissman's "statements on social media and the subsequent handling of them were not consistent with our values." Chairman Klaus Allofs defended the club's decision before the team's match against Hannover on Saturday, but acknowledged that a faster process to reach the decision would have been preferable. "I wouldn't say it was a mistake. We tried to sign a player and I think that's legitimate," Allofs said. "It's also part of our values, that we don't limit ourselves with prejudices and rule things out from the start." Allofs said the club deliberately waited to consult with Jewish community members in Düsseldorf before deciding against the signing.Asked about accusations of antisemitism, Allofs said: "It's absurd, to put it bluntly."Israel's air and ground campaign has killed tens of thousands of people in Gaza.

Virat Kohli and Novak Djokovic's secret to sporting success: Power of visualisation

While strict diet and training remain the sacrosanct principles of sporting success, several top athletes such as Virat Kohli, Novak Djokovic, and Cristiano Ronaldo, among others, practice the power of visualisation to achieve peak performance.

New Delhi.(Agency)

“When you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it,” reads a line from the famous book ‘The Alchemist’ by Paulo Coelho. The legendary India batter Sachin Tendulkar also says, “Dreams do come true, if you chase them hard.” But, does this have any substance in real life? Can our imagination turn true, especially in the field of sports?The human brain is a hidden gem, and its superpowers remain oblivious to us. However, once you’re able to find the obscured reservoir of its magic, it becomes a powerful tool that helps you surmount your

biggest challenges. While sports remain a field where physical prowess and skill make most of the difference, it’s the mental aspect that separates the top performers from the rest.Virat Kohli, Novak Djokovic, Conor McGregor, Cristiano Ronaldo, Michael Phelps and many others have all mastered this one power, which has allowed them to be counted amongst the greatest in their field. It’s the power of ‘visualisation’ or ‘guided imagery’. It entails the practice of imagining yourself performing at your peak against the toughest of opposition and emulating that on the field.According to renowned Sports Psychiatrist Dr Chinmay Patkar, guided imagery has a massive impact on peak sports performance if done correctly under the guidance of an expert.

How does Visualisation work in sports?

When we talk about visualisation, the scientific term for it would be something called guided imagery or mental imagery. The idea is to practice it regularly before you resume sports or participate in a match. To start, bring yourself to a relaxed state and sit in a quiet place, free from distractions. Take a few deep breaths and begin to imagine a scenario of your ideal performance in your

sport,” said Chinmay Patkar in a conversation with India Today. Over the years, top athletes have used guided imagery to prepare themselves for major tournaments and have often come out on top,



making the world take notice of their greatness. Star India batter Virat Kohli used the technique to come out of one of the lowest phases in his life, following the disastrous tour of England in 2014.During an interview with Graham Bensinger, Kohli revealed that while preparing for the Australia tour later that year, he imagined

himself dominating their best bowler, a ferocious Mitchell Johnson. The result? He ended up scoring a whopping 692 runs in the series, his highest ever tally in a Test rubber. “If something looks difficult and if you don't

convince yourself to go out there and achieve the opposite, you're never going to be able to do it. You can't just land in a place and say, I'll see what happens. That way, your chances of succeeding become very, very low,” said Kohli in the interview.In 2019, after winning the historic 4 hours 55 minutes-long Wimbledon final against Roger Federer, Novak Djokovic revealed that he had imagined himself as the winner even before entering the ground. The 2019 final is the longest ever in the tournament’s history, where

Djokovic saved two championship points to be crowned as the champion in front of a partisan crowd, which was screaming “Roger! Roger!” Despite having everyone against him, it was Djokovic’s strong resolve that helped him register one of the greatest victories of his career.

Two Japanese boxers die from brain injuries in separate bouts

TOKYO.(Agency)

Two Japanese boxers have died from brain injuries sustained in separate bouts on the same card at Tokyo's Korakuen Hall.Shigetoshi Kotari, 28, collapsed shortly after completing a 12-round draw against Oriental and Pacific Boxing Federation junior lightweight champion Yamato Hata on Aug. 2.

He underwent emergency brain surgery for a subdural hematoma—a condition where blood collects between the brain and skull—but died on Friday.Rest in peace, Shigetoshi Kotari," the World Boxing Organization wrote on social media. "The boxing world mourns the tragic passing of Japanese fighter Shigetoshi Kotari, who succumbed to injuries sustained during his August 2nd title fight." A warrior in the ring. A fighter in spirit. Gone too soon. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family, team, and the entire Japanese boxing community."

On Saturday, fellow 28-year-old Hiromasa



Urakawa died after suffering the same injury during a knockout loss to Yoji Saito. He had undergone a craniotomy in an attempt to save his life."This heartbreaking news comes just days after the passing of Shigetoshi Kotari, who died from injuries suffered in his fight on the same card," the WBO said in another social media post on Saturday. "We extend our deepest condolences to the families, friends, and the Japanese boxing community during this incredibly difficult time."In response, the Japanese Boxing Commission has announced all OPBF title bouts will now be reduced from 12 rounds to 10.

