

PM launches Maruti Suzuki's e Vitara in big 'Make in India, Make for World' push

Announcing a "new chapter" in India's Make in India journey at the launch event in Hansalpur, PM Modi said, "From today, electric vehicles made in India will be exported to 100 countries. Along with this, hybrid battery electrolyte manufacturing is also starting today."

New Delhi. (Agency)
In his major Swadeshi push ahead of Donald Trump's additional tariffs taking effect, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday inaugurated Suzuki Motor Plant's localised production of hybrid battery electrodes and flagged

Highlighting the establishment of TDS

off the export of Maruti Suzuki's first global battery electric vehicle, the e Vitara, to over 100 countries, including Europe and Japan. Announcing a "new chapter" in India's Make in India journey at the launch event in Hansalpur, PM Modi said, "From today, electric vehicles made in India will be exported to 100 countries. Along with this, hybrid battery electrolyte manufacturing is also starting today."

Ahead of the inauguration, PM Modi wrote, "Today is a special day in India's quest for self-reliance and being a hub for green mobility. At the programme in Hansalpur, e Vitara will be flagged off. This Battery Electric Vehicle (BEV) is made in India and will be exported to over a hundred nations. In a big boost to our battery ecosystem, production of hybrid battery electrodes will also commence at a plant in Gujarat."

Highlighting the establishment of TDS

Lithium-Ion Battery Gujarat Private Limited in 2017, PM Modi said that for India to become a manufacturing hub for electric vehicles, "it was essential to also produce batteries domestically."



In a major boost to hybrid and electric vehicle battery production, PM Modi also inaugurated a lithium-ion battery manufacturing facility set up by Suzuki, Toshiba, and Denso.

From his Red Fort address to an event in Ahmedabad on Tuesday, PM Modi stressed that the upcoming festive season should celebrate self-reliance

and urged people to opt for swadeshi goods. "This is the season of festivals. Now Navratri, Vijayadashami, Dhanteras, Diwali... all these festivals are coming. These are celebrations of our culture, but they should also be celebrations of self-reliance. Therefore, I want to reiterate my request to you once again that we must adopt a mantra in our lives: whatever we buy will be 'Made in India', it will be indigenous," PM Modi said, as quoted by news agency ANI. With the new facility inaugurated by PM Modi, the plant will manufacture over 80 per cent of the components and processes required for lithium-ion batteries, reducing import dependence and paving the way for exports. With this development, India will now serve as Suzuki's global manufacturing hub for electric vehicles. The e Vitara is positioned as a global electric SUV and measures 4,275mm in length, 1,800mm in width, 1,640mm in height, and has a 2,700mm wheelbase.

Probe Agency Raids AAP's Saurabh Bharadwaj In Hospital Construction 'Scam'

Agency Mumbai.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) today conducted raids at Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Saurabh Bharadwaj's residence in the national capital for an alleged "scam" in constructing hospitals during his tenure as the Delhi health minister. The probe agency is raiding at least 13 locations in Delhi.

According to sources, the hospital construction scam is allegedly worth approximately Rs 5,590 crore. In 2018-2019, the AAP-led Delhi government approved projects worth Rs 5,590 crore for the construction of 24 hospitals. The ICU hospital was supposed to be completed in six months, but even after three years, the work remained incomplete. Despite spending Rs 800 crore, only 50 per cent of the work has been completed, sources said. The cost of LNJP hospital increased from Rs 488 crore to Rs 1,135 crore without any substantial progress.

The construction work was started without approval at several places, and the role of contractors has been found suspicious. The Hospital Information Management System (HIMS) has been pending since 2016, with allegations of deliberate delay. Besides Mr Bharadwaj, AAP leader Satyendar Jain is also under investigation in this case.

"Saurabh Bharadwaj was not the minister at the time when this is the case," said AAP leader Manish Sisodia. "This whole case is false. It is clear from Satyendar Jain's case that false cases were made against AAP leaders."

Delhi Government Committed to Green Transport: CM Rekha Gupta

**The Sikh Times
Simmi Kaur Babbar**

New Delhi, 26 August 2025

Delhi's Lieutenant Governor, V. K. Saxena, and Chief Minister, Mrs Rekha Gupta, yesterday cut the ribbon and flagged off more than 24 electric buses at Sardar Patel Vidyalaya, Lodhi Estate, as part of an initiative to promote green transport. On the occasion, Lieutenant Governor Shri V. K. Saxena stated that Delhi is in safe hands today. He praised Chief Minister Mrs Rekha Gupta, noting that within just six months she had begun commendable work towards improving the city's air quality. Chief Minister Mrs Rekha Gupta remarked that true progress lies in living in harmony with nature. She emphasised that the Delhi Government is consistently working to reduce pollution and promote green transportation. The introduction



of electric buses is not merely a technological shift but a concrete step towards environmental conservation. By providing EV buses to schools, the government aims to ensure that children travel in pollution-free vehicles, thereby safeguarding both their physical and mental health.

The Lieutenant Governor further expressed confidence that within the next two to three years, Delhi would witness remarkable transformations that citizens had long awaited. Appreciating the student performances organised at the school, he highlighted that the introduction of electric buses would facilitate the daily commute of nearly 1,200 students, thereby reducing 400-500 private vehicles on the roads. This would not only lower pollution levels but also

ease traffic congestion. He added that if all schools and colleges adopt such initiatives, the problem of pollution could be significantly mitigated.

CM Rekha Gupta said that this initiative would not only ensure safe travel for students but also play an important role in improving Delhi's air quality. She reiterated that reducing pollution is one of the topmost priorities of the Delhi Government. Referring to the Lieutenant Governor's earlier initiatives, she said that the government had already been

undertaking efforts such as the removal of landfill sites, dust control, afforestation, and the rejuvenation of the Yamuna riverfront. Transitioning school buses to electric mode, she noted, was now a decisive step in the same direction. She further announced that the Delhi Government would organise competitions across all schools on themes related to environmental protection and sustainable development, encouraging children to understand their responsibility towards nature and to uphold these values throughout their lives. The Chief Minister added that patriotism today is not merely about sacrificing one's life for the nation, but about every citizen contributing daily towards making their city and country clean, safe, and pollution-free. "We have the opportunity every single day to live for our country and to take it forward," she said.

Defence chief Anil Chauhan stresses jointness, tech integration to win future wars

Agency New Delhi.

Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan on Tuesday said tomorrow's battles will demand swift, coordinated responses across services, warning that future wars will not recognise boundaries between the Army, Navy and Air Force. Delivering the keynote address at RAN SAMWAD -- a first-of-its-kind tri-service seminar on "Impact of Technology on Warfare" -- at the Army War College in Dr Ambedkar Nagar, Madhya Pradesh, Chauhan stressed that jointness, self-reliance in defence, and integrated logistics will be decisive in determining outcomes. He called for institutionalising joint training and rapid absorption of technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, cyber capabilities, and quantum computing. The CDS also underlined the need for robust civil-military integration, citing the ongoing effort to develop Sudarshan Chakra -- a homegrown missile defence system pitched as both "a shield and a sword". Invoking Kautilya, the CDS Chauhan said India has historically been a source of strategic thought, yet lacks serious scholarship on its own wars and strategies. "Research on war, leadership, morale and technology is critical.

India must be Sashakt, Surakshit, Aatmanirbhar and Viksit and this can only happen when all stakeholders build future-ready forces together," he said.

General Chauhan added that RAN SAMWAD was designed to give space to young and mid-level officers who understand technological shifts and whose perspectives must complement the experience of senior



leadership. The two-day seminar is bringing serving professionals to the forefront of strategic dialogue. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will deliver the plenary address on the final day, when several joint doctrines and the Technology Perspective & Capability Roadmap are scheduled for release.

Report claiming 'Manipur strife orchestrated' serves to deepen divide, prolong mistrust: Ex-CM Biren Singh

A 694-page report by Delhi-based non-profit organisation PUCL, authored under the chairmanship of former SC judge Justice Kurian Joseph, alleged that the violence was not spontaneous but orchestrated.

PUNE. (Agency)

IMPHAL: Former Manipur chief minister N Biren Singh alleged that a report of Delhi-based non-profit organisation PUCL claiming that the ethnic violence in the northeastern state was "orchestrated and not spontaneous" serves only to deepen the divide, prolong mistrust and may even promote misunderstanding. Singh was the chief minister of Manipur when ethnic violence, which has claimed over 260 lives and rendered thousands homeless so far, erupted between Imphal Valley-based Meiteis and adjoining hills-based Kukis in May 2023.

BJP's Rajya Sabha MP Leishemba Sanajaoba said that "more than 3,000 FIRs" will be lodged against PUCL for its claim.

Their reactions came after Imphal-based human rights organisation Human Rights International Freedom (HRIF) threatened to take legal measures against the People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) for its claim. PUCL's 694-page report, authored under the chairmanship of former Supreme Court judge Justice Kurian Joseph, alleged that "the violence was not spontaneous but orchestrated".

HRIF, in a letter to the editor of the PUCL, alleged that its report titled 'Independent people's tribunal on the ongoing ethnic conflict in Manipur' is "not only blatantly one-sided but is also replete with unverified facts, misinformation, and a clear bias in favour of the Kuki community, while deliberately omitting and distorting the narrative, facts and suffering of Meitei community".

HRIF also said the report "contains unverified and inflammatory allegations. Without providing any credible evidence" and that "the language and selective reporting have the potential to exacerbate tensions and promote enmity between different groups and disturb the fragile peace process in the state". Singh said, "Well done HRIF for taking the lead."



Chief Minister MK Stalin and his Punjab counterpart Bhagwant Mann, on Tuesday, launched the expansion of the state's flagship Chief Minister's Morning Breakfast Scheme to 2,430 government-aided schools in urban areas at St Joseph Primary School, Mylapore. During the event, Mann said he would consider introducing a similar programme in Punjab at the cabinet meeting scheduled for Wednesday.

Talking at the event, Stalin said the breakfast scheme will now benefit 20.59 lakh students in 37,416 government and aided schools across the state, at a cost of Rs 600 crore. He stressed that the expenditure was not an

expense but a social investment that would yield rich dividends for Tamil society in the future. He also welcomed Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and recalled AAP leader Arvind Kejriwal's visit to Tamil Nadu for the launch of the Pudhumai Penn scheme, under which Rs 1,000 is provided to government school students pursuing higher education. Describing the initiative as more than a scheme to address hunger, Stalin said the breakfast scheme has enhanced students' nutrition, health, social interaction, enthusiasm to attend school, concentration and learning abilities. It has also eased the burden on working parents and reduced hospital visits, he added, noting that he has been

closely monitoring its progress with several studies conducted by the State Planning Commission. "I can say with pride that our schoolchildren will no longer be dull and fatigued, they will now be energetic, confident and full of smiles," he said. He added that it was a matter of honour for Tamil Nadu to have pioneered this

initiative, which is now being considered by other states and even countries. He mentioned the Utachathai Urudhi Sei scheme through which several children have been lifted from malnutrition. He also thanked the self-help group women, who are cooking for the children.

In his address, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann said he was happy to witness the affection people had for MK Stalin and called him a "true people's leader." Congratulating Stalin on the expansion of the breakfast scheme, Mann said he would consider implementing it in Punjab, noting that the state, as the food bowl of India, produces huge quantities of wheat and rice.



"Very Grateful": Mountain Man's Son Thanks Rahul Gandhi For Building House In Bihar

Agency Gaya.
Dashrath Manjhi, Mountain man breathed his last on August 17, 2007, at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi.

The son of Dashrath Manjhi, popularly known as the 'Mountain Man', Bhagirath Manjhi, expressed gratitude towards Lok Sabha MP and Congress MP Rahul Gandhi, as he has built a pucca house for his family in Bihar's Gaya. Speaking to ANI yesterday, Bhagirath said, "...When I met Rahul Gandhi in Patna, I told Rahul Gandhi to come and see the path that my father had carved using a hammer and chisel...So, he came. Rahul Gandhi and I sat together on the cot, drank coconut water, and had a meal...He asked the village children if they studied or not." Bhagirath further said that he never asked Rahul Gandhi to build a house for him. "We came later to know about it...He got the house ready in a month...Later, he handed



over the keys of the house during his visit to Gaya," he added. Bhagirath further said, "There are 5 rooms, a bathroom, a kitchen, and everything is ready. There was a water problem before, but now it has been resolved. Fans have also been installed in all the rooms." "Now there is no problem. I am

happy that Rahul Gandhi built this house... We are very grateful to Rahul Gandhi," he added. The Mountain Man lived in Gehlaur village, near Gaya. As per the Bihar Government, Manjhi carved a path 110 m long (360 ft), 9.1 m (30 ft) wide and 7.7 m (25 ft) deep through a ridge of hills using only a hammer and chisel. After 22 years of work, Dashrath shortened the travel between the Atri and Wazirganj blocks of Gaya town from 55 km to 15 km. He breathed his last on August 17, 2007, at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi. The Government of Bihar gave him a state funeral, proposed his name for the Padma Shri award in 2006 in the social service sector and released a stamp by the India Post in the 'Personalities of Bihar' series on December 26, 2016.

News box

40 AOAs in Noida protest FIRs filed against them for internal disputes and accidents

Noida .(Agency)

Over 40 Apartment Owners Associations (AOAs) of high-rises in Noida held a meeting to protest recent incidents of FIRs against them for incidents within residential condos. The protest follows FIRs against Amrapali Platinum, Supertech Capetown, and others for injuries suffered due to planter falls or internal disputes among residents. On Aug 16, a 12-year-old girl suffered serious head injuries after a chunk of plaster from the Sector 119's Amrapali Platinum society's 25th floor fell on her head. The girl's grandfather alleged that despite the high-risk, no protective barrier, netting or warning sign were in place. This led to an FIR against the society's AOA for negligence.

According to Ajit Kumar Singh, AOA general secretary of Amrapali Platinum, also named in the FIR, the complaint was illegal and one-sided. "FIRs against AOAs are unjustified administrative actions. Besides, our society is under NBCC, which manages the society maintenance and upgradation work. They should be held accountable for any safety measures or security issues of the residents, and not the AOA," said Singh.

In another incident, the Authority on June 27, filed a complaint against AOA of Supertech Cape Town in Sector 74 for dumping untreated sewage in the drain running through the sector. An FIR was registered against under BNS Section 272 (malignant acts likely to spread infection of a disease dangerous to life) at Sector 113 police station. Expressing displeasure over the FIRs, nearly 65 AOAs of different apartment complexes gathered at the clubhouse of Amrapali Princely Estate Sector 76 to raise their objections.

The AOA representatives strongly condemned the unilateral and unnecessary legal actions being taken against AOA members by the Noida Authority and Noida Police Commission. They further said that they do not have any legal authority to implement mandatory or compliance rules and that they can only give out an advisory. The members gathered said that the AOA is working to protect the interests of the citizens living in the societies, and this action taken against them is going to hamper the works of public interest.

Some of the main points raised in the meeting were a call for a transparent inquiry into the FIR lodged against the AOA of Amrapali Platinum. Also, a demand was made to allow AOA to function as an autonomous and accountable unit.

Greater Noida dowry case: Vipin and his family liked her money, not her success, says Nikki's father

Noida. (Agency)

Days after Nikki Bhati's death, two villages stand divided by grief and suspicion. In Roopvas, Bhikari Singh mourns his daughter, convinced that her death was the result of betrayal and abuse. In Sirsa, neighbours rally around Vipin — Nikki's husband — insisting that he is being framed. At Singh's modest two-room house in Roopvas, the mood is sombre. Mourners sit quietly under the verandah, while TV crews hover, capturing every moment of the family's anguish. Singh's wife, Manju, is too ill to speak, and their elder daughter, Kanchan, has been sent away to shield her from the relentless media glare. Nikki and Kanchan's children are with her. Singh recalled happier times, when his daughters were inseparable. "Nikki used to ask me to take her to a juice shop. I would put all four of my children in a car and take them out for juice or paratha. They were close-knit siblings, and today, our family has been destroyed," he says. Nikki and Kanchan's marriage was arranged over a decade ago in the same Bhati family through a local mediator, introduced by the priest of Sirsa's Hanuman Mandir. "We wanted both our daughters to marry into the same family so they could look out for each other. Little did I know I was marrying my daughter to a monster," Singh says.

The priest, Harish Bhagat, remembers the arrangement differently. "The Bhati family was looking for a match for their elder son. But after seeing pictures of the sisters, they agreed to marry both brothers," he says. Singh admits he was reassured by the Bhati's stable business. "In our community, that's what we look for before marrying our daughters. Satveer Bhati had ample estate and a steady rental income. The sons didn't work, but that wasn't a concern for us," he says.

CISF constable dies as vehicle rams his scooter in Ghaziabad

Ghaziabad .(Agency)

A 37-year-old CISF constable was killed after his scooter was hit by an unknown vehicle near the CISF camp in Indirapuram area on Sunday. Police said Sushil Kumar was posted in Parliament House and worked in the CISF's fifth battalion. A resident of Chirauli village in Jawar (Gautam Budh Nagar), Sushil had joined CISF 10 years ago. A complaint, lodged by Yashveer Singh, said his younger brother was on his way to the CISF camp.

"As he was heading towards CISF Indirapuram from Sector 62 Underpass at 5.30am, a vehicle, driven recklessly and at high speed, collided with his scooter. This resulted in serious injuries to my brother and he died on the spot," Yashveer said. On the basis of the complaint, an FIR was registered against an unknown person under sections 106 (causing death by negligence) and 281 (rash driving) of BNS. Police are checking the CCTV cameras of the nearby areas. ACP (Indirapuram) Abhishek Srivastava said that a commuter informed the police about the incident. A police team reached the spot and took the victim for treatment and doctors declared him dead on arrival. After the post-mortem, the body was brought to the CISF camp. Fellow soldiers paid their tribute and the body was handed over to the family with state honours. On Aug 18, a sub-inspector of UP police died in a road accident after her Bullet bike collided with a WagonR car in Kavi Nagar area.

Haryana doctors end 19-day strike, Ayushman Bharat services back on track at private hospitals

GAZIABAD.(Agency)

The Indian Medical Association (IMA) Haryana on Monday announced the withdrawal of its 19-day suspension of Ayushman Bharat services after a high-level meeting with the state govt, where officials agreed to a series of corrective measures to address payment delays and operational glitches. Around 650 private empanelled hospitals in the state will resume Ayushman Bharat services from 12am on Aug 26, said Dr Mahaveer P Jain, president of IMA Haryana.

The decision followed a meeting by chief secretary Anurag Rastogi in Chandigarh, attended by additional chief secretary (health) Sudhir Rajpal, senior officials from Ayushman Bharat Haryana Health Protection Authority (AB-HHPA), and representatives of IMA Haryana.

