

Flooded Kartarpur Sahib Sparks Global Sikh Anguish: All India Sikh Conference Babbar Issues Urgent Appeal

The Sikh Times

Simmi Kaur Babbar

New Delhi, 27 August 2025 – The sacred shrine of Gurudwara Shri Kartarpur Sahib, the birthplace of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj, has been inundated with water following heavy flooding, sending shockwaves of grief and anxiety throughout the global Sikh community.

Reports of water entering the holy premises have left millions of Sikhs in India and across the world deeply disturbed.

The news has triggered widespread anguish, with devotees expressing fear for the safety of the shrine that holds immense spiritual significance. Responding to the crisis, Sardar Gurcharan Singh Babbar, President of the All India Sikh Conference (Babbar), has issued a powerful appeal to Sikhs worldwide—in America, Canada, Britain, Australia, New Zealand and beyond—to stand united in this hour of testing. He has urged



them to travel to Kartarpur Sahib and make a collective appeal to the

Government to immediately ensure the safety and preservation of the holy shrine.

This is not merely a building—it is the sacred birthplace of Baba Nanak Ji, the heart of Sikh faith. It is a question of Sikh honour, Sikh identity, and the sanctity of Guru Ghar. The Sikh Qaum cannot and will not abandon Kartarpur Sahib to neglect or damage, declared Sardar Babbar.

While underlining that Sikhs residing in India are unable to reach Kartarpur Sahib due to closed travel routes, Babbar emphasized the responsibility of the worldwide Sikh diaspora to take immediate action. We in India cannot go—but the global Sikh community must rise. The Sikh Qaum cannot remain a silent spectator



when Guru Nanak's pavitra sthan is in danger, he said. The All India Sikh Conference has also called upon Sikhs

living in Pakistan to gather in large numbers at the shrine and ensure direct protection of Guru Ghar. Their presence, Babbar stressed, would act as a shield to safeguard the sanctity of the holy site and pressurize authorities for urgent remedial measures.

The overflowing waters at Kartarpur Sahib are not just a physical threat but a spiritual wound. For the Sikh community, Kartarpur is the eternal reminder of Guru Nanak's teachings of truth, humility, and universal brotherhood. The thought of this holy site being endangered has shaken Sikh hearts across continents. The All India Sikh Conference (Babbar) has urged the Pakistan Government to act swiftly and decisively to provide robust flood protection, drainage systems, and preservation measures at the shrine, assuring Sikhs worldwide of the safety of their sacred birthplace.

Supreme Court Judge's 'Strong Dissent' Over Elevation Of Gujarat Judge

The Campaign for Judicial Accountability and Reform, which works towards a transparent judiciary, expressed 'dismay' over Monday's statement announcing Justice Pancholi's elevation

Agency New Delhi.

The elevation of Patna High Court Chief Justice Vipul Pancholi to the Supreme Court this week has raised eyebrows after reports emerged that the Collegium's decision was not unanimous.

Supreme Court judge Justice BV Nagarathna was the dissenting voice in a 4:1 decision in favour of Justice Pancholi. Justice Nagarathna - who will become India's first woman Chief Justice in September 2027 - reportedly said the appointment would run 'counterproductive' to the administration of justice in the country and 'erode the credibility of the Collegium system'. Sources said Justice Nagarathna also pointed out there are judges who outrank Justice Pancholi and are more

'deserving' of an opportunity to serve in the highest court in the country. A statement from the Campaign for Judicial Accountability and Reform, which works towards a transparent judiciary, expressed 'dismay' over Monday's statement announcing Justice Pancholi's elevation. CJAR noted the release lacked details of the decision making process.

This, the group said, was a 'surprising departure' from previous instances and a 'mockery of earlier resolutions with respect to standards of transparency in judicial appointments'. The CJAR also pointed Monday was not the first time Justice Nagarathna had

expressed reservations; she did so in May too, it said, noting she even took the unusual step of calling for the minutes of



meetings related to his transfer from the Gujarat to the Patna High Court in 2023. The CJAR statement also said elevating Justice Pancholi at this time would mean there are three judges from Gujarat serving at one time, and that this would be

unfair to other states. "It is not clear what swayed the Supreme Court Collegium in recommending Justice Pancholi to the Supreme Court... since Justice Pancholi is not merely the third judge from Gujarat to be elevated to the Supreme Court, which is disproportionate to the size of the Gujarat High Court, and leaves other High Courts unrepresented but he is also 57th in all-India seniority list..."

"The strong dissent note of Justice Nagarathna has not been published... despite her expressly asking for the same to be published on the Supreme Court's website," the CJAR statement said, pointing out that former Chief Justices of India had made all such details public.

The agenda of the Sangh Parivar. The UGC had recently published the draft curriculum for nine subjects, including Anthropology, Chemistry, Commerce, Economics, Geology, Home Science, Mathematics, Physical Education, and Political Science.

The Kerala State Higher Education Council (KSHEC) will review the draft and submit a report to the state government, which will form Kerala's official response. According to the draft, students would be encouraged to analyse concepts such as 'Ram Rajya' and study ancient texts including the Upanishads, Mahabharata, and Arthashastra as sources for sustainable development studies.

The proposal also recommends including biographies of RSS ideologue VD Savarkar and Deendayal Upadhyaya in the BA Political Science elective course.

This move follows earlier objections raised by Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan in

January, when he criticised the UGC's 2025 draft regulations as a violation of states' constitutional rights. Speaking to the media, Vijayan said the government had written to Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and reached out to non-BJP Chief Ministers to collectively oppose the draft.

Tracing the history of education governance,



Vijayan recalled that education was originally under the State List but moved to the Concurrent List during the Emergency period. He said the draft rules reflect "political arrogance" by sidelining state governments despite them bearing about 75 per cent of education expenditure.

IGL should promptly start road repair work: Ravinder Indraj

The Sikh Times
Sourabh Sharma

New Delhi: 27 August 2025

Delhi Government's Minister for Social Welfare, Ravinder Indraj Singh, convened a meeting with concerned departments regarding the ongoing gas pipeline works in Bawana and the pending road repair works causing inconvenience to the public. In the meeting, he directed officials of Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL) to immediately start road repair work in all areas where pipeline laying has already been completed. In particular, proper filling of potholes and repair of roads in unauthorized colonies must be ensured. In other areas, road repair work should be completed through MCD.

Officials from IGL, MCD, Irrigation & Flood Control Department, and DSIDC were present in the meeting.

The Cabinet Minister stated that in areas where pipeline work is still in progress, IGL must establish coordination with related departments such as MCD, Delhi Jal Board, Irrigation & Flood Control Department, and DSIDC to carry out the works in a synchronized manner, so that the public does not suffer repeatedly due to frequent road digging. He further emphasized that proper coordination among departments while undertaking projects like pipeline laying, drain construction, road construction, and sewer line laying will help resolve these issues effectively.

The Cabinet Minister issued clear instructions that in areas including Indraj Colony, Qutubgarh Village, Nangal Thakran, Dariyapur, Chandpur, Jat Khor, Bajitpur Thakran, Auchandi, Punjab Khor, Harewali, as well as other parts of Bawana, the ongoing pipeline works must be completed within a fixed timeline, and road repair works should be carried out simultaneously.



Manish Sisodia Praises Saurabh Bharadwaj's "Bravery" After 18-Hour Long Raid

New Delhi. (Agency)

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Manish Sisodia on Wednesday hailed the "courage and bravery" of party leader Saurabh Bharadwaj for being "steadfast" even after "18-hour-long" Enforcement Directorate (ED) raids at his residence. In a social media post on X, Mr Sisodia posted a video of both leaders meeting each other following ED raids.

The video was captioned, "My brother Saurabh Bharadwaj, steadfast even after 18 hours of E.D. raid and conspiracies... his courage and bravery are an example for us. We are one family, and as long as we stand together, no lies or conspiracies can

bend us." The Enforcement Directorate (ED) concluded its search at the residence of Delhi AAP president Saurabh Bharadwaj on Wednesday morning, a day after launching raids in connection with a money laundering probe into alleged irregularities in hospital construction projects in the national capital.

The raids began on Tuesday early morning at 13 locations, including Mr Bharadwaj's residence, across the Delhi-NCR region, based on a certain tip-off in connection with the case. The search operations were carried out under Section 17 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA). Earlier, Delhi Leader of



Opposition and AAP leader Atishi alleged that the Enforcement Directorate's 20-hour search at the residence of Delhi AAP president Saurabh Bharadwaj was aimed at diverting attention. She added that the BJP is "scared" of AAP. Speaking to ANI, Atishi said, "ED carried out a search at the residence of Saurabh

Bharadwaj for 20 hours. Why was a raid carried out at the residence of Saurabh Bharadwaj?... These raids were carried out just to divert attention... The strength of AAP is that it never bows down, and that's why the BJP is scared of AAP." AAP MLA Sanjeev Jha accused the agency of harassing Bharadwaj's family in what he described as "political revenge." Speaking to ANI, Sanjeev Jha said, "...It has been 17 hours and the ED team is carrying out the search... What is the ED investigating?... They want to scare us... Family of (Delhi AAP president Saurabh Bharadwaj) is being harassed only out of political revenge..."

High-level committee constituted on the orders of CM Rekha Gupta

The Sikh Times
Simmi Kaur Babbar

New Delhi, 27 August 2025
In its continued zero-tolerance stance against corruption, the Rekha government in Delhi has taken another important step. Chief Minister Rekha Gupta has constituted a high-level committee under the chairmanship of the Additional Chief Secretary (PWD/I & FC), which will review arbitration awards of ₹1 crore and above passed in the Public Works Department and the Irrigation & Flood Control Department over the last 20 years. According to Mrs. Rekha Gupta, the committee will review all arbitration awards of ₹1 crore and above in both departments over the

decisions delivered against the government, assess the payment amounts, and evaluate the losses incurred. Chief Minister Mrs. Rekha Gupta informed that the Comptroller and Auditor General will serve as a member of this high-level committee, while the Additional Director General (PWD/I & FC) will act as the Member Secretary. She further stated that the internal finance support teams of the PWD and the Irrigation & Flood Control Department, namely the COA and DCA, along with two audit teams from the Directorate of Audit, will assist the committee. According to Mrs. Rekha Gupta, the committee will review all arbitration awards of ₹1 crore and above in both departments over the



past 20 years. It will compile year-wise and award-wise data on these cases, including the total number of arbitration matters and the proportion decided against the government. Along with payment details, the committee will assess the financial losses incurred

by the government in such decisions. Once the concerned departments provide the necessary data, the committee will commence its review. If required, the Directorate of Audit will assign additional audit teams based on the volume or complexity of cases, as recommended by the committee. The Chief Minister stated that the purpose of this review is to assess the extent of financial losses resulting from legal disputes and to bring transparency regarding the expenditure or loss of public funds over the last two decades. According to her, arbitration awards have repeatedly imposed economic losses on the government.

Continued news page 2

Front continued news

High-level committee constituted on the orders of CM Rekha Gupta

She further informed that she had recently directed the Anti-Corruption Branch to investigate an arbitration case stemming from irregularities and delays in the construction of the Barapullah Phase-III Corridor. Originally scheduled for completion in October 2017, the project suffered repeated delays and was eventually referred to arbitration. The award was passed in favour of the contractor, mandating a payment of 120 crore. When the payment was withheld, the company approached the High Court, which in May 2023 ordered the Public Works Department to pay ₹175 crore, inclusive of interest and GST. This payment was made during the tenure of Atishi, who was then serving as Public Works Minister in the previous AAP government. The Chief Minister added that many such instances were reported during the previous government's tenure, which compelled her administration to form the committee and initiate an inquiry. According to her, to prevent such financial irregularities in future development projects, the government has also decided to remove arbitration clauses from contract terms. Henceforth, any disputes between departments and contractors will be resolved exclusively through the courts.

News box

Manesar civic body councillors meet MCM chief, demand signboards, computer operators at offices

Gurgaon. (Agency)

Gurgaon. Manesar civic body councillors met MCM commissioner Ayush Sinha on Tuesday, pressing for civic projects in their wards. Their demands included installation of signboards at their offices and residences, and appointment of a computer operator for each office. In the meeting held at the corporation office, senior deputy mayor Praveen Yadav suggested that the corporation should fence off govt land in villages and put up signs to prevent encroachment. The councillors demanded the arrangements of mobile toilets and other facilities in Kasan village for the upcoming fair of Baba Bisah. Yadav also mentioned that many community and public toilets were constructed in the corporation area and should be maintained and opened for public use. Councillors said while cleanliness has improved, there is a need to strengthen it.

Abandoned by husband, Ghaziabad wrestler stages hunger strike at DM's office

Ghaziabad. (Agency)

What drives a national champion to trade the wrestling mat for a protest stage? For Rakhi, a wrestler and judo player, it was the fight for dignity and justice that led her to begin a hunger strike outside the district collectorate on Aug 22. Her protest — sparked by allegations of abandonment and harassment by her husband and parents-in-law — has now drawn the attention of the state women's commission. Rakhi got married to Bhuvnesh Kumar of Shastri Nagar last year. Despite her achievements — over a dozen medals at state and national levels in wrestling and judo — Rakhi says her life took a sudden turn soon after the wedding. According to her, the attitude of her in-laws changed abruptly. Her jewellery was allegedly confiscated, and she was eventually barred from entering the family home. Matters escalated when her husband filed for divorce.



and allegedly pressured her to accept a monetary settlement in exchange for separation. "This is not just my fight. It is for every daughter who is thrown out of her house after marriage and left to wander for justice. I have been sitting here since Aug 22. I will not end my fast until I get justice," Rakhi told reporters at the collectorate. Her stand has resonated with many. Not just her parents, several social activists have joined her at the protest site, lending support to her cause. The demonstration has also prompted swift intervention from the authorities.

On Tuesday, Himani Agarwal, a member of the state women's commission, visited Rakhi. "We will ensure she gets every possible help. Both sides will be made to sit together for talks. I have asked police to take immediate action," Agarwal said.

Rakhi, however, has made it clear that her hunger strike will intensify if her demands are not addressed soon, warning that she will give up water as well.

The day also saw Agarwal visiting Loni to meet the family of a 23-year-old deaf and mute woman who died by suicide days after she was gang-raped by three men when she lost her way home. The family was promised monetary compensation of Rs 8.3 lakh. "The govt stands with the family in this hour of grief. I have urged police to ensure a fair and prompt investigation," Agarwal said.

Dark clouds, showers keep Gurgaon cool, more rain likely in 2 days

Gurgaon. (Agency)

Dark clouds hovered over the city on Tuesday, bringing rain and cooler temperatures. The city recorded 15mm of rainfall till 5.30pm, with the minimum temperature settling at 26.4 degrees Celsius, a notch below normal. The maximum rose to 29.2°C, around 1.3 degrees higher than Monday. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) issued a nowcast warning in the afternoon for multiple parts of south Haryana, including Gurgaon, cautioning of thunderstorms, lightning, and heavy rain through the evening. The yellow watch for heavy rainfall remains in place until Thursday afternoon. By evening, several key stretches, including Sohna Road, Golf Course Extension, and Old Delhi-Gurgaon Road, were waterlogged. Traffic slowed to a crawl during peak hours. Commuters reported spending over an hour on routes that usually take 15-20 minutes.

"Despite repeated issues, the drains have not been cleaned. Crores of rupees are spent in the name of waterlogging management, but even light rain leaves Gurgaon flooded," said Arjun Goyal, an IT professional who was stuck near Rajiv Chowk during the evening rush. Residents in low-lying sectors like 37, 9, and areas near Basai Chowk experienced similar snarls. "The moment it rains, our lane turns into a lake. Drains are clogged, and no one checks until we complain," said Preeti Malhotra, a resident of Sector 37. Civic officials said pumps were installed in trouble-prone areas and urged residents to stay indoors during intense spells. "Our teams are on the ground. Drains are being cleared and we're monitoring water levels on all major roads," a GMRA official said.

With more rain in the forecast, commuters have been advised to avoid travel during peak showers and to steer clear of waterlogged stretches where breakdowns

and accidents are common. The IMD has also warned residents across parts of Haryana, from Palwal, Nuh, and Rewari to Rohtak, Faridabad, and



Sonipat, to take precautions against lightning and intense rainfall through Wednesday and Thursday.

"Intermittent rain with thunderstorms is expected to continue in parts of south Haryana, including Gurgaon, through late evening. Localised waterlogging and

traffic disruptions are likely in low-lying areas. Residents are advised to stay indoors during intense spells and exercise caution while commuting," said an IMD official from the Chandigarh centre.

Meanwhile, parts of Delhi witnessed light showers on Tuesday afternoon, accompanied by an overcast sky. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) predicted light to very light rain on Wednesday as well. On Tuesday, Safdarjung base station recorded 1.6mm of rainfall between 8.30 am and 5.30pm. During the same period, Palam recorded 8mm, Lodhi Road 1.1mm, Ridge 10.4mm, Aya Nagar 5.1mm, Najafgarh 12.5mm and Mayur Vihar 1mm. The maximum temperature reached 31.6 degrees Celsius while the minimum temperature was 23.9 degrees Celsius. Meanwhile, the air quality improved to the satisfactory category with AQI at 55, against 62 from the previous day.

4 new flyovers to decongest Gurgaon-Jaipur section of NH8 by '27

Gurgaon. (Agency)

Union minister Rao Inderjit Singh on Tuesday laid the foundation stone for infrastructure works worth Rs 282 crore on the Gurgaon-Jaipur stretch of National Highway 8. The minister said, "Better connectivity doesn't just reduce travel time, it boosts economic growth." The centrepiece of these projects is a Rs 267-crore package that will see the upgrade of a 58.8km stretch — including four flyovers — between Kherki Daula and Jaisinghpur Khera. Among other projects are footbridges, service roads and drainage work.

The flyovers are targeted for completion by 2027. According to NHAI officials, four six-lane flyovers will be constructed at key intersections: Pachgaon Chowk (1 km), Rathiwas (980 m), near Hero company in Dharuhera (900 m) and Sahlawas (900 m). The four new flyovers will fall on the 58.8-kilometre stretch. This corridor, which carries lakhs of vehicles daily, is notorious for bottlenecks, traffic snarls and monsoon flooding. An NHAI official said, "The four flyovers will eliminate black spots where accidents are frequent and the service roads will provide safer access to local villages." Each flyover will have three-lane service roads on either side to segregate local and through traffic.

Once complete, they are expected to significantly reduce congestion and improve safety for motorists and pedestrians alike.

Describing the projects as a "milestone" in strengthening traffic management along NH8, Singh said Gurgaon and Rewari were not only vital to Haryana but also formed the backbone of India's economy, serving as hubs of industrial and commercial activity. He was joined by minister of state for road transport and highways and corporate affairs Harsh Malhotra at the ceremony.

"The new flyovers, foot overbridges, service roads and drainage works will not only provide relief from jams and accidents but also pave the way for a modern, safe and seamless traffic

BTech student found dead in varsity hostel room in Gurgaon

Gurgaon. (Agency)

A third-year BTech student of BML Munjal University in the city was found dead in her hostel room on the campus in the early hours of Tuesday.