Earlier this year, Irish boxer John Cooney died a week after being taken into intensive care following his Celtic super-featherweight title defeat to Nathan Howells in Belfast.

PSG signs goalkeeper Chevalier from Lille amid uncertainty over Donnarumma's future

Chevalier impressed for Lille in the Champions League last season. He caught the eye with stellar performances against Real Madrid, Atletico Madrid and Juventus.

PARIS.(Agency)

Champions League winner Paris Saint-Germain signed goalkeeper Lucas Chevalier from Lille on a five-year contract Saturday, amid increasing uncertainty over Gianluigi Donnarumma's future at the club. The transfer fee was not disclosed but French sports daily L'Équipe reported that PSG paid just over 40 million euros (\$46.5 million) for the 23-year-old Chevalier, with the deal potentially rising to 55 million euros in case of future bonuses.Chevalier impressed for Lille in the Champions League last season. He caught the eye with



stellar performances against Real Madrid, Atletico Madrid and Juventus, where he made one stunning save from Dušan Vlahovic that even the Juve striker applauded."I am a kid that is living his dream. Ever since I was small I wanted to play at the very highest level," Chevalier said. "I'm really delighted to be here. I will wear this shirt with passion and ambition."

Sanju Samson shares Gautam Gambhir's 21 Ducks backing that boosted his confidence

- Samson recalls Gambhir’s unique “21 ducks” backing during T20I slump
- Suryakumar promised Samson seven straight T20I games as opener
- Samson smashed three T20I hundreds after early Sri Lanka failures

New Delhi.(Agency)

Sanju Samson’s comeback to T20I cricket after India’s 2024 World Cup triumph didn’t begin the way he’d hoped. But a quirky show of faith from head coach Gautam Gambhir gave him the reassurance to play with freedom and eventually rediscover his form.In a chat on Ravichandran Ashwin’s podcast, Samson opened up about the rocky start to his return. Facing Sri Lanka in early 2024, he was dismissed for zero in both



matches. The back-to-back failures brought back memories of earlier years when he often found himself dropped after just a few games. That’s when Gambhir stepped in.“I was feeling low in the dressing room and Gauti bhai noticed,” Samson recalled. “He asked me, ‘Kya hua?’ (What happened?)” I told him I had two chances but couldn’t score. He just said, ‘Toh kya hua?’ (So what?)” and then added, ‘Only if you get 21 ducks will I drop you from the team.’”Samson said those words hit

differently. “When a coach and captain speak like that, your confidence automatically lifts. You know they really trust you and want you to succeed,” he said.

Since making his T20I debut, Samson has appeared in 42 matches, scoring 861 runs at a strike rate of over 152, with three hundreds and two fifties. His first T20I ton came against Bangladesh in Hyderabad, followed by two more against South Africa. Gambhir wasn’t the only one to back him. Samson revealed that Suryakumar Yadav, during the Duleep Trophy, promised him a stretch of seven matches as opener. That run came during series against South Africa and England, where Samson repaid the faith with two centuries in quick succession.In the IPL, however, Samson’s future is less certain. Following Rajasthan Royals’ ninth-place finish in 2025, reports suggest he’s asked to be traded or released.

Tell us how he died: Mohamed Salah slams UEFA for post on Palestinian Pele's death

Liverpool star Mohamed Salah criticised UEFA's tribute to Palestinian footballer Suleiman al-Obeid for omitting details of his death. Al-Obeid died in an Israeli attack while waiting for humanitarian aid in the southern Gaza Strip on Wednesday, August 6.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Liverpool and Egypt forward Mohamed Salah slammed UEFA for their post paying tribute to Palestinian footballer Suleiman al-Obeid on social for failing to refer to the circumstances surrounding his death. The Palestinian Football Association (PFA)

announced on Thursday, August 7, that Obeid was killed in an Israeli attack while waiting for humanitarian aid in the southern

Gaza Strip the previous day.The 41-year-old, who was called the Pele of Palestinian football according to the PFA, scored more than 100 goals during his career, including two in 24 international matches. The UEFA put out a statement on their official X account paying their tribute to Obeid."Farewell to Suleiman al-Obeid, the 'Palestinian Pel'. A talent who gave hope to countless children, even in the darkest of times," read the statement from UEFA."Can you tell us how he died, where and why?"

Salah would retweet it and asked if UEFA could provide them details on how he died, where and why was he killed."Can you tell us how he died, where, and why?"

tweeted Salah in response to UEFA.Uefa hasn't commented yet on the statement made by Salah. The Liverpool forward has been



one of the advocates for humanitarian aid to be allowed into Gaza as the two-year-old war continues to wage on in the area. The PFA put a post on their Facebook account

attributed to UEFA President Aleksander Ceferin, and called Al-Obeid proof that joy can flourish in the hearts of people despite hardship. They also said that his death is a great loss to football and sport in general.

"Proof of the joy that can flourish in the hearts of people despite hardship.""He gave his talent and dedication to the children of Gaza and gave their dreams a hope to blossom despite the suffering," the statement read."His death is a great loss to the world of football and to everyone who recognises the power of sport to unite people."The PFA revealed on Saturday that 325 players, coaches, administrators, referees and club board members in the Palestinian soccer community have died in the Israeli-Hamas conflict since October 2023.