During the meeting, IMA members flagged long-pending issues, including delayed claim settlements, arbitrary deductions, and systemic hurdles that they said made

it nearly impossible for private hospitals to continue offering services under the scheme. Officials assured the association that all pending claims would be cleared within 30 days, with a streamlined mechanism to ensure timely payments in the future. Several other action points including requests related to package rate revisions, CAPF payments, and "green channel" payment implementation will be escalated to the Centre for approvals, officials said. "The authority will examine the provision of interest on delayed payments under the MoU, in consultation with the finance department. Processing of over 400 corrected cases, priority review of NABH incentive applications, a dedicated hospital helpline, and area-wise training sessions for smoother claim filing and processing will continue," they said. "Deputy commissioners across districts have been directed to handle grievance cases more vigilantly and hold meetings regularly. Show-cause or

suspension notices issued solely for the non-entertainment of patients during the strike period from Aug 7 to Aug 25 will be withdrawn once the suspension is



formally called off. The State Anti-Fraud Unit (SAFU) will expedite pending case reviews and share details of fraudulent activities with hospitals before any de-empanelment action," they added.

The govt has also committed to reviewing progress on these action points every 15 days. The next review meeting under the

chief secretary's chairmanship has been scheduled for Oct 15. IMA officials said the decision to restore services was taken in the interest of patients while trusting the govt's assurances. "We will follow up on each point as per the minutes of the meeting," Dr Jain said. The association launched the protest on Aug 7, citing delays in claim settlements, arbitrary deductions, and procedural bottlenecks under the Ayushman Bharat scheme. The suspension of services caused disruptions for thousands of patients across Haryana seeking treatment under the govt's flagship health insurance programme.

Launched in 2018, Ayushman Bharat allows low-income families to avail medical treatments — anything from routine diagnostic tests to surgeries — up to Rs 5 lakh a year. Families with annual income of less than Rs 2.5 lakh, elderly people and other vulnerable groups are eligible to get registered under the scheme.

Farmhouses back in Aravalis, NGT seeks reports from Haryana & Rajasthan in 4 weeks

Gurgaon . (Agency)

National Green Tribunal (NGT) on Monday sought compliance reports from Haryana Pollution Control Board (HSPCB) and Sohna Municipal Council — while making them respondents in the ongoing proceedings — in a case pertaining to illegal construction and reconstruction activities at Raisina in ecologically sensitive Aravali hills. During the hearing, counsel for both Haryana and Rajasthan sought four weeks' time to file their compliance reports in connection with earlier directions relating to protection of the Aravali hills. The bench accepted the request and listed the matter next for Oct 16.

The bench, led by NGT chairperson Justice Prakash Srivastava along with expert members Dr A Senthil Vel and Mr Ishwar Singh, directed its registry to prepare an amended memo of parties and serve notices to the newly added respondents. The matter is being heard in a suo motu case registered last year after a TOI investigation exposed how farmhouses in Ansals Aravali Retreat were being rebuilt in violation of the laws.

The suo motu case arose from a July 2024 media report flagging that demolished farmhouses in Raisina were being reconstructed in violation of ecological safeguards. The land is classified as gair-mumkin-pahar — a notified and uncultivable Aravali hill zone — and falls within the protective ambit of the Punjab Land Preservation Act, 1900, as well as the Aravali Notification, 1992. The tribunal allowed Ansals Aravali Retreat Resident Welfare Association, enabling its participation in the proceedings on grounds that its members are directly affected. The tribunal directed all respondents to file replies within four weeks, with rejoinders, if any, to be submitted two weeks thereafter. Haryana's counsel maintained that the state is acting pursuant to law and prior court orders.

New bus terminal soon at Sector 103, to boost Dwarka Expressway connectivity

Gurgaon . (Agency)

With the city's bus fleet expected to be expanded soon, GMDA is planning a new depot in Sector 103 to improve connectivity along the upper Dwarka Expressway. The metropolitan authority has appointed Delhi Integrated Multi-Modal Transit System Ltd (DIMTS) as the project management consultant for a proposed bus depot in Sector 103.

The agency has been tasked with preparing the concept plan and detailed project report (DPR) for the facility. Spread across 7.18 acres of land recently transferred from the MCG, the depot will be designed to accommodate up to 150 buses. It will include parking bays, operational space, and maintenance facilities. GMDA officials said the location was chosen for its proximity to the upcoming Sheetla Mata Medical College and Hospital, which is also being developed by the authority and will serve as a key transport hub for commuters in

the new sectors. "The development of the bus depot in Sector 103 is part of our efforts to provide sustainable and reliable public transport. By expanding the bus network and upgrading infrastructure, we aim to reduce dependency on private vehicles and promote eco-friendly travel," said RD Singh, chief general manager (mobility division), GMDA. At present, there are two depots in Sector 10 and Sector 52 that together house 200 buses, while an e-bus depot is under construction in Sector 48, which is expected to be ready by the end of this year. The city has a fleet of 159 buses, which are plying across 24 routes. Fifty Gurgaon buses are operating in Faridabad on the orders of the state govt. The bus services have been in operation for seven years now. In Feb this year, Convergence Energy Services Ltd (CESL), a PSU under the ministry of power, finalised a concessionaire to procure, operate, and maintain 450 electric buses across

Haryana. Gurgaon and Faridabad were to receive 100 each of those buses. However, an approval from the state govt is awaited. Speaking to TOI, a senior transport department official said that the state govt is committed to strengthening public transport and is in the process of procuring 450 new buses. "Out of these, 100 each will be allotted to Gurgaon and Faridabad. The proposal will be placed before the purchase committee for approval," the official said, although the official did not comment on the fact that the metropolitan authority is expanding passenger facilities through the development of new bus queue shelters in new sectors. A total of 154 shelters are being built. Of these, 80 BQS along the Southern to Northern Peripheral Road stretch (sectors 68-95) and 74 BQS along the Upper Dwarka Expressway (sectors 99-115) aim to make public transport more user-friendly with convenient bus stop facilities. mit to the timeline.

20-year wait for canal water set to end, new pipe network to enhance supply to Gwalpahari

Gurgaon. (Agency)

After over two decades of awaiting canal water supply, Gwalpahari and the surrounding areas are set to be connected to the city's master water supply network.

A new 450mm diameter line will carry treated water directly from Chandu Budhera water treatment plant to Gwalpahari through the Sector 72 boosting station. Tenders were invited for laying the 7.6km water pipeline network to make the Gwalpahari boosting station operational by June next year, GMDA said. A 5.8km pipeline is required to link the two boosting stations, GMDA said, adding that 2.2km was laid by HSVB back in 2012 and the remaining 3.6km will now be laid to complete the pipeline. In addition to the master line, GMDA will also build a 4km long secondary distribution network in Gwalpahari to channel water from the boosting station to households and



commercial units. This network will comprise pipelines ranging in diameter from 300mm to 600mm. Officials said the boosting station is being designed to meet both present and future demand, given the rapid pace of development around the

area. Over the years, the demand for piped water supply has grown in Gwalpahari, which is home to several upscale residential complexes, including Valley View Estate, Paras Quartier, Ireo Gurgaon Hills, Krish Provence, ASF Insignia, and Vatsal Valley. According to GMDA's infrastructure development plan, the projected population in the area is expected to rise to 43,516 by 2031 and cross 51,700 by 2041. Currently, the city's master water supply line extends only up to Sector 58, 59. The inlet for the Gwalpahari boosting station will be connected to this line. GMDA CEO Shyamal Misra said the project should be completed as per the deadlines. "This project will improve water distribution and help reduce dependence on private sources like tubewells and tankers. Our aim is to ensure that residents get a reliable supply of treated drinking water," a GMDA official said.

No parking bays, buses choke roads in metro hubs in Gurgaon, trigger traffic gridlock

Gurgaon. (Agency)

In the heart of the city, outside Millennium City Centre and IFFCO Chowk metro stations, the daily rush of commuters faces a significant challenge — there is no space for buses to halt. Without dedicated terminals, city buses are forced to queue along the roadside, reducing carriageway space and creating congestion at two of the busiest metro stations. At Millennium City Centre, rows of 12-metre buses wait to pick up passengers, occupying one full lane of the three-lane road. The situation is exacerbated by autos and e-rickshaws squeezing in near the metro entry, adding to the chaos. Similar is the situation near Fortis Hospital, where buses halt until their schedules align, and at IFFCO Chowk, where long queues of buses wait to ferry passengers onwards.

Commuters say the situation has become part of their daily ordeal. "During the peak hours, it takes 30-40 minutes just to cross Millennium City Centre because buses and autos are scattered all over the road. Even entering the metro stations becomes a challenging task. It feels like there is no traffic management in place at all," said Ashok Dalwani, a resident of Sushant Lok-1. Ruby Jain, a resident of Sector 28, said, "Without proper bus terminals, buses stop wherever they find



space. That blocks traffic, and even passengers risk their safety crossing moving traffic to catch buses." Traffic cops too admitted the main bottleneck is the lack of bus space. "If buses had proper space, autos and e-rickshaws could be managed separately. Now everything spills onto the same area," said a traffic official on duty.

Authorities had even earmarked space for feeder services to ferry metro passengers to other parts of the city. The Haryana Shahari Vikas Pradhikaran (HSV) allotted three acres of land to the transport

especially with another metro station of the upcoming new metro line planned near Millennium City Centre. The additional station will push footfall higher, and without a terminal, more buses will be forced onto the main road, making the situation worse. A GMDA official said they are pursuing the matter at higher levels to find a solution. "We plan to construct a bus terminal in Sector 29. We have raised the issue of land transfer with the transport department, and it is being discussed at a higher level.

We are hoping to find a early resolution to the matter," the official said. However, past experience has shown that when it comes to transferring land for public facilities, agencies are rarely willing to budge.

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Animal welfare groups hail apex court's fresh verdict on stray dogs

The Sikh Times

New Delhi: For over a decade, Vinita Kumar has been feeding and caring for nearly 30 community dogs in her East End Apartments in Mayur Vihar Area, Delhi. Along with her husband, she has spent time and money vaccinating and sterilising most of them. But on Friday, after the Supreme Court modified its earlier order on the management of stray dogs in Delhi-NCR, Kumar was left with more questions than answers. "The judgment is so-so. Who will decide which dog is ferocious? Who will decide where they go? A vet should be there to assess. And what about gated complexes like ours? The order is only clear for public spaces and streets, but inside societies, it is still vague," Kumar said. The court's ruling comes after months of litigation over rising dog-bite cases and conflicts between residents, RWAs and dog feeders. In its fresh directions, the Bench clarified that stray dogs will not be removed en masse. Only those found rabid or "highly ferocious" can be caught. The rest are to be vaccinated, sterilised and released back where they were picked up. The court also barred random roadside feeding, directing the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) and other local authorities to earmark designated feeding points for community dogs. To support this framework, NGOs approaching

the court must contribute Rs 2 lakh and individual petitioners Rs 25,000 towards a welfare fund. For feeders like Kumar, however,



the order raises practical concerns. "If every society pushes dogs out, where will they go? Streets are already crowded," she asked. "And how will the MCD know where feeding happens unless they coordinate with us? Feeders should be in touch with officials to decide spots," said Kumar. Animal welfare voices cautiously welcomed the decision.

Deeksha, another resident of East End Apartments and a pet parent herself, called it "a very positive order." She said the ruling

of encouraging adoption of Indian breeds. "People spend money on exotic breeds unsuited for our climate, while our own desi dogs are hardy and brilliant. Adoption of Indi dogs should be promoted," she said. RWAs, on the other hand, see both clarity and loopholes in the ruling. Atul Goyal, an RWA representative, said while sterilisation and designated feeding points are "a step forward," implementation will be the real test. "Unless the veterinary departments of the urban local bodies are made accountable at the ward level, nothing will change," he said. "Feeding has to be managed at the colony level, within 200-500 metres, not just at ward level. Otherwise, it will fail," he said. Goyal also flagged unaddressed issues such as the practice of meat shops and eateries dumping waste that attracts strays. "There is no order on controlling that. Unless restaurants and meat vendors are restricted from feeding dogs with waste food, the problem will persist," he noted. Ajay, another RWA leader, emphasised that while the idea of designated feeding points looks promising, its success will depend entirely on coordination. "Dogs will start staying near feeding centres," he said. "So, the implementation of this order will need extensive collaboration between the MCD and the local communities, including dog lovers and feeders. Without that, this will remain only on paper," Ajay said. Rajiv

Verma, former secretary of the Mayur Vihar Pocket 4 RWA, said: "The problem with dogs is not just about disease. Even if they are not rabid, people are afraid of them. Vaccination doesn't remove the fear." Verma suggested that the authorities mark vaccinated dogs visibly with collars or tags so that residents feel reassured about safety.

Man sets father-in-law ablaze in Ghazipur, nabbed

New Delhi: A man allegedly set his father-in-law on fire after pouring petrol on him in the Ghazipur area here, the police said on Monday. The accused has been arrested, they said. According to the police, the incident took place on August 16, when Singh's son-in-law Sandeep arrived at his house in Ghazipur's Haroli Extension, demanding to take his wife Nisha back. Nisha came to her parental home after a dispute with Sandeep on the August 15. When Singh refuted, Sandeep allegedly poured petrol on him and set him ablaze. The police formed a team to investigate the case. Investigation revealed that Sandeep had a history of violent behaviour and substance abuse. He had previously attempted to open a gas cylinder at home and had physically assaulted his mother. Sandeep, who worked as a gardener at Modern School in Vijay Nagar, Ghaziabad, had been absent from work for 10 days prior to the incident.

IIT-Delhi researchers develop AI models for quality check of cement

New Delhi:

Researchers at IIT Delhi have developed artificial intelligence (AI) models capable of instantly predicting the quality of cement clinker — an innovation that could drastically cut delays and reduce waste across the cement industry. Concrete, which makes up over 90 per cent of the world's built environment, relies on cement as a fundamental ingredient. However, cement production is one of the world's most carbon-intensive processes, contributing

nearly 8 per cent to global carbon emissions. With over 4.1 billion tonnes produced annually, improving the efficiency and sustainability of cement manufacturing has become an urgent priority. Traditionally, clinker — the partially processed form of cement — is tested using high-energy X-ray analysis to assess quality. This method can take up to four hours, often resulting in reprocessing if problems are detected. In response, a research team led by Sheikh Junaid Fayaz, a PhD scholar at IIT Delhi's

Civil Engineering Department, under the supervision of Prof. NM Anoop Krishnan, has developed AI models that can perform the same assessment in mere fractions of a second. "X-ray-based clinker checks can take up to four hours, while our AI models deliver pre-

dictions in just 1/100 of a second — making quality control a million times faster," said Prof. NM Anoop Krishnan.

"This allows engineers to adjust plant parameters in real time, ensuring target quality is achieved before pro-

duction, instead of relying on delayed post-production checks."

Commenting on the broader potential, Sheikh Junaid Fayaz said,

"The significance of this work goes well beyond cement. It showcases how AI can modernise traditional industrial practices and support sustainability tar-

gets. Given the strong performance of our models, several cement plants globally have already shown interest in adopting this technology."

NAME CHANGE
I, Himanshi Jawa alias Himanshi Jindal D/O Rajesh Jawa W/O Deepanshu Jindal R/O D-18, Tandon Road, Adarsh Nagar, PO: N. S. Mandi, Dist. North West, Delhi, Delhi -110033, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Himanshi Jindal

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is for general information that I, GAURAV CHHABRA S/O Ashok Kumar, RIO 76 C-8, Gaushala, Kishangarh, PO: Vasant Kunj, Vasant Vihar, South West, Delhi, Delhi-110073, declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as SURINDRA KUMAR in my Service Record. The actual name of mine is SURENDRA KUMAR, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is for general information that I, SHAHLA D/O SHAMIM ANSARI R/O 14/234, GALI NO-2, MASJID WATI GALI, JAGDAMBA VIHAR, WEST SAGAR, SAGARPUR, SOUTH WEST, DELHI, DELHI-110046 declare that name of my father and my mother has been wrongly written as MD SHAMIM ANWAR and NAZIA PARVEEN respectively in my 10th and 12th educational documents. The actual name of my father and my mother are SHAMIM ANSARI and NAZIA PRAVEEN respectively which may be amended accordingly.

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NEWS BOX

Japan protests to Beijing over gas field in East China Sea

TOKYO. (Agency)

Japan has lodged a protest with China after discovering what it says were efforts by Beijing to develop gas fields in disputed waters of the East China Sea. Tokyo's foreign ministry said late Monday it had confirmed that Beijing was setting up drilling rigs in the area -- where the two countries' exclusive economic zones (EEZ) claims overlap -- and submitted a complaint to the Chinese embassy.

"It is extremely regrettable that China is advancing unilateral development," the ministry said, noting it had taken place on the Chinese side of the de facto maritime border. The ministry accused China of positioning 21 suspected drilling rigs, with Tokyo fearing gas on the Japanese side could also be extracted. Japan "issued a strong protest" to the Chinese embassy, the ministry said. It "strongly urged China for an early resumption of talks on the implementation" of a 2008 bilateral agreement regarding the development of resources in the East China Sea, it added. That agreement saw Japan and China agree to jointly develop undersea gas reserves in the disputed area, with a ban on independent drilling by either country. But negotiations over how to implement the deal were suspended in 2010. Japan has long insisted the median line between the two nations should mark the limits of their respective EEZs. China, however, insists the border should be drawn closer to Japan, taking into account the continental shelf and other ocean features. The two countries are embroiled in a separate row over disputed islands elsewhere in the East China Sea. China claims the string of islands -- which Japan refers to as the Senkakus and are known as the Diaoyu by Beijing -- as its own, and regularly sends ships and aircraft into the area to test Tokyo's response times. China also has disputes with several other nations in the South China Sea, which it claims in its entirety.

Australia expels Iran's envoy accusing Tehran of directing antisemitic attacks

world. (Agency)

The Australian government on Tuesday said it is expelling Iran's ambassador, accusing the country of being behind two antisemitic attacks in Melbourne and Sydney. Australia has given the Iranian ambassador and three other officials seven days to leave the country -- the first such expulsion of an ambassador since World War II, Foreign Minister Penny Wong told a news conference. Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said that Australian intelligence services had connected Iran to attacks on a Sydney restaurant and a Melbourne mosque. "ASIO has gathered enough credible intelligence to reach a deeply disturbing conclusion. The Iranian government directed at least two of these attacks. Iran has sought to disguise its involvement but ASIO assesses it was behind the attacks," Albanese told reporters, referring to the main domestic spy agency. Notably, there has been a steep rise in antisemitic events in the two cities since Israel launched its War on Gaza in October 2023.

A first! Netanyahu says 'deeply regrets' Israeli airstrike on Gaza hospital that left 21 dead, including journalists

world. (Agency)

In an uncharacteristic admission, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he "deeply regrets the tragic mishap" at Nasser Hospital, where an attack killed at least 21 people, including five journalists. "Israel deeply regrets the tragic mishap that occurred today at the Nasser Hospital in Gaza," read a statement posted on Netanyahu's office website. "Israel values the work of journalists, medical staff, and all civilians," its statement read.