Police said prima facie it appears to be suicide, but the student's family has alleged foul play. An autopsy was carried out and the report is pending. Bhumika Gupta, who belongs to Rajasthan's Alwar, had retired early to her room after attending a birthday party being celebrated in the hostel on Monday night. Her roommate returned around 1.30am, and repeatedly knocked on the door, which was locked from inside, police said. After Bhumika didn't open the door for a while, the roommate alerted the hostel's warden, who called security guards and a carpenter. The carpenter broke open the door, and the 19-year-old's body was found. There was no note,

cops said. The warden said she called Bhumika's mother and the college management alerted police. A team from the Bilaspur police station questioned the warden and Bhumika's roommate, while forensics



experts collected evidence. Bhumika's mother Beena Gupta, who works with the Rajasthan govt's women and child development department, told TOI she

spoke to her daughter last on Sunday. "There was no reason for her to commit suicide. She was a good student and was living a happy life. Something is amiss," she said. An uncle, Brijesh Gupta, alleged the university initially told the family that

Bhumika was unwell and her condition was serious. "By the time we reached Gurgaon from Alwar, they told us that our daughter had taken the extreme step. College authorities delayed informing the family and cops. Moreover, when cops entered her (hostel) room, her feet were on the ground. Police need to do a detailed investigation. We suspect that she was murdered," the uncle said. Another relative alleged that Bhumika's seniors were "teasing" her. Based on the family's demand, a three-member board of doctors, including a woman and two men,

No flat handover yet, Haryana Rera asks realtor to pay buyers for delay

Gurgaon. (Agency)

The Haryana Real Estate Regulatory Authority (HRERA) has directed Agrante Realty to pay delayed possession charges to homebuyers of its affordable housing project Kavyam in Sector 108.

In four similar complaints filed by allottees, HRERA's order passed on July 11, 2025, held that the developer failed to deliver possession by the due date of Feb 20, 2024, despite collecting nearly the entire sale consideration. The authority examined the cases collectively since they involved identical facts and the same project.

Homebuyers alleged that they booked the flats under the state's Affordable Housing Policy 2013 and were promised possession of the flats within four years from the grant of environmental clearance. However, construction was delayed, and no occupation certificate has been obtained to date. The complainants sought delay possession charges, completion of basic amenities, and protection from arbitrary extra demands. Agrante Realty, in its defence, cited Covid-19, repeated

pollution-related bans in NCR, and cost escalation, such as labour shortages, rising input costs, as force majeure. It claimed these factors were beyond its control and sought exemption from liability. However, the Authority rejected the realtor's plea and said these were short-term



disruptions.

Citing the Affordable Housing Policy and provisions of the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016, HRERA observed that temporary curbs and pandemic disruptions could not justify prolonged delays. "The promoter cannot be granted leniency on bald reasons and cannot take benefit of his own wrong," the order stated. HRERA ordered the builder to pay monthly interest at 11.1% per annum — the prevailing SBI marginal cost of lending rate plus 2% — on amounts deposited by buyers from the due date till handing over of possession, besides completing pending amenities works such as water, electricity, roads, parks, and club facilities, and not levying any charges beyond the builder-buyer agreement.

The decision, officials said, would apply mutatis mutandis to all similar complaints against the project. Buyers have also been advised to approach the adjudicating officer under the Act if they wish to seek additional compensation

128 families asked to vacate Janta flats after roof collapse

Noida (Agency)

Noida: Nearly 130 families living in Janta and EWS flats in Sector 31 have been advised to vacate their homes after a roof collapse exposed how decades of seepage, neglect and unauthorised modifications have left the buildings structurally unsafe. On Sunday evening, the roof of a second-floor flat gave way following rain, made worse by years of seepage, lack of upkeep and the weight of three overhead water tanks.

Kuldeep and Savita Dixit, tenants of the two-bedroom unit, were at home with their three children — aged one-and-a-half, 8, and 19 — when the ceiling of their bedroom came crashing down. "It was like the entire roof fell in a single blow. Our furniture and appliances were destroyed. We had been requesting repairs for months because of water seepage, but no one took responsibility," Savita said. Following the collapse, the family shifted temporarily to a hotel. Their neighbour, Pooja Mishra, whose flat lies directly below, also vacated her unit, fearing further damage. On Monday, an inspection team led by senior Authority officials, including general manager (civil) SP Singh and general manager (planning) Meena Bhargava, found that years of unchecked seepage

had weakened the concrete reinforcement of the roof. The additional load of the tanks only hastened the failure. The team's wider survey revealed that 128 Janta and EWS flats in the block were plagued by similar issues — seepage, cracks, and structural alterations — making them highly vulnerable. Following the survey, Authority CEO Lokesh M issued an advisory, stating, "For the immediate safety of residents, they have been asked to vacate. Redevelopment of these flats will be taken up under the new (redevelopment) policy, and tenders will be floated once the board approves the proposal." The new redevelopment policy, approved by the Authority on June 14, covers buildings older than 30 years or those declared unsafe by certified engineering institutes, such as IITs and NITs. It promises homeowners larger flats with at least a 15% increase in carpet area, temporary rent support during construction, and modern amenities. Developers, in turn, are to be incentivised with higher floor area ratio (FAR) allowances, making projects financially viable. While the policy could come as a relief for Noida's 115-odd private projects and Authority-built complexes, many dating back to the 1980s and 1990s,

weaknesses. Residents say repeated monsoons have worsened seepage, but the lack of systematic upkeep since the 1980s has made the flats ticking hazards. When TOI took a walk through the neighbourhood, it found many blocks had developed large cracks on outer walls, while balconies had exposed steel bars, corroded by years of rainwater seepage. In several buildings, residents had extended rooms or built makeshift balconies without structural reinforcement, further compromising the already weak buildings. With no Resident Welfare Association (RWA) to organise collective maintenance,



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Dwarka road cave-in sparks public anger over fragile infra

The Sikh Times

New Delhi: For Dwarka residents, road cave-ins during the monsoon have become all too common. With broken stretches, sinking lanes and frequent waterlogging witnessed every rainy season, Sunday's collapse of a road near the National Law University was met less with shock and more with weary disappointment. According to the police, the cave-in was triggered by heavy rainfall and subsequent waterlogging. Traffic movement in the area was disrupted until the authorities barricaded the affected stretch and deployed technical teams to assess the damage. While repairs were carried out by the evening, the incident once again drew attention to the state of Delhi's fragile road infrastructure, particularly in Dwarka. The problem is not limited to the Law University stretch. Right outside the Dwarka Sector 14 Metro station, Gate No. 1, commuters step out not just to find e-rickshaws and autos waiting, but also broken and uneven roads pockmarked with potholes. During peak hours, when hundreds of passengers exit the station, navigating the damaged stretch becomes a daily

hazard. "Roads have been in a bad condition for as long as I can remember. Every day, I'm scared that my rickshaw will tip over



because of the potholes," said Bahadur, an e-rickshaw driver who has been working in the area for the past two years. Locals point out that the same stretch has at least two

more pothole-ridden patches. Neeraj, a tea vendor who has set up his cart nearby, said, "Even after repairs, these roads get damaged within a short while. I've seen several accidents here, but no one pays attention. The authorities fill the pit with mud and stones. Within weeks, it's back to the same condition." This is not the first time Dwarka has witnessed such incidents. Earlier in February, a car fell into a pit after the slab covering a drain gave way in Dwarka Sector 12 near KM Chowk. The accident once highlighted again how fragile the road network in the sub-city has become, especially during the monsoon season. Residents say these back-to-back cave-ins are a glaring reminder of poor civic planning and a lack of accountability. They argue that temporary patchworks only worsen the problem instead of addressing the root causes such as poor drainage systems, substandard construction and lack of regular monitoring. Ranjeet Jha, an e-rickshaw driver who moved to Delhi 40 years ago and has been driving in Dwarka for the past seven years, accused successive governments of ignoring the sub-city. "Roads have not been properly built here for years. Whether BJP or AAP, no one has paid attention to Dwarka.

Only areas near Yashobhoomi witness improvement because VIPs visit there. The rest is neglected," he said. He said the condition in village pockets of Dwarka is worse. "In Sector 19, a cow fell into an open drain. If a large animal can fall into the drain, what about children or elderly people? Still, nothing has been done to cover the drain. The same is true for the roads. Governments only do politics, no one cares for residents," Jha said. Dwarka residents say they chose the sub-city for its relatively open spaces, planned layout and wide roads, but monsoon turns the area into a nightmare. "Dwarka is a beautiful place to live in, but the monsoon makes life miserable," said Shweta, a resident of Dwarka Sector 22. "Sewage lines are not desilted on time, leading to severe waterlogging. A 10-minute journey takes an hour because of traffic jams. Add broken roads to that, and travelling becomes dangerous." She recalled a recent incident when her car tilted dangerously after one of its wheels got stuck in a pothole. "It was definitely scary because the rickshaw next to me also got stuck the same way. That's how accidents happen," she said.

Delhi University's oldest men's hostel a home away from home

New Delhi: Gwyer Hall carries with it a rich history spanning nearly nine decades. Known as the oldest men's hostel of the University of Delhi, it has been home to generations of scholars, each leaving behind a piece of their story within its walls. The hostel traces its origin to 1937-38, when it first opened with just 26 residents under the name Law Hall. However, financial constraints led to its closure in 1939-40. The dream of a dedicated hostel for students was revived after the completion of the building in 1948, when it was renamed Gwyer Hall in honour of Sir Maurice Linford Gwyer, the then Vice-Chancellor of Delhi University. Sir Maurice served as the V-C from 1938 to 1950 and was also the Chief Justice of India between 1937 and 1943. Prof Gajender Singh, Provost of Gwyer Hall, said: "Gwyer Hall is the oldest hostel of Delhi University, offering a total of 158 seats for Cluster Innovation Centre (CIC) graduates, master's students, law students and PhD scholars. Students from other hostels in DU can also dine here by purchasing a coupon and enjoying meals in the hostel." The hostel accommodates 158 full-time students from the CIC graduate programmes as well as postgraduate, law and PhD scholars. The facilities have evolved with time, now including a spacious dining hall with a modern kitchen, a common room, TV room, computer room, reading room, gymnasium and washing machines – all aimed at providing a comfortable living space for students. For many residents, Gwyer Hall is more than just a hostel – it's a second home. "I've been staying in Gwyer Hall for the past year. The hostel is nice and offers all necessary facilities. The rooms are double-seated and furnished, and we get three meals a day with food being of good quality. All students have to apply every year as hostels are allotted for only one year at a time," said Rinkesh Chaudhary, a PhD student of History from Bihar. The affordability of DU hostels is another key draw for outstation students. "This year, the admission process has been centralised. Students from the NCR region generally do not get hostel accommodation. DU hostels are quite affordable and offer basic facilities at a reasonable cost, which is a big relief for outstation students. These hostels ensure a comfortable living environment without putting too much financial burden on students," said Kamlesh Yadav, a PhD student of Environmental Science.

NAME CHANGE
I, DHEERAJ GUPTA S/o RAJENDER PARSHAD R/o B-54, Gali No. 20, New Gupta Colony, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar, North West Delhi, Delhi-110009, have changed the name of my minor son MUDIT GUPTA alias MRIDUL GUPTA aged 17 years and he shall hereafter be known as MRIDUL GUPTA.

NAME CHANGE
I, hitherto known as Veenu Chaudhary alias Km Beni Chaudhary W/o Ganga Prasad R/o 2603, DLF Phase IV, Gurgaon Haryana-122009, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as VEENU CHAUDHARY.

NAME CHANGE
I, SURESH KUMAR S/o NARSINGH PAL SINGH, R/o A-425, G.D. Colony, Mayur Vihar Phase 3, Dist. East Delhi, Delhi-110066, declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as SURESH KUMAR MEENA in my minor daughter namely PRACHI MEENA aged 15 years in her School Records. The actual name of mine is SURESH KUMAR, which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE
I, TH LUVWANGA SINGH S/o TH BIRMOHON SINGHA PERMANENT ADDRESS: HOUSE NO 291, SINGER BOND PT V. CACHAR, ASSAM-788126, And Residing at RZF-769/13, GALI NO-11, RAJ NAGAR PART-2, PALAM COLONY, NEW DELHI, 110077, have changed the name of my minor son TH SURAJ SINGHA aged 08 years and he shall hereafter be known as AYANSH SINGHA.

NAME CHANGE
I, Shankar Singh Bisht, S/o Pan Singh Bisht, Plot No 71/72 And 76, Pratap Enclave, Mohan Nagar, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi 110059. Have Changed My Name Shankar Bisht To Shankar Singh Bisht for All Future Purposes

NAME CHANGE
I, GULAB RATHOR Father of JC-382422N Rank-SUB Name-PRAKASH RATHORE Presently residing at VILL-MEMADI, PO-SIMROL, TEH-MHOW, DIST-INDORE, MADHA PRADESH-452020, have changed my name from GULAB RATHOR to GULAB RATHORE for all future purposes and in my son's service records my date of birth wrongly mentioned as 01/07/1950 instead of my correct date of birth as 01/01/1953 vide Affidavit dated 27/08/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, RAJESH KUMAR GUPTA, S/o RAN DEV GUPTA R/o A-201, Bapu Dham Sanjay Camp, T-Huts Chandrap. Gupta Marg, Chanakya Puri, PO:Chanakya Puri, Dist: New Delhi, Delhi-110021, have changed the name of my minor son SUNIL KUMAR aged 17 years in his School Record. The actual name of my wife is RUPMALA KUMARI, which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE
I, RAJESH KUMAR GUPTA, S/o RAN DEV GUPTA R/o A-201, Bapu Dham Sanjay Camp, T-Huts Chandrap. Gupta Marg, Chanakya Puri, PO:Chanakya Puri, Dist: New Delhi, Delhi-110021, have changed the name of my minor son SUNIL KUMAR aged 17 years in his School Record. The actual name of my wife is RUPMALA KUMARI, which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE
I, Shankar Singh Bisht, S/o Pan Singh Bisht, Plot No 71/72 And 76, Pratap Enclave, Mohan Nagar, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi 110059. Have Changed My Name Shankar Bisht To Shankar Singh Bisht for All Future Purposes

NAME CHANGE
I, GULAB RATHOR Father of JC-382422N Rank-SUB Name-PRAKASH RATHORE Presently residing at VILL-MEMADI, PO-SIMROL, TEH-MHOW, DIST-INDORE, MADHA PRADESH-452020, have changed my name from GULAB RATHOR to GULAB RATHORE for all future purposes and in my son's service records my date of birth wrongly mentioned as 01/07/1950 instead of my correct date of birth as 01/01/1953 vide Affidavit dated 27/08/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.

ISRO to launch Gaganyaan's first uncrewed mission G1 with robot Vyommitra in December

New Delhi: The first uncrewed mission of the Gaganyaan human spaceflight mission, G1, will be launched with the half-humanoid robot Vyommitra in December, said V Narayanan, Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), on Thursday. Vyommitra, a female robot, is equipped with the capability to monitor module parameters, issue alerts, and execute life support operations.

Narayanan informed that over 7,700 ground tests related to the Gaganyaan mission have been completed, and over 2,300 more tests are targeted before March 2026. Motors for crew escape systems, which are integral for astronaut safety, have also been developed and tested. An Orbital Module Preparation facility, a Gaganyaan Control Centre, a Gaganyaan Control facility, an environmental control and life support system, a crew training facility, second launch pad modifications, and a parachute-based deceleration system have been established.

Narayanan informed that the upcoming missions include an integrated air drop test, which involves dropping the crew capsule from an altitude of approximately 3.5 to 4 km using a helicopter. "Trial sorties are underway. In the fourth quarter of this year, the first uncrewed mission of Gaganyaan-G1 will be launched," the ISRO chairman said. The Department of Space has constituted a high-level review committee to closely monitor the progress of activities leading to the launch of India's human spaceflight program, Gaganyaan. "Flight integration activi-

ties for various propulsion stages of the LVM3 launch vehicle have been completed, and the launch campaign has commenced. Currently, crew module and service module mechanical and electrical integration activities are underway. Further, integration of the Orbital Module and thermovac tests, dynamic and acoustic tests, and launch complex activities such as propellant filling and integrated checks are to be completed," ISRO officials said. Narayanan also informed that there will be five launches by ISRO this year and four in 2026. These include Oceansat-3A, which will play a key role in marine

NAME CHANGE
I, Rajni Goyal H/o Vinay Aggarwal R/o H.O B-5/364, b Block Yamuna Vihar Delhi-110053. I have changed my name to Rajni Aggarwal Permanently

NAME CHANGE

I, CHETNA Wife of JC-382422N Rank-SUB Name-PRAKASH RATHORE Presently residing at VILL-MEMADI PO-SIMROL, TEH-MHOW, DIST-INDORE, MADHA PRADESH-452020, have changed my name from CHETNA to CHETNA RATHORE for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 27/08/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, Amit Kumar S/o Mukesh Kumar, R/o Plot No-19, Third Floor, Sector 17, Brahmputra, Delhi, North East Delhi -110053. Declare that the name of my mother has been wrongly written as Gullistan in my 10th class Educational Documents which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as Ram Kumar S/o DARBAR LAL, RC 112, D BLOCK, KHORA COLONY, PRATAP VIHAR, PO:Khora Gaon, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh -201308 have changed the name of my minor daughter Neel Kabin aged 13 years and she shall hereafter be known as NEEL KABIR.

NAME CHANGE

I, ILYAS KHAN S/o AHSAN KHAN R/O E-19-106, Aleem Kabab Corner, Hauz Khas, Daryaganj, New Delhi, Delhi - 110017, have changed the name of my minor son ILYAS KHAN to ILYAS KHAN and my father name from AHSAN KHAN to AHSAN KHAN.

NAME CHANGE

I, Rambabu Pal S/o Lalman, Kanjua, PO: Beoli, DIST: Badaun,Uttar Pradesh-202526, have changed the name of my minor son Rambabu Pal aged 17 years and he shall hereafter be known as SURAJPAL.

NAME CHANGE

I, BASIRAT ULL NISHA W/o MUSH-TAQ AHMED, R/o House No-A, 682-345, Street No-4, Insha Al Masjid, Chauhan Banger, Seelampur, North East Delhi, Delhi-110053, declare that name of mine and my minor daughter has been wrongly written as BASIRAT ULL NISHA & ZAINAB AHMED in his school records. The actual name of mine and my daughter are BASIRAT ULL NISHA & ZAINAB, which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE

I, SUSHILA RATHOR Mother of JC-382422N Rank-SUB Name-PRAKASH RATHORE Presently residing at VILL-MEMADI, PO-SIMROL, TEH-MHOW, DIST-INDORE, MADHA PRADESH-452020, have changed my name from SUSHILA RATHOR to SUSHILA RATHORE for all future purposes and in my son's service records my date of birth wrongly mentioned as 01/07/1955 instead of my correct date of birth as 01/01/1958 vide Affidavit dated 27/08/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, RAJESH KUMAR GUPTA, S/o RAN DEV GUPTA R/o A-201, Bapu Dham Sanjay Camp, T-Huts Chandrap. Gupta Marg, Chanakya Puri, PO:Chanakya Puri, Dist: New Delhi, Delhi-110021, have changed the name of my minor son SUNIL KUMAR aged 17 years in his School Record. The actual name of my wife is RUPMALA KUMARI, which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE

I, RAJESH KUMAR GUPTA, S/o RAN DEV GUPTA R/o A-201, Bapu Dham Sanjay Camp, T-Huts Chandrap. Gupta Marg, Chanakya Puri, PO:Chanakya Puri, Dist: New Delhi, Delhi-110021, have changed the name of my minor son SUNIL KUMAR aged 17 years in his School Record. The actual name of my wife is RUPMALA KUMARI, which may be amended accordingly.

