

## Double Standards of Justice: Sikhs Languish in Jails While Rapist Ram Rahim Gets Frequent Paroles

The Sikh Times  
Special Correspondent

New Delhi, August 5: A growing wave of anger is sweeping through the Sikh community over what is being termed as "blatant discrimination" in the justice system of the country. On one hand, Sikh prisoners who have completed their sentences remain locked behind bars, while on the other, convicted rapist and murderer Gurmeet Ram Rahim enjoys parole every two months, roaming freely outside prison under official protection.

This stark contrast has triggered outrage and questions across the nation: Is India running two parallel systems of justice – one for the privileged and another for the oppressed?

While Sikhs who have served their full sentences continue to languish in jails without release, Gurmeet Ram Rahim, convicted of heinous crimes including rape and murder, is



repeatedly granted parole "for personal reasons" and allowed to live luxuriously outside prison. His repeated paroles are seen as a mockery of the justice system, raising serious doubts about the rule of law and equality before law in the country.

Expressing deep anguish, the All India Sikh Conference Babbar has made an urgent appeal to Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to immediately order the release of all Sikh prisoners who have completed their sentences.

"It is unacceptable that those who have served their time are still kept behind bars while a rapist and murderer enjoys state-sanctioned vacations," said Gurcharan Singh Babbar.

He further stated, "This is a matter of grave injustice. The government must ensure the immediate release of all Sikhs whose sentences have ended. Continuing their detention is a violation of not just constitutional rights, but also of basic human dignity."

Ram Rahim's frequent paroles have

repeatedly drawn sharp criticism from across political and social circles. Many question why a convicted criminal is allowed to leave jail every two months, while ordinary prisoners are denied even basic relief. His parole periods often coincide with elections, fueling allegations of political patronage and vote-bank appeasement.

Sikh organizations have warned that the growing injustice is creating massive unrest among the community. "The patience of the Sikh community is being tested. We will not remain silent while discriminatory policies continue to target us," Babbar added. The demand is clear and urgent: All Sikh prisoners who have completed their terms must be released immediately, and the government must ensure equality in the justice system.

This issue not only questions the integrity of law enforcement but also challenges the very foundation of India's constitutional principles of justice, equality, and fairness.

MNS workers storm Nagpur bank, assault staff for action against labourer

Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) workers created a ruckus at a Yes Bank branch in Nagpur on Monday, assaulted a bank staff member and vandalised the premises. The incident took place at the Mount Road branch after a borrower, who alleged injustice by the bank, sought the support of Raj Thackeray's party men, police said.

A video of the MNS workers slapping a staff member, raising slogans, defacing the bank premises and creating a ruckus has gone viral on social media.

As per the information, the borrower, identified as Indrajit Baliram Mule, had reportedly taken a loan from Yes Bank to purchase an earth-moving machine. According to Mule, he was struggling with repayment and had approached the bank multiple times seeking a resolution. However, the bank, he claimed, did not offer any assistance or settlement option. Subsequently, when he took the heavy-duty machine to take a driving test and obtain a driving licence at the Regional Transport Office (RTO), the bank allegedly seized the vehicle and later sold it without informing him.

## Enough: India hits back at US after Russian oil threats, truce lies

If Donald Trump expected India to roll over, the message from South Block is loud and clear: India decides its interests, not Washington.

New Delhi. (Agency)

In the face of mounting threats from the US to end its purchases of Russian oil or face steep punitive tariffs, India on Monday issued a defiant and unapologetic rebuttal, sending a clear message to Washington: enough is enough. Pulling no punches, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) came armed with receipts and called out the US and the European Union (EU) for their own continued trades with Russia. From publicly rubbishing US President Donald Trump's false claims of brokering a ceasefire between India and Pakistan, to unequivocally rejecting pressure on its energy ties with Moscow, New Delhi has made one thing crystal clear: it values diplomacy, restraint, and dialogue—but it will not be

dictated to.

**OP SINDOOR AND TRUMP'S TRUCE LIES**

It all began with Trump's boastful assertions over the India-Pakistan flare-up in May, claiming he had single-handedly negotiated a ceasefire. But in a rare, outright dismissal of a US President's remarks, New Delhi categorically denied any such involvement.

Parliament was also told in no uncertain terms that no foreign leader mediated to bring an end to the four-day conflict. The public rebuttal signalled that New Delhi would not let political grandstanding and misinformation from Washington go unchecked.

**INDIA-US FRICITION OVER RUSSIAN OIL**

Now, Trump has accused India of

helping to bankroll Russia's war in Ukraine. He announced plans to raise tariffs on Indian goods by 25 per cent starting August 7,



along with additional penalties unless India halts its imports of discounted Russian crude, which now account for one-third of the country's oil imports.

On his Truth Social platform, the US President accused New Delhi of "not caring how many people in Ukraine are being

killed by the Russian war machine". Alleging that India was "selling Russian oil on the open market for big profits", he threatened to further raise punitive tariffs.

Earlier, he derided both Russia and India as "dead economies" and warned they would "go down together."