Market Outlook: Tariff Tensions, Inflation Data Key Triggers Next Week

New Delhi. (Agency)

Investors should keep an eye on the developments around the US-India trade deal, quarterly earnings results, tariff rhetoric and inflation data in the upcoming trade week, analysts said on Sunday.Over 1,400 companies including from sectors such as metals, energy and pharmaceuticals are scheduled to report Q1 FY26 results next week, as quarterly earnings cycle comes to an end. Grasim Industries, Hero MotoCorp, India Lease Development, and other major companies are scheduled to release their quarterly earnings on August 11.On the macroeconomic front, investors are focused on domestic CPI and WPI inflation data, set to be released on August 12 and August 14. Last week, markets fell for the sixth straight week following US President Donald Trump's unexpected announcement of a 50 per cent tariff on Indian goods. The Nifty and Sensex fell by nearly one per cent, closing at 24,363 and 79,857, respectively.FII selling persisted during the week, indicating broader risk aversion in emerging markets. However, ongoing purchases by DIIs helped mitigate losses. Domestic resilience is shown by strong July GST collections and rising PMI readings. However, increasing input costs, inflation trends, and weaknesses in the banking and IT sectors may cap upside.Ajit Mishra from Religare Broking Ltd said, "The Nifty's close below 24,450 has increased the risk of further correction, with immediate support placed near 24,200. On the upside, resistance is expected around the 24,600–24,800 zone, with a stronger barrier at 25,200."

“Broader market indices remain vulnerable given their higher beta to FII outflows. Any rebound is likely to be short-lived unless accompanied by easing trade tensions and a reversal in FII flows," he added. On the sectoral front, domestic demand-driven segments such as infrastructure, select autos, and rural-focused FMCG may display relative resilience if macro conditions hold steady.

From Zero To Rs 50,000: Minimum Balance Rules Compared Across SBI, ICICI, HDFC, And Other

New Delhi. (Agency)

Minimum Balance Rules Comparison: The Private Lender ICICI Bank has recently announced that the minimum balance requirement for savings accounts opened on or after August 01, 2025 will be increased to Rs 50,000 from the earlier Rs 10,000. The move has been met with some criticism from various echelons of society, as it will hamper people with low income from getting access to financial and banking services.

In metro and urban branches, the minimum average monthly balance (MAMB) will be Rs 50,000, up from the earlier Rs 10,000. In semi-urban branches, it will rise to Rs 25,000 from Rs 5,000, while in rural branches, the requirement will double to Rs 10,000 from Rs 5,000. The higher MAMB will apply only to new accounts opened after August 1.Customers who fail to meet the requirement will face a penalty of 6% of the shortfall or Rs 500, whichever is lower.

The State Bank of India (SBI) and a few other banks are softening their stance for minimum average balance requirements for both rural and urban metros.

Earlier, Punjab National Bank (PNB) and Canara Bank had announced the removal of penalty charges for not maintaining the minimum average balance (MAB) in all savings accounts.Canara Bank brought significant relief to its savings account holders by eliminating the average monthly balance (AMB) requirement for all types of savings bank accounts.

D-Street set for a stormy week? Tariffs, Q1 earnings, inflation data in focus— Analysts weigh in on likely stock market trajectory

New Delhi. (Agency)

Stock markets are set for another potentially turbulent week in the wake of Us tariff impact, q1 earnings and inflation data expected this week.This week's trading would only span across days; Friday being an holiday on account of Independence Day.In the upcoming week, investors will be focusing on India's Consumer Price Index (CPI) and Wholesale Price Index (WPI) inflation data. Global developments, especially regarding US-India trade talks, will also be closely watched. The earnings season is nearing its end, but significant results from companies like Ashok Leyland, ONGC, IOC, Hindalco Industries, and BPCL are expected to prompt stock-specific movements.Analysts have also given their insights on what could drive the markets over the news four days. Ajit Mishra – SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, was quoted by PTI saying, "This week, attention will turn to domestic CPI and WPI inflation data. Developments in the US–India trade relations will also remain in focus amid ongoing discussions over a trade agreement. The earnings season is nearing its end, with key results due from Ashok Leyland, ONGC, IOC, Hindalco Industries, BPCL and others, which could drive stock-specific action,"Santosh Meena, Head of Research at Swastika Investmart, highlighted several key factors to monitor this week, including trade negotiations, macroeconomic data, earnings, and Foreign Institutional Investor (FII) flows. He emphasized that any developments or statements from India and the US will significantly influence the market.Meena pointed out that India, the US, and China are set to release important economic data, with US inflation figures set to release on August 12, "India, the US, and China will release key numbers, with US inflation data (12th August) being especially crucial in the backdrop of higher tariffs.

US Fed official says jobs report confirms 'signs of fragility' in market

Bowman also made the case that price increases from US President Donald Trump's sweeping tariffs this year will likely represent "a one-time effect."