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NAME CHANGE

NEWS BOX

Mass evacuations in eastern Pakistan as India releases water from swollen rivers

LAHORE. (Agency)

Pakistan has evacuated tens of thousands of people to safer areas after neighboring India released water from overfilling dams and swollen rivers into low-lying border regions, officials said Tuesday.

The move came a day after New Delhi alerted Islamabad about possible cross-border flooding, marking the first public diplomatic contact between the two nuclear-armed rivals in months.

Pakistan's National Disaster Management Authority said it had issued an advance alert to its Punjabi counterparts about a surge in the Sutlej River and the risk of flooding, and that evacuations from various districts in the eastern Punjab province were underway. In a statement, it said rescuers evacuated more than 14,000 people from Kasur, a district in Punjab province, while over 89,000 were moved to safer ground from the city of Bahawalnagar, near the Indian border. The NDMA said authorities have urged residents to stay away from rivers, streams and low-lying areas, avoid unnecessary travel, and follow alerts issued through the media, mobile phones and the NDMA's disaster alert app. The latest flood alert and evacuation drive by Pakistan comes as heavy monsoon rains continue to batter both South Asian countries. In Pakistan's northwest, many residents complained this month that they had received no warning before flash floods struck Buner district, killing more than 300 people. Officials have said the devastation was caused by a sudden cloudburst, which could not have been predicted, and that many of the victims were living along natural water pathways. Nationwide, floods triggered by seasonal rains have killed more than 800 people in Pakistan since June 26. In Kashmir, which is split between the two sides and claimed by both in its entirety, at least 65 have also died and hundreds have been displaced in the Indian-administered Jammu area.

Parents Of Missing 7-Month-Old California Boy Charged With Murder

world. (Agency)

The parents of a missing 7-month-old boy in Southern California have been charged with murder.

The Riverside County District Attorney's office charged Jake Haro, 32, and his wife, Rebecca Haro, 41, in the death of their son Emmanuel, according to court papers filed Tuesday. They are also charged with filing a false police report, which is a misdemeanor. The boy hasn't been found, and authorities said they believe he is dead.

The Haros were scheduled to appear in court on Tuesday, but their arraignment was delayed until Sept. 4. Each is being held on \$1 million bail, online court records show. A message was left for Brian Cosgrove, who was listed as the defense attorney in the case records. Riverside County prosecutors said they would not release additional information until a press conference on Wednesday. Last week, the couple urged the public to help find their son. They were arrested Friday, a little more than a week after Rebecca Haro told authorities she was changing her son's diaper outside a store in the San Bernardino County community of Yucaipa when she was assaulted and left unconscious. She told deputies that when she awoke, her son was gone. Authorities said in a statement that they later confronted Rebecca Haro about inconsistencies in her account and that she refused to cooperate. The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department declined to discuss what these inconsistencies were. Authorities searched the family's home in the Riverside County community of Cabazon. Over the weekend, they also searched for the boy's body near a freeway while his father, wearing a jail jumpsuit, was present.

What To Know About Massive Dust Storms Called Haboobs In US Southwest

world. (Agency)

Massive walls of dust and debris called haboobs that roll through the U.S. Southwest can be awe-inspiring and terrifying, especially for motorists caught in their path. Thunderstorms spawn the phenomenon and can create a wall of dust thousands of feet tall and several miles wide, reaching speeds of 60 mph (97 kpm) or more. Thunderstorms can produce strong downdrafts that hit the ground at 50-80 mph (80-129 kph) and then spread in all directions, said Sean Benedict, a meteorologist at the National Weather Service's Phoenix office.

The winds stir up loose dust and dirt, including from arid areas and farm fields, that get blown along in front of the approaching storm cell. If thunderstorms don't keep developing, the dust dissipates. But rain-cooled air in front of a storm can keep pushing warm air upward, generating new storms and more downdrafts, Benedict said. When that happens, the haboob can keep growing, and some travel as far as 100 miles, Benedict said. "It's all dependent on whether they're moving through an area that's prone to (generating) dust," said Benedict, noting that there's a prominent dust corridor between Phoenix and Tucson. Haboobs also can form in arid areas of Nevada, New Mexico and Texas. Scientists say localized bursts of rain in the U.S. Southwest during the monsoon season in summer have become more intense since the 1970s as the atmosphere heats up due to human-caused climate change. At the same time, it's raining less often as droughts last longer and some arid areas expand. Climate change increases the odds of both severe drought and heavier storms that could set the stage for more intense dust storms in the future.

Trump cites threat of tariffs 'so high' to India, Pakistan to broker peace as 50% US levies take effect

world. (Agency)

US President Donald Trump on Wednesday once again claimed he helped avert a potential nuclear clash between India and Pakistan in May. Addressing a cabinet meeting at the White House, Trump said he had spoken with a "very terrific" Prime Minister Narendra Modi and warned New Delhi and Islamabad that continued hostilities would trigger tariffs "so high" and jeopardise trade deals. Trump's latest comments come as his administration's 50% tariffs on Indian imports — an initial 25% duty and an additional 25% "penalty" over New Delhi's energy ties with Russia — take effect today. India has termed the move as "unjustified and unreasonable".

"I'm talking to a very terrific man, Modi of India. I said, what's going on with you and Pakistan? Then I spoke to Pakistan about trade. I said, what's going on with you and India? This has been going on for a hell of a long time, sometimes under different names for hundreds of years," the US President said during the cabinet meeting.

"But I said, what's going on?... I said, no, no, I don't want to make a trade deal with you.

You're going to have a nuclear war. You guys are going to end up in a nuclear war. And that was very important to them. I said, call me back tomorrow, but we're not going to do any deals with you, or we're going to put tariffs on you that are so high. I don't give a damn. Your head's going to spin. You're not going to end up in a war," he added. "Within about five hours, it was done. It was done. Now maybe it starts again, I don't know. I don't think so. But I'll stop it if it does. We can't let these things happen," Trump said. Trump also repeated his claim that seven fighter jets or more were shot down during the hostilities, saying, "I saw they were fighting, then I saw seven jets were shot down. I said, 'That's not good.' That's a lot of jets. You know, USD 150 million planes were shot down. A lot of them. Seven, maybe more than that. They didn't even report the real number." The US President had earlier put the number at five and said he used trade pressure to halt the escalation.

"I have stopped all of these wars. A big one would have been India and Pakistan..." he said during a bilateral meeting with the

President of the Republic of Korea on Monday (US local time). He added, "The war with India and Pakistan was the next level that was going to be a nuclear war...



conflict after the Pahalgam terror attack that left 26 people dead and that he intervened at a crucial time to de-escalate.

"We have stopped wars between India and Pakistan. They were probably going to end up in a nuclear war. They shot down five planes in the last attack. It was back and forth, back and forth. I called them and I said no more trade if you do this. They are both powerful nuclear nations. Who knows where that would have ended up, and I stopped it..." Trump said.

His remarks came a day after the White House credited his intervention with helping secure a "ceasefire" between India and Pakistan following Operation Sindoor, which targeted terror camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied Jammu and Kashmir on May 7. India has consistently denied any third-party involvement in the de-escalation asserting that it was Pakistan's Director General of Military Operations who reached out to his Indian counterpart on May 10, leading to a ceasefire agreed upon directly between the two sides.

Heavy rain causes flooding, landslides and eight deaths in Vietnam, Thailand

The rain was part of the aftermath of Tropical Storm Kajiki, which made landfall Monday afternoon in central Vietnam, where thousands of people were evacuated from high-risk areas.

COLOMBO. (Agency)

HANOI: Heavy rain caused flooding and landslides on Wednesday in parts of Southeast Asia, where at least eight deaths were reported in the aftermath of a tropical storm. Flooding occurred in several northern and central

provinces of Vietnam, seven people died, one was missing and 34 were injured, state media reported. Nearly 20 centimeters (8 inches) of rain fell overnight in parts of northeast Vietnam



and flood warnings remained for some riverside areas. In Thailand, one person died and another was missing from a landslide Wednesday in part of the northern city of Chiang Mai. Thailand's Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation said many

homes were affected and a few people were injured from flash flooding and landslides in northern provinces.

Thailand's Meteorological Department warned of heavy rain in northern and northeastern regions Wednesday. Residents in foothills and low-lying areas near waterways were warned about possible flash floods and landslides. The rain was part of the aftermath of Tropical Storm Kajiki, which made landfall Monday afternoon in central Vietnam, where thousands of people were evacuated from high-risk areas. Kajiki earlier brought winds and rain to China's southern Hainan Island.

Scientists published a 2024 study warning 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.

Trump's push to oust US Fed's Lisa Cook unites anti-DEI effort, bid to control independent institutions

WASHINGTON. (Agency)

US President Donald Trump's vow to fire Lisa Cook, an economist who is the first Black woman to serve on the Federal Reserve's board of governors, kicked off another tense debate and likely legal battle over a major institution's independence. It also marks another potential high-profile ouster of a Black leader from the federal government amid Trump's broader crusade against diversity and inclusion policies. Trump's order to fire Cook aligns with the White House's effort to expand its power across once ostensibly independent parts of the federal government and broader American economy and society, which critics warn may do long-term damage to trust in the data, policies and processes that undergird American strength. The move would also remove a longtime researcher and advocate for diverse and equitable policymaking from leadership. On Monday, Trump said he fired Cook

after the director of a housing regulatory agency, who the president appointed, alleged Cook committed mortgage fraud. Cook dismisses the firing as legally unfounded. "President Trump purported to fire me 'for cause' when no cause exists under the law, and he has no authority to do so," Cook said in a statement to The Associated Press. "I will not resign. I will continue to carry out my duties to help the American economy as I have been doing since 2022." Kush Desai, a White House spokesman, said Cook "was credibly accused of lying in financial documents from a highly sensitive position overseeing financial institutions" and that her removal "improves the Federal Reserve Board's accountability and credibility for both the markets and American people." Backlash from Black leaders Trump's move drew immediate backlash from Black lawmakers. "Dr. Lisa Cook is the first Black woman ever to serve on the Federal Reserve Board of Governors.

Donald Trump is trying to remove her without a shred of credible evidence that she has done anything wrong," House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, D-N.Y., said in a statement.

The National Urban League, a civil rights group, called Trump's move a "witch hunt" and condemned the president's comments about her as "character assassination." And the Congressional Black Caucus defended Cook as "a highly respected economist who has dedicated her career to dismantling barriers to innovation and economic participation." The caucus denounced Trump's rhetoric and effort to fire Cook as "a racist, misogynistic, and unlawful attack on the integrity and independence of the Federal Reserve. It is a dangerous attempt to politicize and exert control over the central bank — one that will only continue to damage the economy, harm hardworking Americans, and undermine our credibility on the world stage."

'Manhattan Project moment': Trump admin invests in US rare earths in push to break China's grip

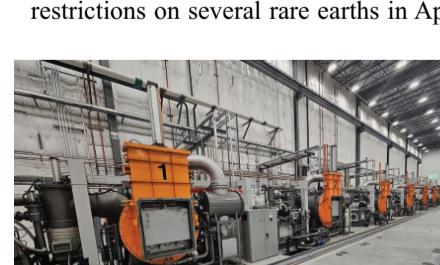
KHARTOUM. (Agency)

OMAHA: US production of crucial components in electric vehicles, smartphones and fighter jets is set to expand rapidly in the coming years, as the Trump administration intensifies efforts to build up the critical mineral industry in the United States to work to break the chokehold that China has on the global supply chain. The federal government is pumping hundreds of millions of dollars into American companies, has made an agreement with one firm to set a minimum price for some US-produced critical minerals, and has launched an investigation into foreign-made supplies. "This is the Manhattan Project moment for rare earths," said Joshua Ballard, CEO of USA Rare Earth, which plans next year to start making the rare-earth magnets that appear in many products. The White House has made it a priority to revive the domestic critical minerals industry, which is proving urgent after Beijing leveraged its near-monopoly on the

products to force the US to the negotiating table during a trade war. US President Donald Trump said this week that China "intelligently went and they sort of took a monopoly of the world's magnets," but he expressed confidence in securing supplies because the US has "much bigger and better cards." "We're going to have a lot of magnets in a pretty short period of time. In fact, we'll have so many, we won't know what to do with them," he said as he hosted South Korean President Lee Jae Myung. Critical minerals have been tied to national security. Industry insiders, analysts and lawmakers have warned for years that America's dependence on China for critical minerals — a list of 50 minerals that includes 17 sought-after rare-earth elements — is a national vulnerability. The hard-to-pronounce elements are needed in smartphones, wind turbines and robots as well as missiles, submarines and fighter jets. "Our national and economic security are now acutely threatened by our reliance upon hostile foreign powers' mineral

production," an executive order from Trump declared in March.

It was not until Beijing rolled out export restrictions on several rare earths in April



— leading to a temporary halt of Ford's electric vehicle production — that "the problem that for over a decade seemed far away hit close to home," said Gracelin Baskaran, director of the Critical Minerals Security Program at the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies. Trump said Monday that he could charge 200% tariffs on Chinese goods if

Beijing does not export magnets to the US but noted "that's perhaps behind us." Instead, he said he could withhold airplane parts to ground China's American-made Boeing jets. When asked about the leverage, Guo Jiakun, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesman, said Tuesday that Beijing "follows the principle of mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and mutually beneficial cooperation" in dealing with the US. "We hope the US will work with us to jointly promote the steady, sound and sustainable development of bilateral ties," Guo said. Critical minerals industry welcomes support. The Pentagon is investing \$400 million in rare-earth producer MP Materials. It gave the US company a \$150 million loan this month, has promised to ensure every magnet made at its massive new plant is bought and set a minimum price for its neodymium and praseodymium products for a decade. "It looks like we're going to finally do something to address that issue and make these projects a reality."

SOUTH PADRE ISLAND. (Agency)

SpaceX's Starship megarocket roared into the skies Tuesday on its 10th test flight, following a string of explosive failures that cast doubt about its ability to realize Elon Musk's vision of colonizing Mars.

Standing 403 feet (123 meters) tall, the most powerful launch vehicle ever built lifted off from the company's Starbase in southern Texas at 6:30pm local time (2330 GMT), triggering loud cheers from engineering teams, a webcast showed. Starship is key to Musk's ambitions of making humanity a multiplanetary species, while NASA is awaiting a modified version to act as a lander for its plans to return astronauts to the Moon.

A launch attempt on Sunday was scrubbed due to a fuel leak on the launchpad, and on Monday weather intervened as thick clouds forced another delay.

Much is riding on the mission, after the last three flights ended with the upper stage exploding: twice over the Caribbean and once after reaching space. In June, an upper stage blew up during a ground test. "We've had



so many tests and it hasn't proven itself reliable," Dallas Kasaboski, a space analyst for consulting firm Analysys Mason, told AFP. "The successes have not exceeded the failures." The goal is to send the upper stage ship -- eventually intended to carry crew and cargo -- halfway across the globe before splashing down off northwestern Australia.

Outfitted with prototype heat-shield materials, it will deploy dummy Starlink satellites while flying a trajectory meant to stress-test its rear flaps.

The booster, known as Super Heavy, splashed down safely in the Gulf of Mexico. While SpaceX previously wowed observers by catching the booster in the launch tower's "chopstick arms," this flight instead focused on collecting data on how it performed when an engine unexpectedly cuts out. Despite recent setbacks, Starship is not seen as being at a crisis point. SpaceX's "fail fast, learn fast" philosophy has already given it a commanding lead in launches with its Falcon rockets, while Dragon capsules ferry astronauts to the ISS and Starlink has become a geopolitical asset. Still, Starship presents new challenges.

No extension to vacate 18 floors without OC in Tardeo high rise: Bombay high court

Mumbai.(Agency)

Bombay high court on Tuesday refused to extend the time for occupants to vacate the top 18 floors of a 34-storey building in Tardeo's Tulsiwadi, which do not have an occupation certificate (OC).

'Reading the Supreme Court order and the subsequent (HC) order passed on Aug 6, if we are to extend the time again, it will send out a wrong message, completely wrong message,' said Justices Burgess Colabawalla and Firdosh Pooniwalla.

A petition was filed by Sunil Jhaveri, resident of Willingdon Heights, alleging gross illegalities with no fire NOC and only part OC for floors 1-16. The BMC flagged illegalities in construction of floors 17-34. On July 15, HC directed occupants of floors 17-34 to vacate within two weeks. On Aug 1, the Supreme Court upheld this order. On Aug 6, HC granted further three weeks time to vacate by Aug 27 and sought an undertaking from them.

Since the regular division bench that had passed the order to vacate was unavailable on Tuesday, the matter was mentioned before the alternate bench by senior advocate Girish Godbole, for the housing society. He said a request was made to the registrar (judicial) to constitute the same bench. 'Ultimately we are seeking relaxation in the undertaking we have given,' he added. Godbole said the BMC undertook three inspections in Aug and found all 17 objections were complied with. A regularisation proposal is filed and would take time to process. The fire department on Aug 25 conducted an inspection and on Monday gave a letter of compliance. The judges said until an OC is issued by the BMC 'you can't occupy the premises.' 'Even if the fire department has cleared the building on all counts. At the end of the day, BMC still has to issue the OC,' said Justice Colabawalla.

The judges pointed out that the HC on Aug 6 'very unwillingly' granted more time. Godbole said the original order was essentially because there was no fire NOC. 'I'm not saying it is justified to occupy a building without OC. Nor am I arguing there are thousands of buildings in Mumbai (without OC),' he added. Justice Colabawalla said, 'You will be allowed to get into your premises. It's not that your premises are being demolished.' The judges were not inclined to extend the time and posted the matter before the regular bench on Sept 2.

Opposing the prayer for extension of time, the BMC's advocate Chaitanya Chavan said an eviction notice will be issued. 'If they don't comply, they will face the consequences,' said Justice Colabawalla.

Schools, experts brainstorm safety protocols after tragedy

Ahmedabad.(Agency)

In the aftermath of the shocking murder of a Class 10 student at Seventh Day Adventist Higher Secondary School in Maninagar, the Ahmedabad district education officer (DEO) convened a special brainstorming session with principals and school administrators to discuss measures that could help prevent such incidents in the future.

The meeting, attended by heads of leading city schools, began with psychologists and education experts analysing the factors behind the incident and suggesting preventive steps. Experts, including Prashant Bhimani, Navodita Ganguly, and Nischal Bhatt, stressed that student safety and emotional well-being required shared responsibility between schools and parents.