Trump's top advisor, Stephen Miller also warned that it is "not acceptable" for India to fund Russia's war through oil purchases. But the Modi government isn't flinching.

In its statement yesterday, the MEA lambasted the "unjustified and unreasonable" targeting of New Delhi. It took aim at the West's duplicity, noting that the US and EU continue to do business with Russia even while pressuring India to cut ties.

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## U-Special Bus Service to Resume After Years: CM Rekha Gupta

The Sikh Times  
Sourabh Sharma

New Delhi, 5 August: Delhi Chief Minister Mrs Rekha Gupta yesterday inaugurated the newly constructed academic block of the Social Centre School, affiliated with Delhi University, (Maurice Nagar) marking a significant milestone for



students across the capital. During the event, she announced the revival of the long-discontinued 'U-Special' bus service, which once served as a lifeline for college students in Delhi. The Chief Minister stated that the service would return with modern upgrades, including air conditioning, LED lighting, and music systems ensuring a more comfortable, accessible, and dignified commute for students. She further proposed that Delhi University adopt selected government schools, allowing university professors and students to regularly mentor schoolchildren and contribute to their academic growth. Addressing the gathering as the chief guest, Mrs Rekha Gupta acknowledged the challenges stu-

## Loot alliance of BJP, education mafia: AAP protests against school fee hike bill

New Delhi. (Agency)

Am Aadmi Party (AAP) MLAs on Monday protested against a bill to regulate fee hikes by schools in the Delhi Assembly premises, calling it a "sham" designed to favour private school owners. The Delhi School Education Transparency in Fixation and Regulation of Fees Bill, 2025 was tabled on the first day of the Monsoon session of the assembly. AAP legislators, led by Leader of the Opposition, Atishi, protested in front of Mahatma Gandhi's statue.

Calling the bill a "calculated sham", former Delhi chief minister Atishi accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led government of protecting

private school interests rather than those of parents.

"This bill is not about transparency. It is about facilitating fee hikes by private schools. The BJP has delayed this bill since April so that schools could increase fees unchecked," she alleged.

Atishi said the bill, brought to the assembly in the ongoing Monsoon session, lacks any provision for a rollback of hiked fees and proposes a fee fixation committee that would be headed by the school management itself.

She demanded that the bill be referred to a select committee for wider consultation and urged the government



to freeze school fees at 2024-25 levels until the legislation is finalised.

"The AAP will continue to fight for the rights of Delhi's parents and children. The BJP will have to listen," she said. The AAP MLAs on Monday walked out of the House proceedings over the bill. Speaking to reporters, Atishi said,

"There is collusion between BJP and Private Schools. It has been 4 months, private schools have forcefully collected increased fees by threatening parents, and now a law has been introduced that is completely fraudulent. The committee will be formed under the chairmanship of the management that wants to increase school fees. Will they increase the fees according to the parents' wishes? There is not even a provision for an audit." The party demanded that the bill be sent to a Select Committee, opinions be taken from parents, and the increased fees that have been collected be refunded completely fraudulent.

## Kalyan Banerjee quits after Mahua Moitra's 'pig' jibe, resignation accepted

**Kalyan Banerjee quits as party chief whip after Mahua Moitra's 'pig' jibe, Trinamool accepts resignation**

New Delhi. (Agency)

The Trinamool Congress on Tuesday announced that senior leader Kalyan Banerjee had resigned as the party's chief whip in the Lok Sabha following fellow MP Mahua Moitra's 'pig' jibe at him. The party named MP Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar as his replacement in the Lower House. In a statement, the party said its leadership has accepted Kalyan Banerjee's resignation and appointed Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar as the new chief whip in the Lok Sabha, while Satabdi Roy has been named the new deputy leader of the party in the House, with immediate effect.

Kalyan Banerjee resigned on Monday, a day after Mahua Moitra referred to him as 'pig' on a podcast with India Today. Moitra,



while reacting to Kalyan Banerjee's comments on her marriage with Pinaki Mishra, said, "You don't wrestle with a pig. Because the pig likes it and you get dirty. There are deeply misogynistic, sexually frustrated, depraved men in India and they have their representation in parliament

across all parties."

The remarks infuriated Banerjee, who publicly condemned them as 'dehumanising' and lacking in the basic norms of civil discourse.

"I have taken note of the recent personal remarks made by Mahua Moitra in a public podcast. Her choice of words, including the use of dehumanising language such as comparing a fellow MP to a 'pig', is not only unfortunate but reflects a deep disregard for basic norms of civil discourse," he hit back. Following Banerjee's resignation, in a major reshuffle of its parliamentary leadership, Trinamool appointed party general secretary Abhishek Banerjee as its new leader in the Lok Sabha, replacing veteran MP Sudip Bandopadhyay.