His office went on to add, "The military authorities are conducting a thorough investigation. Our war is with Hamas terrorists. Our just goals are defeating Hamas and bringing our hostages home."



Journalists from Reuters, the Associated Press and Al Jazeera were among those killed, the organisations confirmed. The victims included Mariam Daqqa, 33, who had freelanced for AP since the Gaza war began; Al Jazeera's Mohammed Salam; Reuters contractor cameraman Hussam al-Masri; Moaz The Gaza Government Media Office later reported that another journalist, Hassan Douhan of Al-Hayat Al-Jadida, was fatally shot by Israeli forces in al-Mawasi, Khan Younis. "We call on the international community and groups involved in journalism and media work in all countries of the world to condemn the crimes of the [Israeli] occupation, deter them, and prosecute them in international courts."

Trump fires Federal Reserve Governor Lisa Cook, opening new front in fight for control over central bank

Trump said in a letter posted on his Truth Social platform that he is removing Cook because of allegations that she committed mortgage fraud.**WASHINGTON. (Agency)**

President Donald Trump fired Federal Reserve Governor Lisa Cook late Monday, an unprecedented move that constitutes a sharp escalation in his battle to exert greater control over what has long been considered an institution independent from day-to-day politics. Trump said in a letter posted on his Truth Social platform that he is removing Cook because of allegations that she committed mortgage fraud. Bill Pulte, a Trump appointee to the agency that regulates mortgage giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, made the accusations last week. Pulte alleged that Cook had claimed two primary residences -- in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and Atlanta -- in 2021 to get

better mortgage terms. Mortgage rates are often higher on second homes or those purchased to rent. The firing is likely to touch off an extensive legal battle that will probably go to the Supreme Court and could disrupt financial markets, potentially pushing interest rates higher. The independence of the Fed is considered critical to its ability to fight inflation because it enables it to take unpopular steps like raising interest rates. If bond investors start to lose faith that the Fed will be able to control inflation, they will demand higher rates to own bonds, pushing up borrowing costs for mortgages, car loans and business loans.

Legal scholars noted that the allegations are likely a pretext for the president to open up another seat on the seven-member board so he can appoint a loyalist to push for his long-stated goal of lower interest rates.

Fed governors vote on the central bank's interest rate decisions and on issues of financial regulation. While they are appointed by the president and confirmed

by the Senate, they are not like cabinet secretaries, who serve at the pleasure of the president. They serve 14-year terms that are staggered in an effort to insulate the Fed

pressure to keep interest rates low, the same goal sought by Trump, has widely been blamed for touching off rampant inflation in the late 1960s and '70s.

The announcement came days after Cook said she wouldn't leave despite Trump previously calling for her to resign. Senate Democrats had expressed support for Cook. "The Federal Reserve has tremendous responsibility for setting interest rates and regulating reserve member banks. The American people must have the full confidence in the honesty of the members entrusted with setting policy and overseeing the Federal Reserve," Trump wrote in a letter addressed to Cook, a copy of which he posted online. "In light of your deceitful and potentially criminal conduct in a financial matter, they cannot and I do not have such confidence in your integrity." Trump argued that firing Cook was constitutional, even if doing so will raise questions about control of the Fed as an independent entity.



Israeli protesters call for hostage deal, end to war in Gaza ahead of cabinet meeting

**TEL AVIV. (Agency)**

Protesters calling for an end to the war in Gaza and the return of hostages being held there took to the streets in Israel early on Tuesday morning ahead of a security cabinet meeting scheduled for the evening.

AFP journalists saw protesters blocking roads in Tel Aviv, waving Israeli flags

and holding up pictures of the hostages. Israeli media reported others rallying near a US embassy branch in the city, as well as outside the houses of various ministers across the country. "There is an offer on the table. We demand that our leaders sit at the negotiation table and not get up until there is an agreement," said Hagit

Chen, whose son was abducted by militants in October 2023, according to a statement released by a forum representing the families of hostages.

The agenda of the security cabinet meeting has not been officially disclosed, but local reports suggest it could be to discuss renewed negotiations for a ceasefire and hostage release deal. The cabinet approved in early August a plan for the military to take over Gaza City, triggering fresh fears for the safety of the hostages and a new wave of protests that has seen tens of thousands take to the country's streets in recent weeks. Netanyahu last week had ordered immediate talks aimed at securing the release of all remaining captives in Gaza, while also doubling down on the plans for a new offensive to seize Gaza's largest city.

That came days after Hamas said it had accepted a new ceasefire proposal put forward by mediators that would see the staggered release of hostages over an initial 60-day period in exchange for Palestinian prisoners held by Israel.

Heavy rain falls in parts of Southeast Asia after tropical storm blows into Vietnam

HANOI. (Agency)

Heavy rain fell on Tuesday in parts of Southeast Asia after a tropical storm made landfall in Vietnam, flooding streets in the capital, blowing away billboards and knocking down power poles and trees. In Hanoi, people tried to push motorbikes through water that was ankle-deep or higher as cars and buses slowly moved along flooded city streets. Vietnam's state media said the remnants of Typhoon Kajiki were now a tropical depression over Laos. Heavy rain was also forecast in Thailand, and people were told to be vigilant for possible flooding. Vietnam's government had planned to evacuate nearly 600,000 people in the provinces of Thanh Hoa, Quang Tri, Hue and Danang, where more than 152,000 homes were in high-risk areas. More than 16,500 soldiers and 107,000 paramilitary personnel were assisting

with evacuations or were on standby for search and rescue, state media said. Two airports in Thanh Hoa and Quang Binh provinces were still closed Tuesday after flights were halted



Monday. The national weather agency said Kajiki made landfall in central Vietnam with maximum sustained winds of 117 kph (73 mph). The torrential rain triggered flash flood and landslide alerts. The storm blew away billboards and the roofs of buildings, uprooted trees and knocked down electric poles, state media VTV

reported. It hit Monday afternoon during high tides that caused coastal flooding in Nghe An and Ha Tinh provinces. Overnight, heavy rain persisted between central Vietnam's Thanh Hoa and Ha Tinh province.

Vietnam has reported one death, a man who was electrocuted while trying to prepare his home for the storm Friday. Kajiki earlier brought winds and rain to China's southern Hainan Island.

In Thailand, the Meteorological Department warned of heavy rain nationwide Tuesday. Residents in foothills and low-lying areas near waterways were warned about possible flash floods and landslides. Scientists published a study last year warning that seas warmed by climate change will result in Southeast Asia's cyclones forming closer to land, strengthening faster and lasting longer, raising risks for cities.

Israeli airstrike on Gaza hospital kills at least 20, including 5 journalists

COLOMBO. (Agency)

An Israeli airstrike hit the fourth floor of southern Gaza's main hospital Monday, killing at least 20 people, Gaza's health ministry said. Gaza's civil defence agency said five journalists were among at least 20 people killed Monday when Israeli strikes hit a hospital in the south, with Reuters, The Associated Press and Al Jazeera mourning their slain contributors.

The ministry said the victims on the fourth floor of Nasser Hospital were killed in a double-tap strike — one missile hitting first, then another moments later as rescue crews arrived. Khan Younis' Nasser Hospital, the largest in southern Gaza, has withstood raids and bombardment throughout 22 months of war, with officials citing critical shortages of supplies and staff. Israel's military did not immediately respond to questions about the strike. Among the five journalists who were killed, Mariam Daqqa, 33, freelanced for the AP since the Gaza war began, as well as other news outlets. Daqqa, who has a 12-year-old

son who was evacuated from Gaza earlier in the war, frequently based herself at Nasser, most recently reporting on the hospital's doctors struggling to save children from starvation. The Associated Press said in a statement that it was "shocked and saddened" to learn of the death of Mariam Daqqa, 33, a visual journalist who had freelanced for the agency since the start of the war. Al Jazeera confirmed that its journalist Mohammed Salam was among those who were killed in the Nasser hospital strike. Reuters reported that its contractor cameraman Hussam al-Masri was also killed in the strike. Photographer Hatem Khaled, who was also a Reuters contractor, was wounded, the news agency reported. "Al Jazeera Media Network condemns, in the strongest possible terms, this horrific crime committed by the Israeli occupation forces, who have directly targeted and assassinated journalists as part of a systematic campaign to silence the truth," the broadcaster said in a statement. A

spokesperson for Reuters said: "We are devastated to learn of the death of Reuters contractor Hussam al-Masri and injuries to another of our contractors, Hatem Khaled, in Israeli strikes on the Nasser hospital in Gaza today." "We are urgently seeking more information and have asked authorities in Gaza and Israel to help us get urgent medical assistance for Hatem," the spokesperson added in a statement.

The Palestinian Journalists Syndicate also named two other victims as Moaz Abu Taha and Ahmad Abu Aziz. According to AFP journalists, Abu Taha had worked with

some Palestinian and international outlets. The Israel-Hamas conflict has been one of the bloodiest conflicts for media workers, with a total of at least 200 journalists killed in Gaza in the 22-month conflict, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists. Comparatively, 18 journalists have been killed so far in the Russia-Ukraine war, according to the CPJ. The Israeli Prime Minister's Office and Israeli military refused to comment on the incident. The Israeli military later said its troops carried out a strike in the area of Nasser Hospital and that it would conduct an investigation into the incident. The military said it "regrets any harm to uninvolved individuals and does not target journalists as such. Thibaut Bruttin, the director general of Reporters Without Borders, said press freedom advocates had never seen such a severe step backward for reporters' safety. He noted that journalists have been killed both in indiscriminate strikes and in targeted attacks that Israel's military has acknowledged carrying out.



longer," Trump wrote. In June, Trump called off trade talks with Canada in retaliation against Ottawa's planned digital services tax, which would have applied to US multinational companies such as Alphabet, Amazon and Meta that provide services to Canadians. Shortly after, Canada said it would rescind the taxes impacting US tech firms. Since returning to the presidency in January, Trump has imposed tariffs on allies and competitors alike, with varying rates for different countries' products. But sectors he has singled out for separate action — such as steel, aluminum and autos — are spared from these countrywide levels. Instead, they have been hit with sector-specific duties. Trump has wielded tariffs as a means to pursue various goals. A doubling of US tariffs on Indian products is set to take effect this week over its purchase of Russian oil, a key revenue source in Moscow's war in Ukraine. gton.

NEWS BOX

Four Andhra Pradesh government school students return from Japan after Sakura exchange

VIJAYAWADA. (Agency)

As many as four meritorious government school students from Andhra Pradesh returned home after a week-long educational tour of Japan under the Sakura Science Exchange Programme. The students, Class 10 toppers in their respective schools, were part of a 34-member Indian delegation that visited Japan from August 17 to 23.

The programme, run by the Japan Science and Technology (JST) Agency since 2014, fosters youth interaction in science and technology between Japan and Asian countries. This year, the selected students were T Pushpanjali (Gollaprolu ZPHS in Kakinada district), K Harish (Bhogapuram AP Model School in Vizianagaram district), M Aishwarya (Bitragunta KGBV in Prakasam district) and P Varun Sai (Mangalagiri MPL High School in Guntur district). The delegation was flagged off in New Delhi by Sanjay Kumar, Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy. In Japan, the students visited scientific institutions, interacted with researchers and explored Japanese culture. On their return, they met Samagra Shiksha State Project Director B Srinivasa Rao in Vijayawada. "Visiting a developed country like Japan is golden opportunity. I hope these students become role models and inspire others in government schools," he said.

With 124 sub-castes, confusion among Muslims over caste census in Karnataka

MYSURU. (Agency)

With the State Government preparing for the upcoming Social and Educational Census, there is confusion within the Muslim community over caste enrolment.

The Karnataka State Backward Classes Commission has issued a notification and as part of the preparatory process, it released a list of 124 sub-castes under the Muslim community eligible for backward classes' reservation. The notification has sparked a discussion within the community as many are not clear as to how they should identify their caste during the enumeration process as they are not sure of which sub-group they belong to. Questions have been raised over whether Muslims should record themselves simply by their religion or their specific sub-caste or occupational group. These 124 sub-castes are not new and Muslims were enrolled under these during the past census, surveys and findings. The commission has also invited objections within seven days of the notification in case any sub-caste is omitted or if there are errors in the names listed. These caste includes Bangi Muslim, Atari, Byari, Chapperbanda, Darji Muslim, Fakir, Gabbit, Ghare, Goundi, Kasbin, Khalifa, Mapilla, Nadaf, Notari, Peshimam, Pinjara, Qaji, Safai, Pathan, Sikkaligara, Takankar, Syed, Sunni and many others. With the prevailing confusion, awareness programmes have been started and round table conferences held to arrive at a unified stand. Community representatives believe that a consensus is vital at current juncture as inconsistent or fragmented response during the census could have long-term implications on reservations and welfare measures. The Social Democratic Party of India, Karnataka unit, also held two round table meetings of Muslim community leaders, elected representatives, religious scholars and social thinkers, including retired government officers and revenue department officials.

DME forms panel to probe alleged Rs 40-crore CT scan scam at Kakinada GGH in Andhra

KAKINADA. (Agency)

Acting on the TNIE exposé on unauthorised money collection at SL Diagnostics Private Limited in Kakinada Government General Hospital premises, the Directorate of Medical Education (DME) has constituted a three-member committee to probe the alleged Rs 40-crore CT scan scam. The panel will inspect the records of the diagnostics centre, which operates under a public-private partnership.

The committee comprises GGH DCSRMO Dr Mehar Kumar, Hospital Administrator and Deputy Collector N Sridhar, and Radiology HOD Dr B Anuradha. Due to ongoing nursing supplementary examinations and the Vinayaka Chaviti festival, the inquiry is likely to begin only after August 27. The scam came to light through the TNIE's report "Rs 40 Cr Scam: Diagnostics firm accused, probe ordered." SL Diagnostics staff are accused of charging patients Rs 300 per CT scan film since 2017, with those requiring multiple images forced to pay between Rs 600 and Rs 900. Concerns have been raised over the committee's composition, as all three members are from Kakinada GGH and have worked in coordination with SL Diagnostics. Hospital staff and associations argue the DME should have appointed an external team to ensure impartiality. They also urged the State government to let the hospital manage the CT scan facility directly.

Hyderabad traffic police announce diversions, parking plans for Khairatabad Ganesh

Traffic from Nirankari via Khairatabad Post Office lane towards Khairatabad Railway gate will be diverted to Old PS Saifabad junction.



HYDERABAD. (Agency)

In view of the Khairatabad Ganesh idol installation, Hyderabad Traffic Police has announced traffic diversions from August 27 to September 6, between 11 am and late night. Traffic from VV Statue towards Mint Compound via Rajiv Gandhi Statue will be

diverted to Nirankari Junction, while vehicles from Old PS Saifabad towards Bada Ganesh via Rajdoot lane will be diverted to Iqbal Minar. Traffic from Iqbal Minar towards Prasads Theatre via Mint Compound will be diverted at Secretariat Temple X Road towards Telugu Thalli junction, and vehicles from

Necklace Rotary towards Mint Compound will be diverted either towards Telugu Thalli junction or Khairatabad flyover. Traffic from Nirankari via Khairatabad Post Office lane towards Khairatabad Railway gate will be diverted to Old PS Saifabad junction. The police have cautioned that heavy traffic is expected at Khairatabad, Shadan College, Nirankari, Old PS Saifabad, Mint Compound and Necklace Rotary, and advised commuters to avoid these routes wherever possible. For parking, visitors coming via Necklace Rotary and NTR Gardens may use Race Road, NTR Ghat, HMDA parking beside Prasads Theatre, the open space opposite the theatre or Saraswathi Vidya Mandir High School opposite Prasads Theatre, while those arriving via Khairatabad

Junction may park at Vishveshwaraiah Bhavan. Authorities urged devotees to use public transport such as Metro Rail, MMTS and TGSRTC buses, and encouraged residents from the same locality visiting the idol together to carpool to reduce congestion.

Madras HC appoints SIT to investigate kidney trafficking racket in TN

MADURAI.(Agency)

Expressing its displeasure over the failure of the state government to register an FIR in connection with the recent kidney trafficking incidents in Tamil Nadu, the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court on Monday appointed a special investigation team (SIT), headed by Inspector General of Police (South Zone) Prem Anand Sinha, to probe the racket and directed the team to file a progress report before the HC in a month. A bench comprising justices S M Subramaniam and G Arul Murugan criticised the state for not having shown enough sensitivity towards the issue, although it is related to the life of citizens. Even after the court repeatedly pointed out the gravity of the issue and the need to file an FIR, the state continued to hesitate citing statutory bar, it said. Although Additional Advocate General (AAG) M Ajmal Khan and State Public Prosecutor Hasan Mohamed Jinnah, in response to the court's oral

instructions to suggest names for forming an SIT, submitted a list of police officers, the judges were disappointed. HC asks DP to assist SIT, says it will monitor kidney trafficking incidents. Stating that the list failed to inspire the court's confidence, the judges secured another list from the government through the Additional Registrar General of the court, based on which the judges appointed an SIT headed by IGP Sinha and comprising four SPs — N S Nisha of Nilgiris, N Silambarasan of Tirunelveli, Dr K Karthikeyan of Coimbatore and B K Arvind of Madurai — to probe into human organ trafficking, especially kidney. The bench also directed the Director General of Police and the Director of Medical and Rural Health Services to render assistance to the team, including with workforce and technical inputs. The team was directed to register an FIR based on the complaint lodged by the Namakkal Chief Medical Officer and the report submitted by the

state-appointed committee. The HC bench would monitor the probe, the judges added, and adjourned the case to September 24. The directions were issued on an advocate S N Sathishwaran's PIL, seeking CBI probe. Earlier, the DMS had submitted a status report containing the recommendations of the state-appointed committee and the action taken. Citing the report, the AAG told the bench that corrective measures were being taken and an FIR cannot be registered owing to Section 22 of the Transplantation of Human Organs and Tissues Act, 1994, which said no court can take cognisance of an offence made under the Act except on a complaint made by an appropriate authority authorised by the government. However, the judges said that even as per the state-appointed committee's report, the issue involved fabrication of documents and exploitation of people from economically weaker sections by some private hospitals.

Mumbai Dargahs start the Prophet's 1,500th b'day celebrations

Mumbai. (Agency)

Mahim and Haji Ali Dargahs on Monday jointly launched 12-day celebrations of the 1,500th birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad. It was led by managing trustee Suhail

Khandwani. A key highlight of the programme is an interactive interfaith session on 'Legacy of the Holy Prophet of Islam; Justice, Equality and Righteousness' on Aug 30. It will bring together different faith leaders to discuss the

Prophet's universal teachings. The celebration will continue with activities like community cleaning drive, educational sessions on the life and message of the Holy Prophet at Al Barkat Malik Mohammed Islam School, Kurla, added Khandwani. Free distribution of books

and other stationeries to poor and needy students is part of the initiative.