Bhimani recommended that every school should designate a 'peer guardian' or 'swajan mitra' for each class. This student would act as a trusted friend to whom classmates could share difficulties, ensuring issues are identified and resolved at an early stage. Ganguly emphasised the need for structured parenting education. 'We

require degrees for teachers, clerks, and other professionals. Similarly, there should be a parenting course,' she argued. She suggested that parents seeking nursery admission for their child must first undergo a mandatory 10-hour parenting programme, as responsibility for a child lies equally with both parents and schools.

Bhatt added that parent-teacher meetings should focus less on pointing out children's mistakes and more on training parents on how to support and guide their wards effectively.

During the discussion, DEO Rohit Chaudhary and several trustees and principals shared their insights. Administrator Bhaskar Patel recalled how his school implemented strict safety protocols following the 1992 riots, in line with education department guidelines. Others, including

Raja Pathak, Archit Bhatt, Kamal Mangal, Alkesh Patel, Mubin Kazi, and Rakesh Pandya, supported additional measures such as stricter monitoring during school dispersal. They suggested that teachers and staff be stationed at designated points until every child has safely boarded their respective school transport vehicles.

Having achieved a remarkable feat of 100% digital literacy in the state, the Literacy Mission aims to extend digital literacy to the migrant workers too through this scheme.

environmental one. In this hour of pain, people expect their Chief Minister to stand with them. It is deeply unfortunate that while Punjab is under red alert, our CM is in Chennai...' he said in a statement issued on Tuesday.

Demanding immediate action, the Jalandhar MLA also demanded immediate supply of clean drinking water, medical aid, fodder for livestock and shelters for displaced families. 'This tragedy must be met with relief today and a credible long-term flood management plan tomorrow.'

'Girdawari (damage survey) must be completed within seven days, with compensation of Rs 60,000 per acre for destroyed crops, Rs 10 lakh to families who lost loved ones and Rs 5 lakh plus full treatment for the injured,' he said, adding that the government should also provide rehabilitation for those who lost homes and shops. The Congress MLA also said Punjab deserves urgency,

compassion and accountability, not silence and absence.

Congress MLA Sukhpal Singh Khaira also

wrote on X, 'The quote 'Nero played the flute while Rome burnt' aptly fits on



Bhagwant Mann who's busy touring... while Punjab is suffering from fury of statewide floods! We @INCIndia demand immediate flood relief measures including compensation for crop losses, livestock and

property damage.'

SAD president Sukhbir Singh Badal also hit out at the CM for being out of state when 'Punjab is drowning in floods'. He posted on X: 'Homes are ruined, crops destroyed, loss of lives and... He is vacationing in Chennai with his family! This is utterly disgusting and shameful. Punjab ruddh reha hai, Mukh Mantri mauja lutt reha hai...' The SAD chief also appealed to the party cadre to provide manpower, diesel, plastic pipes, tractors, food packets and fodder in flood-affected areas. 'I have visited Fazilka, Abohar and Sultanpur Lodhi in the past few days and am visiting Tarn Taran today. There are reports of flooding in Hoshiarpur also for which I have deputed SAD team to help the distressed', he said. The party MP and former union minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal said: 'It is a matter of grave sorrow that Bhagwant Mann is... leaving Punjab submerged in floods, and the people of Punjab are regretting making him the CM today!'

Living on a prayer: Bandhs breached, Tarn Taran residents carry soil bit by bit to save selves from Beas

Many videos of villagers exposing breaches in the under-repair bundhs have gone viral.

Amritsar . (Agency)

Residents of Sabhra village in the Patti Assembly constituency of Tarn Taran district have been working tirelessly for the past two weeks to strengthen the Beas river embankments (bundhs) after the water level rose to 2.5 lakh cusecs, and the inflow is expected to reach 3 lakh cusecs. However, the strong water current of the swollen river breached bundhs at several locations, washing away the efforts of the past two weeks. Many videos of villagers exposing breaches in the under-repair bundhs have gone viral. However, in Sabhra village, locals are working on a war footing to contain the situation.

Bagha Pehlwan, a local, said, 'The situation is under control. We have put up barriers, filling gabion crates. Around 400-500 people are engaged at two stretches near villages.'

Deputy Commissioner Rahul Sindhu said the administration is providing support for embankment work, including fuel, bags and soil, while kar sewa volunteers led by local

saints are engaged in plugging weak points. We are providing fuel for the vehicles, we are providing bags, and we are also getting the material for making embankments. But stones cannot be arranged in the rainy season,' the DC said. Sindhu, however, said, 'So far, floodwater has not entered houses or any settlement in the district, though damage was reported in Firozepur and Kapurthala.' Sindhu said, 'Relief centres have been identified, and within three hours, we can have relief centres ready. Besides, the Army can be called in if evacuation is required.'

However, Harmel Singh, who is associated with Baba Sukha Singh of Sarhaliwale and the Baba Avtar Singh Bidhi Chand sect, said, 'We have only received baskets and some diesel from the administration. None of the officials is working with us. It's just the community work and we are living on a

prayer.'

Villagers alleged that after the embankment breached in 2023, they repeatedly requested the government for repair, but no work was done. Cabinet minister Lalit Singh Bhullar represents the Patti constituency.



'Had the government worked on the embankments, we would not have been required to work today,' said Pehlwan, who has also been making videos to motivate

more volunteers to come to the site and support manually. 'This will continue until the water recedes,' he added. Muthianwala villagers, however, lost the fight against floodwater. Videos of the moment when the bundh gave up went viral on social media.

'For 28 days, we carried soil bit by bit with our hands and tractors,' villager Harjinder Singh said, adding: 'The administration only provided 250 litres of fuel through the sarpanch after the bund overflowed.'

Villagers alleged that even a breach in 1988 remains unrepairs. 'They gobbled crores of rupees for the repair. If they had given Rs 5-10 lakh to strengthen the bundh, it could have been saved,' Harjinder Singh alleged. Villagers claimed that standing paddy crops at the ripening stage on around 45 acres were submerged. 'Now, they'll give compensation and bring fuel. What will we do with that fuel when damage has been done?' a farmer said.

Ellisbridge hostel students assaulted over noise dispute

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

A 19-year-old man living in a hostel in the Ellisbridge area filed a complaint of assault on Tuesday against four unknown men and a woman who attacked hostel inmates allegedly over creating noise. According to an FIR filed with Ellisbridge police, the incident took place at DKP Hostel near VS Hospital after two groups of intruders allegedly attacked hostel students and damaged property midnight on Monday.

A fifth-semester MSc IT student at JG University, lodged a complaint describing the events. According to the complainant, around 12.45am on Tuesday, he was walking to the hostel washroom when he noticed two unknown youths sitting on the boundary wall. The youths confronted him, shouting and using abusive language. When he ignored them and proceeded toward his room, they began verbally abusing him further.

The complainant saw the two attackers assaulting his friend, with one wielding a wooden stick. 'The complainant intervened to help, sustaining minor injuries to his left hand and waist during the struggle. Other hostel residents came to assist, prompting the initial attackers to move toward the main hostel gate,' said a police official.

Soon, two more men and a woman appeared near a smaller hostel gate, shouting threats and abusive words, the complaint mentions. The intruders reportedly damaged the room door and broke the glass window. Ellisbridge police registered a case under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita sections covering assault, criminal intimidation, unlawful entry, and property damage. Statements of the complainant and other witnesses are being recorded, and cops began reviewing CCTV footage from the hostel premises to identify the individuals involved.

Digital, legal and health literacy: Migrants' Changathi gets update

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM.(Agency)

Exploiters, beware: the migrant workers at your disposal will soon be equipped with the knowledge to question ill practices against them and even amplify them through social media. With the Kerala State Literacy Mission revamping its 'Hamari Malayalam' textbook provided to interstate migrants as part of the 'Changathi' project, many of them will now attain digital, legal, and health literacy.

Officials are trying to launch the new textbook in the upcoming phase of the programme, which is expected to start after September. Four phases of 'Changathi' have nearly been completed across all districts, with only a few remaining to write the exams. The three-month teaching programme, held on days convenient to migrants, has been a great success since its inception in 2017, with 8,527 people having passed the examination so far.

While the current textbooks have proved helpful for migrants, a holistic upgrading of the curriculum has become a necessity, which will be done with the support of MG University's Centre for Migration Policy and Inclusive Governance.

To cover five subjects

Having achieved a remarkable feat of 100% digital literacy in the state, the Literacy Mission aims to extend digital literacy to the migrant workers too through this scheme.

Officials have stated that the updated textbook will cover five subjects under this topic: smartphone usage, internet access, e-mail and government services, online money payment, and social media. 'We are planning to provide every service that we provide through the Digi-Keralam scheme,' said Kerala State Literacy Mission director A G Oleena. She said requests have also come from various sides to provide content in a digital format. 'This too will indirectly promote digital literacy,' she said.

Educating about rights

Given the rampant workplace exploitation migrant labourers face, educating them about their rights and labour laws is important, said Resmi G, assistant director of the mission. 'Though we have been giving legal awareness sessions occasionally in focused areas, a systematic introduction of legal content in the syllabus will be more helpful for them,' she said. The curriculum will also feature the facilities provided by the Kerala government for the migrants' welfare.

More than teaching labour laws, migrants will be equipped with basic knowledge on the legal measures needed in case of accidents, filing police complaints, etc. 'Many of them have a fear or inhibition to approach the police due to what they have seen in their native places,' said a senior official with the Centre for Migration Policy and Inclusive Governance.

property damage.'

SAD president Sukhbir Singh Badal also hit out at the CM for being out of state when 'Punjab is drowning in floods'. He posted on X: 'Homes are ruined, crops destroyed, loss of lives and... He is vacationing in Chennai with his family! This is utterly disgusting and shameful. Punjab ruddh reha hai, Mukh Mantri mauja lutt reha hai...' The SAD chief also appealed to the party cadre to provide manpower, diesel, plastic pipes, tractors, food packets and fodder in flood-affected areas. 'I have visited Fazilka, Abohar and Sultanpur Lodhi in the past few days and am visiting Tarn Taran today. There are reports of flooding in Hoshiarpur also for which I have deputed SAD team to help the distressed', he said. The party MP and former union minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal said: 'It is a matter of grave sorrow that Bhagwant Mann is... leaving Punjab submerged in floods, and the people of Punjab are regretting making him the CM today!'

Leaving Punjab reeling under floods, CM goes to Tamil Nadu, Opp slams Mann

Chandigarh.(Agency)

The Opposition on Tuesday criticised Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann for attending an event in Chennai at a time when several parts of Punjab are reeling under floods and in need of urgent relief and rescue measures. The CM is in Tamil Nadu as the chief guest at the launch of the expansion of the state's Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme for government-aided primary schools in urban areas.

Lashing out at Mann, several senior Congress and Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) leaders issued strong statements on social media. The Leader of Opposition in Punjab Assembly, Partap Singh Bajwa, posted on X: 'Farmers and poor families across Punjab are crying for help as their homes, fields and livelihoods drown in unprecedented floods and... CM Bhagwant Mann has flown to Tamil Nadu for yet another PR event... This shameless abandonment... is nothing short of betrayal.' State Congress president Amarinder Singh Raja Warring said Mann should have cancelled all engagements and focused on

environmental one. In this hour of pain, people expect their Chief Minister to stand with them. It is deeply unfortunate that while Punjab is under red alert, our CM is in Chennai...' he said in a statement issued on Tuesday.

Demanding immediate action, the Jalandhar MLA also demanded immediate supply of clean drinking water, medical aid, fodder for livestock and shelters for displaced families. 'This tragedy must be met with relief today and a credible long-term flood management plan tomorrow.'

'Girdawari (damage survey) must be completed within seven days, with compensation of Rs 60,000 per acre for destroyed crops, Rs 10 lakh to families who lost loved ones and Rs 5 lakh plus full treatment for the injured,' he said, adding that the government should also provide rehabilitation for those who lost homes and shops. The Congress MLA also said Punjab deserves urgency,

compassion and accountability, not silence and absence.

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Bhagwant Mann who's busy touring... while Punjab is suffering from fury of statewide floods! We @INCIndia demand immediate flood relief measures including compensation for crop losses, livestock and

The OMG pool: Paddling gamers out of gambling

The online money gaming industry in India is in a tizzy. In the week gone by, the Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill 2025 was swiftly introduced and passed in both Houses of parliament. It has been a tumultuous week for every gaming company that has been the talk of the town for the past several years. This high-visibility industry has grown leaps and bounds. While the 2025 numbers are awaited, the size of the industry in 2024 has been estimated to be ₹31,938 crore (\$3.7 billion). The number for 2029 was estimated at ₹78,500 crore (\$9.1 billion). The industry today speaks of an ecosystem of 2 lakh employees, a large number of companies, deep investments in online tech, a thriving ecosystem of influencers and a robustly-active advertising plan that ropes in both influencers and big stars from the realm of cricket and cinema to rope in new customers. Dream11, just one of the 1900-plus companies around, hit it big while sponsoring the Indian cricket team jersey that can attract as many as 78 crore eyeballs—more than half the country's population—at one go. Anyone who makes it to a cricket jersey in India is a big moneymaker brand with big ambitions. On the sly and superstitious side of the fence, any brand that has made it to the cricket jersey in recent times has had it hard. Sahara, Oppo, Byju's and now Dream11 are all brands that soared high and, coincidentally, landed with a sudden thud. The Indian cricket jersey jinx is something to consider for sure.

Even as you consider the jinx, the gaming industry has most certainly seen it coming, but has possibly used every tool to postpone the inevitable for a while. This is an industry that grabbed the attention and involvement of more than 45 crore Indians who put their money into games that excited their interest and avarice. The annual loss of the gamer is estimated to be ₹20,000-26,000 crore. The loss of the gamer is the gain of the gaming company. The industry believed in grabbing the largest number of eyeballs of potential customers. Cricket in general and the Indian Premier League in particular were great devices to garner eyeballs. The industry poured big money into cricket sponsorship and decided to spend money upfront to gain customers—ending up with 45 crore gamers. The big losers in this ban on online money gaming (OMG) are the big companies that paid lopsided interest towards plucking the low-hanging fruit and did precious little for e-sports and casual games of skill. It was easier to get in those who wanted to play OMGs in a nation where gambling is illegal. Wagering is a passion for a lot of people who want to see the better life without putting in the hard work needed to get there. But let's be fair—it's not laziness alone. There is the fact that you might want to put in that hard work, but the opportunities to absorb it don't exist at all. Wagering is both a fun thing to do (look at the Diwali 'teen-patti' parties that are just about beginning) and a compulsive thing to do (look at gaming addiction) at times. OMGs first drew the attention of the lowest wage-earning classes of society, who put in their meagre savings with the quest to make it rich. Your Ola cabdriver, your help at home, and the corner kirana-store guy probably wanted a piece of OMG action early and quick. Small winnings spurred a deeper involvement. In the beginning the money was yours. And then in came money that you made by selling things you did not want in the home. And then came the moneylender. The moneylender looking for opportunities got into the act. This informal lending sector has gotten a boost as well, thanks to OMG. And when the debts started rising, the pressure on the losing gamer started building. Loans were taken to settle other ones. In the case of as many as 32 reported loss of lives due to suicide related to OMG (in the last 31 months), it was end-game. OMGs did not go after these lives. It was the moneylender and the rissuing debt profiles that were building up in the most susceptible parts of the economic food chain.

A Guwahati High Court Judge's admonishment of a corporate lawyer about a private company being allotted 3,000 bighas in the thickly forested and resource-rich Dima Hasao district has drawn wide media attention. The allotment was made by the local district council for the firm, owned by JK Lakshmi Cement of the New Delhi-based JK Group, to operate a mine and cement plant. Public interest in the issue has soared, especially after official videos of the court proceedings surfaced on social media, where the lawyer appeared clueless about the topography of the area. Is it a joke, the judge snapped, asserting that public interest was paramount.

Dima Hasao and two other districts in Assam are governed under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, which gives locally elected politicians control over resources such as land, forests and water. The state government does not have much power over these subjects, which can be compared to the district panchayati system but is meant to protect tribal rights as the communities in these areas are poor and vulnerable. The allotment was made after the Dima Hasao Autonomous Council passed resolutions making the land transfer in October and November last year. Two villages were informed that the acquisition would be done and they would receive compensation. But news accounts of the process say that the council received the bulk of the Rs 50-crore compensation and most villagers were given cheques for Rs 2 lakh while the village heads got Rs 15 lakh. Reactions and opposition erupted, especially after bulldozers (now a familiar sight in Assam aimed at evicting people from forest lands) arrived. A writ petition challenging the allotment was filed in the high court and this is the case where the judge made his remarks. While the Sixth Schedule empowers tribal groups with specific powers, what needs to be asked is if the council applied its mind rigorously to the issue before deciding. In the neighbouring state of Meghalaya, coal mining is one of the most sensitive political, economic and environmental issues. Allegations of extensive corruption and misgovernance have been swirling around for decades and the disappearance of lakhs of tonnes of the mineral under the nose of officials earlier this year despite a court order provoked anger.

But when nearly 4,000 tonnes of coal vanished last month and the state Excise Minister claimed it could have been washed away by heavy rains, derision replaced anger. The minister, Kyrmen Shylla, said, "Meghalaya receives the highest rainfall. You never know... because of rain, the coal might have swept away. Chances are very high." But then he appeared to back out, perhaps, because even he realised how absurd this sounded. "I cannot blame the rain. It could be or it could not be. I really don't have any kind of details," he said. But the issue is anything but funny. The National Green Tribunal banned coal mining in the state in 2014, following a series of mining disasters in what is known as rat-hole mines, where miners have to

Northeast's battles: Land, coal & corruption

From Dima Hasao to Jaintia Hills, who owns the region's wealth?



crawl into poorly ventilated mines to dig out coal. Yet illegal mining has persisted and, in the process, undermined the state's economy as it is untaxed; big names are said to be involved, but are only whispered about and never surface in the public domain. According to the inquiry committee appointed by the high court to investigate illegal mining and transportation of coal, more than 1,500 coal depots were to be inspected by state officials. Only a handful have been checked and Justice BP Katakey is exasperated by the slow pace of the work of the state government. "I find the progress in East Jaintia Hills (district) very slow and unsatisfactory, while the quantity in other districts is very small," he remarked. Meghalaya depends on Central government funds to run its administrative machinery and projects and raises limited financial resources of its own. However, some funding comes from what are euphemistically called EAPs or externally aided projects which are financed by such lending institutions as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the German development organisation, GIZ.

The extent of the coal mining — and transportation — problem was revealed in a road accident on the busy Shillong-Guwahati highway. A large truck lost control and overturned, blocking traffic and spilling its load. It was carrying a full consignment of coal. The truck was moved from the accident site but the coal lay on the highway. "It'll vanish by the morning," said a Shillong resident after hearing of the incident.

The challenge of accountability is seen most vividly in a report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General (CAG), which was tabled in the Meghalaya Assembly in July. In a stinging indictment of the Jaintia Hills Autonomous District Council (which has been in existence since 1964), the report underlined that "There was a total misappropriation of Rs 7.08 crore, comprising Rs 5.49 crore from 2001 to 2004 and an additional Rs 1.59 crore misappropriated between March and May 2014. Despite recovering Rs 1.69 crore, significant amounts remain outstanding, with Rs 5.39 crore yet to be recovered. Despite partial recovery of the embezzled funds, these were not disclosed in the Annual Accounts for proper monitoring of recovery of the balance amount."