New Delhi.(Agency)

WASHINGTON recent US employment report confirmed "signs of fragility" in the labor market, a senior central bank official said Saturday, backing three interest rate cuts this year to guard against further weakening.In prepared remarks to a summit in Colorado, Federal Reserve Vice Chair for Supervision Michelle

Bowman called for a "proactive approach" in lowering the benchmark lending rate.Doing so "would help avoid a further unnecessary erosion in labor market conditions" and reduce the chance that the Fed's rate-setting committee will need to make a larger cut if the jobs market worsened further, she said.Bowman also made the case that price increases from President Donald Trump's sweeping tariffs this year will likely represent "a one-time effect."

She expects inflation will return to the Fed's two-percent target after the tariff effects dissipate."It is appropriate to look through temporarily elevated inflation readings and therefore remove some policy restraint to avoid weakening in the labor market," she added in the remarks.Bowman was one of wo Fed



governors to dissent at the central bank's July policy meeting, a rare occurrence even as officials voted to hold rates steady for a fifth straight gathering. Her latest remarks underscore growing divisions among Fed policymakers about when the independent central bank should begin slashing rates again.The Fed has come under intense pressure from Trump recently, as the president repeatedly

lambasts Fed Chair Jerome Powell for its decisions to keep rates unchanged.

Bowman, who was nominated by Trump in 2018 to the Fed's board, also took aim at government data over its declining survey response rates and other issues -- saying the monthly numbers have become increasingly tough to interpret.

Even as she acknowledged weakness in the labor market, she said that she remained "cautious about taking too much signal from data releases."On the day that the Labor Department released July's jobs report, which showed cracks in the market with employment in May and June revised down significantly by 258,000 jobs, Trump ordered the firing of the commissioner of labor statistics.

Without providing evidence, he accused commissioner Erika McEntarfer of manipulating data for political reasons.

ITR 2025: How Tax Rules Differ For Freelancers And Salaried Employees— Explained

New Delhi.(Agency)

With the ITR 2025 filing season around the corner, many freelancers and consultants are wondering how their income is taxed and why the rules differ from those for salaried employees.“This classification determines what deductions you can claim and how you maintain records,” said a Mint report. For salaried workers, tax paperwork is often straightforward with Form 16 from their employer. Freelancers, however, need to handle extra steps like obtaining Form 16A from each client and cross-checking it with Form 26AS to make sure all tax credits are correctly reflected.For salaried employees, taxes are cut by the employer before the salary reaches their account. Freelancers, however, need to handle taxes themselves. Usually, when clients pay freelancers, they deduct 10 per cent TDS and submit it to the government under the freelancer’s PAN. To ensure the tax is



credited correctly, freelancers should collect Form 16A from each client and match it with Form 26AS.

Salaried vs Freelancers: Expense Deductions

Salaried employees get a flat deduction up to Rs 50,000 under the old tax regime or Rs 75,000 under the new one without having to show any bills. Tax Deductions Available for Freelancers (Old Regime)

Freelancers can claim many of the same benefits as salaried individuals, such as: Section 80C: PPF, ELSS, life insurance, and other eligible

investments- Section 80CCD: National Pension System (NPS) contributions

- Section 80D: Health insurance premium payments- Section 80TTA: Interest earned from savings accounts

-Section 80GG: Rent deduction (up to Rs 5,000/month) if HRA is not received

Choosing the Right ITR Form

If you’re a freelancer and don’t qualify for presumptive taxation, you’ll need to file ITR-3. For example, if you work as a content writer, presumptive taxation doesn’t apply—so you must report your income and expenses in detail.The tax rates are the same for freelancers and salaried individuals, but the differences lie in how income is classified, what deductions you can claim, and the level of compliance required. Keeping invoices, receipts, and expense records organised will make filing easier and more accurate.

India's trade ties expansion: 5 major FTAs signed in five years; more deals in progress, says MoS Commerce & Industry

New Delhi.(Agency)

Over the last five years, India has expanded its international trade relationships by signing five major Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) whilst progressing with several new negotiations, as detailed in Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Jitin Prasada's written response to the Rajya Sabha.

The Minister provided this information in response to Congress member Jebi Mather Hisham's query regarding India's international trade agreements signed during the previous five years and their implementation status.

The five-year period saw the implementation of multiple agreements namely:

India-Mauritius CECPA in 2021

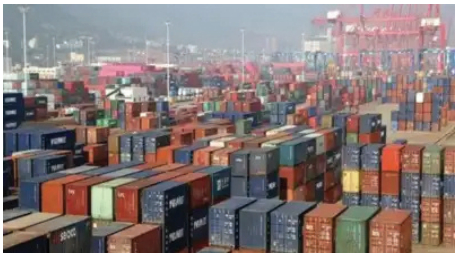
India-UAE CEPA in 2022

India-Australia ECTA in 2022

India-EFTA TEPA in 2024

India-UK CETA in 2025 (pending implementation)The Minister's trade

data revealed varied results across different agreements, according to ANI report.The India-Australia ECTA showed export growth of 14 per cent in 2023-24 and 8 per cent in 2024-25,



despite maintaining a negative trade balance. The Mauritius agreement demonstrated consistent trade surplus, whilst UAE trade saw substantial increases in both exports and imports, largely from petroleum trade, resulting in a growing deficit.Regarding the India-UAE FTA, primary imports for 2024-2025 comprised Petroleum:

Crude, Petroleum Products, and associated items. Agricultural and pharmaceutical exports from India showed positive growth."Additionally, the FTA has also led to a significant growth in Foreign Direct Investment," the minister said in his response.