The two dargah trusts will host a three-day free medical camp at the Mahim Dargah Campus from Sept 1 to Sept 3 and will provide essential health services.

Khandwani. The festivities commenced with a parcham kushayi or flag-hoisting ceremony and beating of duff (a dhol-like instrument) at Mahim Dargah.

"Called Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi, the celebrations will feature a series of spiritual, social and charitable events till Sept 5," said

Rakesh Mohanty, a member of the Badagada Brightstar Youth Association, said artists have been busy working to build the 61-feet idol of Lord Ganesh since the last one month. "Created with eco-friendly materials, the idol will have two large silver feet. The Mooshika (mouse), the Lord's vehicle, will also be made of silver," he added. Members of the Winner Association in Saheed Nagar also said that they have kept their celebrations eco-friendly and have not used

Aug brings 21% seasonal rain to Gujarat; 15% in last week alone

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

Ahmedabad: In the first 24 days of Aug this year, the state received 21% of average seasonal rainfall. Out of the total, 15% was recorded in the last week alone. On Sunday, Gujarat recorded an average of 20.5mm of rain, with 225 out of 251 talukas receiving at least 1mm of rain. Month-wise, June remained the month with the highest rainfall at 34.5%, or more than one-third of the total seasonal rainfall, followed by 28.5% in July. The first fortnight of Aug, according to experts, was marked by a lack of any major weather system as the state received 6% rain. Region-wise, north Gujarat received the highest 87% of seasonal rainfall till Sunday, followed by 86% in south Gujarat, 85% in Kutch, 83.5% in Saurashtra, and 79% in east-central

Gujarat. Overall, the state recorded 84% of seasonal rain so far. The past three years recorded more than 100% of seasonal rainfall in Gujarat. India meteorological department (IMD) data indicate that Gujarat has the fifth highest excess rainfall at 15% this monsoon. Rajasthan has the highest 56% excess rain, followed by 33% in Jharkhand, 24% in Madhya Pradesh, and 23% in Himachal Pradesh. In comparison, Maharashtra has 5% and Karnataka 12% excess rain this monsoon. Till 6pm, 143 talukas received 1mm or more rainfall. Khergam in Navsari received the highest 72mm of rain, followed by 57mm in Vijaynagar (Sabarkantha), 54mm in Balasinor (Mahisagar), 52mm in Songadh (Tapi), and 50mm in Valsad, among others. Ahmedabad city received 5mm of rain till 6pm as the city

experienced partly cloudy weather. According to the IMD forecast, heavy to very heavy rainfall is expected in parts of Dahod, Chhota Udepur, and Bhavnagar on Tuesday, and heavy rain in Banaskantha, Mehsana, Sabarkantha, Gandhinagar, Aravalli, Ahmedabad, Mahisagar, Panchmahal, Vadodara, Narmada, Dang, Tapi, Navsari, Valsad, Amreli, and Gir-Somnath. Likewise, on Wednesday, heavy to very heavy rain is expected in parts of Narmada and Tapi, and heavy rain in Panchmahal, Dahod, Vadodara, Chhota Udepur, Bharuch, Surat, Dang, Navsari, Valsad, Amreli, and Bhavnagar.

Sardar Sarovar Dam is at 85% of its capacity as of Monday morning, whereas 206 major water reservoirs in the state are at 78.5% of their capacity.

Eco-friendly, tribal themes to steal the show in Bhubaneswar this Ganesh Puja

BHUBANESWAR. (Agency)

The state capital is gearing up for a grand and green celebration of Ganesh Puja this year with gigantic, eco-friendly idols of Lord Ganesh set to become the centre of attraction in many pandals across the city. This year, the Lord Of Wisdom will be worshipped in over 340 pandals of the city from Wednesday. However, a 61-feet-tall idol of Bappa, believed to be the tallest, at Badagada locality and another 46-feet-tall idol of the Lord at Saheed Nagar are set to steal the limelight during the festival.

Rakesh Mohanty, a member of the Badagada Brightstar Youth Association, said artists have been busy working to build the 61-feet idol of Lord Ganesh since the last one month. "Created with eco-friendly materials, the idol will have two large silver feet. The Mooshika (mouse), the Lord's vehicle, will also be made of silver," he added. Members of the Winner Association in Saheed Nagar also said that they have kept their celebrations eco-friendly and have not used



any chemical colour in the idol-making. The club will also be organising cultural evenings and 'Prasad Sevan' during the

Meanwhile, aiming to give a tribal touch to their pandal, members of the Sahid Club at

Gujarat HC refuses to believe witness who surfaced after 16 years

MUMBAI. (Agency)

The Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation (MSRDC) will set up eight additional EV charging points on the 94.5 km Pune-Mumbai expressway. "Presently, there are five spots on the expressway where there are EV charging stations. We plan to install eight more. A study on this has been initiated, and we should be able to identify these locations soon. With more EV charging stations, vehicles will be able to operate with ease," a senior MSRDC official told He said another study on the number of EVs operating on the highway was being conducted. "Presently, we do not have any records regarding this. However, with tolls for EVs now exempted, we need to know the average numbers. We expect that the new charging points should start coming up by the end of this year," the official said. With the expressway recording an average daily movement of 1.4 lakh vehicles, commuters said more EV charging stations were needed. The state govt had recently announced that e-vehicles (EVs) operating on Pune-Mumbai Expressway won't have to pay toll tax. In addition to the expressway, toll tax has also been exempted for EVs operating on Samruddhi Mahamarg and Atal Setu. Commuters said travelling long distances in the state with EVs was daunting. Though the state govt had floated EV policy in April this year, not much had been done to improve infrastructure facilities for these vehicles, they said. Prakash Khadekar, a resident of Shivajinagar who owns an electric car, said that he never drove on the expressway with it. "I bought this car two years ago but have not gone on long trips with it until now. There is a serious infrastructure problem regarding EVs in Maharashtra. The main problem is lack of charging stations. There are charging stations that are non-operational due to technical reasons. While it is commendable that MSRDC is coming up with more charging stations, this should have been done much earlier, and the state govt needs to ensure that charging points on all highways are well maintained.

Saheed Nagar said they are using eco-friendly materials like bamboo and palm leaves. "The celebration will be a blend of tradition and sustainability. The initiative aims to inspire devotees to celebrate responsibly while preserving the environment," said assistant secretary of the club Ashique Panda. On the other hand, to ensure a smooth and peaceful celebration and prevent noise pollution during the festival, the Commissionerate Police convened a coordination meeting with all stakeholders on the day, and issued guidelines including restriction on use of DJ and vibrators during the immersion processions to keep the sound level within the admissible limit. DCP Jagmohan Meena said pandals have also been restricted from using unsafe light decoration among other measures. The BMC asked pandals to avoid single-use plastic.

When wisdom took the crown

We pray to Ganesha to remove difficulties from our path. However, on the ground, this means developing our emotional intelligence to get out of difficulties ourselves with minimal damage control. So, let us revisit in greater detail than September 2022, a story of high emotional intelligence. This tale concerns one of the world's oldest royal houses, which went under the rubble of time. Trigarta was an ancient kingdom in Punjab, traversing the rivers Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej. It is mentioned in the Ramayana, Mahabharata and the Brahmanda Purana. The Trigartas are said to have fought off the Persians and Assyrians and appear in the annals of Alexander's expedition to India in 326 BCE. Raja Parmanand Chandra is believed to be the 'Porus' who fought and lost to Alexander on the banks of the Beas. When 'Porus' was brought captive to him, Alexander, who considered him a worthy foe, asked him how he wished to be treated, and 'Porus' reportedly answered with superb simplicity: "Like a king." In the Mahabharata, the kings of Trigarta are described as sworn territorial enemies of Matsya, a kingdom allied to the Pandavas. So, they fought against them under their first cousin, Duryodhana, at Kurukshetra. Susharma, the Trigarta raja, led a do-or-die squadron called the Samsaptaka to capture Udyodhishthira. He and his entire force were killed by Arjuna.

Just so, the Trigarta rajas are said to have fought and lost to Sri Rama. The Trigartas are nobles of the Chandravanshi or 'lunar dynasty'. The Katoch Rajputs, who claim descent from the Trigartas, founded the kingdom of Kangra in the hills to the east of Punjab that later became the modern Indian state of Himachal Pradesh. The first-known Katoch raja was Bhumi Chand, and the Brahmanda Purana says he built the original temple to Devi Parvati at Jwalamukhi in the Kangra Valley, which still draws flocks of devotees. The Chinese Buddhist pilgrim Zuan Xang visited the Katoch kingdom in the seventh century, then known as 'Jalandhara'.

The Katoch also fought the great kingdom of Kannauj, from which the royal houses of Marwar and Bikaner sprang. They battled Mohammed of Ghazni and Mohammed of Ghori, and resisted Akbar's siege in 1615. They sided with Guru Gobind Singh against Aurangzeb and fought Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who visited Jwalamukhi in 1815 and covered the temple spire with gold. The Katoch also fought the British. In 1847, Raja Parmod Chandra fired a 101-gun salute, a practice later reserved by the British Crown for itself, to inform his people that their king was on the throne. He led an army of 8,000 Katoch across the Beas against the British forces stationed in Pathankot for the Second Anglo-Sikh War. Parmod Chandra was betrayed by a person named Pahad Chand, defeated, and deported to the hill town of Almora, where he died in 1851. Kangra was subsumed in the British Empire. Today, any number of Katoch fight in the Indian armed forces. To follow the annals of the Katoch clan is to unspool the history of North India in one skein, for they appear in every epoch—sturdy warriors who repeatedly fought forces greater than theirs. Their fortunes founders, but they went on. No other noble house seems to have had quite that continuity. Although the princely order was abolished by modern India in 1971, a Katoch raja by name still exists today, and there are four branches of Katoch: Jaswal, Guleria, Sibaia and Dadwal. Our tale is about a scion of this ancient clan sometime in the fifteenth century. He was the founder of the scenic hill kingdom of Guler, a Katoch king called Raja Hari Chand from the old royal family of Kangra. Like most royals and feudal chiefs around the world, Hari Chand loved the hunt. One fine day in late summer, his quarry led him on a long chase, and the king left his companions far behind. Along the way, he dismounted to look for tracks. His foot slipped and he fell into a deep hole. "A dry well," he thought before his head struck a rock and he passed out. The grasses that hid the well closed over it again.

Democracy on trial: From the rule of law to rule by law

When the Leader of Opposition in the world's largest democracy raises concerns about electoral integrity in Parliament, the response cannot be bureaucratic deflection and ultimatums

The surest way to throttle democracy is to weaponise laws and target those opposing the government. This government seems to have converted this into an art.

I recall the day the amendment to the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA), was taken up for discussion in Parliament. The Home Minister openly stated that this was necessary, for none could oppose the inclusion of terrorists and terrorist organisations in the First Schedule of the UAPA, seeking to destabilise our Republic. I intervened and expressed my fears that these laws are likely to be used against our citizens; it has turned out to be a reality.

The prosecution of young students, like Umar Khalid and Sharjeel Imam, under those laws has resulted in them languishing in jail for years without a trial. Such laws have been used against journalists, academics, and members of religious communities in this country. The obvious intent was to silence them.

he weaponisation of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA) is evident in its widespread use against political opponents, including chief ministers and ministers from opposition-ruled states, such as Arvind Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia, Satyendra Jain, Hemant Soren, and Farooq Abdullah, among others. Valiant attempts were made to move against Siddaramaiah, but they came to nought. These laws have also been used to instil fear in several leaders who were once part of the opposition but have been persuaded to join the BJP to save themselves from prosecution and imprisonment.

The BJP has, particularly in Maharashtra, rewarded opposition leaders against whom serious allegations of corruption were publicly made for causing a split in their erstwhile parties. They are now part of the coalition ruling Maharashtra. The latest example of weaponisation of laws is the introduction of two Constitution (Amendment) Bills in Parliament on August 20, 2025. It is claimed that this is being done in public interest, for the welfare of the people and to uphold the principles of constitutional morality, and good governance—concepts that are alien to the functioning of this government. What is likely to serve is not public interest, but the political interest of the ruling dispensation. This is clear from the fact that the proposed law provides that the chief ministers and ministers being investigated for offences punishable for more than five years and being in custody for more than 30 days will, on the 31st day, if they have not resigned, be dismissed by the governor of the state.

The principle of law that our Republic has embraced is that a person is innocent till proven guilty. In this case, a minister or a chief minister can be removed on a mere allegation without any proof. We are all aware that many such cases have been pending trial for over a decade and that the conviction rate in several of these prosecutions is abysmally low. If the proposed constitutional



amendments become law, it is most likely that trumped-up allegations will be made to target sitting chief ministers and ministers, and after 30 days in custody, they will be dismissed from those positions. Such allegations in the past have served the political interests of the BJP. The present establishment seeks to utilise these laws for its own political purposes. This weaponisation is also evident from how laws such as PMLA or UAPA have been used against influential ministers seeking to coerce them to join the BJP, or even public servants not belonging to any political party, in opposition-ruled states. Ironically, since 2014, these laws have never been invoked against any minister in any of the BJP-ruled states, or, for that matter, against any minister within the ruling establishment at the Centre. Obviously, the selective use of such laws serves the political interest of the party in power. The other matter of great concern is that such laws will allow the governor to dismiss a chief minister or a minister of the opposition-ruled state, which, under the present legal framework, can happen only upon conviction. In addition, prosecution against public servants holding such positions can only be launched by seeking the sanction of the Council of Ministers in the case of prosecution against a minister and that of the governor in the case of a chief minister. By seeking to do away with the sanction provision, such laws weaponise the governors appointed by the Union to dismiss a minister or a chief minister. This is a direct invasion of the federal structure of this country, which the

Supreme Court has held to be one of the basic features of the Constitution. Having set out the above, it is also significant that these constitutional amendments have been introduced by the present establishment, aware that such Bills cannot become law without garnering the support of a two-thirds majority in both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha. The NDA, at present, consists of 293 members of the Lok Sabha, whereas for such Bills to pass muster, it must receive the support of 363 members. This is obviously a tall order, and these Bills, in all likelihood, will fail. If they become law, they will surely be challenged in the courts. The courts will not favour such attempts to deface the Constitution. On the face of it, these Bills are manifestly unjust, violate the fundamental tenets of federalism and the basic principles of the rule of law. One wonders why these Bills were introduced in the first place. There may be two reasons. One, the canard that the government wishes to rid the polity of criminals who are being prosecuted and that the opposition does not want to uphold the principles of constitutional morality—a political narrative, which in the context of how this government has jettisoned these principles, will not find favour with the people. Perhaps the other and real reason is to divert the attention of the people of India from the massive show of public support for opposition leaders in the run-up to the assembly elections in Bihar. It appears constitutional democracy can be throttled and stymied through the weaponisation of laws. A new form of dictatorship!

Core vs headline: India's inflation debate deepens

Those championing core inflation argue that the food component is outside the RBI's purview and, therefore, core inflation should guide policy. They reason that stabilising core inflation leads to better economic outcomes

The RBI's Flexible Inflation Targeting (FIT) framework will turn 10 next year, and the central bank believes it has met its expectations. Over the last nine years, India experienced a hump-shaped performance, with inflation behaving like an obedient child in the first and last three years. The middle three years saw retail prices breach the upper tolerance band, mainly due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war. If average inflation hovered around 4 percent from 2016 to 2019, it stayed above 6 percent for five quarters from the first quarter of Financial Year 2022 to the fourth quarter of Financial Year 2023. With a review slated next March, key questions arise: Should core inflation replace headline inflation as the anchor for monetary policymaking, as suggested by the Economic Survey, 2025? Or should the government re-examine the 4 percent target and consider establishing a tolerance band? Those championing core inflation argue that the food component is outside the RBI's purview and, therefore, core inflation should guide policy. They reason that stabilising core inflation leads to better economic



outcomes. However, RBI maintains that persistent food inflation can spill over to core inflation through higher wage costs, higher rents, and higher markups. Which is why its expert committee in 2014 insisted that since food and fuel constitute more than 50 percent of the consumption basket, inflation based on less than half the

basket would not be representative. As former Governor Shaktikanta Das noted, eliminating food from the target would amount to having no target at all. "It will make no sense to the average citizen, as it is the headline inflation that the common person understands and should remain that way." Even as the debate over core vs headline remains unfinished, there's another view that the inflation target itself needs to be reset. However, the central bank may not be in agreement. In its recent discussion paper, it noted that changing the target now, when the global economy is confronted with geopolitical uncertainty, can be interpreted by international investors as a dilution of the IT framework, thereby undermining policy credibility. It reasoned that the current tolerance band of 2-6 percent allows headroom to account for deviations from temporary food and fuel price shocks. That said, price stability is a shared responsibility between the government and RBI, and hence needs effective monetary-fiscal coordination to prevent second-round inflationary effects.

A soldier must not be fighting the state

MoD must be more sensitive & review its policy on disability entitlement of ex-servicemen

WHEN a disabled veteran or a family is forced to fight another battle, not on the frontline, but in the court, something is broken in our system that vocally applauds the soldier but entangles him in litigation after retirement. In several recent rulings, the courts have cautioned the government against its persistent practice of contesting nearly every Armed Forces Tribunal (AFT) ruling that grants pensionary relief to soldiers. This observation was made when the Delhi High Court was hearing the case of Major Sanjeev Chadha, who had died 25 years ago. In another case last month, the Delhi High Court dismissed 300 petitions filed by the Defence Ministry challenging the AFT's order granting disability pension. The court noted, "It is not an act of generosity, but a rightful and just acknowledgement of the sacrifices endured by them, which manifests in the form of disabilities/disorders suffered during their military service.... It is a measure that upholds the state's responsibility towards its soldiers, who have served the nation with courage and devotion." This is the real issue before us — the responsibility of the state towards the soldiers. However, before we turn to this, we must also understand why special consideration should be made towards the members of the military.

The military is entrusted with the exercise of ultimate violence on behalf of the nation. Irresponsible behaviour on its part could weaken a nation's security and well-being. There must, therefore, be a set of

codified values that serve as a guide to members of the military — the military ethic. This ethic accepts the supremacy of the political government, is corporative in spirit, and emphasises loyalty and obedience. However, the foremost element of the military ethic is the concept of "unlimited liability."

"Unlimited liability" means that all members of the military accept that they can be lawfully ordered to go into conditions which could lead to their death. This is a uniquely military provision that sets it apart from any other profession and is at the heart of understanding the meaning of duty as a soldier sees it. The fundamental nature of soldiering is not the capacity to take lives (though necessary for victory) but the willingness to die. We must also ask ourselves what keeps individual soldiers going in the most difficult of conditions along the Himalayan watershed, the icy heights of Siachen, patrolling in waist-deep snow during counterterrorist operations in Kashmir, and engaging in artillery duels at the Line of Control. What keeps them going is a powerful sense of purpose that their duty serves a cause far greater than their own hardship. They are defending the honour of their country, aware that the safety of the nation rests on the resolve of each soldier.