The report was for 2017-2018 and pulls no punches — but the question is: how does the Meghalaya Government plan to follow up on it, apart from tabling the report in the Assembly? Will it seek to fix responsibility or simply repeat the past refrain of better financial discipline and improved training of staff? Granted, these amounts look like small change, given the scale of defalcation and financial misdemeanours which are reported on a regular basis from the major metros and larger states. Meghalaya is a small state. Last year, the Niti Aayog said it was the third poorest state in India after Bihar and Jharkhand, graded on the basis of multi-dimensional poverty. We need to remember that funds that disappear, as in the JHAC, could have made a crucial difference for people — between remaining in poverty and rising out of it.

Fertiliser demand, poor supply stir farm crisis

The urea stock with the Centre at the beginning of this month was about half of what it was last August

A crisis is simmering in Telangana, and the farmers are at the receiving end. Serpentine queues at the Primary Agricultural Cooperative Society centres for hours on end, at places even from early morning, have become the norm—something not witnessed in years. The reason is an acute shortage of urea. The Centre has allotted 9.8 lakh metric tonnes (LMT) to Telangana for this Kharif, but the state has received 5.42 LMT so far. The situation is largely the same in other states. Reasons are many. There are global supply chain disruptions and lower-than-expected imports due to factors such as China halting its exports. Still, India has agreements with the Saudis, UAE, Nigeria, and other countries to import urea. It's not that we are entirely dependent on imports; we are the world's third-largest producer of fertilisers. However, as the second-largest user in the world, the country is not yet self-reliant. It is clear that something has gone wrong, and the sooner the Centre and states acknowledge it, the better. Domestic production isn't on expected lines. The Ramagundam Fertilisers and Chemicals Ltd went out of action for some time. The urea



stock with the Centre at the beginning of this month was about half of what it was last August.

Furthermore, the increased cultivable area in Telangana is taking its toll. Farmers in the State use about 170 kg per acre. When we consider that the sown area increased to

118.69 lakh acres from 91 lakh acres last year, the picture becomes clearer. Additionally, paddy cultivation has grown significantly, resulting in increased demand for fertilisers. A closer examination raises pertinent questions. Granted, we have import constraints. What have the Centre and states done to keep pace with the demand? There are programmes to promote natural farming and fertilisers other than the widely used ones. However, much more needs to be done to raise awareness among farmers. Importantly, domestic production must be freed from the 'inspector raj' as industry bodies demand. Currently, the Centre must expedite imports, ramp up domestic production, and improve distribution. Both the ruling and opposition in the state have turned the crisis into a boxing match, with the result that panic is spreading. The onus is on both to see reality for what it is, rather than confusing the farmers.

Sovereign credit rating upgrade: A milestone and a mandate

India's first sovereign credit rating upgrade in 18 years is a verdict on its economic resilience. With this, the cost of capital for companies planning infrastructure investments should come down. But the upgrade also puts a sharper focus on India's policy stewardship

On August 14, after an 18-year gap, India's sovereign credit rating was upgraded for the first time by S&P Global Ratings. The long-term sovereign credit rating was upgraded from BBB- to BBB, nudging the country a notch higher within the investment-grade bracket. The short-term ratings, and the transfer and convertibility assessment were also upgraded. On paper, this was a technical adjustment. In reality, it was a verdict on India's resilience, reforms and readiness for the next stage of growth. Credit ratings are the world's shorthand for risk. They shape how much a country pays to borrow abroad, influence how global funds allocate their portfolios and signal to investors whether a nation is on the path of stability or vulnerability. In the years since 2007, the Indian economy endured the global financial crisis, the 'taper tantrum' in 2013, two currency crises in 2013 and 2018, a once-in-a-century pandemic and commodity shocks triggered by war. That India's rating has finally moved up suggests that, despite all the turbulence, something about the fundamentals has changed for the better. S&P's assessment rests on a triad of strengths: growth, fiscal prudence and stability. Between 2021-22 and 2023-24, India clocked an average real GDP growth of

8.8 percent—the fastest in Asia. Even with moderation, S&P expects annual growth to average 6.8 percent over the next three years. In an era when China is slowing and advanced economies are flirting with stagnation, India offers a rare momentum.

The Centre's provisional fiscal deficit has narrowed to 4.8 percent of GDP in 2024-25, with a target of 4.4 percent for 2025-26. General government deficits—which measure the gap between overall government spending and revenue—are expected to fall from 7.3 percent to 6.6 percent by 2028-29. Debt, while high at about 81 percent of GDP, is finally on a downward slope. For rating agencies—always wary of fiscal slippage—this trajectory mattered.

Finally, the trajectory of our inflation also signalled a policy credibility, with consumer price inflation falling to 1.6 percent in July 2025, comfortably within the Reserve Bank's 2-6 percent band, after bouts of food and fuel shocks. The payoffs from the upgrade have been visible. Markets celebrated, yields on 10-year government bonds eased, foreign inflows into Indian debt rose, and S&P promptly upgraded 10 Indian banks and non-banking financiers. For companies planning infrastructure investments, the signal was clear: the cost of capital is likely to come down. For the government, the implications are equally significant: lower borrowing costs free up fiscal room for productive spending. There is also a softer, but equally important, dividend: confidence. An upgrade after 18 years reassures investors that India is not just a high-growth story but also a credible borrower. In a global economy riddled with uncertainty, this credibility is worth more than any single fiscal statistic. And yet, to treat the



upgrade as the final word would be a mistake. India's new rating of BBB still keeps it just two notches above 'junk' grade. The upgrade acknowledges progress, but also embeds a warning: backsliding could be punished. Three risks stand out. First, the risk of external headwinds. The looming threat of 50 percent US tariffs on selected Indian exports is not trivial. S&P calls it "manageable" because India's economy is consumption-driven; but trade tensions could still dent

disinvestment. Neither is guaranteed. To sustain momentum, India must deliver on four fronts. One, India has to aim at deepening its tax reforms, widening of the base. Direct tax reform—especially rationalising exemptions and improving compliance—are essential to lift revenues sustainably.

Second, India has to strengthen its fiscal transparency. Consistent, transparent fiscal reporting will matter more to rating agencies than ambitious targets. Third,

the new upgrade is a mandate in favour of the government's push for infrastructure investments. However, such investments have to fructify in a timely and cost-efficient manner. States, which account for nearly 40 percent of public spending, must be encouraged to build the institutional capacity to deliver projects on time and within budget. Finally, it is important to guard macrostability, including inflation control, currency management, and financial stability. An upgrade can quickly unravel if investors sense a populist drift in policy. Beyond economics, the upgrade is also about narrative. India has positioned itself as the world's fastest-growing large economy, a hub for digital innovation, and a champion of emerging-market

resilience. The rating upgrade reinforces this story. But it also places the country under sharper scrutiny. Every policy choice—from managing climate finance to regulating tech platforms—will now be judged also through the prism of international confidence. The upgrade is a milestone, but it is also a mandate. If India uses this moment to double down on fiscal reforms, expand its revenue base, and maintain macro stability, the next upgrade will take fewer than 18 years.

Vacate, allow redevelopment: HC to 11 members of 4 dilapidated Vasai buildings

Mumbai.(Agency)

Observing that an obstructive approach can be counterproductive to redevelopment, Bombay high court ordered minority members of four dilapidated buildings in Vasai West to vacate their flats for demolition. It granted 11 members 15 days time due to the Ganpati festival. "These members need to cooperate in the demolition of these buildings by vacating their respective premises," said Justices Girish Kulkarni and Manjusha Deshpande on Aug 21.

Petitions were filed by Pushpanjali CHSL and Deepanjali CHSL whose buildings at Diwan and Sons Housing Enclave on Ambadi Road were declared dangerous and classified as CI category on Feb 28 by the Vasai Virar Municipal Corporation (VVMC). As there was a dispute due to different structural audit reports, VVMC referred the issue to the technical advisory committee. On June 27 TAC confirmed the buildings are CI category. On July 1 VVMC issued notices to vacate.

The judges noted that the majority of 113 members, around 90%, had taken a decision for redevelopment and appointed a developer. 11 members had issues with redevelopment. The petitioner-societies alleged they were obstructing the demolition. The societies' advocate Abhijit Kulkarni said



minority members have no legal right to endanger the lives of other members and delay redevelopment.

The judges said such contention is supported in various HC decisions and Kulkarni is correct "that minority members cannot stall the redevelopment or adopt an obstructive approach..."

Advocate Kaustubh Patil, for the minority members, said they do not dispute that the condition of the buildings is dangerous but there are certain contentions regarding redevelopment they intend to assert. The judges said minority members can assert their rights and contentions only before the appropriate forum.

"However, such rights and contentions in no manner whatsoever can result in such an obstructive approach and become counterproductive to the redevelopment of the buildings, as decided by the majority members..." they added. VVMC's advocate Swati Sagvekar said in view of the approach of the non-cooperating members, it would require police protection.

When Patil urged time to vacate in view of the Ganesh festival, the judges agreed "however, not unconditionally". They sought an undertaking that the 11 members will unconditionally vacate and thereafter not oppose demolition, or VVMC would be free to get the buildings vacated with police protection and demolish them.

Four men storm Chandkheda school following student's rustication

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

A week after a Class 10 boy was stabbed to death at Seventh Day Adventist School in Maninagar, another incident of a student-related brawl has taken place, this time in Chandkheda, over the rustication of a Class 8 student following charges of indiscipline. According to Chandkheda police, Abha Bhatia, director of Asian Global School, filed a complaint on Tuesday that her school was facing repeated issues with a Class 8 student who allegedly bullied and harassed other students.

The FIR states that on Aug 20, the student slapped and grabbed a classmate by the neck. After repeated complaints and discussions with the parents, the school decided to cancel his admission.

Bhatia stated that the school's admin head informed the parents over the phone on Monday to collect his leaving certificate. On Tuesday, around 1.45pm, three unknown men led by a man named Tilakram Tiwari came to the school reception and claimed they were sent by the Class 8 student's father. When staff explained that only parents could discuss admission matters, the men insisted on meeting Bhatia.

In her FIR, Bhatia stated, "When I refused to meet them, they entered my office shouting. One of them, wearing a white shirt and identifying himself as Tilakram Tiwari, threatened to kill me. They pushed my staff members during the scuffle. We called the police, but the four left before the police team arrived."

Chandkheda police registered offences under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sahita for causing hurt, criminal intimidation, house-trespass after preparation for hurt, assault, wrongful restraint, and abetment.

Onam fete kicks off with colourful Athachamayam in Kerala

KOCHI. (Agency)

This year, the traditional Athachamayam procession, which heralds the start of Kerala's 10-day Onam festival, was made all the more vibrant by the shining sun. The bright weather, a change from previous years, set the stage for a grand celebration in Tripunithura, the erstwhile royal town.

The streets of Tripunithura were a riot of colour and sound, as thousands of visitors from far and near gathered on both sides to soak in the festive spirit. The procession was led by artists dressed in costumes of Mahabali and Vamana, with the rhythmic beat of a large traditional drum announcing its arrival. Over 50 groups, including students and artists from nearby schools and colleges, participated. They had come dressed in costumes ranging from Mahabali, Vamana, a tiger, a hunter to politicians and kings.

The parade featured a spectacular array of 59 art forms from across the state, including theyyam, kummatti, kolkali, kathakali, pulikali, and kalaripayattu. The inclusion of art forms like margamkali and kolkali, a folk art from the Malabar region, highlighted the message of religious and communal harmony.

The procession wasn't just about traditional art. Nineteen floats on various social themes such as drug abuse rolled through the streets, offering a visual treat for the spectators, including foreign tourists.

The parade also featured imitations of popular movie characters, including Empuran, Pushpa, Rajinikanth, and Kamal Haasan, as well as the beloved Kalabhavan Mani. People lined up on roadside, cheering and applauding as the procession passed by. "There was a big crowd this time with the weather being pleasant. However, the security system was fool-proof with barricades erected all along the stretches.

Schools shut, train services hit: Relief ops, evacuations on as swollen rivers inundate Punjab villages

Jalandhar. (Agency)

As incessant rains and swollen rivers submerged many villages and low-lying areas in Punjab, massive relief and rescue operations on Tuesday were conducted in several districts with teams of various central and state agencies and the Army evacuating residents to safer places. With the weather department predicting more rains in coming days, Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann announced closure of all schools in the state from August 27 to 30.

The flood-situation has turned grim in Punjab after the water levels in Sutlej, Beas and Ravi rivers and seasonal rivulets rose following heavy rains in their catchments in Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir, inundating large swathes of farmland and villages along these rivers.

The release of surplus water from the Pong, Bhakra and Ranjit Sagar dams have also

compounded the woes of villages in several districts of Punjab, as they fear massive crop damage.

The worst-affected villages are in Pathankot, Gurdaspur, Fazilka, Kapurthala, Tarn Taran, Ferozepur and Hoshiarpur districts. A central flood control room has been established at the Circuit House in Jalandhar to tackle any possible flood situation in Punjab and to ensure immediate relief in affected areas, said officials.

Two people lost their lives due to incessant rains and floods in the state and 44,899 hectares of area under crops in 16 districts out of total 23 has been affected. Two women have died in Barnala and Hoshiarpur due to roof collapse. The victims have been identified as Sonia (30) from Barnala and Kailash Devi from Hoshiarpur. The situation also worsened in Kapurthala's Mand area, which is quite far

from main land, and mainland villages in Hoshiarpur districts of Doaba region, where swollen rivers and breaches in protective embankments have led to inundation of farmland and low-lying villages. The farm land on around 15,000 acres submerged under water in both the districts. In Sultanpur itself around 10,000 acres farm land of nearly 30-35 villages including 16 of Mand area and remaining on the river bank

are affected.

In Kapurthala district, the Mand area of Sultanpur Lodhi turned grim after breaches occurred in the advance bandh, a temporary embankment raised inside the main Dhussi Bandh along the Beas River. The advance bandh, built to protect crops grown on near the dry riverbed, gave way at three locations, allowing floodwaters to submerge hundreds of acres of farmland. Officials said nearly 30-35 villages, including Ahliwal, Ahliwal Khurd, and Baupur Karim, face threat as agricultural land has been submerged. Though the number of houses in this stretch is limited, thousands of acres of paddy are at risk. Mand area, a low-lying island between two branches of the Beas, has been under water for weeks. The island is home to small villages that depend almost entirely on farming.

Flood waters enter Gurudwara Kartarpur Sahib in Pakistan as Ravi overflows

Amritsar. (Agency)

The Gurudwara Darbar Sahib in Kartarpur, Pakistan, and the corresponding corridor have been affected by flooding caused by the overflowing Ravi River. The water level in the Ravi has risen following the excess release of water from the Ranjit Sagar Dam. Visuals shared by the Pakistani traveller account Travel with Waqas Haider showed the entire premises of the historic gurdwara, including the central area, submerged by around 10 feet of floodwater.

Flooding across parts of the Ravi has reached the inner sanctum of the gurdwara, with water reportedly standing four, five or even six feet high inside, Inderjit Singh, an employee at Gurudwara Kartarpur Sahib, told The Indian Express on Wednesday.

"But by God's grace, the Guru Granth Sahib is installed on the first floor and all the Guru's sacred Birs are safe and being cared for," he said, adding that volunteers have been relocated to the guest house.

Access is now cut off. Water is flowing over the road as well, so there's no way to reach the upper floors except by boat," Singh said.

Langar supplies are being stockpiled for rooftop delivery as soon as conditions allow, he said. The Ravi is situated on the border between India and Pakistan



at Dera Baba Nanak, and the Kartarpur Sahib Gurdwara is located across the river. The 4-km-long Kartarpur Sahib Corridor links Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, believed to be the final resting place of Guru Nanak, to Dera Baba Nanak shrine in Punjab's Gurdaspur district.

Tall order: City Square Tower to be 180m

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

Early last year, the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) had announced an ambitious City Square on Sindhu Bhavan Road, which included a tower. On Tuesday, the civic body unveiled some more details about the tower. At 180m, it will be the tallest building in the city, offering panoramic sights of the city from its viewing deck. The City Square project itself will cost Rs 669.37 crore.

AMC had announced the City Square plan in its 2024-25 budget, putting the estimated height of the tower at 100m. The new plan adds 80m to the structure.

Tenders related to the City Square Tower will begin once clearances from bodies like the Airports Authority of India come, and other important analyses, including wind data and soil tests, are complete. An AMC official requesting anonymity stated, "AMC is planning to build a

special City Square to create a unique identity for the city and improve its smart city ranking, for which a specific provision was made in the 2024-25 budget."

The official added that two plots next to Oxygen Park on Sindhu Bhavan Road have been selected for the project.

In March 2024, the standing committee approved a proposal to appoint a consultant to design the square. After appointment on March 7, 2024, officials said the consultant gathered data, including wind data from over a decade and soil test information, to determine the maximum height possible for a tower on the plots.

The current target is to build a 180m City Square tower, which will have a viewing gallery. The area around the City Square will be developed into a garden with commercial spaces and entertainment activities.

"The state govt has decided to provide grants from the Finance

Commission and the Swarnim budget for the City Square project, which will become a unique landmark for Ahmedabad. AMC has allocated a budget for this special project. Only one consultant submitted a proposal to design the square, asking for plot details. The total area of these plots is 13,144 sq m (9,404 sq m and 3,740 sq m)," the official said. "The two plots on Sindhu Bhavan Road were chosen for the City Square, which will become a landmark.

It will feature a tall tower from which one can get a panoramic view of the entire city. To achieve this, consultants are analysing wind data and conducting soil and other tests to determine the feasibility of a 180m height. The finalised design for the tower will be submitted for approval to the state govt's special tall building structural committee. The process to obtain an NOC from AAI will also be initiated.

Mumbai-Konkan travel: RoRo ferry to Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg from Sept 1; fares start Rs 2,500 per passenger, Rs 6k for cars

Ahead of Ganesh Chaturthi, the Maharashtra government will launch RoRo ferry services from Bhaucha Dhakka to Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg starting September 1, weather permitting. This South Asia's fastest ferry service, cutting travel time from 10-12 hours by road to just 3-5.5 hours.

Mumbai. (Agency)

On the eve of Ganesh Chaturthi, which witnesses an exodus of lakhs of Konkan residents from Mumbai to their villages, the state govt has announced the start of RoRo (roll-on/roll-off) ferry services from Bhaucha Dhakka (Ferry Wharf) to Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg.

Services will begin from Sept 1 onwards, once the weather stabilises. At 25 knots, this will be the fastest ferry service in South Asia, and in the future, additional stops like Shrivardhan and Mandwa will be added, with jetties being developed accordingly.