The India-EFTA TEPA awaits implementation later this year, subject to ratification completion by all parties.

India has finalised negotiations for a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement with Oman and is pursuing various other agreements, including deals with the EU, Australia (CECA), Sri Lanka, Peru, Chile, New Zealand, and the United States.

Furthermore, India is modernising existing trade agreements, including the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (2009) and the India-Korea CEPA (2009).



2025-26 saw average monthly registrations of 11.3 lakh, representing a 35 per cent decrease from the previous fiscal year's monthly average of 17.4 lakh.Uttar Pradesh maintained its position as the primary contributor in the first half of 2025, with a slight increase in share from 13.9 per cent to 14.1 per cent compared to the latter half of 2024.Among the top 10 states, Rajasthan and Maharashtra demonstrated the strongest monthly growth in June, recording increases of 22.1 per cent and 21.3 per cent respectively.Nevertheless, all states witnessed reduced investor registration rates in 2025-26 compared to 2024-25. Gujarat experienced the largest decline at 60 per cent, followed by Rajasthan at 46 per cent. Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh, despite their leading positions, recorded decreases of 39 per cent and 36 per cent respectively.

Unseasonal rains impact up to 34% room AC makers' revenue in June quarter

New Delhi. (Agency)

Unseasonal rains and early monsoon arrival have impacted up to 34 percent of the revenue of listed room-air-conditioner companies in the June quarter.Listed durable goods makers, including Voltas, Blue Star and Havells, have reported a 13-34 percent decline in their housing room-air-conditioning (RAC) segment in the latest June quarter, creating short-term pressure on their topline and margins.Besides rains, the impact was further accentuated by an exceptionally high base in the corresponding quarter of the previous year, which had benefited the makers from a harsh and prolonged summer that drove record sales.However, some of them reported a better performance in their Commercial Air Conditioning business and expect to continue the momentum.The near-term environment remains challenging for the RAC segment, which is expected to be sized around 12.5 million units.However, companies are looking ahead to a demand revival during the upcoming festive season and expect to close FY26

with reasonable growth."During the quarter, weather-related volatility had a significant bearing on temperature-sensitive categories, most notably the air conditioning category. The summer of 2025 arrived late and stayed mild, and ended abruptly, curtailing peak demand for air conditioners," Voltas said in its analysis of Q1 results.In the June quarter, Voltas' revenue from "unitary cooling products for comfort and commercial use", which comprises its RAC business, was down 24.57 percent to Rs 2,867.86 crore. It was Rs 3,802.17 crore in the corresponding period of the preceding fiscal.ome-grown Havells also reported a decline of 34.4 percent to Rs 1,261.85 crore in the revenue of its Lloyds' business in the June quarter.The revenue of Lloyds, which houses its residential air-conditioner business, was Rs 1,924.11 crore a year ago.Havells Chairman and Managing Director Anil Rai Gupta said the company has also witnessed a decline in fan and room cooler business due to intermittent rains."So, that also saw a significant decline in sales, very

similar to what we saw in the air conditioner business,"he noted.

Similarly, Blue Star revenue from its consumer-facing room AC business



declined 13.3 percent to Rs 1,499.37 crore in the June 2025 quarter. It was Rs 1,729.52 crore a year ago."FY26 started on a softer note, driven primarily by unseasonal rains across the country, which resulted in a muted demand primarily for the Room Air-Conditioning segment," Blue Star said in the investors' update.According to Blue Star, the June quarter presented "unexpected headwinds" due to the early onset of monsoon across India,

making this an unusually soft summer season."The Room Air Conditioners business experienced unexpected headwinds due to the early onset of monsoon and an overall mild summer, resulting in subdued demand," it said.On the other hand, its commercial refrigeration business delivered strong growth during the quarter, driven by rising demand from the processed food and pharmaceutical sectors, reflecting a positive turnaround in key end-user industries, it said.According to Tata group firm Voltas, its trade partners had built up inventory in anticipation of strong demand, but softer secondary sales led to slower off-take and elevated stock levels, prompting a temporary adjustment in factory operations.To sustain market momentum, Voltas intensified its efforts to drive secondary sales through focused promotional activities, which placed some pressure on margins.eanwhile, Blue Star said it will continue to invest in expanding its distribution footprint across the country and remain confident in its outlook for the rest of the year.

Vicky Jain On Samarth Jurel

Isha Malviya

Abhishek Kumar’s Reunion At His Birthday Bash: ‘Ek Doosre Ke Liye...’