What does a soldier ask in return from the state? That he be treated with honour, respect and dignity. If he is injured or loses his life, he or his family will be looked after. This mutual obligation is referred to as the "Military Covenant". This interplay between the soldier and the state creates an unbreakable bond that has sustained the military throughout India's independent history. The 'Military Covenant' is not



only applicable to men in uniform, but more critically, also to those out of uniform. It is the veterans, living in thousands of villages across the country, without the institutional support that a serving soldier enjoys, who deserve the state's obligations the most. Unfortunately, the spectacle of thousands of them who have bled for the flag now pleading before judges is distressing. Major Sanjeev Chadha's family had to wait a quarter

settled by the courts. However, little has changed. In September 2023, new entitlement rules were issued for the grant of disability pension for the armed forces. Instead of taking note of the conditions under which soldiers operate, the rules have narrowed eligibility conditions. They create an unjust imbalance compared to civilian employees, who continue to receive broader protections recognising work-related health issues without such stringent conditions. A month after the new rules were promulgated, it was reported that the Ministry of Defence had directed the Army to file writ petitions challenging all orders passed in favour of the disabled soldiers by the AFTs.

The problem is compounded by a refusal to accept the decisions of the AFT. In October 2024, the AFT Principal Bench in New Delhi issued summons to the Army Chief and the Defence Secretary. The Bench remarked, "We find that the respondents in more than 6,500 cases pending before the Armed Forces Tribunal, Principal Bench, New Delhi, and 10 other Regional Benches are not implementing the orders passed by this Tribunal." The justification often given by officials is that there is an exploitation of disability benefits by "unscrupulous personnel" and a rise in "personnel seeking disability, even for lifestyle diseases." This assertion does not stand up to scrutiny, considering the large number of cases where the courts have dismissed the MoD's challenges to AFT rulings.

The MoD must, therefore, review its policy on disability entitlement, both to curb any misuse and become more sensitive to soldiers whose health is bound to be affected by the hazardous conditions under which they operate. This should not merely be a technical exercise, but a moral one.

NEWS BOX

Cancelled Stan Swamy lecture to be held online

MUMBAI. (Agency)

The Stan Swamy Memorial Lecture, which was earlier cancelled by St Xavier's College, will now be hosted by two social organisations - Samanvaya and People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL). The lecture will be delivered by the same speaker, Fr Prem Xalxo, SJ, associate lecturer, faculty of theology at Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome, and on the same topic titled 'Migration for livelihood: Hope amidst miseries', which was planned for the original event.

The lecture will be delivered online via zoom on Sept 13. The lecture at St Xavier's was also scheduled to be held online on Aug 9, to commemorate the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples.

The cancellation at St Xavier's College followed a protest letter from the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), a student organization affiliated with the RSS, opposing the lecture. The lecture, now being hosted by the two social groups, aims to continue the dialogue on migration and livelihood and will be accessible to a wider audience, the organisers said.

A member of one of the organisations told TOI Fr Prem Xalxo has agreed to deliver the same lecture that was cancelled earlier. "Many of us were disappointed by the decision to cancel it following pressure from a student organization. We firmly believe a topic as important as migration and livelihood should be discussed. We, therefore, requested the speaker to deliver the same lecture," said the member, adding more organisations may join in to host the speaker. The letter from ABVP had alleged Fr Swamy was arrested in the Elgar Parishad-Bhima Koregaon violence case and was charged for having links with Maoist outfits. ABVP demanded cancellation of the lecture, failing which the organisation would initiate a widespread student agitation.

School claims swift emergency action in Nayan Santani case

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

Nearly a week after 15-year-old Nayan Santani's death, Seventh Day Adventist Higher Secondary School issued an official statement defending its response to the stabbing incident. Nayan, a Class 10 student, was allegedly stabbed by his schoolmate on Aug 19 and died during treatment on Aug 20.

The school said Nayan re-entered the campus around 12.54pm on Aug 19, about 10 minutes after school hours ended, clutching his stomach. According to the school's statement, CCTV footage shows he sustained injuries outside the premises. "Our security team immediately alerted staff. At 12.59pm we called the 108 ambulance. At the insistence of the mother, he was taken to Sardar Patel Hospital in an autorickshaw before the ambulance arrived," the school said, adding that a teacher accompanied the family. School authorities claimed that the emergency response was executed within six and a half minutes of Nayan's return. The city police officials earlier claimed that it took at least 30 to 40 minutes before the injured student was moved for medical aid. The school said its principal stayed with the family at the hospital for over seven hours, coordinated with doctors, and helped arrange O+ blood donations from staff. It also highlighted that the stabbing did not occur inside the campus and that the school acted with urgency.

The statement further alleged that on Aug 20 a mob vandalised school property, damaged buses and classrooms, and assaulted staff during a condolence prayer. An FIR has been lodged over the violence. The school said it has begun the rustication process for the accused student, is cooperating with the investigation. It appealed for peace and urged that facts be verified before circulating allegations.

GHMC readies 74 artificial ponds for Ganesh idol immersion in Hyderabad

HYDERABAD. (Agency)

With the festive spirit for Ganesh Chaturthi already in the air, thousands of idols in different forms and sizes are reaching pandals across Greater Hyderabad ahead of the grand festivities from August 27.

To ensure hassle-free immersion and reduce pollution of lakes and tanks, the GHMC is preparing 74 artificial waterbodies under three categories — 27 portable prefabricated water tanks, 20 temporary excavation tanks and 27 baby ponds. This is three more than last year.

Officials said the initiative aims to ease the strain on existing water bodies, especially from Plaster of Paris (PoP) idols, while also ensuring that devotees need not travel long distances or face crowding at major lakes. Sanitation staff will be deployed at the ponds to receive idols, while local police will guide pandal organisers and others during immersion. Post-immersion, puja material and debris will be segregated and sent to landfills. Portable ponds will be dismantled and stored for reuse, while excavated tanks will be levelled back to the ground.

Gramophones revive nostalgia in Hyderabad's antique shops, blending music, memory and heritage

HYDERABAD. (Agency)

In an age of invisible music libraries and silent AirPods, the gramophone demands a different kind of attention. It is unapologetically physical, tactile and communal. It asks for a hand to wind its key, an ear to lean in close and a shared moment to appreciate its warm, analogue soul. In Hyderabad's antique stores, this nearly-lost ritual of listening is being lovingly preserved.

In the 1970s and 80s, jukeboxes stood in popular cafes in Abids and other parts of the Old City, waiting for a 25-paisa coin to spin a favourite track. A song, a cup of chai and a short pause in a busy day — that was entertainment. Today, while most ears are plugged into apps and AirPods, nostalgia still lingers in the city's old homes and antique shops. At Khaja Complex on Masab Tank-Banjara Hills Road, beside Dine Hill Restaurant, sits a fourth-generation antique store started by Mirza Mustafa Ali Baig and now run by his son, Mirza Azhar Ali Baig. Cameras, lamps, chandeliers, Polaroids — the place feels like stepping into a different century. But the showstopper is a 70-year-old gramophone. "It's the main attraction," says Azhar, a Nizam enthusiast whose family has spent four decades restoring key-wound players and portable box gramophones, or valise models. Most of his finds come from the homes of Nawabs. Before Independence, gramophones were luxuries only the wealthy could afford. A single unit costs Rs 250, roughly a common man's monthly salary. Radios, too, were rare treasures. "If one existed

in a lane, everyone gathered to listen to film songs or cricket commentary," recalls Azhar. An anchor to the past

Gramophones first arrived in India around 1900 as luxury imports. By 1901, the Gramophone Company had opened its Calcutta branch. In 1902, Gauhar Jaan became the first Indian artist ever recorded — over 500 songs in just six



weeks, pressed abroad and shipped back, making her a household name. Women like Gauhar Jaan of Calcutta, Oomda Jaan of Hyderabad and Bangalore Nagarathnamma defied stigma to become pioneers of the industry. Dr Mohammad Saifullah, honorary managing trustee of the Deccan Heritage Trust, recounts a gem of history. "I recently obtained the audio of a ghazal sung by the legendary Begum Akhtar in 1937, during the Silver Jubilee celebrations of the Nizam VII Mir

Osman Ali Khan. Until now, the only known gramophone record from that event was of a ghazal sung by Angoor Bala. Osman Ali Khan himself had been gifted. When people first heard the 'Voice of America' from a metal box, many thought the British were mad.

Gramophones too carried their own magic — the needle box, the puff of powder, the hand-cranked sound that seemed to breathe life into melody. Later came commercial giants like HMV, followed by the Nizam's own record company, immortalising the music of that age. "Near Charminar, antique dealer Askar Ali continues his family trade of four decades. "We buy antiques, repair gramophones, sometimes sell them outright or on commission," he says. Sales are unpredictable — 10 gramophones in a good year, five in a slow one.

Most youngsters, he admits, buy them as decor, a royal touch to modern homes. Yet a handful still insist on working pieces, craving the old style of listening. Though clay records are no longer made, repairs keep the machines alive; seven days to polish, patch and prepare them for another turn. Today, gramophones sell upwards of Rs 5,000 in select stores across Banjara Hills and Charminar. "Mostly for decoration," says Askar Ali with a smile, "but for those who truly use them, it's about reliving memories." For many, they are not antiques but emotional anchors. "People in the Instagram age still come looking," he adds. "Often, they just want to hold on to a piece of family history." a radio in the 1920s.

Rare amoebic variant detected in Kerala; total active cases touch 18

KOZHIKODE. (Agency)

Amid serious concerns over an increase in the cases of amoebic meningoencephalitis in the state, an expert team at the Kozhikode Government Medical College Hospital (MCH) has confirmed the detection of a rare amoeba variant, Sappinia pedata, in a patient under treatment at the MCH. This is the first time the variant is detected in the state.

Currently, there are 18 active cases of amoebic meningitis across Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Kozhikode, Wayanad and Malappuram districts. Of them, eight have been admitted to the Kozhikode MCH. This year, 41 cases have been confirmed in the state so far. With the cases on the rise, the state government has heightened vigil, launching preventive measures, including chlorination of wells and water tanks across homes, hospitals, hostels and educational institutions. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has urged local self-government institutions to

carry out preventive measures effectively.

Vermamoeba vermiformis, a free-living amoeba that has been identified as a cause of primary amoebic meningoencephalitis (PAM), and Naegleria fowleri, also known as the brain-eating amoeba, were the two variants identified in the cases reported in the state so far.

Chlorination drive on August 30, 31

The Sappinia pedata strain is particularly rare and can trigger both granulomatous amoebic meningoencephalitis and PAM — conditions that are often fatal if left untreated.

"Sappinia infections are extremely rare. The fact we have detected it here is of high clinical importance. It may represent a changing trend in environmental exposure or simply improved diagnosis, but it warrants detailed study," said a neurologist at Kozhikode MCH. Patients with Sappinia infection usually show symptoms such as fever, severe headache, nausea, seizures, or confusion. The challenge, experts say, is these symptoms mimic other types of

meningitis.

In laboratory tests, these amoebae are often mistaken for bacteria, fungi, or other parasites. Unless doctors suspect amoebic infection, it can go unnoticed. That delay is what makes the disease dangerous," said a microbiologist at the MCH. Despite the strain's rarity, doctors stress that clinical outcomes have improved due to quicker detection and aggressive treatment.

Meanwhile, Health Minister Veena George urged the public to be cautious but not alarmed. She announced a statewide water hygiene campaign to arrest the rise in amoebic encephalitis cases.

Urging LSG bodies to intensify preventive measures, the CM said the government will launch 'Water is Life' to combat waterborne diseases. The initiative, led by Haritha Keralam Mission will begin with a statewide drive on August 30 and 31 to chlorinate wells and water storage tanks across homes, hospitals, hostels and educational institutions.

DPR preparation for Kochi Metro phase 3 begins

KOCHI. In a crucial development towards realisation of the proposed Metro corridor extension from Aluva to Angamaly via Kochi airport, Haryana-based Systra MVA Consulting India Pvt Ltd has commenced the detailed project report (DPR) preparation for Kochi Metro Phase 3.

The Kochi Metro Rail Ltd (KMRL) has asked the consultant to submit the study report, prepared at a cost of Rs 1.03 crore in six months.

"The initial work towards realisation of the long-standing demand of extending the Metro to Angamaly via Kochi airport has now begun. The Central and state governments have already approved the DPR study for Metro third phase, which will ensure world-class travel facilities to the people of this region and the growth of this region," KMRL Managing Director Loknath Behera said.

The Kochi Metro Phase 3 project involves the construction of a 17.5-km-long elevated metro viaduct, while nearly three kms is



proposed to be constructed as an underground section.

"Extensive field investigation, surveys, engineering studies, etc. will be carried out as part of the DPR. The cost of the DPR study will be met from the Central Financial Assistance Scheme of the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Development," Behera added. The KMRL kicked off the process to select the consultant for DPR preparation in January this year, when it floated tenders for the same. However, the crucial exercise faced delays. While RITES (Rail India Technical and Economic Service) was initially the frontrunner, the tender submitted by the public sector enterprise under the railway ministry cancelled due to budget overruns, leading to re-tendering.

Syndicate meet delayed, Madurai Kamaraj University's PhD scholars in lurch

MADRASI. (Agency)

The syndicate of Madurai Kamaraj University (MKU) has not met for the last six months, leaving PhD scholars in a quandary. The scholars say they are cannot apply for jobs due to lack of doctorate certificate which would be issued only after the syndicate approves their doctoral work. Sundar (name changed), a PhD scholar, said he completed his viva voce in February, but is yet to get the certificate. "After completing the viva, scholars will get the syndicate approval within a month. Only after this we can apply for provisional certificate. Without the certificate, we can't apply for job. At least 25 PhD scholars in MKU and affiliated colleges are yet to get syndicate approval. We gave several representations to authorities through our guides, but they were in vain," he said. He added



"A friend who completed her viva in Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, received the doctorate recently. Now she is working as an assistant professor in a self-financing college in Tirunelveli. But MKU students could not take up any jobs due to lack of certificates. Chairperson of MKU convener committee E Sundaravalli must convene a special syndicate meeting and grant approval at the earliest." Speaking to TNIE, a senior official from MKU, said syndicate meetings must be held every month. Because there is no V-C, it has not been held. Chairperson of MKU convener committee E Sundaravalli has not convened the syndicate meeting since January this year. But, those who completed their viva before October will get their convocation by this year"

R Murali, secretary of Save MKU Forum claimed that nearly 100 PhD scholars are waiting for their doctorates. "The syndicate should meet immediately and grant approval to the papers, and send their provisional certificates without further delay," he said.

28 yrs on, mom gets 6.5L for boy's death by negligence

Mumbai. (Agency)

Mumbai: Twenty-eight years after an 8-year-old boy was killed by a stone that flew in from a quarry near his school in Kandivali, a civil court recently ordered a compensation of Rs 6.5 lakh — Rs 2 lakh relief with 8% interest/annum since 1998 — to his mother.

The court directed the man who had set off the blasts, Chandar Gadwal, to pay the compensation. Observing that his negligence had caused the death, it said he illegally carried out quarrying close to the school without informing the authorities, reports Rebecca Samveli. It said the mother's evidence had proved Gadwal was negligent.

The mother, Chintadevi Arjundas, moved the plea in 1998 and also blamed the school and the state chief secretary for negligence. "There is no evidence to hold any negligence on the part of defendant nos 2 and 3 (school and state chief secretary) as defendant no 1 (Gadwal) has not contested the matter. He has not brought the fact that either he informed defendant no. 2 about the so-called blasting and prior permission of defendant no. 3 or any other competent authority to that effect was obtained," judge Subhash K Karhale said.

The incident occurred on Feb 19, 1997, when Ajay, a class 2 student at Anudatt Vidyalaya, Kandivali (East), was in his classroom. At

around 4pm, Gadwal set off blasts on a plot near the school. A heavy stone broke through the tin roof of the classroom and hit Ajay on the head, causing severe injuries. He was rushed to Bhagwati Hospital by school staff and shifted



to Nair Hospital for further treatment. However, he succumbed to his injuries on April 16, 1997. Chintadevi filed a suit on Feb 20, 1998, against three defendants. She sought Rs 10 lakh in compensation, plus 18% interest, for the death of her son, who was described as a topper with a bright future. The defendants were served with notices, but only the headmaster of Anudatt Vidyalaya filed a statement. The headmaster denied negligence, stating that he was unaware of the quarrying activity conducted by Gadwal.

Slaying the 'choker' with sword of science

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. (Agency)

All may seem hunky-dory and celestially beautiful at Vellayani, with its misty mornings and eco-tourism initiatives evoking considerable charm. But this picture-perfect setting exists only along its banks. Wade into the waters, and the choking of the lake becomes evident in more ways than one. With over 50 per cent of the lake infested with invasive species, both foreign and native, the ecological impact has led to changes in groundwater quality and fish populations, as well as a decline in the visitation of migratory birds.

One of the main villains among these weeds is the water hyacinth, which has been making headlines for its invasion not just of Vellayani but most of Kerala's water sources. Scientists like Ajith Haridas, former head of CSIR-NIIST, believe this is a direct reflection of the lack of proper sewerage treatment in Kerala.

"Agriculture and the use of fertilisers are less

in Kerala, it being a state with sparse agri initiatives. So, the sewerage is the culprit here, which grants nitrogen and phosphorus into the waters. The treatment facilities here are at least 50 years old. So, the waste is let into the waters, adding to its nitrogen and phosphorus content which results in blockage of light and growth of weeds like water hyacinth. It literally chokes the health of the lake ecosystem and its adjoining ecology," says Ajith.

This issue has been rampant in Kerala, and from time to time, efforts have been made to bank upon the weeds to create value-added products. The recent initiatives of some universities to address this problem have brought it into the limelight again. Similarly, the efforts of institutions like CSIR-NIIST to collaborate with local administrative bodies such as the Nemom block panchayat are being seen as steps towards highlighting the issue boldly, if not solving it completely.

Nemom panchayat's latest initiative is to tie up



with CSIR-NIIST to develop value-added products, a move seen as an attempt to contain the hyacinth infestation to some extent. "The idea was mooted at the recently held innovation cluster meeting in which the issue of how hyacinth infestation was affecting the lake and its ecology was raised," says Nemom block panchayat officer PRAjayaghosh.

"CSIR-NIIST then offered to collaborate with us on a strategic plan to make value-added products from the weed, which would also

be a source of income for local people of the Kalliyur panchayat. The project is approved, and the MoU is likely to be signed in September." The technology to be used for the project would be closed retting or treating the weeds by containing them in a closed space — a process invented by Ajith. "Water hyacinth or Eichhornia crassipes infests lakes when the water is contaminated. In case the lake is relatively free from lead, mercury, arsenic, etc., as perceived by a few scientists, the results can be very good, even surprising," says R S Praveen Raj, senior principal scientist at CSIR-NIIST, Thiruvananthapuram.