The services will cut travel time, which currently ranges from 10-12 hours by road, to just 3 to 5.5 hours. The state faces several local body polls later this year. The RoRo (roll-on/roll-off) ferry from Bhaucha Dhakka (Ferry Wharf) to Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg will accommodate 656 passengers, 50 four-wheelers and 30 two-wheelers. "The RoRo was mooted during chief minister Devendra Fadnavis' first term. We have received 147 permissions for the project including from

central bodies like DG shipping and Mumbai Port Trust," said state ports minister Nitesh Rane. The fare for the ferry, M2M Princess, will range from Rs 2,500 for economy, Rs 4,000 for premium economy, Rs 7,500 for business class and Rs 9,000 for first class. A four-wheeler will be charged Rs 6,000, bike Rs 1,000 and bicycle Rs 600. Ferrying a minibus will cost Rs 13,000, a 30seater bus Rs 14,500, a 45-seater bus Rs 17,000 and a bigger bus Rs 21,000. On the steep charges, Rane said, "This service will really cut travel time. In any case, people flying from Mumbai to Chipli Airport in Sindhudurg are willing to pay ticket prices ranging from Rs 18,000 to Rs 27,000." Rane said the ferry will travel at a speed of 25 knots, and will be among the fastest passenger ferries in the country. It will travel to Jaigad in Ratnagiri and Vijaydurg in Sindhudurg. "By comparison, the ferry from Mumbai to Alibaug travels at 10-15 knots," said Rane. "There are jetties at both landings. The

jetty at Jaigad is ready but it is around 40 km from the city. We will provide 4-5 buses to travel to Ratnagiri. Over time, we will extend the jetty to Ratnagiri terminal," he said. The travel time from Mumbai to Ratnagiri's Jaigad will be between 3 and 3.5 hours. The timing from Mumbai to Vijaydurg will range between 5 and 5.5 hours, he said. "This is a historic moment. RoRo ferry services

Estonia, Portugal keen to sell their beer brands in Kerala

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. (Agency)

Beer connoisseurs in Kerala, cheer up! Estonia and Portugal are eager to whet your appetite. Officers with the embassies of the two European countries recently approached the Kerala State Beverages Corporation (Bevco) and enquired about the possibility of selling their beer brands in the state. Bevco is yet to begin the sale of foreign-made beer even as it sells Foreign-made Foreign Liquor (FMFL) and foreign-made wine brands. "The excise department has already approved the sale of foreign-made beer brands. Now, the proposal is pending before the finance department which has to finalise the tax slab," Harshita Attaluri, chairman and managing director of Bevco, told the . She said the embassy officers also showed interest in exploring the FMFL and wine markets. "We told them that interested companies can submit applications and necessary documents on the designated portal," Attaluri said.

Meanwhile, the sales of FMFL and foreign-made wine are seeing a steady increase, fetching Bevco good revenue. A total of 1.14 lakh cases were sold until the third week of August this financial year, compared to 1.04 lakh cases during the corresponding period in the previous year.

"A majority of our outlets are now walk-in facilities where customers can select their

brands from the display racks. This has helped increase foreign-made liquor and wine sales," Attaluri said.

Sales rise at Bevco outlets, decline at bars

While beer sales through Bevco outlets have recorded an increase in the current financial year, the sales at bars showed a declining trend. Until the third week of



August, 18.28 lakh cases were sold, compared to 17.36 lakh cases during the corresponding period in the previous year. However, warehouse sales dipped to 19.95 lakh cases from the previous year's 22.62 lakh cases. Warehouse sale refers to the sale to bars and beer parlours. Bevco had recently submitted a recommendation to the government for the introduction of low-alcohol beverages. This followed requests from tourists and other stakeholders in the tourism industry.

"The RoRo ferry service is expected to cut travel time from 10-12 hours by road to just 3 to 5.5 hours. For now, it will take passengers to Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg. However, the main drawback is the steep ticket price beginning at Rs 2,500 for an economy seat. Few of the thousands who throng the Ganpati special trains and buses will be able to afford this fare.

Top court orders probe into judge's call to tribunal member in insolvency case

The inquiry will be conducted by the Secretary General of the Supreme Court and will ascertain whether the call was indeed made by a High Court or Supreme Court judge, and if so, by whom. The court has said it will decide on further action based on the findings.

Agency New Delhi.

The Supreme Court has ordered an inquiry into allegations that a judge of the higher judiciary contacted a member of the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) in Chennai to seek a favourable order in an insolvency matter. The inquiry will be conducted by the

Secretary General of the Supreme Court and will ascertain whether the call was indeed made by a High Court or Supreme Court judge, and if so, by whom. The court has said it will decide on further action based on the findings.

The matter came to light after the NCLAT recorded that "one of the most respected members of the higher judiciary" had approached one of its members in connection with a corporate insolvency case. Judicial member Justice Sharad Kumar Sharma, who was part of the two-member bench hearing the matter, recused himself on August 13, citing external pressure.

"We are anguished to observe that one of us, Member (Judicial), has been approached by one of the most revered members of the higher judiciary of this country for seeking an order in favour of a particular party. Hence, I recuse to hear the matter," the tribunal said in its order. The case involves Hyderabad-based real estate

company KLSR Infratech Limited, which had appealed before the NCLAT against an order of the Hyderabad Bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT). The NCLT had admitted a petition by



creditor AS Met Corp Pvt. Ltd. seeking initiation of the Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) against KLSR Infratech. After hearings concluded, the matter was reserved for orders on June 18, with both sides granted an additional week

to file written submissions. Court records show that KLSR Infratech argued it was a profit-making company with a turnover of more than Rs 300 crore in the past five years and therefore not insolvent. The company also cited an FIR filed in June 2022 against the creditor's directors alleging misconduct, claiming the existence of a dispute that should bar insolvency proceedings.

AS Met Corp, however, contended that KLSR Infratech defaulted on dues of Rs 2.88 crore along with interest, asserting that the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code permits insolvency proceedings in cases of proven default where no dispute exists. Following Justice Sharma's recusal, the case had to be reassigned to another bench by the NCLAT chairperson. Member (Technical) Jatindranath Swain, who was also on the bench, expressed similar concerns about preserving the integrity of the judicial process.

Yamuna remains above warning mark in Delhi, likely to cross danger mark by evening



Agency New Delhi.

The water level of the Yamuna river reached 204.61 metres at the Old Railway Bridge on Wednesday morning, remaining above the warning mark of 204.50 metres for the second consecutive day, officials said. According to a flood warning issued by the Central Water Commission on Tuesday evening, the river is likely to cross the danger mark by Wednesday evening. It advised officers to keep a vigil in their respective areas and take necessary action, such as warning people residing near the river embankments and making arrangements to shift them to safer places. The Yamuna's water level stood at 204.61 metres at 9 am on Wednesday, the officials said.

The warning mark for the city is 204.5 metres, while the danger mark is 205.3 metres and evacuation starts at 206 metres. The Old Railway Bridge serves as a key observation point for tracking the river's flow and potential flood risks. "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.

It is forecast that the water level may increase further," an official from the central flood room said.

According to the flood control department, around 37,230 cusecs of water is being released from Wazirabad every hour and around 52,448 cusecs is being released from the Hathnikund Barrage. Water released from the barrages typically takes 48 to 50 hours to reach Delhi.

Even lower discharges from upstream are raising the water level of the Yamuna.

Somebody isn't happy with you: Fiji PM to PM Modi as Trump tariffs kick in

The South Pacific nation's Prime Minister reached New Delhi on Sunday for a three-day visit aimed at strengthening Fiji's partnership with India across sectors including maritime security, trade, and health.

Agency New Delhi.

Fijian Prime Minister Sitiveni Ligamamada Rabuka has said he told Prime Minister Narendra Modi that "somebody is not very happy with you" following US President Donald Trump's move to impose steep tariffs on Indian goods, believing that PM Modi was "big enough to weather those discomforts".

The Fijian leader is in India on a three-day visit, his first in his current capacity, aimed at strengthening cooperation in areas ranging from trade and digital technology to health, capacity building and maritime security.

"Now, what is happening out there is impacting your relationship with the

United States. The recent announcements of tariffs and some things that are coming towards Prime Minister Modi's direction. I told him



the other day, somebody is not very happy with you, but then you are big enough to weather those discomforts," Rabuka said while addressing an event in New Delhi.

The fresh round of US tariffs has now

kicked in, unsettling exporters, business owners and trade analysts. What was earlier a 25 per cent levy has been doubled to 50 per cent on India's imports of Russian crude oil. Further in his address about the vision of 'Ocean of Peace', the Prime Minister of the South Pacific nation also spoke about his engagements with other world leaders.

"I have not had any personal interaction with the President of the United States. I have asked for a bilateral meeting with the President of Russia. I have had a bilateral meeting with the Prime Minister of the UK. Prime Minister Modi echoed our sentiments and the concept when we spoke yesterday. Chinese President Xi Jinping, in a discussion earlier this year and also last year, has taken it up," Rabuka said.

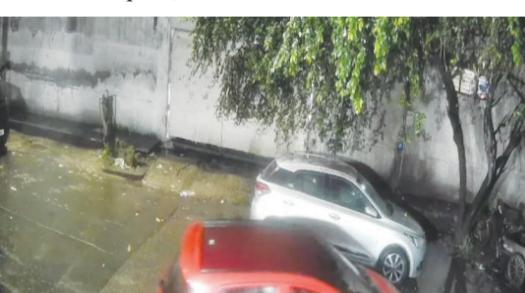
On Camera, 16-Year-Old Hits Man With Car, Drags Body For 600 Metres In Delhi

Agency New Delhi.

A 32-year-old man was hit and dragged for 600 meters by a car in Delhi. Behind the wheel was a 16-year-old student, who has now been detained, and the car has been seized. The incident occurred on Saturday evening in the outer North District of Delhi. As seen in the CCTV footage, a red car hits a man. Instead of stopping and helping the victim, the driver drives over and drags the man for 600 meters before leaving the body near the office of the North Delhi Power Ltd. (NDPL), gate number 5. The victim's show is left behind on the road.

The victim, identified as Sujit Mandal, died of his injuries by the time the police reached the accident spot. The

victim's body was found with various injuries all over the body and torn clothes. Mandal was rushed to Burari Hospital, where doctors declared him



dead. Jitesh, brother-in-law of Sujit, identified the body. Mandal used to work at a PVC pipe factory in the Badli Industrial Area and was returning from work at the time of the incident.

Harishwar, the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Outer North District, said that the victim was hit by a red car around 7 PM near his workplace. "Despite knowing that the injured person was stuck beneath the vehicle, the offending driver stopped for a while and then drove on," said the official, as quoted by the news agency ANI. With the help of the CCTV footage, the police identified the vehicle number, traced the car and obtained details of its owner. Investigation revealed that the driver was a minor who is now in custody. A First Information Report (FIR)

has been filed under Section 105 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, involving punishment for culpable homicide not amounting to murder.

Twist In Noida Dowry Case, Nikki Bhati's Sister-In-Law Makes Big Allegation

Agency New Delhi.

The Noida dowry death case has taken a dramatic turn with fresh allegations surfacing against the victim's family. Nikki Bhati's family had accused her husband and in-laws of dowry harassment, but now a similar accusation has emerged against her own family. Nikki Bhati's sister-in-law Minakshi, estranged wife of her brother Rohit Payla, has alleged that she too faced dowry harassment by her in-laws.

Rohit and Minakshi, 31, got married in 2016. Minakshi, who is from Palla village, has claimed that her family had given a Maruti Suzuki Ciaz as dowry, but her in-laws had sold it, calling it "inauspicious." The Paylas, family of Nikki Bhati, had then demanded a new model of Scorpio SUV and cash, Minakshi's family claimed. On being denied, Minakshi alleged that her in-laws sent her back to her parents' house. The matter was taken to the village panchayat, where it was reportedly advised that either Rs 35 lakh (the amount

spent on their wedding) be returned to Minakshi's family so that she could be remarried, or that the husband's family accept her back as their daughter-in-law. The dispute remained unresolved, with Minakshi alleging that Nikki's father, Bhikhari Singh Payla, and other family members never accepted her.

When Nikki's brother was confronted over the allegations made by his estranged wife, he refused to comment. "I don't want to speak on this matter. These are mere allegations," said Rohit. But another person from his side claimed that the issue had even led to guns being drawn between the two families, and defended the Paylas, saying, "Fights happen in every house. At least we did not burn the girl."

Satyavir Singh, the arrested father-in-law of Nikki Bhati, had apparently assured Minakshi's father that he would use their

personal rapport to ensure Bhikhari Singh Payla pays him back. He is also said to have intervened multiple times in Minakshi's case and urged Mr Payla to



settle the issue. The new revelations add a fresh dimension to the ongoing investigation into Nikki Bhati's death, raising questions over the long-standing dowry disputes despite it being an illegal practice across the country.

Nikki Bhati, 28, was burnt alive by her in-

laws last week, which followed years of domestic abuse and demands for dowry. Her seven-year-old son and sister, married in the same family, were witnesses to the horrific crime.

The case garnered national spotlight after a video emerged showing Nikki hobbling down the stairs while on fire. She later died of burn injuries.

The Paylas had earlier appeared to defend the dowry system as part of their social system. Nikki Bhati's father, who had given a Scorpio car, cash, and gold to his two sons-in-laws, had sought to justify this, saying, "This is how marriages happen in our clan".

When asked why he didn't bring her daughter home despite knowing she was being tortured, he told NDTV, "We need to listen to our samaj and clan members." His brother and Nikki's uncle, Rajkumar Singh, had said that they gave in to the repeated dowry demands to keep peace in her family.

NEWS BOX

Australia great Michael Clarke grateful after skin cancer removed in fresh health scare

New Delhi. (Agency)

Former Australia captain Michael Clarke has revealed he has undergone surgery to remove skin cancer from his face, using the moment to urge others to stay vigilant about their health. The 44-year-old took to Instagram on Wednesday (27 August) to share a photograph of himself after the procedure, accompanied by a candid message about the importance of prevention and early detection. Skin cancer is real! Especially in Australia. Another one cut out of my nose today. A friendly reminder to get your skin checked. Prevention is better than cure but in my case, regular check-ups and early detection is key. So grateful that @drbishihsoliman got it early," Clarke wrote. This is not Clarke's first battle with the illness. According to 7News, the former Test captain was first diagnosed in 2006 and has since had about a dozen cancers removed. Last year, he underwent surgery for a basal cell carcinoma on his chest, while in 2023 he



had further procedures to remove cancers from his forehead and face. In 2023, Clarke also teamed up with the Australian Skin Cancer Foundation to raise awareness, later telling Sunrise that he tries to have full skin checks twice a year. Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer globally, with figures showing that two in three Australians will be diagnosed with some form of the disease by the age of 70. Despite his health setbacks, Clarke remains a towering figure in Australian cricket. Between 2003 and 2015, he represented his country in 115 Tests, 245 one-day internationals, and 34 T20 internationals, scoring 8,643 Test runs and 7,981 in ODIs. He also claimed 94 wickets across formats. Clarke captained Australia in 74 Tests and 139 ODIs, leading the team to a 5-0 Ashes whitewash in 2013-14 and to the World Cup title in 2015.

R Ashwin retires from IPL amid trade rumours, sets sight on overseas leagues

New Delhi. (Agency)

Retired India spinner Ravichandran Ashwin called time on his Indian Premier League career on Wednesday, August 27. Ashwin took to his social media account to announce the decision. The legendary spinner played 221 matches in the competition and picked up 187 wickets. "Special day and hence a special beginning. They say every ending will have a new start, my time as an IPL cricketer comes to a close today, but my time as an explorer of the game around various leagues begins today. Would like to thank all the franchisees for all the wonderful memories and relationships over the years and most importantly the IPL and the BCCI for what they have given me until now. Look forward to enjoying and making the most of what's ahead of me," Ashwin said in a statement on Wednesday. Ashwin has featured for five teams in the Indian Premier



League and even captained the Punjab franchise during his stint there. Over the course of his IPL career, he has represented Chennai Super Kings, Rising Pune Supergiants, Punjab Kings, Delhi Capitals, and Rajasthan Royals. Ashwin retires as the fifth-highest wicket-taker in the history of the tournament, behind Yuzvendra Chahal, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Sunil Narine and Piyush Chawla. He has also scored 833 runs, including one half-century, for Rajasthan Royals.

R Ashwin's IPL 2025 Season

The spinner played his final season for his home team, CSK. He picked up 7 wickets and scored 33 runs in his 9 outings in the tournament. Ashwin was involved in other controversies amidst CSK's struggles in 2025. Last season, Ashwin was called out due to his YouTube channel, which had criticised Afghan spinner Noor Ahmad, his CSK teammate. One of the channel's analysts, Prasanna Agoram, argued that Noor Ahmad was not needed in the lineup.

Bengaluru Bulls hit the reset button ahead of Pro Kabaddi League Season 12, with new coach BC Ramesh taking charge after Randhir Singh Sehrawat's exit. Ramesh opens up on pressure, strategy, and building a balanced squad.

NEW YORK. (Agency)

Bengaluru Bulls have hit the reset button hard ahead of season 12 of the Pro Kabaddi League. The biggest change came with the coaching staff as the legendary coach Randhir Singh Sehrawat was relieved off his duties at the end of the season after the Bulls ended at the bottom of the table with just 19 points after 22 games. And one of the major changes was seeing a new squad come in and a coach who is familiar with what the Bulls are all about. BC Ramesh is a serial winner as he lifted the PKL title with Puneri Paltan in Season 10. In fact, he was with the Bulls

when they last won the title in the Season six as he worked as an assistant coach under Sehrawat. Now he is with a young team and has the task of replacing a legend at the helm. Speaking to India Today during a virtual interaction, Ramesh said that the pressure is on him when it comes to replacing Sehrawat as the fans will have big expectations from him. There is a lot of pressure on me right now, because all our Bengaluru Bulls followers are very dependent on us. They say 'Ramesh sir went to two-three teams and showed good performance in those teams also. The expectation everyone has right now is that the same performance which I produced with the previous teams, the same will be replicated here too — that's what people keep thinking.'"Now, I have a very big responsibility, becoming the coach in Bengaluru after Season 6. Last year, our team's performance was very poor, and after that, we changed the whole team and made a new team, and made a different strategy. Whatever chances we had, according to our

purse, we tried to make it happen," said Ramesh.

A team in transition but with a lot of promise

During the auction, Ramesh said the focus went on the defence and they invested on young, up-and-coming raiders. The coach feels that he believes the team performance will be very good this time around due to this mantra. "That's why this time we built a strong defence and gave chances to young raiders in this season. We have made a totally

balanced team. I believe because of this thinking, the team performance will be very good. I expect that they will play well, and all the players are practicing very hard, and whatever coach wants skill-wise, they are working on it," said Ramesh.

When it comes to strategy, Ramesh said his ideology is different from Sehrawat. While the change does excite the coach, he cautioned everyone saying that it will take him time to implement his style with the team. "My strategy and another coach's strategy — they are always different, every coach has his own strategy. In the same way, I have explained my kind of strategy to the players and prepared them. We'll see once the season starts. Very important will be how the team's combination fits, and how the team performance happens — that has to be seen. In one or two matches at the start, no team can tell anything. After six or seven matches, only then it will be known who is playing how and what," said Ramesh.