Isha Malviya and Abhishek Kumar were present at Vicky Jain’s birthday celebration along with Samarth Jurel, and this unexpected reunion of exes raised multiple eyebrows. There were several speculations about their alleged patch-up, but now, in a fresh conversation, Ankita Lokhande’s husband revealed that they were not present at his party because of each other; instead, they came for him. In a chat with Filmygyan, Vicky Jain talked about Isha, Abhishek, and Samarth attending his birthday party and shared, “Vo sab individual level par mujhse bohot connected hain. To itne saare log hain to ye ek parivar ban chuka hai. Aapka birthday hoga toh vo saare log jo aapki journey mein important hain vo sab wahan rehne chahiye. Toh vo sab mere liye aaye the, koi bhi ek doosre ke liye nahi aaye the, sab wahan mere liye aaye the.” (They’re all very connected to me on an individual level. There are so many people that it’s become like a family now. On your birthday, all the people who are important in your journey should be



there. So, they all came for me, not for each other, but only for me.)

About Isha Malviya and Abhishek Kumar’s reunion

Meanwhile, Isha Malviya and Abhishek Kumar, who gained popularity after they appeared in Bigg Boss 17 and their personal life came

into the limelight, have collaborated for a new song Ni Tu Baar Baar. The song featuring the two exes will be released on August 5.

Earlier, Isha Malviya and Abhishek Kumar were spotted together in a car, with the actress trying to hide her face. The sighting stirred curiosity online, with some fans speculating about a real-life reunion, while others believed it was for a project. “It was a very good moment, and I was the one who took the initiative to talk to her. Krushna bhai took us towards Isha to dance to her popular song. Woh gaana kitna viral ho gaya hai. She is doing some great work, and I feel everyone is doing a good job in their respective space. Shayad aisa portray ho jaata hoga that we hate each other, but there is nothing like that. Nobody hates anyone, and we are all somehow connected to each other,” Abhishek shared while talking about his reunion with the actress earlier on the sets of Laughter Chefs.

Isha and Abhishek’s past includes Udaariyaan, where Abhishek first dated Isha, followed by her high-profile relationship with Samarth Jurel during Bigg Boss 17.



Tehran: John Abraham To Manushi Chillar, Who Plays What Role In Upcoming Thriller



Tehran, the upcoming Geopolitical thriller featuring John Abraham and Manushi Chillar in lead roles, is generating anticipation ever since its announcement. Helmed by Arun Gopalan, the film is set to stream on the OTT giant Zee5 on August 14. Backed by Maddock Films, Tehran unfolds amid rising global tensions between Israel and Iran. It goes into the mysterious world of international espionage, where a single man’s allegiance can tip the scales between loyalty and betrayal. As fans await to see John and Manushi together for the first time, let’s take a closer look at who plays what in the action-thriller:

John Abraham

In Tehran, John Abraham will portray ACP Rajiv Kumar, an officer divided between duty and conscience. Rajiv is concerned with international espionage and the geopolitical conflicts between Iran and Israel. He gets caught in the crossfire of political objectives and is forced to alter alliances, all while his own loyalty is called into doubt.

Manushi Chillar

Manushi, on the other hand, will be seen playing the role of SI Divya Rana. She is brave, determined, and dedicated to her words and responsibilities. Divya has everything she requires to serve the nation.

Neeru Bajwa

Punjabi actress Neeru Bajwa is also a part of Tehran, wherein she will be seen playing the role of Sheilaaja. Her character is recognised as emotionally intense and complicated, representing the film’s investigation of global politics and personal views.

John Abraham On Tehran

Speaking about the film, John said in a statement, “Tehran is a truly global film, based on real-life events that resonate far beyond national borders. Playing ACP Rajeev Kumar in Tehran has been one of the most difficult and complex roles of my career, as he is not your typical nationalist.

Hey Mahesh Babu, Namrata Shirodkar Says You Make Her Life ‘Feel Like A Dream’



Mahesh Babu turned 50 today, August 9. While several heartwarming wishes poured in from across the world, it was his wife and former actress Namrata Shirodkar’s birthday wish that stole the limelight. She took to her social media and shared a special family picture that offered a loving glimpse of the happy family.

Taking to her Instagram, Namrata posted a beautiful family photograph featuring herself, Mahesh and their children — Gautam and Sitara. Alongside the picture, she penned an emotional note that captured the essence of their bond.

Calling Mahesh Babu her strength, the former actress penned, “Happy birthday to the man who makes life feel like a dream. My love, my strength, my everything. Love you always, Mahesh Babu.” Shilpa Shirodkar’s Wish For ‘Best Brother-in-Law’ As Mahesh Babu turned a year older, actress and sister-in-law Shilpa Shirodkar also took to Instagram to post a heartfelt birthday message. Dropping an adorable picture with Mahesh Babu, she penned, “Happy Birthday to the best brother-in-law ever!! You keep inspiring us all with your humility and grace. May your light be shining brighter each year! Love you tooooooooo much.”