"If so, the narrow, pathogen-free fibres, after detoxification and drying, can be used as feed for fish and livestock, medicinal applications, including biodegradable wound dressings for diabetic patients. However, extensive research would be needed for this."

Indian Navy to equip entire fleet with BrahMos supersonic missile by 2030

By 2030, the Indian Navy plans to arm all warships with BrahMos, boosting its strike power to over 300 missiles across 20 stealth frigates and 13 destroyers.

Agency New Delhi.

The Indian Navy is on track to arm its entire fleet with the supersonic BrahMos missile by 2030, a move that will significantly boost its maritime strike capability. BrahMos, tested extensively during Operation Sindoar, has emerged as one of the most lethal weapons in India's

arsenal. Building on its success, the Navy has inducted two new BrahMos, equipped stealth frigates, INS Udaygiri and INS Himgiri. With these additions, the Navy now operates 14 guided missile stealth frigates, each carrying eight vertical-launch BrahMos anti-ship missiles. The Navy's modernisation push dates back to the induction of Talwar, class frigates in 2003.

Of the six Talwar, class warships currently in service, four already field BrahMos systems while the remaining two are undergoing upgrades. Under a 2016 India-Russia agreement, four more Talwar, class frigates were cleared for construction, two in Russia and two in India. Russia has delivered INS Tushil and INS Tamal, while the other two will join service shortly. By the end of 2030, the Navy is expected to operate 20 BrahMos, capable stealth frigates: seven Nilgiri-class, three Shivalik-class, and 10 Talwar-class. Alongside, the Navy has 13



destroyers in service. New destroyers carry 16 BrahMos vertical launchers each, while older ones house eight. These include four Visakhapatnam-class, three Kolkata-class, three Delhi-class, and three Rajput-class destroyers. Combined, the Navy will be able to launch over 300 BrahMos missiles simultaneously by 2030.

NILGIRI-CLASS EDGE

The Nilgiri-class frigates, being built under Project 17A, represent the Navy's most advanced indigenous surface combatants.

Seven ships are under construction -- four at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) and three at Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE). Launched between 2019 and 2023, four are already undergoing sea trials. INS Nilgiri, the lead ship, was commissioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in January this year. INS Udaygiri, the 100th warship designed by the Navy's design bureau, joined the fleet on July 1, while INS Himgiri followed on July 31.

BRAHMOS AND BEYOND

Both Himgiri and Udaygiri are armed with BrahMos missiles for anti-ship and land-attack roles. Their layered defence includes Barak-8 long-range surface-to-air missiles, close-in air defence guns, Varunastra heavyweight torpedoes, anti-submarine rocket launchers, and advanced sonar suites. The ships also feature multi-function digital radars, combat management systems, and aviation facilities for two helicopters.

Yamuna breaches warning mark in city



Agency New Delhi.

The Yamuna river crossed the warning mark of 204.50-metre at the Old Railway Bridge here on Tuesday morning, officials said. At 9 am, the water level in the river stood at 204.58 metre.

The situation is being monitored and all agencies concerned have been asked to take precautionary measures to handle the flood-like situation as the level will continue to rise as per the forecast. "The reason for the increase in level is mostly due to the high volumes of water released from the Wazirabad and Hathnikund barrages every hour. The forecast is of further increase in level but it is likely to remain below the danger mark by today evening," an official from the central flood room said.

According to the flood control department, the Hathnikund barrage is releasing around 36,658 cusecs of water and Wazirabad is releasing 35,640 cusecs of water every hour. The Old Railway Bridge serves as a key observation point for tracking the river's flow and potential flood risks.

The warning mark for the city is 204.50 metre, while the danger mark is 205.33 metre, and evacuation of people starts at 206 metre. Water released from the barrages typically takes 48 to 50 hours to reach Delhi. Even lower discharges from upstream are raising the water level, nearing the warning mark in Delhi.

DTC arm faces fund crunch, bus route restructuring plan in limbo

Agency New Delhi.

Nearly two months after the Delhi government announced the restructuring of bus routes across the city, the project is yet to take off due to delays in the release of funds. Officials said the Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) has sought financial support to move the scheme forward, but the proposal remains in limbo as the allocation has not been cleared.

"The blueprint for the restructuring has been prepared, but DTC cannot begin implementation until payments are routed through the Delhi Transport Infrastructure Development Corporation (DTIDC)," said an official. DTIDC serves as a funding arm of the DTC.

The project would be executed in partnership with the Delhi Integrated Multi-Modal Transit System (DIMTS), which manages the city's cluster bus fleet. According to officials, the plan requires more than Rs 3 crore to conduct a city-wide survey and determine new routes.

The exercise is to be carried out by the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi. DTC has already decided to commission the study, but progress hinges on the release of the funds.

The move to redraw bus routes was prompted by persistent complaints over the inefficiency of the capital's bus network. On several routes, buses remain overcrowded with commuters waiting for hours, while on others, vehicles run nearly empty. The issue is compounded by the huge chunk of the fleet being decommissioned without any concrete replacements. About 1,700 CNG buses are expected to be phased out by March 2026, as their operational permission lapses. "The twin problems are that the overall fleet size is inadequate, and the existing buses are not deployed rationally," another senior official said.

A recent study by the transport department showed that 37 percent of public transport passengers depend on buses, with an average travel length of 11.2 km. Transit hubs such as Anand Vihar ISBT, Kashmiri Gate, Connaught Place, New Delhi Railway Station and Badarpur are among the most congested ones. The study noted that each bus carries an average of 36 passengers, with central Delhi recording the highest ridership.

Vantara pledges full cooperation with SC-appointed SIT, says animal welfare 'top priority'

Vantara has welcomed the Supreme Court's order forming an SIT and pledged full legal adherence and cooperation with investigators, insisting that the welfare of animals remains its central priority.

Agency New Delhi.

Day after the Supreme Court ordered a fact-finding probe into its functioning, Reliance Foundation's wildlife initiative Vantara said it remains committed to transparency and will extend full cooperation to the Special Investigation Team (SIT). In a statement issued on Tuesday, the Jamnagar-based rescue and rehabilitation centre said it holds the Supreme Court's order in "utmost regard" and reaffirmed its pledge to compassion and compliance with law. "We will extend complete cooperation to the Special Investigation Team, always placing the welfare of animals at the heart of all our efforts," the centre said. It added that the process should be allowed to run its course "without speculation" and guided only by the best interests of the animals. The



response comes after the Supreme Court appointed a four-member SIT headed by former judge Justice Jasti Chelameswar to look into allegations against the centre. The team, which also includes Justice Raghavendra Chauhan, former Mumbai Police Commissioner Hemant Nagrare and senior Customs officer Anish Gupta, has been tasked with examining a range of issues. These include claims of unlawful acquisition of animals,

particularly elephants, compliance with the Wildlife (Protection) Act and international norms, veterinary care and welfare standards, as well as concerns around environmental suitability and financial transparency. The SIT is expected to carry out on-site inspections in Jamnagar and interact with regulators, intervenors and independent experts. It has been asked to submit its report by September 12, with the case listed for hearing on September 15. The court has clarified that the exercise is meant for fact-finding and should not be seen as casting doubt on Vantara or any authority at this stage. Spread across thousands of acres within Reliance's refinery complex, Vantara has gone on to become one of the world's largest privately supported animal care centres.

Dowry Victim Nikki Had Caught Husband's Affair. He Then Assaulted 'Lover'

Agency New Delhi.

The brutal murder of 26-year-old Nikki Bhati, burnt alive in her matrimonial home in Noida allegedly over dowry demands, has reopened a window into her husband's violent past. Nikki's husband, Vipin Bhati, was already named in a 2024 case of assault and exploitation filed by another woman in an episode that also involved Nikki herself. A woman had registered an FIR at Jarcha Police Station in Greater Noida in October 2024, accusing Vipin of assault and exploitation. According to sources, Vipin was then in a relationship with the complainant, despite being married to Nikki.

The matter escalated when Nikki and her



sister caught Vipin and the woman "red-handed". In an attempt to prove his innocence, Vipin allegedly beat the woman, after which she filed an FIR against him. On August 21, Nikki was beaten, doused with a flammable substance and set on fire inside her

home in Greater Noida's Sirsa village. She died en route to Delhi's Safdarjung Hospital after sustaining 70 per cent burns. Videos recorded by Nikki's sister Kanchan on her phone have circulated online, capturing moments of violence. One clip shows Nikki being dragged by her hair, while another shows her engulfed in flames as she stumbles down the stairs before collapsing. Her husband Vipin, his mother Daya, father Satveer, and brother Rohit have all been arrested. Vipin was shot in the leg during what police described as an attempted escape while in custody. His mother was arrested a day later, and his father and brother were tracked down near Sirsa Toll Chauraha.

Supreme Court Overturns Own Death Penalty Order For Rape-Murder Convict

Agency New Delhi.

The Supreme Court has said that it can revisit its own verdict of a death sentence if it is convinced that the accused has been condemned to the death penalty without ensuring that the guidelines mandated by the top court were followed.

The Supreme Court, in a recent verdict setting aside the death sentence of a man convicted of the rape and murder of a four-year-old girl, held that Article 32 of the Constitution empowers the top court in cases related to capital punishment to reopen the sentencing stage.

In 2017, the top court passed an order upholding the death sentence of Vasanta Sampat Dupare, convicted of the rape and murder of a four-year-old girl. Now, the top court has directed a fresh hearing on his punishment. The court proceeded to place the matter before the Chief Justice of India to reassign the case for fresh sentencing, as the man is still convicted of the rape and murder of a minor. This judgment comes as a significant development, especially with regard to

the options available for those awarded capital punishment by the Supreme Court itself.

The decision delivered by a three-judge bench of Justices Vikram Nath, Sanjay Karol, and Sandeep Mehta said that this corrective power is invoked precisely to compel rigorous application of the safeguards laid down by the top court in the Manoj judgment, thereby ensuring that the condemned person is not deprived of the fundamental rights to equal treatment, individualised sentencing, and fair procedure that Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution secure to every person.

This verdict came after an Article 32 petition filed by Dupare, who argued that his sentencing did not comply with the 2022 judgment in Manoj v. State of Madhya Pradesh, which had mandated courts to undertake a detailed evaluation of mitigating factors such as the convict's socio-economic background, mental health, and possibility of reform before

imposing the death penalty.

"The writ petition is allowed. Therefore, we hold that Article 32 of the Constitution empowers this Court in cases related to capital punishment to reopen the sentencing stage where the accused has



been condemned to the death penalty without ensuring that the guidelines mandated in Manoj were followed," the order read.

The judgment becomes significant as the Supreme Court has not only acknowledged the retrospective reach of the Manoj judgment but has also clarified

"Pay Rs 80 Crore Or Face Baba Siddiqui's Fate": Mumbai Businessman Gets Threat Calls from Pakistan

Agency New Delhi.

Mumbai Police have launched a probe after a 51-year-old businessman filed a complaint alleging death threats and extortion attempts linked to gangster Chhota Shakeel's network. The complainant, who is engaged in the import of chemicals and petrochemicals, claims the threats are related to a business dispute involving an Iranian company. According to the complaint, the businessman imported oil from Iran in 2015. Due to US sanctions on Iran at the time, he says he made the payments in Dubai as instructed by the Iranian supplier. However, the Iranian company later accused him of failing to make full payment for certain consignments and initiated arbitration proceedings in Iran.

The businessman stated that he did not appear for the arbitration, which led to an ex parte award in favour of the Iranian company. The company subsequently approached the Bombay High Court seeking attachment of his property based on the Iranian order.

While the High Court rejected the attachment request, the civil case is still pending for final hearing. Since June this year, the businessman alleges he has received multiple extortion calls from Pakistan, claiming to be from Chhota Shakeel's gang. Initially, the caller demanded Rs 2 crore, which later escalated to Rs 80 crore. The calls reportedly warned the businessman that he would meet the same fate as "Baba Siddiqui" if he did not comply, a reference that has raised serious alarm.

The businessman, who has offices in Mumbai's Fort area and in Dubai, lodged a formal complaint with the Mumbai Police. The Anti-Extortion Cell has taken over the case and launched an investigation. Speaking on the matter, a senior officer from Mumbai Crime Branch said, "We are investigating the possibility of an international extortion racket linked to organised crime syndicates, exploiting foreign trade disputes. All leads are being verified, including the role of foreign operatives."

How A Strand Of Hair Helped Ajit Doval Uncover Pakistan's Nuclear Plans

Agency New Delhi.

A torn shawl, dusty streets, and a man no one paid attention to. This was Ajit Doval, India's future National Security Advisor, moving unnoticed through Pakistan's Islamabad in the 1980s.

To a casual observer, he was another beggar, collecting coins and wandering the alleys. But behind the tattered shawl and unkempt appearance was an intelligent mind. Already a decorated officer for his work with the Intelligence Bureau and the Sikkim mission, Mr Doval's objective was to uncover Pakistan's secret nuclear ambitions from within its most secure research zones.

At the time, Pakistan was determined to acquire nuclear weapons by any means necessary. India's 1974 nuclear test prompted Islamabad to aggressively pursue its own nuclear programme, with support from countries like China. India needed concrete proof of these clandestine efforts, and the task fell to Mr Doval, the officer known as the "Super Cop."

Islamabad's Kahuta, home to the infamous Khan Research Laboratories (KRL), was no ordinary town. Scientists, security personnel, and government officials moved with strict routines, guarding secrets that could change the fate of nations. For months, Ajit Doval became invisible to them, mingling into the dusty streets, observing, noting, and memorising. Every gesture, movement, and daily ritual became part of his intelligence map. His breakthrough came in a small barber shop frequented by KRL scientists. While others ignored the tiny strands of hair left behind on the floor, Mr Doval carefully collected them.

Supreme Court Overturns Own Death

Penalty Order For Rape-Murder Convict

that Article 32 empowers it to reopen sentencing in death penalty cases where its own procedural safeguards have not been observed. However, the court maintained that reopening will be reserved for only those cases where there is a breach of new procedural safeguards, as such breaches are so serious that, if left uncorrected, they would undermine the accused's basic rights to life.

The top court has emphasised that the death penalty, being the rarest of rare punishments, cannot be imposed mechanically without giving due weight to the convict's life circumstances.

In the Manoj verdict, the Supreme Court had laid down a more structured sentencing framework, requiring trial courts and High Courts to seek comprehensive psychological, psychiatric, and social evaluation reports of the convict before awarding the death penalty. The top court found that this was not done in Dupare's case.

NEWS BOX

US Open: Buzz cut Alcaraz powers himself into 2nd round with straight sets win

New Delhi. (Agency)

Carlos Alcaraz debuted a fresh buzz cut at the US Open on Monday, drawing mixed reactions from fans online. But any debate over his new look quickly faded under the weight of his performance, as the world No. 2 dispatched American Reilly Opelka 6-4, 7-5, 6-4 to move into the second round.

Having shed his signature tousled hair, Alcaraz looked sharp in more ways than one. The 22-year-old began his campaign for a second Grand Slam title this year with a commanding display, overcoming the towering Opelka's blistering serve and difficult baseline game. "I've got to ask the people if they like the new haircut or not. Did you like it guys? I think they like it," Alcaraz joked in his on-court interview. "Today was a really difficult one. He's a great and really tough player with that serve. I couldn't get the rhythm I wanted, but I'm really happy with



everything." Confident Alcaraz Stamps His Authority

Alcaraz broke early in the first set for a 3-2 lead and never looked back, closing it out with confidence. In the second, he showed brief vulnerability with a pair of double faults, but Opelka was unable to capitalise on two break point chances. Alcaraz recovered quickly, broke in the 11th game, and held to love to take a two-set lead. The Spaniard turned up the pressure in the third set, earning a decisive break in the ninth game after a combination of a foot fault and an errant serve from Opelka. He then closed the match with a love hold, sealing a composed and clinical first-round win. "Nothing depends on you. It always depends on him," Alcaraz said of the challenge posed by Opelka. "The way he serves, the way he plays from the baseline—you just have to be focused, put as many returns in as you can, and try to win the points he lets you win."

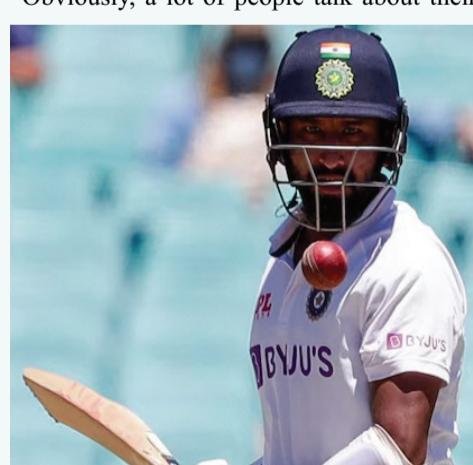
Pujara is a whitewalker, his contributions are no less than Kohli and Rohit: R Ashwin

New Delhi. (Agency)

Former India all-rounder Ravichandran Ashwin feels Cheteshwar Pujara never got the limelight despite making similar contributions to Indian cricket like Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma. Pujara recently announced his retirement from Tests after last playing for the country back in 2023. He ended his career with 103 matches, having scored 7195 runs at an average of 43.60 with 19 centuries and 35 fifties to his name.

Pujara was seen as a true successor of the legendary batter Rahul Dravid, and he lived up to the hype on several occasions by being a rock at the crease. Recently, R Ashwin recalled Pujara's illustrious career and said that his contributions were often overshadowed, but he helped Virat Kohli score a lot of his runs.

"What did Cheteshwar Pujara stand for in Indian cricket? I said his contributions are no less than Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma. Obviously, a lot of people talk about their



contributions. The attention is not there. Not every cricketer gets the attention, but that does not mean their contribution is any less. Pujara's contribution at No.3, believe it or not, was instrumental in helping Virat Kohli also make a lot of his runs," Ashwin said on his YouTube channel. Kohli and Pujara were involved in several memorable partnerships in their career, scoring 3513 runs together at the crease from 83 innings at an average of 43.37 with seven hundreds and 18 fifties. Their most memorable stand came against England in Visakhapatnam, 2016, when the duo added 226 runs for the third wicket.

Furthermore, Ashwin compared Pujara to 'Whitewalker' a famous character in the TV series, Game of Thrones.

Cameron Green scored a stunning 118 not out, registering the second-fastest ODI century by an Australian, to help Australia post 431 for 2 against South Africa.