MS Dhoni's shocking leave in 2019 World Cup recalled by Ferguson: I was surprised

New Delhi. (Agency)

New Zealand pacer Lockie Ferguson has recalled one of the defining moments of the 2019 World Cup semi-final against India—the sight of MS Dhoni leaving a delivery in the middle of a tense run chase. With the pressure high at Old Trafford and India chasing 240, Dhoni's decision to shoulder arms surprised even Ferguson. For the bowler, it was a small but crucial win, a reminder of how fine margins shaped that dramatic knockout. India's chase had already gone wrong after Trent Boult and Matt Henry reduced them to 5-2 and later 24-4. A fighting 77 from Ravindra Jadeja, alongside Dhoni, brought some hope, but the task was still tough. At one stage, India needed 52 from 31 balls when Dhoni let the delivery go, leaving fans and Ferguson stunned. Looking back, Ferguson admitted he never expected the veteran to leave the ball at such a moment.

"I can't remember what they were needing to chase at the time, but I knew they had to score a few runs. The plan was to bowl and see if MS

be able to officially announce my switch once I get the formal approval letter from Tripura," Shankar told Cricbuzz on Tuesday. A Tripura Cricket Association (TCA) official confirmed later in the day that Shankar will indeed join Vihari as one



mainstay for Tamil Nadu since his debut in 2012, playing 58 Ranji Trophy matches and amassing 3,142 runs at an average of 44.25, with 11 centuries and 16 half-centuries. In List A cricket, he has 1,702 runs from 62 outings, while his T20 career has yielded 1,004 runs from 47 matches. The all-rounder enjoyed a strong red-ball campaign last season, scoring 476 runs in six Ranji matches at 52.88, including two centuries. He also chipped in with 188 runs in List A games, though his Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy campaign was less fruitful with just 83 runs in four matches. Meanwhile, Hanuma Vihari has already confirmed his move to Tripura after parting ways with Andhra. The 31-year-old announced on social media that he has signed as one of Tripura's three professionals and will represent them in all formats. "After thoughtful consideration, I have made the decision to move to the Tripura Cricket Association, where I'll be representing the state in all three formats of the game," Vihari wrote on X, adding that the switch offers him a platform that better aligns with his aspirations.

India all-rounder Vijay Shankar is set to turn out for Tripura in the upcoming domestic season after securing a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the Tamil Nadu Cricket Association. The 33-year-old's move comes shortly after former India batter Hanuma Vihari also signed up with the North-Eastern side.

New Delhi. (Agency)

India all-rounder Vijay Shankar is reportedly set to join the Northeastern outfit for the upcoming domestic season, having already secured a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the Tamil Nadu Cricket Association (TNCA). "I have obtained the NOC from TNCA but am yet to receive confirmation from the Tripura Cricket Association. I will

First time since 1994: Kazakhstan check in for hockey's Asia Cup

RAJGIR. (Agency)

The Kazakhstan men's hockey team has landed here for the Asia Cup starting August 29, marking its first appearance in the continental showpiece since 1994.

Led by Yerkebulan Dussebekov, the team landed on Tuesday night, its maiden appearance on Indian soil. Kazakhstan's 1994 Asia Cup outing in Hiroshima had ended in a fifth-place finish. The same year, they also secured a sixth-place finish at the Asian Games. Currently ranked 81st in the FIH World Rankings, Kazakhstan are in Pool A, drawn alongside hosts India, Japan and China. They will open their campaign against Japan on August 29, followed by a clash with China on August 31, before wrapping up the group stage with an encounter against India on September 1.

"We are extremely excited to be here in India for the very first time. This country is known as the heartland of hockey, and for us



to play in such an atmosphere is a very special opportunity," Dussebekov was quoted as saying by Hockey India in a press

release. "We have a very young team, and over the past few months our preparation has been about giving these players

confidence and exposure at the highest level. The energy and enthusiasm in the group is fantastic, and we are eager to learn and grow with every match," he added.

About the challenging pool placement, Dussebekov acknowledged that his side will have to fight hard.

"Being placed in a group with India, Japan, and China will be a tough challenge, but we see this as a great chance to test ourselves against some of the best teams in Asia. Our aim is to fight hard, play with discipline, and make Kazakhstan proud on this big stage," Dussebekov concluded.



would undercut it, and he left it. So I was surprised because naturally, when you're bowling, you're trying to restrict runs, then it's nice when batter leaves it," Ferguson told CrickTracker. The contest only got tighter. With 31 required off 12 balls, Dhoni produced a trademark upper cut over deep backward point, sending Ferguson's delivery for six and shifting the pressure back onto the bowler. Ferguson revealed that he stuck to the same plan on the next ball, but this time Dhoni executed it perfectly again.

"I think the next over, the first ball, I tried again, and he just got it over the boundary for six. So the plan almost worked the second time as well. But it was nice to get him out that game and, of course, get across the line in the semi-final," he added.

US Open: Gauff survives Tomljanovic scare, Osaka cruises to second round

Coco Gauff survived a tough first-round match against Ajla Tomljanovic at the US Open. Naomi Osaka impressed with a commanding straight sets win, signalling strong form ahead.

NEW YORK. (Agency)

Coco Gauff was pushed to the brink but survived a stern first-round test at the US Open, edging past Australia's Ajla Tomljanovic 6-4, 6-7(2), 7-5 under the Arthur Ashe Stadium lights on Tuesday. Naomi Osaka, meanwhile, dazzled on and off the court as she powered through her opener in straight sets. Gauff, the 2023 champion, arrived in New York with a revamped team after parting ways with mentor Matt Daly and enlisting biomechanics specialist Gavin MacMillan

to address her service struggles. But the 20-year-old looked shaky early, dropping serve in the opening game and producing a string of errors before settling into her rhythm.

She broke decisively to claim the first set and appeared in control at 4-2 in the second, only for Tomljanovic - best remembered for her victory over Serena Williams at Flushing Meadows in 2022 - to mount a spirited fightback. The Australian saved two set points, forced a tiebreak, and levelled the contest with aggressive baseline hitting. Gauff's nerves showed in the decider as she double-faulted twice while serving for the match at 5-4, but the American regained her composure to secure victory with a backhand winner, greeted by a roar from the home crowd. "There were chances for it to be a straight-sets win, but it was tough," Gauff admitted. "I felt she was getting so many balls back. It wasn't the best, but I'm happy to be through to the

next round." She will next face Olympic silver medallist Donna Vekic in what promises to be another stern challenge. If Gauff's passage was a grind, Osaka's was



pure theatre. The two-time US Open champion strode into Louis Armstrong Stadium in a crystal-encrusted red Nike outfit and rose-adorned ponytail, later

swapped for practicality, before dispatching Belgium's Greet Minnen 6-3, 6-4 in 83 minutes. "This is my night outfit," Osaka said with a smile. "Hopefully I'll wear my day outfit next time." Beyond the glamour - including a quirky bag charm she introduced as "Billie Jean Bling" - the 27-year-old mother produced a performance of grit and precision. She cracked seven aces, saved all break points in the second set, and converted all six of her opportunities on Minnen's serve. "I could have had a better attitude - I was stressed," Osaka admitted. "But I'm glad I was able to win. It feels really good to have had some confidence-building matches recently, especially on a surface that I love." Minnen, ranked 106th, was undone by 30 unforced errors against Osaka's baseline aggression, as the Japanese continued her quest to become the first mother since Kim Clijsters in 2011 to win a Grand Slam singles title.

Ahead of festive season SBI Card and Flipkart launch co-branded credit card

Kolkata: (Agency)

Shoppers, marketers and policymakers are all eagerly looking forward to the impending festive and wedding season that is supposed to start in September and end in January. While marketers are looking forward to the surge in sales revenue which has eluded them in general for a few months, policymakers are watching how consumption drives GDP which they want to push up desperately and shoppers want to make the most of the benefits that festive shopping can generate. This time the salaried class have some extra cash in their pocket, thanks to the income tax relief till Rs 12 lakh salary which has kicked in from April. Repo Rate cut by the RBI has also driven personal interest rates down in all banks, which is supposed to boost discretionary purchase during the festive season. Keeping this backdrop in mind, SBI Cards has tied up with e-commerce giant Flipkart to offer a co-branded credit card to aid the shopping appetite of the people. The benefits and



cashbacks

Named 'Flipkart SBI Credit Card', it has been designed with cashback benefits for shoppers for discerning customers on the majority of their purchases, said SBI Card in a statement. The card was launched in the presence SBI Chairman C S Setty and MD Ashwini Kumar Tewari. By using this card, customers are entitled to 7.5% cashback on expenditure made on Mynttra and 5% cashback on expenditure on Flipkart, Shopify, and Cleartrip. All products in the Flipkart universe will be covered by this credit card, the company said. Customers can apply for this credit card through the Flipkart App and SBI Card SPRINT by visiting the SBI Card website SBI Card.com. However, it has to be kept in mind credit cards carry the highest rate of interest among all retail loan products.

AHPI action against Bajaj Allianz, Care health Insurance arbitrary, lacks clarity: GIC

New Delhi: (Agency)

Responding to the Association of Healthcare Providers India's (AHPI) decision to suspend cashless hospitalisation services for Bajaj Allianz General Insurance and Care Health Insurance from September 1, the General Insurance Council (GIC) on Tuesday said that the action is arbitrary, lacks clarity or actionable details. The August 22 decision of the AHPI followed repeated complaints from its member hospitals that Bajaj Allianz has refused to revise hospital reimbursement rates in line with rising medical costs, and it has pressured hospitals to further reduce tariffs that were agreed upon years ago. In addition, member hospitals complained of unilateral deductions by the Company, delay in payments and unduly high time taken for issuing pre-auth and pre-discharge approvals. Further, a similar notice has been served to Care Health Insurance on August 22, with a request for their response by 31st August 2025. Failing this, the AHPI's member hospitals will be constrained to discontinue cashless services to Care Health Insurance beneficiaries as well.

The GIC said: "This sudden unilateral action on part of AHPI has created unnecessary confusion and concerns amongst citizens, impacting the trust in the health insurance ecosystem. Instead of enabling dialogue and resolution, a press statement was abruptly issued, prejudicing the interests of policyholders across the country."

No reciprocal tariff on Indian electronics exports to the US

New Delhi: (Agency)

In a relief for Indian electronics manufacturers, the United States has granted a temporary exemption from the 50% reciprocal tariffs on a range of Indian exports, including smartphones, switching and routing equipment, integrated circuits, and semiconductors. This exemption is linked to an ongoing Section 232 national security investigation in the US, which currently permits duty-free imports of these critical electronic products. However, the relief is temporary, and the imposition of future tariffs will depend on the outcome of the investigation.

The Trump administration had earlier announced multiple rounds of reciprocal tariffs of up to 50% on Indian goods, set to take effect from August 27. Earlier this month, President Donald Trump also declared an additional 25% tariff on Indian imports in response to India's continued purchase of Russian crude oil. The exemption is expected to benefit major players such as Apple and Samsung, both of which have significantly expanded their manufacturing footprint in India. According to recent data, India became the largest supplier of smartphones to the US in Q2 2025, accounting for 44% of the market share. India has now overtaken China as the leading smartphone exporter to the US. In June 2025, India's electronics exports to the US surged by 23.5% to \$8.3 billion, with mobile phones—particularly iPhones—being the key growth driver.

Absolute shock': As 50% US tariffs take effect, India braces for \$48.2B export hit

Officials have warned the new duties could make shipments to the US commercially unviable, triggering job losses and slower economic growth.

New Delhi: (Agency)

India is bracing for a sharp blow to its overseas trade as steep US tariffs take effect on a range of Indian products on Wednesday—a move that threatens over half of India's exports to its largest market and highlights the fragile trade ties between the two countries. US President Donald Trump had initially announced a 25% tariff on Indian goods. But earlier this month he signed an executive order imposing an additional 25% tariff due to India's purchases of Russian oil, bringing the combined tariffs imposed by the

United States on its ally to 50%.

The Indian government estimates the tariffs will impact \$48.2 billion worth of exports. Officials have warned the new duties could make shipments to the US commercially unviable, triggering job losses and slower economic growth.

India-US trade relations have expanded in recent years but remain vulnerable to disputes over market access and domestic political pressures. India is one of the fastest-growing among major global economies and it may face a slowdown as a result. Sectors to be impacted by US tariffsEstimates by New Delhi-based think tank, Global Trade Research Initiative, suggest labor-intensive sectors such as textiles, gems and jewelry, leather goods, food and automobiles will be hit hardest. "The new tariff regime is a strategic shock that threatens to wipe out India's long-established presence in the US, causing unemployment in export-driven hubs and weakening its role in the industrial value chain," said Ajay Srivastava, the think tank's founder and a

former Indian trade official. The US has for now exempted some sectors such as pharmaceuticals and electronic goods from additional tariffs, bringing some



relief for India as its exposure in these sectors is significant.

Exporters fear losses

Puran Dawar, a leather footwear exporter in northern India's Agra city, says the industry would take a substantial hit in the near term unless domestic demand strengthens and other overseas markets buy more Indian goods. "This is an absolute shock," said Dawar, whose business with the US has resisted opening these sectors to cheaper American imports.

years. DAWAR's clients include the major fashion retailer Zara. DAWAR, who is also the regional chairman of the Council for Leather Exports—an export promotion body—said the US should understand that the steep tariffs will hurt its own consumers. Groups representing exporters warn that new import tariffs could hurt India's small and medium enterprises that are heavily reliant on the American market. "It's a tricky situation. Some product lines will simply become unviable overnight," said Ajay Sahai, director general of the Federation of Indian Export Organisations.

Modi vows not to yield to US pressure

The tariffs come as the US administration continues to push for greater access to India's agriculture and dairy sectors. India and the US have held five rounds of negotiations for a bilateral trade agreement, but have yet to reach a deal. That's largely because New Delhi has resisted opening these sectors to cheaper American imports.

Ease of doing business or ease of offending The Jan Vishwas Dilemma

MUMBAI: (Agency)

The introduction of the Jan Vishwas Bill 2.0 in Parliament on 18 August 2025 is being hailed as a milestone in India's attempt to shift towards trust-based governance. The bill is meant to foster greater trust in citizens and businesses, reduce the burden of criminalisation for minor infractions, and create an environment that encourages entrepreneurship and investment.

It has now been referred to a Select Committee of the Lok Sabha for deeper scrutiny. This bill promises to decriminalise 288 provisions across 16 central laws in an effort to make India a more attractive manufacturing and investment destination. If successful, it could bolster the "Make in India" initiative and accelerate the journey towards transforming the country into a global manufacturing hub. The question, however, is not simply whether easing punitive provisions will improve the business environment, but whether the shift from criminal penalties to financial fines will strengthen efficiency or inadvertently open the doors to corruption and lax compliance. Supporters argue that the bill embodies a more modern and humane philosophy of regulation—"warn, correct and then penalize." Instead of treating every minor error as a crime, the law seeks to assume good faith and treat mistakes as lapses to be corrected, reserving harsher consequences for repeat or wilful violations.

This is not only a pragmatic approach to governance but also a reflection of a maturing democracy that chooses reform over fear. By decriminalising minor offences, courts will be freed to focus on serious crimes, while businesses will be spared the constant dread of criminal prosecution for technical lapses. Take, for instance, the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940. Under the existing law, violations involving the manufacture or sale of Ayurvedic, Siddha, or Unani medicines could attract up to six months of imprisonment alongside fines. The Jan Vishwas Bill proposes to scrap the jail clause, replacing it with a significantly higher financial penalty of at least Rs 30,000.

The logic is clear: deterrence need not always involve jail terms; a steep monetary penalty can achieve compliance without clogging courts or intimidating small manufacturers.

Similarly, in the Central Silk Board Act, 1948, furnishing a false statement even if an innocent clerical error, was previously a criminal offence with up to one year of imprisonment. Under the new framework, the first instance would attract only a warning, while repeat offences would incur a penalty of Rs 25,000 to Rs 1 lakh, replacing the outdated Rs 1,000 fine.

Your salary grew — did your SIP MIRA Money research head argues for Step-Up SIPs

Kolkata: (Agency)

Very few people are still strangers to the term Systematic Investment Plans, or SIPs. Almost everyone has heard about it and some have already adopted it. But very few actually raise the SIP amount in step with their income. Inflation is constantly chipping away your buying power. To beat inflation and to create a really big amount of corpus one should think in terms of Step up SIPs. Mohit Bagdi, head of investment research and founding member of MIRA Money tells News9 why it is important. He begins with a scenario. You have an existing SIP but many a times during the year you see that there is always some surplus amount in your bank account where you are struggling with "where should I invest" or "is this the right time to invest". According to Bagdi, if you can relate to this, then most often it is a case of slower pace in SIP growth vs your salary growth. Mere SIP is not enough. "Several professionals I have seen, who set up a SIP early in their careers and rarely revisit it for years, even as their income rises steadily. The result? Over time, their investment contribution becomes disproportionately small compared to their earning potential. In

personal finance, one needs to remember that, inertia & procrastination is costly," remarks Bagdi. He then proceeds to say that doing just systematic investments is not enough—it has to rise gradually. "If your average annual salary



increment is 8-10%, then you should Step-up your SIPs by 10%. In today's digital age, you can simply automate it on investment platforms wherein a month after your increments, platform step-up your SIPs in existing funds," he advises.

Why Step-up SIP

Apart from aligning your savings into investments, Bagdi says, one must understand that stepping up SIPs help in silently and effortlessly build long-term wealth. The biggest advantage: it

does not require the investor to time the market. Additionally, it compounds the portfolio longer and better, mitigates inflation risk and doesn't impact your lifestyle expenses drastically. The MIRA Money expert also offers a thumb rule—before incurring expenses, keep your SIPs in pace with your income. Because one's wealth journey should reflect one's evolving financial capacity.

SIP versus Step-up SIP

A SIP and a Step-up SIP can create two vastly different results. Just take two calculators for a demonstration. The SIP calculator will tell you that if you invest Rs 10,000 a month for 10 years in mutual fund schemes and it they generate a 12% average return, the amount at the end of 10 years will become Rs 23.23 lakh. Now consider the same person beginning the same SIP (Rs 10,000) but raising it 10% every year. He/she continues it for 10 years with the same 12% average return. Now the value generated will become Rs 33.74 lakh. (Disclaimer: This article is only meant to provide information.

Once world's spice hub, Kerala braces for Trump tariff jolt

KOCHI: (Agency)

From Vasco da Gama's landing in Calicut in 1498 to the Dutch and the British setting up forts and factories along its coast, Kerala's spices once lured the world. But today, the state's spice capital, Kochi, home to four of the world's largest value-added spice extractors, is staring at an uncertain future as the United States slaps a punitive 50% tariff on Indian spice exports beginning August 27.

The blow is significant. Synthite Industries, Plant Lipids, Mane Kancor and Akay Group—all headquartered in and around Kochi—together command about 70% of the global market for spice oleoresins and natural extracts.

Their customers include the world's biggest FMCG, food & beverage,



nutraceutical and flavour & fragrance brands. Together, they turn Indian spices into billion-dollar exports.

But there is a twist. Despite Kerala's historical legacy as the land of pepper, nutmeg and cardamom, these

companies no longer depend on local farms. Instead, their tankers bring in raw materials from Vietnam, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and even Guatemala, process them in high-tech factories in Kerala, and re-export them to the world. "Our production is grossly insufficient for internal consumption," admits Viju Jacob, executive chairman of Synthite Industries, which alone clocks nearly \$500 million in revenues.