Mahesh Babu’s Personal Life Mahesh and Namrata have been a loving duo for 20 years now. The couple tied the wedding knot in 2005 and are proud parents of two children. They stepped into a new chapter of life with the birth of Gautam in the year 2006. Following this, the two embraced parenthood for the second time in 2012 with the birth of their daughter, Sitara.

Mahesh Babu’s Recent and Upcoming Work

Workwise, the actor most recently impressed audiences in Guntur Kaaram, a Telugu-language action drama. Directed by Trivikram Srinivas, the film starred him alongside Sreeleela, Meenakshi Chaudhary, Jayaram, Jagapathi Babu, Sunil, Prakash Raj, Ramya Krishna and Rao Ramesh. Mahesh Babu earned widespread attention for its gripping storyline and powerful performances.

Up next, Mahesh Babu is roped in for acclaimed filmmaker SS Rajamouli’s much-awaited film, titled SSMB29. Adding to the excitement, the film marks the maiden collaboration of global icon Priyanka Chopra Jonas with Mahesh.

Kiara Advani

Shares Glimpse Into Motherhood With Sweet Midnight Post For Daughter



Kiara Advani is currently enjoying one of the most beautiful phases of her life — motherhood. The actress recently welcomed her first child with husband Sidharth Malhotra. Recently, Kiara took to social media to share a heartwarming late-night post about her daughter. Kiara Advani took to her Instagram stories and shared a post which read, “I change your diapers, you change my world. Fair trade.” It was summing up the joy and exhaustion of her new role as a mother. In no time it went viral. Recently, on her birthday also she shared the glimpse of her cake with caption, “My most special Birthday Surrounded by the loves of my life — my baby, my husband, and my parents — with both our songs playing on repeat as we step into this wonderful year ahead. Feeling incredibly grateful and blessed. Thank you all for your kind wishes.” She also dropped a picture of her birthday cake — featuring an angel embracing her baby. The cake also had “Happy Birthday Ki, Wonderful Mama!”

Kiara Advani And Sidharth Malhotra’s Baby Girl:

The couple welcomed their daughter on July 15, 2025, at Reliance Hospital in Mumbai. Sidharth Malhotra and Kiara Advani shared the happy news on Instagram with a heartwarming pink announcement card that read, “Our hearts are full and our world forever changed. We are blessed with a baby girl.” The message was simple, emotional and full of gratitude. The design featured delicate heart balloons and soft pastel elements, with “Baby Girl” written in elegant gold script. He signed it off with both their

names — Kiara & Sidharth — marking the beginning of their journey as parents. Back in February 2025, the couple made their pregnancy public with a soft, heartwarming Instagram post — featuring baby socks and the caption, “Our biggest blessing is on the way.” The photo instantly went viral, with congratulations pouring in from across the film industry. Sidharth Malhotra and Kiara Advani’s love story started off quietly. They first met in 2018 at a film party, but it was during the shooting of Shershaah in 2021 that



they grew close. Their on-screen chemistry led to rumors, but the two kept things private for a long time. Over the years, fans picked up on subtle hints — like their New Year vacation in South Africa and sweet birthday posts on Instagram. In early 2023, Kiara finally confirmed the relationship with a playful birthday post for Sidharth. A few weeks later, on February 7, 2023, they got married in a beautiful, intimate ceremony at Suryagarh Palace in Jaisalmer.



5 things you should learn from your First job

So it's your first job and you have to make sure that you create the right impression and yet stick to your deadlines.

10 tips for email Etiquette

The digital age has made communication much easier and more hassle-free, what with several apps available for mobile phone chat. However, people often forget that they have to use a different, more formal tone for official email correspondence, and end up peppering their emails with too many emojis and abbreviations. Here are a few tips to keep in mind when you're sending out a work email.

1. INTRODUCTIONS ARE IMPORTANT: Always introduce yourself if you are writing to someone you don't know or haven't corresponded with previously. If you've got the sender's address from a mutual friend, mention that in your email. Introducing yourself is especially important if you're sending out a survey or questionnaire to people whose addresses you have got from a database.

2. ALWAYS RUN A SPELL-CHECK: It's important to run a spell-check for official correspondence, especially if you're sending an email from your phone. You don't want the auto-correct feature to backfire on an official email, after all. Ensure your grammar and punctuation are correct as well.

3. USE THE REPLY-ALL FEATURE SPARINGLY: Only use the reply-all feature for an email that really needs it. If the reply is meant for only one person, just reply to him/her. And don't use it to reply to a sender's greetings for the festive

season — you could find yourself being blamed for starting an unnecessary email thread.

4. USE BCC FOR GENERIC MAILS: Use the Bcc field for when you are sending out mails to a very large number of people who may not all know each other. It's also a way to ensure that all your contacts' addresses are not out there for people unknown to them to access.

5. RESTRICT THE NUMBER OF ATTACHMENTS YOU SEND: Send heavy files via file-hosting services so that you don't

underlining in the middle of a lot of text. Don't use fancy fonts or multiple font colours either.