NEW YORK. (Agency)

New Zealand are in the middle of a major injury crisis ahead of their long home season as Mitchell Santner, Glenn Phillips, Will O'Rourke and Finn Allen are nursing various ailments. The Blackcaps will host Australia, England and West Indies for multi-format series beginning from October 1, followed by a T20I series against South Africa in March 2026. However, they're likely to miss most of their first-choice players due to an injury crisis in the team. Fast bowler Will O'Rourke has been ruled out of action for three months after scans revealed that he has a stress fracture in his lower back, informed New Zealand Cricket in a media release. The 24-year-old picked up the injury during the



first Test against Zimbabwe earlier this month and was sent home, where scans revealed the extent of his injury. Apart from him, all-rounder Glenn Phillips has suffered a groin injury while opening batter Finn Allen is recovering from his right foot surgery. The duo has been ruled out of the three-match T20I series against Australia played for the Chappell-Hadlee Trophy, beginning from October 1. Allen is likely to spend three months on the sidelines, while Phillips will be reassessed in a month to ascertain his potential return to play. To add to the misery, limited-overs captain Mitchell Santner, who recently returned after playing in The Hundred for Northern Superchargers, is also battling a groin pain.

Santner is due for abdominal surgery and will

take a month to recover. He's set to be in a race against time to be fit for the Australia series. Meanwhile, the Kiwis also have some positive news amid the long list of injuries as fast bowler Ben Sears has recovered from the side-strain which kept him out of the Zimbabwe tour and is likely to be available for the long home summer. New Zealand head coach Rob Walter revealed that they will name Santner in the squads for the Australia series and will assess his rest and rehabilitation in the meantime.

"We expect to name him in our squad when we announce it in a couple of weeks' time, and from there we can assess how his rest and rehabilitation progresses following surgery, before making a call on the eve of the series," said Walter in a media release.

After three T20Is against Australia, New Zealand will play as many T20Is and ODIs against England starting from October 18. They will further play five T20Is, three ODIs and as many Tests against West Indies, starting from November 5. The West Indies series will also mark New Zealand's first assignment in the World Test Championship (WTC) cycle 2025-27.

Sachin Tendulkar breaks silence on Joe Root nearing his all-time Test runs milestone

New Delhi. (Agency)

Legendary India batter Sachin Tendulkar recently commented on Joe Root approaching his all-time record of most runs in Test cricket. Root recently became the second-highest run scorer in Tests during the fourth Test against India at Old Trafford in Manchester. The England batter has scored 13,543 runs in his career so far at an average of 51.29 with 39 centuries and 66 fifties.

Root is well on course to break Tendulkar's record, who tops the list, having scored 15,921 runs in his Test career from 200 matches. Recently, Tendulkar was asked about Root's prolific run in Tests as he recalled his first impression of England batter back in 2012 when he made his debut against India in Nagpur. The legendary batter revealed that he was impressed with Root's assessment of the pitch and predicted him to become England captain in future. "To have gone past 13,000 runs is a remarkable achievement, and he's still going strong. When I saw him for the first



physical redemption and ensuring smooth access to the venue," said Hockey India in a statement. The Hero Men's Asia Cup will feature eight top Asian nations: India, Japan, China, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Korea, Bangladesh, and Chinese Taipei. The event also serves as a qualifier for the 2026 FIH Hockey World Cup, adding extra

significance to every game. Hosts India have been placed in Pool A alongside Japan, China, and Kazakhstan. They will kick off their campaign against China on August 29, followed by a clash with Japan on August 31 before their final pool match against Kazakhstan on September 1.

Hockey India has announced free tickets for fans who want to watch the Asia Cup 2025. The tournament is being held in Rajgir, Bihar.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Hockey India has announced free tickets for fans who want to attend the Asia Cup 2025 in Rajgir. The tournament begins on August 29 with 8 of the top teams from the continent. Pakistan are the only top Asian team to not attend the continental competition due to VISA issues.

The fans have to register for free tickets at www.ticketgenie.in or on the Hockey India app. Upon registering, they will receive a virtual ticket. This system has been designed to provide a seamless and hassle-free experience, eliminating the need for

early as Newcastle started brightly, but Liverpool took the lead against the run of play. Ryan Gravenberch cut inside and fired



a low shot past Nick Pope in the 35th minute. Newcastle's frustration boiled over when Anthony Gordon was sent off in first-half stoppage time. Initially booked for a reckless challenge on Virgil van Dijk, the yellow was upgraded to a red after VAR review. Moments into the second half, Hugo Ekitike made it 2-0 with a calm side-footed finish that underlined Liverpool's attacking

depth. Even with a man down, Newcastle refused to fade. Bruno Guimaraes sparked belief with a thumping header just before the hour mark, and William Osula completed the comeback in the 88th minute, punishing Liverpool's lack of control with a composed finish after a long ball from Pope. But with the final kick of the game, Ngumohoa delivered the knockout blow. Latching onto a loose ball in the box, he rifled it into the bottom corner to send the travelling fans wild and lift Liverpool to six points from two matches. "It was a special moment," Liverpool captain Van Dijk said. "He's a great talent and to do that here, in this atmosphere, it tells you a lot about his mentality."

Liverpool top, Newcastle in turmoil

Arne Slot's side now sit level on points with Arsenal and Tottenham at the top of the table. For Newcastle, the situation looks more complicated.

16-year-old Ngumohoa scripts history as Liverpool down Newcastle in injury time

New Delhi. (Agency)

The spotlight may have been on the absent Alexander Isak ahead of Liverpool's trip to Newcastle United, but by full-time, it belonged to 16-year-old Rio Ngumohoa, whose stunning stoppage-time winner sealed a dramatic 3-2 victory for the Premier League champions. Ngumohoa, making his Premier League debut, entered folklore by becoming Liverpool's youngest ever goalscorer and the fourth youngest in league history. His instinctive first-time finish in the 100th minute silenced a roaring St James' Park and completed a wild, seesawing contest that few will forget.

Red card, comeback, and heartbreak for Newcastle

All eyes before kick-off were on Isak, whose push to join Liverpool dominated the build-up. With the striker again missing from the squad, the home crowd was fired up, determined to rally behind a side under pressure. That energy seemed to pay off

time in Nagpur in 2012 during his debut Test, I told my teammates that they were watching the future captain of England. What impressed me most was the way he was able to assess the wicket and how he rotated the strike. I knew at that very moment that he would be a big player," said Tendulkar during an Ask Me Anything session on Reddit. Root has been in marvellous form in the post-COVID era, having scored 5720 runs from 61 matches (111 innings) at an average of 56.63 with 22 hundreds and 17 fifties. The former England skipper has drastically improved his conversion rate and is gradually moving towards becoming the leading run scorer in Test cricket. The 34-year-old has both age and form on his side to etch his name in the history books. However, his next assignment will be the toughest as he'll travel to Australia for the Ashes, where he's yet to score a century.



Asia Cup debutants Oman announce squad, Jatinder Singh to lead 17-member squad

Oman became the sixth team to announce their squad for the Asia Cup. The side announced a 17-member team, with opener Jatinder Singh leading the side.

NEW YORK. (Agency)

Oman, who are set to feature in the Asia Cup for the first time, announced their squad on Tuesday, August 26. The governing body of the country, Oman Cricket, announced a 17-member squad led by opener Jatinder Singh. Oman will be under the coaching of Duleep Mendis, former Sri Lanka batter who featured in 24 Test matches in the 1980s. Mendis said that the Asia Cup would be a great experience for his side and that they

would be able to showcase the kind of talent they had on the global stage. "It is real that we are participating in the Asia Cup, a major tournament and a fantastic opportunity for our players to showcase their skills on a global stage," Mendis said. Playing against teams like India and Pakistan is a moment to embrace for any cricketer. Anything can happen in a fast-paced T20 game, where one over of brilliance can change everything," he added.

Oman begin their campaign on September 12 against Pakistan and then play UAE and India on the 15th and 19th respectively. The top two teams from each group will qualify for the next stages of the tournament.

"Our build-up has been strong, with the ongoing National T20 tournament providing competitive exposure, and our training sessions have been intense and focused. It's not just about skills – in high-pressure games

against elite teams, mental strength is equally crucial. We are hopeful of making an impact in this Asia Cup and showcasing Oman as a growing cricketing nation," Mendis stated.

Oman squad for Asia Cup

Jatinder Singh (c), Hammad Mirza, Vinayak Shukla, Sufyan Yousuf, Ashish Odedera, Aamir Kaleem, Mohammad Nadeem, Sufyan Mahmood, Aryan Bisht, Karan Sonavale, Zikriya Islam, Hassnain Ali Shah,

Faisal Shah, Mohammad Imran, Nadeem Khan, Shakeel Ahmad, Samay Shrivastava. Oman's Asia Cup 2025 Fixtures:

12 September – vs Pakistan

15 September – vs UAE

19 September – vs India

Oman Cricket Controversy

The current Oman squad looks very different from the one that featured in last year's T20 World Cup 2024. Only Jatinder Singh, Mohammad Nadeem and Sufyan Mahmood are the common names in the current side.

The drastic change in the set-up happened after a fallout with the players and the Oman Cricket Board, which did not pay the players their dues from the T20 World Cup 2024.

ESPNcricinfo reported in June 2025 that the board had finally agreed to pay the members of its men's T20 World Cup squad the prize money due to them from the tournament.



Switching from UPS to NPS? Here's what employees must know

MUMBAI.(Agency)

The government has introduced a one-time, one-way switch facility for central government employees, allowing them to move from the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) to the National Pension System (NPS), reported The Economic Times.

SWITCH FACILITY OPEN UNTIL SEPTEMBER 2025

According to a notification issued by the Ministry of Finance on Monday, employees can opt for the UPS until 30 September 2025. The switch option, however, can be exercised only once and must be done at least one year before superannuation or three months before voluntary retirement, whichever is earlier.

RULES FOR RESIGNATION AND OTHER CASES

The notification clarified that similar rules would apply in cases of resignation, with minor modifications if required. However, the switch facility will not be available in cases of dismissal, compulsory retirement as a penalty, or where disciplinary proceedings are pending or being considered.

NPS REGULATIONS WILL APPLY AFTER SWITCHING

Once the switch is made, the provisions of the PFRDA (Exit & Withdrawal under NPS) Regulations, 2015 will come into effect. This means the employee will no longer be eligible for assured payouts and benefits under the UPS. The government also said that its differential contribution of 4%, based on the default investment pattern, will be calculated and added to the employee's NPS corpus at the time of exit. The move gives employees a choice but also makes it clear that the switch is final. Once an employee opts for the NPS, they cannot return to the UPS.

Eternal, Zomato's parent, gets over Rs 40 crore GST demand

CHENNAI.(Agency)

Eternal Ltd., the parent company of Zomato, Blinkit, District and Hyperpure, has received tax demand orders from the GST authority amounting to more than Rs 40 crore. The orders were issued by the Joint Commissioner (Appeals)-4 in Bengaluru and cover the period between July 2017 and March 2020. The total demand includes Rs 17.19 crore in GST dues, Rs 21.42 crore as interest, and Rs 1.71 crore as penalty. Eternal said in a regulatory filing that it plans to challenge the orders and has already taken legal advice. The company believes it has a strong case and does not expect any material financial impact because of this dispute. The development comes at a time when Eternal is investing heavily to grow its businesses. In the June quarter of FY26, the company reported a net profit of Rs 25 crore, sharply lower than the Rs 253 crore it made a year earlier, though revenue jumped 70% to Rs 7,167 crore.

The tax demand adds to the regulatory pressure on India's fast-growing digital platforms, but Eternal's management appears confident about resolving the matter through the appeals process, said an industry expert, who doesn't want to be identified due to work confidentiality.

Ola Electric secures PLI certification for Gen 3 scooter portfolio

NEW DELHI.(Agency)

Ola Electric, India's largest pure-play electric vehicle (EV) company, has announced a significant milestone that is expected to propel the company toward profitability. The company in a statement on



Tuesday said that it has received Certification for Compliance with the eligibility assessment requirements under the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for its Gen 3 scooter portfolio. The certification was granted by the Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI) under the Ministry of Heavy Industries and applies to all seven models within Ola's S1 Gen 3 scooter lineup. This new achievement means that both the Gen 2 and Gen 3 scooter portfolios are now PLI-certified.

The Gen 3 portfolio, which includes models such as the S1 Pro and S1 X, accounts for the majority of the company's current sales. As a result, this certification is anticipated to significantly enhance Ola Electric's profitability starting from the second quarter of the 2026 fiscal year.

A spokesperson for Ola Electric Mobility Limited stated, "Securing PLI certification for our Gen 3 scooters, which form the bulk of our sales, is a critical step towards profitability. This will directly strengthen our cost structure and margins, enabling us to deliver sustainable growth." The spokesperson added that the certification will act as a "strong catalyst" for the company to achieve its goal of turning its auto business EBITDA positive, all while continuing to offer competitively priced EVs to customers. The PLI certification makes Ola Electric eligible for incentives ranging from 13% to 18% of the determined sales value (DSV) until 2028, providing a long-term financial boost. In addition to this announcement, during its annual 'Sankalp' event, Ola Electric also unveiled new models powered by the 4680 Bharat Cell. These include the S1 Pro Sport with 5.2 kWh and 4 kWh variants, the S1 Pro+ 5.2 kWh, and the Roadster X+ 9.1 kWh.

Trump's 50% tariff comes into effect from August 27: What's at stake

The United States government has issued a draft notification confirming the step, which will be applied through a supplementary 25% duty on top of existing tariffs.

New Delhi.(Agency)

US President Donald Trump's 50% tariff on Indian goods will come into effect from Wednesday, August 27, and is expected to pose a big challenge for exporters. The United States government has issued a draft notification confirming the step, which will be applied through a supplementary 25% duty on top of existing tariffs. The notification, released by the Department of Homeland Security on Monday, stated that the higher duties will apply to Indian goods "entered for consumption, or withdrawn from

warehouse for consumption, on or after 12:01 am Eastern Daylight Time on August 27, 2025." The Prime Minister's Office will convene a high-level meeting today to review measures for Indian exporters facing the impact of higher tariffs in the United States, according to people familiar with the matter. The session is expected to be chaired by the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister.

HOW MUCH TRADE WILL BE AFFECTED?

According to a report by the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI), tariffs will hit Indian exports worth \$60.2 billion.

Products most at risk include textiles, gems and jewellery, shrimp, carpets, and furniture. These are sectors that are labour intensive and together employ millions of workers. GTRI estimates exports in these areas could shrink by as much as 70%.

The organisation said the new duties cover around 66% of India's total exports to the US, worth \$86.5 billion in FY2025. If the tariffs remain in place, exports may fall to \$49.6 billion in FY2026. Alternative suppliers like China, Vietnam, and Mexico are likely to fill the gap in the US

market.

WHICH SECTORS ARE SAFE AND WHICH ARE VULNERABLE?

Not all industries will feel the same pressure. Analysts believe that



Textiles and gems and jewellery are expected to be under moderate pressure as well, given that the US is India's largest market for these products.

The US is India's biggest buyer of textiles.

India is currently the third largest exporter of textiles to the country, holding a 9% share, compared to China at 25% and Vietnam at 12%. Over the past five years, India's share has risen steadily from 6% to 9%, while China's share has dropped from 38% to 25%. This growth could now come under strain as higher tariffs make Indian goods more expensive for US buyers.

ECONOMY EXPECTED TO ABSORB SHOCK

Even with the risks, experts suggest that India's economy will not be derailed. Reports from rating agencies such as S&P Global and Fitch say the large size of India's domestic market will help cushion the blow. Strong consumption in areas such as telecom, hospitality, aviation, cement, and services is expected to keep growth steady.

How India's export sectors are getting impacted by 50% US tariff

MUMBAI.(Agency)

The imposition of higher tariffs by the US will significantly impact micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), which account for as much as 45% of India's total exports. The textiles, gems and jewellery, and seafood industries, which account for 25% of India's total exports to the US, are likely to be the most affected, as MSMEs have more than a 70% share in these sectors.

The chemicals sector, where MSMEs have a 40% share, is also likely to face difficulties. A GTRI report projects that India's exports to the US could be slashed to \$49.6 billion in FY2026, a 43% decline from the previous year's \$86.5 billion. The US on Tuesday has notified the implementation of additional 25% duties on Indian goods, thereby raising the overall tariff to 50%, to be effective from August 27. However, few items like steel, copper and aluminium and sectors like automobiles (passenger vehicles like SUV, sedan) have been exempted from the tariff. Sector-Specific Analysis

Several sectors that will be most severely impacted due to their heavy dependence on the US market.

Textiles and Apparel: The Tirupur cluster, which accounts for over 30% of India's ready-made garment (RMG) exports, will be severely impacted. Tariffs on RMG will increase to 61% from the previous 13.9%, making Indian products uncompetitive against rivals in Bangladesh and Vietnam. Pushan Sharma, Director, Crisil Intelligence, states, "Partial absorption of the increased product prices due to higher tariffs will put pressure on MSMEs, squeeze their already-slim margins and pose a material challenge to their competitiveness. For instance, those into readymade garments (RMG) are expected to lose ground in the US as the tariff increases to 61%, including 50% additional ad valorem duty, compared with peers in Bangladesh and Vietnam tariffed at 31%." **Diamonds and Jewellery:** Exports to the US, which comprise 40% of India's global exports in this sector, will face a tariff surge from 2.1% to 52.1%. MSMEs in Surat, which dominate diamond exports with over 80% share, will feel the shock, as the U.S. is a major consumer of Indian diamonds. **Shrimp:** India's top market for farmed shrimp, the US is imposing a 50% tariff on top of the existing 10% countervailing duty, bringing the total tariff to 60%. This will disadvantage seafood MSMEs.

Once 'white gold', cotton turns into burden for India's farmers

New Delhi.(Agency)

Cotton farmers in India are facing one of their worst crises in decades. Once called 'white gold' because it brought prosperity to farmers, cotton has now become a burden. Yields are falling in the fields, prices are dropping in the mandis, and imports are rising in the markets. By reducing import duty to zero, the government has made the situation even more difficult for farmers. If this trend continues, India may soon become fully dependent on cotton imports, just as it already depends on edible oils and pulses. At present, cotton cultivation area, production, and productivity are all going down, forcing India to rely more on imports. In just two years, the cotton cultivation area has fallen by 14.8 lakh hectares, while production has dropped by 42.35 lakh bales. Between October 2024 and June 2025 alone, cotton imports crossed 29 lakh bales, the highest in six years.

Each bale contains 170 kilograms of cotton. Experts say this is the result of weak policy and poor planning. India already spends nearly Rs 2 lakh crore every year on imports of edible oils and pulses, and the same risk now hangs



HOW MUCH HAS PRODUCTION FALLEN?

The scale of the decline can be seen in numbers. In 2017-18, India produced 370 lakh bales of cotton. In 2024-25, this has dropped to only 294.25 lakh bales. Experts say the fall is due to three

major reasons – price, policy, and pests. Farmers are receiving less money for their harvest, the government has not supported them with the right policies, and pests like the pink bollworm are damaging crops.