"We are importing pepper from Vietnam, Indonesia and Sri Lanka, adding value, and then exporting it. Except cardamom and nutmeg, almost everything else comes from outside." That model is now at risk.

Indian leather industry eyes expansion in Russian, African markets amid US tariffs



never a quick process," he noted, adding that the long-standing presence of Indian leather products in the US makes the sudden tariff particularly disruptive. CLE has resolved to send trade delegations to Russia and African nations to scout for fresh opportunities. Jalan stressed that shifting markets is not easy, citing variations in shoe sizes, consumer preferences and design trends. Locating alternative markets on short notice is tough because shoe sizes, design preferences, and consumer trends vary widely between regions. We hope this

tariff is temporary and that the government will extend a support package of 20-25%, he added. Exporter Prerna Verma echoed these concerns, pointing out that product realignment would be necessary. "Styles that work in the U.S. or Europe may not appeal in Russia or Japan," she said.

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM CLE MEETING

At the Central Region meeting, former CLE Chairman Javed Iqbal said the industry had reached a consensus to aggressively pursue trade in Russian and African

markets. Current Chairman Asad Iraqi added that India's free trade agreement with the UK would also be leveraged for new opportunities. Trade delegations are set to visit these regions soon, with Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal expected to lead the mission to Russia. Buyer-seller meets are also planned in African countries.

CHALLENGES IN DIVERSIFICATION

Iqbal warned that entering new markets comes with challenges, as many are already saturated and competitive. "Besides, buyers everywhere are asking for price concessions, which complicates matters further," he remarked.

POTENTIAL BOOST FROM DOMESTIC MARKET

Iqbal also pointed to opportunities in the domestic market. With current per capita footwear consumption in India at just 1.8 pairs annually, much of it low-cost imports from China, plans are underway to increase this to two pairs per person. "This increase could partially offset the losses caused by shrinking exports," he noted.

Rubina Dilaik

Expresses Gratitude To Paparazzi For Their Birthday Wishes

Rubina Dilaik And Abhinav Shukla's appearance on Pati Patni Aur Panga – Jodiyon Ka Reality Check continues to melt hearts, thanks to their love-filled bond and adorable chemistry. Even their off-camera moments are often viral on social media, with fans constantly sending lots of love and praise their way. Well, deservedly so. One of the clips from the sets saw the couple joyfully posing together for the paparazzi but it was Rubina's heartfelt exchange with the paparazzi that stole the attention. Dressed in their stylish best, both Rubina and Abhinav made sure to serve the fashion moment for an episode of the reality show. It was after the quick photo-op that the actress, staying true to her charming personality and humble behaviour, took a brief pause to thank the photographers for their birthday wishes. With folded hands and a gentle smile on her face, she acknowledged their sweet wishes, proving kindness never goes out of fashion.

Rubina Dilaik and Abhinav Shukla are each other's biggest cheerleaders. Currently, the couple is winning hearts in the couple-based reality show, hosted by Sonali Bendre and Munawar Faruqui. In one of the episodes with a Bollywood-themed twist, contestants stepped into the shoes of their favourite characters.

Abhinav Shukla All Praises For Rubina Dilaik

Dishing out major couple goals, Abhinav showcased his affection for his wife and proudly praised her for her discipline, perseverance and outstanding achievement.

Abhinav said, "Her stubbornness inspires me. She knows exactly what she wants and does not want. If anything doesn't fit into her pattern, whether it's a late-night party or something that interferes with her sleep, gym time, or shoot schedule, she'll simply decline. And I really admire that. Not many individuals can do it. Her stubbornness is what keeps her disciplined, focused, and consistent."

He added, "I've seen her always stick to her values, push herself to grow, and never take shortcuts. Rubina's stubbornness is her strength, despite some viewing it as a flaw. It is the reason for her success."

Rubina and Abhinav tied the knot in 2018, after dating each other for four years. Together, they participated in the reality show Bigg Boss 14 and the couple became parents to twin daughters, Jeeva and Edhaa, in November 2023.

Pati Patni Aur Panga

Alongside Rubina-Abhinav, Pati Patni Aur Panga also features celebrity couples like Hina Khan-Rocky Jaiswal, Gurmeet Choudhary-Debina Bonnerjee, Avika Gor- Milind Chandwani, Swara Bhasker- Fahad Ahmed and Geeta Phogat-Pawan Kumar. The show airs on Colors TV and is also available for streaming on JioHotstar.



'Dusro Ki Baat Dimag Me Lekar Nahi Baithti:' Bigg Boss 19's Ashnoor Kaur On Her Personality

Bigg Boss 19, the Salman Khan-hosted controversial reality show, kick-started with a grand, power-packed premiere episode on August 24. The season introduced 16 renowned personalities, who entered the house with their spirits high and ready to clash in the high-stakes arena. Among all the entries, it is the youngest contestant and actress, Ashnoor Kaur, who is quickly becoming a fan favourite. Known for her acclaimed performances in Jhansi Ki Rani, Yeh Rishta Kya Kehlata Hai, Saath Nibhana Saathiya, and Patiala Babes, Ashnoor has had a flourishing career in the television world since the age of five. With Bigg Boss 19, she now ventures into reality television, promising to reveal her unfiltered self to her fans and admirers.

Ashnoor Kaur's calm nature

In a recent moment inside the house, Ashnoor reflected her calm and composed nature, saying, "Nahi, ek baar baat hogayi, to wo baat chali gayi mere dimag se. Fir main dusro ki baat dimag me lekar nahi baithtati. (No, once the conversation is done, it will vanish away from my mind. Then I don't keep other people's things in my mind.)"

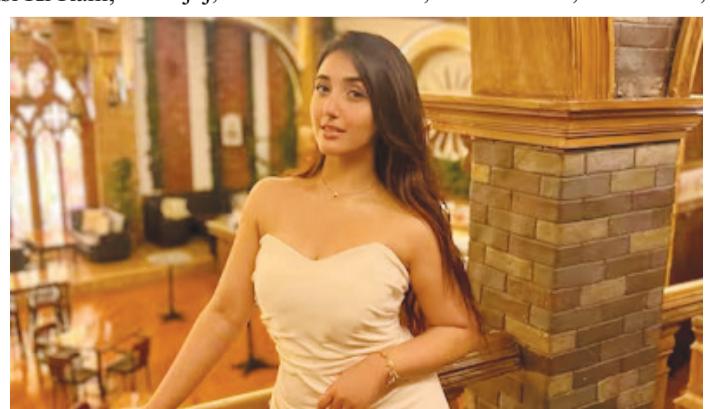
Ashnoor Kaur's Acting Journey

The actress stepped into the light-camera-action world at the young age of 5. She made her acting debut with the television show Jhansi Ki Rani in 2009. After

earning a lot of praise for her role in the historical drama, she portrayed the role of young Naira in one of the longest-running shows, Yeh Rishta Kya Kehlata Hai. As she grew older, she took on more mature roles, such as playing the lead role as Mini in Patiala Babes.

Bigg Boss 19: Meet the contestants

Premiered on August 24, the Bigg Boss 19 house welcomed 16 personalities this year. The names include Gaurav Khanna, Zeishan Quadri, Abhishek Bajaj, Nehal Chudasama, Neelam Giri, Baseer Ali,



Pranit More, Ashnoor Kaur, Natalia Janoszek, Farhana Bhatt, Awaz Darbar, Nagma Mirajkar, Tanya Mittal, Amaal Malik, Kunickaa Sadanand, and Mridul Tiwari. Catch all the drama, unexpected twists, and surprises unfold inside the confines of Bigg Boss 19 every night at 10:30 PM on Colors or 9 PM on JioHotstar.

Hrithik Roshan Rents Out Luxury, Sea-View Juhu Home To Girlfriend Saba For Rs 75,000 A Month



Hrithik Roshan's personal and professional lives often make headlines, but this time it's his real estate move that has caught attention. The Bollywood star has rented out his sea-facing luxury flat in Mumbai's Juhu to his girlfriend Saba Azad for Rs 75,000 per month, according to documents accessed by Zapkey. The apartment is located in Mannat Apartments (Vartamaan) on Juhu-Versova Link Road, one of the city's most expensive neighbourhoods. Local brokers told HT.com that rents for a 3-BHK in the same stretch, measuring around 1,000-1,300 sq ft, usually range between Rs 1 lakh and Rs 2 lakh monthly.

Inside Hrithik's Property Deal

As per the leave and licence agreement dated 4 August 2025, Saba paid a deposit of Rs 1.25 lakh to move into the property. The building itself is no stranger to Hrithik's investments. Back in October 2020, the actor bought three units here – including the entire 18th floor and a duplex across the 19th and 20th floors – for Rs 97.5 crore from builder Samir Bhojwani. Zapkey records also reveal that in 2023, Gujarat Themis Biosyn Ltd rented a 3,600 sq ft flat in the same tower for Rs 6 lakh per month, paying a stamp duty of Rs 64,500 and registration charges of Rs 1,000.

Hrithik Roshan's Real Estate Track Record

The Roshans have long been active in Mumbai's property market. In May 2025, Hrithik and his father, Rakesh Roshan, sold three apartments in Andheri for Rs 6.75 crore. Earlier this year, Hrithik had also rented a 2,727 sq ft office space in Goregaon for Rs 5.62 lakh a month, and in February he renewed a lease for a 9,209 sq ft commercial space in Pune's Kharadi for Rs 6.08 lakh monthly.

Despite repeated attempts, Hrithik Roshan could not be reached for comment. But one thing is clear – while his films like War 2 continue to keep him in the spotlight, his property moves are also making headlines of their own.

Shah Rukh Khan Has Always Given Credit To Me, Says Sonu Nigam: 'Itne Bade Aadmi Ho...'



Singer Sonu Nigam recently opened up about Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan, and expressed admiration for him. Having lent his voice to many of SRK's iconic songs, Sonu Nigam revealed that he is a very special man, and that he always acknowledges and gives credit to others. He said that in the industry, singers are hardly ever mentioned even when others win awards for their songs. However, Shah Rukh Khan has never held back in praising him, and giving him credit, despite being such a huge superstar.

In a conversation with Faridoom Shahryar, Sonu Nigam said, "Shah Rukh Khan bohot bada aadmi hai. Bohot special hai. Wo bhi Delhi se hi aaya tha. Apne field mein to wo raja ban gaya. Unki aankhon mein dikhega apko ki banda mehnati hai. Aur sabse achhi baat ye hai ki Shah Rukh Khan se zyada achha behave karta hua meine koi actor dekha nahi hai. Mainstream mein koi Jinko haq hai akadna ka. Shah Rukh Khan se achha maine humble, aur gregarious tareef karne mein. Aamir se meri ab dosti hui hai. Aamir bohot ache aadmi hain. Shah Rukh kai saal se lage hain. (Shah Rukh Khan is a very big personality. He's truly special. He also came from Delhi, just like me. And in his field, he became a king. You can see it in his eyes – he's a hardworking man. And the best thing about him is that I've never seen an actor in mainstream cinema who behaves as well as Shah Rukh Khan does. Especially someone who has every right to have an ego. When it comes to being humble and generous with praise, I haven't seen anyone better than Shah Rukh Khan. I've recently become friends with Aamir Khan too, and he's a wonderful person. But Shah Rukh has been consistent for years.)"

He further added, "He has always given credit to me. Koi zarurat nahi thi. I am whatever I am because of Sonu's songs. 'Itne bade aadmi tum khud ho yaar. Tumhe kya zaroorat hai? Log bohot mushkil se credit dete hain kisiko. SRK ne kabhi koi kasar hi nahi chhodi mujhe credit dene mein. (He has always given me credit. He had no need to – he once said, 'I am whatever I am because of Sonu's songs.' I mean, come on, you're Shah Rukh Khan. You don't have to say that. Most people find it hard to give credit to others. But SRK never held back.)" Sonu Nigam added that he appreciates this about Shah Rukh Khan, especially because people in the industry don't usually credit others. "SRK never held back, and I truly appreciate that. Because I've seen how small-hearted people can be when it comes to acknowledging others. Singers like us sing the songs, and others get awards for them – and they don't even mention the singer's name."

Tame those table tantrums

Figuring out what is the best way to provide adequate carbohydrates, proteins and essential vitamins to your child is bad enough, and then come the tantrums. But don't worry - here are some smart strategies that will make sure your meal times are peaceful.

1. Never 'ask' a child to eat anything. Yes! Weird as it may sound, most tantrums can be avoided if kids are never asked to eat anything. Our role as parents is just to prevent them from eating the wrong food at the wrong time, so that they eat the right food at the right time. When prevented from eating junk, a child has no alternative but to eat well when hungry. On the other hand, if you are trying to force-feed children something they don't want, they will flare up and resist. Don't force them to eat, and there won't be any fights on the table.

2. The next obstacle will arise when you'll have to say 'no' to junk food. Do this firmly and don't give in. Let your kids know that you really mean what you say. It's okay if they

cry, sulk or scream. Suffering the consequences for bad behaviour is upsetting for the child, but it doesn't mean it's bad for them. Allowing them to eat whatever they wish, whenever they want, doesn't make you a want, doesn't make you a good parent.

3. Ensure that other members of the house are in sync with your ideologies and methods. Make sure no one gives in to your child's demands (either openly or when you're not around). This usually happens on the pretext that 'let the child eat something; it's better than not eating anything'.

Remember, children will only learn to eat correctly when they are left with no option.

4. Make sure meal times have a happy, relaxed atmosphere. Avoid doing homework and other activities simultaneously. If the child throws a tantrum, keep calm, clear the food from the table and store it in the fridge, so that it can be served again later. Make no attempts to provide alternatives.

5. Make food enjoyable! Serve fruits in attractive ways that make eating a fun activity for the child. Look up online for interesting and innovating

ways to serve different food items to kids: like sandwiches, coin pizzas, roti wraps etc.

6. Come up with a weekly, pre fixed menu for your kids, taking into consideration their likes and dislikes. This way they will be aware of what is going to be served that day and thus, will have no reason to raise objections.

7. Introduce a little of each food group at a time. If you know your child resists soups or salads in particular, serve just a small portion of it every day. Do this for a minimum of two weeks, gradually increasing the portion size if the child agrees. His/her taste buds will gradually start accepting those forbidden foods and he/she will soon learn to enjoy them.

8. Explain the benefits of having a good, balanced meal to your children. Tell them which foods have proteins and why they are important for the body. Tell them about calcium-rich foods and how consuming them leads to healthier bones. Mainly, educate them on the dining table through fun facts and examples.

9. Lastly and most importantly, set an example by always eating right. Children love to emulate their parents. They always learn better from what they 'see' rather than from what they are 'told'. Eat well-balanced and healthy meals with your children so that they follow your footsteps well.

I caused my mother a lot of trouble as a child because I was a fussy eater. I realised this the day the tables turned, and my little daughter did the same to me.

Food tantrums are every mother's worst nightmare.



'I believe in living with the right balance'

I believe in living with the right balance: Vineet Bajpai, CEO, TBWA\India

?Managing work-life balance

I was a workaholic till very recently and it took me some time to get this right. I realised that the only sustainable model for success and longevity is one that offers balance. So, now my greatest balance comes from spending time with my family, no matter what. I also read a lot, write whenever I get time and play console games.

Key to fitness

I have always been an active swimmer. I play tennis regularly. However, the real difference came in when I started practising yoga in the form of pranayama. It completed my fitness chart and is an inseparable part of my fitness regimen now.



Energy high and happiness

There is nothing more fulfilling and energising than to see the building of an institution that one started from scratch. Thereafter, the journey

becomes the fuel! On the other hand, happiness is a far deeper emotion, and what gives me ample joy and happiness is the presence of my family around me.

Risk-taker or a micro-planner?

I will have to say I am a combination of both. I started my professional life as an entrepreneur, so that makes me a risk-taker. And I'm also a micro-planner because I'm involved in building a company from 'good' to 'brilliant' - which needs meticulous planning and determined execution of the details.

Spiritual diet

I'm a voracious reader and have a strong inclination towards spiritual and philosophical books. Apart from practising meditation, it is books from authors like Dr S Radhakrishnan and Khalil Gibran that have made a huge impact on me. My father is a constant source of wisdom for me as he influences me with recitations from the Gita, Guru Granth Sahib and even Ghalib!

Handling failure/success

I'm grateful to the Universe for my success but I never celebrate it. I start to plan the next big step. Failure makes me more committed, stronger and determined to win. Hope it stays that way!

Crisis management

I have a great asset for this - a fantastic team. It has taken me almost two decades to build this solid team, but now it never lets me feel alone or deal with crisis all by myself.

An icon who has achieved work-life balance

Robin Sharma, the celebrity author of The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari. I follow his teachings and it is amazing to see how he creates time for family, holidays and refuelling, despite nurturing a global career.



5 characteristics of a great workplace

At every stage in your career, the decision of where to work is in many ways life-shaping beyond just the immediate tangible financial impact. Unfortunately, not many realise this until well into their career. Where you work is a choice of how and on what you want to spend your time and what you want to receive in return for that invaluable investment. While ultimately where to work is each individual's choice based on their priority and needs, in my opinion, there are five key criteria to look for in a company.

1. Inspired you to be the real you:

Do you ever wonder why 99% of your workforce puts up facades of themselves at work that are very different from who they are in their personal lives? Why is there this dichotomy? Your energies should be focused on the market, your employer's competition, managing your time well, the opportunities and risks at work not within yourself. When you work for an organisation that connects with your authentic self, you not only do your best, but also inspire others around you.

2. Focuses on a mission close to your heart:

The best jobs allow you to do work you believe in and enjoy. Successful start-ups in particular are often characterised by the collaboration of inspired individuals who could not imagine doing any other work. This type of environment allows people who are creatively oriented and talented to work with organisations that match their passion and push the boundaries of technology and innovation.

3. Honours merit over tenure; ideas over hierarchy:

Apple's legendary co-founder firmly believed companies that want to retain great employees have to let them make decisions. Enlightened leadership teams ask employees to contribute ideas because they recognise managers and executives don't have all the answers. Leaders should also encourage debate and action on ideas. In 2006, IBM invited 150,000 employees, family members, business partners and clients to an online brainstorming session called 'Innovation Jam'. Participants from 104 countries responded, and their ideas led to \$100 million in investments by IBM on suggested projects.

prospects to continue your educational journey:

Look for an environment where you can challenge the status quo, even unlearn past assumptions and misplaced beliefs, and ultimately learn a set of new skills and principles that enable you to continuously stretch and raise the bar for yourself.

5. Provides a pace to enjoy the journey:

With mobile phones, a constantly connected world, a growing number of virtual offices and global teams that make collaborating across time zones critical to success, the boundaries between work and home life are now blurred. A good organisation will allow employees to take from this the benefits and leave behind the disadvantages. You want to be able to transition seamlessly between work and home life without it seeming like you have a strained wall of defined separation from your "home you" and your "work you".

While every individual needs to strive hard to hit the upper echelon of their potential, the path to get there should always be enjoyable and fun or it will always feel like hard work and make it even more difficult to achieve.

A workplace that offers you the environment where the journey is just as exciting as the destination is a must in my book.