8. WATCH YOUR TONE: Always be careful about how your email sounds. It may be an official email, but it should not sound too abrupt. You shouldn't sound over-friendly either, especially if this is the first time you are corresponding with the recipient. Moreover, don't send out an email if you're upset. Save it as a draft and re-read it when you're calmer.

9. FIX YOUR FORWARDS: Make it a point to clean up forwards before you, in turn, forward them to other people. Not only does this make the email look cleaner, but it also ensures that you don't give away anyone else's email addresses.

10. CHECK WHO YOU'RE SENDING AN EMAIL TO: Always check the To field of an unsent email before you send it. You don't want the wrong email being sent to the wrong person. What every official email should contain

Subject line: This is the first thing that recipients will see in their inboxes and it will determine whether they will read it or not. It should be clear and direct.

Salutation: Always start an email by greeting the recipient by using the word 'dear' followed by his/her name. If you aren't on a first-name basis with the recipient, use a title and a surname.

Concise body: Get straight to the point. If you have more than one issue to address, start with the most important, and list the rest point-by-point.

Sign off: Always sign off on your emails. Phrases like 'Yours sincerely' and 'yours faithfully' are acceptable for formal emails. 'Best regards' or 'kind regards' work in most other situations.



clog the recipient's inbox. You could also zip files or resize pictures. If you know you're sending an email to someone who accesses his/her inbox on the phone, don't send several attachments with it.

6. DON'T OVER-ABBREVIATE: Don't use too many abbreviations or in your email, like FYI, PFA, PDF or FYR. It may confuse the recipient, who may also get the impression that you don't have the time to type out a proper email. If you must use them, restrict it only to the subject line.

7. FORMATTING FUNDAS: Do not use all caps and bold fonts as this will give the recipient the impression that you are shouting at him/her. The same goes for

And while you are busy maintaining a balance between creating the right impression, sticking to deadlines, you also have to see that you learn various things from your job which doesn't really come under your job responsibilities. From how to cracking the meeting to how to talk to break the ice with the seniors here is a list of things that you learn both knowingly and unknowingly on your first job.

Sticking to deadlines

So while you were in college or school deadlines were something that you were quite flexible with. But things change when you step out in the world and get into the work zone. From bringing out a story

within a deadline or cracking a deal within a deadline, this word matters the most in the work zone and should be given utmost priority.

Work-home balance isn't a myth

So while you may think that balancing your work responsibilities and home chores is a total myth, in reality is isn't. While, initially it may all seem very surreal to manage all, gradually you will get used to it and then managing both becomes quite easy.

Every penny counts

Gone are the days when you can buy a dress or shoe or cosmetics without thinking much about the cost. When you start working you get to know the real value of hard earned money.

So in a sense your first job teaches you where to be a spendthrift and where to be a true-blue stingy.

Being a smart worker

Well, it is good you are a hard worker, but amidst deadlines one has to be a smart worker and make sure that he/she finishes work in time and with less errors.

Socialize right and smart

Certainly, there are many who are glued to social media, but when you get into a work pace and add people from your work space one has to be doubly sure to see what kind of messages and pictures they are sharing on social media. The reason being that a lot of employers these days goes through our social pages and decides whether to hire or not.

5 essential skills today's employers want

Apart from relevant, organisations are now looking at hiring graduates with people skills and an aptitude for leadership

In a competitive job market, a degree that highlights your core competencies and skills is not enough to get you a job. Employers are now looking for candidates with not only the right attitude, but also the right aptitude while hiring. Here are some of the essential skills that fresh graduates will need to cultivate to secure a job:

Communication skills: The most significant step towards getting through the interview process is to polish your communication skills, both written and verbal.

This is the best way to stand out in the crowded candidate market and it also aids in building a strong professional network.

Aptitude for leadership: It is not just the academic record and domain expertise that matter these days, but also your proficiency to be a leader that companies look out for. Not everyone can master this skill; however, one can work on building their inherent leadership qualities by taking initiatives and responsibility.

Being a people's person and a team player: Good interpersonal skills are a key to securing your dream job. Having this skill



reflects that you are sociable and can work harmoniously with others. Interviewers will most likely test your ability of being a team player through questions relating to real-life scenarios. Some interviewers give a lot of importance to the extra-curricular abilities of the interviewee - excellence in sports, participation in student organization activities, community assistance roles with NGOs, etc - to judge the individual's ability to work in teams and inspire innovative ideas.

Problem solving and analytical skills: Impromptu thinking and problem solving skills are the qualities that prospective employers look for in candidates. So it is essential to build on these capabilities and flaunt them when you present yourself in the job market as this will help you gain bonus points.

Open to learning and being proactive: It is vital for a candidate to come across as independent and not someone who needs to be pushed for a task to be completed. In addition to this, out-of-the-box thinking and innovative ideas can get you the competitive corporate advantage. Interviewers will also try to gauge if a candidate is open to maintaining a continuous learning curve to re-skill themselves in a dynamic workplace and stay ahead. Interviewers are impressed not with how much you know, but with how well you can convince the opposite person to think and accept your point of view. By demonstrating the right qualities and by marketing yourself efficiently, you can certainly land your first big career break!