This will not only hurt farmers but also push up the price of clothes for consumers as India buys more cotton from abroad. India is the second-largest cotton producer in the world after China, with nearly 24% of global production.

Despite this, farmers are struggling. Prices are one reason. In 2021, cotton prices touched Rs 12,000 per quintal. Today, they have fallen to Rs 6,500-7,000, which in many cases is less than the minimum support price (MSP). Another problem is pests. The pink bollworm has developed resistance to the Bt protein, making pest attacks harder to control. Farmers are forced to spend more money on pesticides, raising their costs.

US issues draft notice to enforce 50% tariffs on India from Aug. 27; Pharma, electronics exempted

New Delhi.(Agency)

The United States on Tuesday notified the implementation of additional 25% duties on Indian goods, thereby raising the overall tariff to 50%, to be effective from August 27. According to the notice issued by the US Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the tariff will cover a wide spectrum of Indian exports, including textiles, gems and jewellery, leather, machinery, furniture and marine products. However, a few items like steel, copper and aluminium and sectors like pharmaceuticals, electronics and automobiles – passenger vehicles like SUV and sedan – have been exempted. The additional tariffs are being imposed to give effect to the President's Executive Order 14329 of August 6, 2025, titled "Addressing Threats to the United States by the Government of the Russian Federation." The CBP clarified

that from 12:01 am eastern daylight time on that day, the higher tariffs will apply to all products of India that are either entered for consumption in the US or withdrawn from warehouses for consumption. Industry exporters fear the new tariff will affect their profit margins and eventually slowdown in shipments to the US. With Washington being India's largest export market for a large chunk of the goods, exporters fear tapping a new market with similar demand will be challenging for many sectors. The Commerce Ministry has assured exporters that the government will take all possible measures to safeguard them from the ongoing global uncertainties. However, the Indian government hasn't come up with any retaliatory measures so far against the US. On July 30, US President Donald Trump announced a 25% tariff on Indian imports as part of a broader

trade war in which he imposed duties on more than 90 countries. A week later, on August 6, he imposed an additional 25% levy, calling it a "penalty" for India's continued purchase of Russian oil, taking total tariffs on New Delhi to 50%. On Monday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi remained firm ahead of the 50% US tariffs on Indian goods, saying his government will find a way out regardless of the economic pressure by Washington. He assured small shopkeepers, farmers, and livestock rearers that the government would protect their interests. "We will bear any pressure. Modi will never allow you to be harmed," Modi said. RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra said on Monday that the central bank will provide special support for sectors impacted by tariffs and noted that the overall impact on the economy.

What India really needs to become 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047

IndiaToday.in reached out to leading economists to understand what India must do over the next two decades to achieve its 'Viksit Bharat' vision. Here's what they had to say.

New Delhi.(Agency)

When Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the nation on Independence Day this year, he celebrated reforms like GST, job creation, and the ongoing transformation of India's economy. But with the government setting its sights on the 'Viksit Bharat' goal for 2047, a pressing question emerges: what will it truly take for India to become a developed economy? India reached out to leading economists to understand what needs to happen over the next two decades. What emerges is a vision that goes far beyond incremental reforms, combining growth, inclusivity, resilience, and sustainability.

Economists said it is not a matter of small policy tweaks. Achieving Viksit Bharat will require bold structural changes, smart investment in human capital, and an ability to harness India's demographic and technological strengths. For Manoranjan Sharma, Chief Economist at Informer Ratings, the blueprint is rooted in history. India's first Five-Year Plan, launched in 1951, aimed to "bring about a sustained improvement in the standards of living of the people". Though formal Five-Year Plans are no longer part of the policy lexicon, their core goals – economic growth, structural transformation, modernisation, self-reliance, and social justice – remain crucial. "Today, governments must focus on broad-based economic growth to ensure it benefits all sections and regions of society," Sharma said. Strengthening MSMEs, monitoring fiscal and current account deficits, creating an enabling ecosystem for inclusive development, and empowering women economically are essential, he added. He also said that banks and financial institutions can act as catalysts for transformation. India has made considerable progress in inclusive

growth over the past decade. One of the biggest breakthroughs has been the JAM Trinity – Jan Dhan Yojana, Aadhaar, and mobile connectivity. Sharma called it a

improving efficiency, and ensuring that benefits reach the intended sections of society."

FOCUS ON MSMEs, YOUNG WORKFORCE

Technology, he argued, must drive the next phase of growth, highlighting studies by the IMF which show that "productivity-induced technological gains" in India are unmatched globally. The digital economy is emerging as a major growth engine, touching education, finance, banking, and MSMEs alike. Yet India still faces regional imbalances and sectoral inequalities. "While high-growth sectors should be prioritised, the focus should also be on enhancing efficiency and productivity across all sectors," Sharma said. Exports, which crossed \$821 billion in FY25, have been a growth driver, but challenges remain. To leverage India's demographic dividend fully, Sharma insisted that "critical issues like health, education, and employment must be addressed effectively. Without these foundational areas, India's demographic dividend could turn into a demographic disaster."



"quiet revolution" that has improved access to banking and government services, especially for the underserved, and won recognition from global institutions like the World Bank and IMF. He stressed that building on this foundation is crucial, noting that JAM has "been instrumental in reducing leakages,

Ridhi Dogra

Calls Raqesh Bapat's Ganpati Workshop A True Blessing

Raqesh Bapat recently took part in a unique hands-on Ganpati idol-making workshop alongside an array of kids of all ages. As part of the Lokmanya Cultural Foundation, the session held at the Karve Shikshan Hall was seemingly filled with art, devotion and creativity. Afterwards, the actor also revealed his gratitude for making this Ganeshotsav truly special. On Instagram, Raqesh Bapat shared a series of candid pictures captured during the workshop. Dressed in a pink kurta and dhoti-style pants, the actor was seen guiding the little kids to DIY their own favourite Ganpati idols. With the beautiful smiles on their faces, it seems the participants experienced the joy of shaping their own eco-friendly idols while connecting with traditions in a creative way.

Raqesh Bapat Reveals His Gratitude To Be Part Of The Idol-Making Session

He captioned the post as "When passion meets purpose, joy multiplies. Loved every moment of sculpting with these young, enthusiastic creators today!" and further added, "A heartfelt thank you to @lokmaniaculturalfoundation for organizing such a wonderful session!"

Ex-Wife Ridhi Dogra's appreciation For Raqesh Bapat

Reacting to the beautiful initiative, Raqesh Bapat's ex-wife, Ridhi Dogra penned a lovely note for him. It can be read as "To pass on the legacy. That a little boy learnt from a priest on a mountain top mandir back to little young minds. The world should see this is what success look like.. What a blessing Raq. Ganpati Bappa Morya." In a separate comment, the actress also dropped a series of clapping emojis.

Many others showered the comment section with immense praise for Raqesh. Rithvik Dhanjani called him "Guruji!!!" followed by two folded hands and two red hearts emojis. Amrutha Khanvilkar posted a couple of heart-eyed emojis. One of his fans penned, "Super awesome."



Mrunal Thakur

Drops Sexy Black-And-White Pics, Calls Them 'Unscripted Moments'

Actor Mrunal Thakur has once again set social media abuzz with her latest Instagram post, where she shared a series of black-and-white photographs that fans are calling "timeless" and "effortlessly glamorous."

The post, captioned "Unscripted moments", captures the actress in candid yet striking poses. Dressed in a chic black top paired with high-waist denim, Mrunal exudes understated elegance. The monochrome aesthetic enhances the raw, unfiltered vibe of the shoot, highlighting her natural beauty and expressive persona.

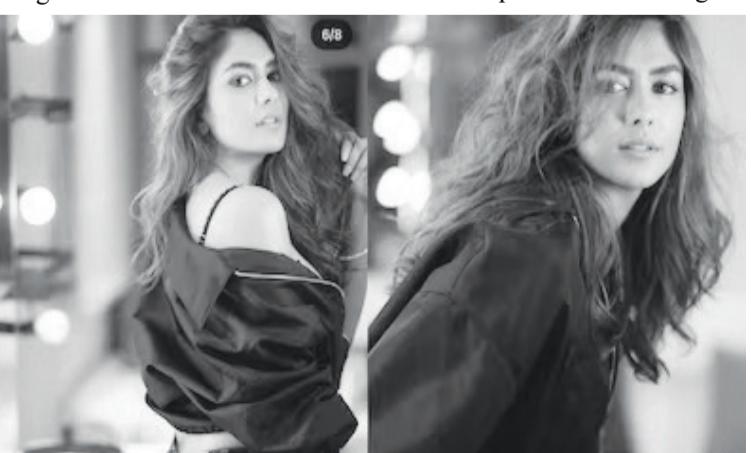
The Look That Has Fans Talking In the photos, Mrunal lets her voluminous hair flow freely, complementing her bold yet graceful presence. Whether leaning back with a thoughtful gaze, adjusting her jacket with a hint of mystery, or smiling softly in a candid frame, the actress embraces a rare vulnerability that resonates with the caption "Unscripted moments."

Her choice of styling—a cropped, off-shoulder jacket revealing subtle detailing and form-fitting denim—strikes a perfect balance between edgy and sophisticated. The simplicity of the look allows her expressions to take center stage, turning the carousel into an intimate mood board of emotions.

Mrunal Thakur was last seen in Vijay Kumar Arora's

action comedy Son of Sardaar 2 alongside Ajay Devgn. Besides Mrunal Thakur and Ajay Devgn, the standalone sequel to the 2012 film of the same name featured a versatile line-up of actors, including Ravi Kishan, Sanjay Mishra, Neeru Bajwa, Deepak Dobriyal, Chunky Panday and Mukul Dev, among others.

The actress is working in David Dhawan's upcoming film Hai Jawani Toh Ishq Hona Hai. Alongside



Mrunal, the film will feature Varun Dhawan and Pooja Hegde in lead roles. The film is set to hit the theatres in 2026. Up next, she will be seen in Dacoit. In this genre-bending action thriller, Mrunal will appear alongside Adivi Sesh. The film is slated to release during Christmas of 2025. The film is being produced in both Telugu and Hindi in order to reach a wider range of audiences.

Soha Ali Khan Reveals How Much Of The Rs 1200 Cr Pataudi Palace She Owns: 'Generator Room...'



Saif Ali Khan reclaimed ownership of his ancestral home, the Pataudi Palace, some years ago. The property was leased out to a hotel chain by his father, the late Mansoor Ali Khan Pataudi. Now, Saif is again the custodian of the Rs 1200 crore home. But do you know how much of that property belongs to his younger sister, Soha Ali Khan? The actress only owns a 2 BHK apartment that used to be the generator room. During a recent chat with Zoom, Soha Ali Khan revealed, "I have what was the generator room. But luckily, for a short period of time, there was a hotel that was managing the Pataudi palace. My parents moved into the generator room, converted it into what, I think, is actually a very nice property, and now that's mine."

When asked if she ever questioned why Saif was given more, she said, "The things that were relevant to my life were not crowns or thrones. It was just the things that I wanted to do, and never was I told that you want to do this." She added, "Never was there an expectation that the son would drink milk first and daughters would serve them food before eating themselves. I was never told not to play outside because you will become dark or that girls should behave like this, wear clothes like this. None of that."

"Even though my father was from an aristocratic Muslim background, he was a forward thinker and very progressive. I think all of that helped me to just have that confidence, to believe that anything I wanted to do, was possible. That I should just work hard at it. There were no systemic barriers. There was nothing preventing me from thinking," she said. "I was aware of the law of primogeniture; I am aware of Muslim law. I am aware now that there's a lot of things whereby you can circumvent that as well. You can leave a will and say that this is what I want to go to my children in equal," Soha Ali Khan mentioned.

Meanwhile, Saif Ali Khan is transforming a section of the property into an archive to highlight his ancestors' achievements. Saif Ali Khan is the sole owner of the Palace and doesn't share ownership with his sisters, Saba and Soha. This is because he was born a 'nawab' before the privy purses were abolished.

Alia Bhatt Stuns In A Yellow Monokini As She Enjoys Beach Vacay With BFF Akansha



Alia Bhatt and Akansha Ranjan were also joined by their mothers as they posed for a selfie.

Alia Bhatt knows that working hard should be followed by getting ample downtime with one's family. Although the actress is busy juggling multiple projects, she recently made time for her loved ones and joined them on an Island getaway. Alia Bhatt recently went on a tropical vacation with her mother Soni Razdan, BFF Akansha Ranjan and her mother Anu Ranjan.

Akshansha Ranjan took to her Instagram to share some jaw-dropping pictures from the vacay. They also featured Alia Bhatt happily posing in a yellow swimsuit. The Jigra actress looked radiant as she finished her look with some chunky, gold jewellery and statement sunnies. Have a look here:

Akansha captioned the post, "oops we did it again." A fan comment read, "Wow, you look splendid." Another added, "Hey, beautiful." A comment read, "Wow, such beauty." Another said, "Aalu is looking gorgeous." A fan wrote, "Lovely." Another added, "She is sooo cute." Another mentioned, "They look too hot."

Alia Bhatt Upcoming Movies

Meanwhile, Alia Bhatt is busy shooting for Sanjay Leela Bhansali's ambitious film Love & War, co-starring her husband Ranbir Kapoor and Vicky Kaushal. The film will feature a love triangle set against a military background. Her lineup of films also includes YRF's Alpha, which has found itself embroiled in controversy after War 2's release. While the YRF spyverse film opened to good numbers, it failed to maintain its momentum at the box office and did not manage to impress the audience much.

Reports now suggest that Aditya Chopra himself has stepped in to save the film. As per a report by senior journalist Subhash K Jha, after the disaster of Ayan Mukerji-directed War 2, the inexperience of Alpha director Shiv Rawail has left YRF concerned. Shiv has previously directed The Railway Men, which was a mini-series. YRF executives are reportedly unsure if he can handle a grand project like Alpha. However, no official statement has been released on the matter.



Paneer Tandoori Recipe

How to make Paneer Tandoori

Step 1

Wash the paneer under running water and cut it into cubes. Then, mix the paneer cubes with ginger paste, garlic paste, curd, meat masala and kasoori methi. Marinate it for about 20 minutes. Put it into a tandoor or grill it on both the sides.

Step 2

Now, put 2 tbsp oil in a pan and heat it over moderate flame. Add the grilled paneer pieces into it. Saute it for some time, cover and cook. Once the whole thing gets reduced into gravy form, add some

more kasoori methi and mix it well.

Step 3

Season the dish with salt according to your taste. Your dish is ready to be served. Serve it hot with roti or parathas, or even rice.

Paneer Tandoori is a scrumptious and easy-to-make North Indian recipe as it uses readily available ingredients in the kitchen like paneer, curd, meat masala and ginger-garlic paste. If you are done with garam masala loaded paneer dishes like Paneer Butter Masala, Kadhai Paneer and Shahi Paneer, this paneer recipe is a welcome variation as it uses meat masala. It is a kids

favourite curry recipe and an ideal dish which can be served on anniversaries and kitty parties. One important tip that you should keep in mind while making this recipe is that you need to marinate the paneer pieces well so that the flavours are properly absorbed. Serve this easy paneer recipe with rice, naan or paratha. It also

pairs well with garlic naan, missi roti and biryani. A must try paneer recipe for parties and special occasions. You can also garnish this paneer recipe with onions rings for that extra crunch!

Ingredients of Paneer Tandoori
400 gm paneer
2 tablespoon refined oil

1 tablespoon salt
For Marination
1 tablespoon ginger paste
3 tablespoon meat masala
4 pinches kasoori methi powder
1 tablespoon garlic paste
1/2 cup yoghurt (curd)

As the New Year is on us, there seems to be an emphasis on back-to-the-basics and healthy gluten-free products. There'll be a resurgence of superfoods, the emergence of a 'Better for You' category of foods and even ingredients like seaweeds. Mixology will take on a whole new complexion.

Chef Shivan Khanna, Executive Sous Chef, The Taj Mahal Hotel, New Delhi, lists his trends for 2018:

* Increased demand for hyper-local ingredients – guests are keen to try dishes which are made from locally-sourced ingredients because they help achieve superior taste quality, they benefit society at large and are also a sustainable method of procurement.

* Increased focus on health and wellness – there is a growing demand for gluten-free products and people's desire to cut back on white carbs is changing the way recipes are now being crafted.

* Resurgence of superfood – This trend also finds its way back to the increased focus on health and wellness. People want to consume more and more foods such as carobs or millets which are potent and packed with nutritional benefits.

* Focus on plant-based protein – there has been a surge in vegetarianism over the past few years. As a result, there is now more interest in

* Emergence of 'Better for You' category of foods. In today's environmentally conscious world, guests are looking for products which are neither harmful to the environment nor to their individual selves. This category includes ingredients which are cage free, pesticide free, free-range dairy products and the like.

* Focus on plant-based protein – there has been a surge in vegetarianism over the past few years. As a result, there is now more interest in

food made with plant-based proteins. Chefs are embracing ingredients such as tofu, quinoa, and tempeh (made using soy).

* More advanced methods of mixology – cocktails will see their own set of trends in 2018. We are expecting there to be an increased use of fresh ingredients and homemade mixes, as well as use of different methods of cocktail preparation like smoking and grilling. There is also expected to be a shift from to more flavorful spirits that have greater character like bourbon and rum.

For Achal Aggarwal, Executive Chef, Hilton Chennai, the accent will be on green tea and pop-up restaurants

* Hotels may start serving green tea made with leaves. What we get is tea dust.

* Many dishes will have green tea as an ingredient owing to its health benefits.

* Star hotels may go for pop-up restaurants (restaurants that would change its cuisine every month – say Chinese one month, Indian the next and so on). Five star hotels have the infrastructure and manpower for this.

* Hotels will have more live counters as part of their

Focus on plant-based protein - there has been a surge in vegetarianism over the past few years. As a result, there is now more interest in food made with plant-based proteins. Chefs are embracing ingredients such as tofu, quinoa, and tempeh.

buffet. Two benefits — it gives the customers the satisfaction of having freshly cooked food and hotels in turn can cut waste.

*

Vegetarianism will gain further ground amongst people.

* Demand for exotic vegetables and dishes made with such vegetables would go up.

Chef Mangesh Hinge of Chevon had a rather different take.

* Seaweed: Seaweed is low in calories and is filled with nutrients, you can buy packaged seaweed and enjoy with your favorite dish.

* Goat meat, since it is much leaner than chicken and is lower in calories, saturated fat, sodium, and cholesterol. A 100-gram portion of goat meat has about 122 calories, which is considerably less than pork's 179 and chicken's 162.

* Floral flavours: Edible petals is the upcoming trend which is making its way to common people's kitchen from the high-end eateries. When infused in or cocktails, they have implausible health benefits, lowering high blood pressure, easing stomach aches, and potential to aid in weight loss.

Here's what'll tickle your Palette