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# CEC finds Yamuna embankment in Kalesar National Park intact

**Gurgaon.** The Supreme Court-appointed central empowered committee (CEC) this month confirmed allegations that an embankment was built in the protected Kalesar National Park to divert Yamuna waters and Haryana govt's submission that the structure had been removed was false. CEC visited the park in Yamunagar on May 19 and found that the embankment across the river was intact, according to the report submitted by the committee's chairperson Siddhanta Das this week. The Kalesar park is an eco-sensitive zone (ESZ), where construction is barred and any non-forest activity needs to be approved by the ESZ monitoring committee. CEC recommended taking penal action against responsible officials, halting all illegal construction immediately, improving ESZ committee's oversight mechanism and training all govt officials in ESZ norms. The case stems from a petition filed in March by activist Sanjay Kumar, who alleged that an embankment was built on the river by Haryana's irrigation department and the

structure diverted Yamuna's waters to UP to aid illegal mining. The petitioner's counsel also submitted satellite imagery as evidence of construction. The SC bench of justices B R Gavai and Augustine George Masih, while hearing the plea in April this year, ordered the CEC to investigate the site. It also directed the petitioner to submit copies of the plea with Haryana and UP govt for their responses. EC, after the inspection on May 19, submitted its report to the top court on May 26. It said that the state's irrigation department had informed the ESZ monitoring committee on May 15 that the embankment was temporary to stop nearby farmlands and villages from flooding. The department told the monitoring panel that the structure was removed. "During the site visit, it was also observed that the embankment was constructed across the river's flow, which contradicts the submissions made in the minutes of the district-level ESZ monitoring committee meeting. Irrigation department officials then informed that

the said embankment was constructed temporarily..." CEC's report to SC noted. The report also said that 1,800 metres from the embankment, nine concrete studs and a 450m cement wall were being built without ESZ committee's clearance. Further, CEC said, a day before its site visit, the irrigation department submitted a "written statement" from the contractor tasked with building the embankment that this structure was constructed to "facilitate concreting work" to prevent soil erosion and the firm has "since removed it". In its observations, CEC pointed out the violations – that the ESZ monitoring committee "failed" to take suo-motu cognizance of construction in the Kalesar National Park; the irrigation department "misrepresented the nature and location of the embankment", and that "no permissions" were sought for construction in the protected area. In addition, the report said, the contractor's admission that the embankment was built for concreting work and not to avoid flooding "came only a day before CEC's

site visit, raising further concerns about transparency and compliance". The Supreme Court will take up the petition in July next. Asked about CEC's findings, Haryana's principal chief conservator of forests (PCCF) Vineet Garg said strict instructions have been issued by the ESZ panel to ensure compliance with environmental regulations in the future. "The state has acknowledged the ecological importance of the Rajaji-Kalesar-Simbalbara wildlife corridor and expressed its commitment to conservation efforts. As part of this, Haryana will prepare a proposal to strengthen the corridor," Garg said. Yamuna's passage in the Kalesar park is part of a critical wildlife corridor through the Shivalik hills. This corridor facilitates movement of wildlife between Rajaji Tiger Reserve in Uttarakhand, Kalesar National Park in Haryana and Simbalbara National Park in Himachal Pradesh. The petitioner's counsel Gaurav Kumar Bansal told TOI on Thursday that this region is a "crucial".

**Gurgaon.** A recent directive from the Directorate of School Education announced the discontinuation of govt-provided internet data for tablets distributed to students.

The move, effective from May 25, 2025, requires students to use their personal internet connections or access school Wi-Fi where available.

The decision, however, has sparked concerns among teachers and potentially impacts digital learning initiatives across the state. In the city alone, around 33,000 students received these devices under the e-Adhigam scheme. The estimated number of tablets distributed across the state is around 500,000. The devices were primarily given to govt school students in classes 10, 11, and 12. In April 2022, govt approved the procurement of 5 lakh tablets at a cost of Rs 620 crore, alongside Rs 47 crore worth of SIM cards, to provide a free internet facility with a daily data limit of 2 GB. The tablets had SIM cards installed that were recharged for internet use only, with no calling facility.

According to the recent letter from the Directorate of School Education, students are expected to "use the internet available at home" to use the PAL application on the tablets. Alternatively, the students can use the broadband available in school with teacher supervision.

According to the sources, multiple factors potentially contributed to this decision, including the feedback and budget allocation considerations. An official said that the primary reason behind the move is budget constraints and a lack of results. The move is likely to be a part of a cost-cutting measure to shift the budget to other areas with higher requirements. Officials said the decision is also motivated by the fact that performance of electronic devices worsens after three years, and rendering internet facilities may be less useful.

## U-Special Bus Service to Resume After Years: CM Rekha Gupta

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We are transforming government schools in Delhi to exceed the standards of private institutions so much so that parents will proudly choose to enrol their children in them." The event was attended by Delhi's Education Minister Mr Ashish Sood, Delhi University Vice-Chancellor Prof Yogesh Singh, Mayor Mr Raja Iqbal Singh, local MLAs, senior officials from the university and the education department, and a large number of students. In her concluding remarks, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta reaffirmed her government's unwavering commitment to educational reform, stating that sustained efforts are propelling Delhi toward a future of "Excellence in Education, Excellence in Opportunity."

## SC Settlements to be Transformed: Ravinder Indraj Singh

The Sikh Times

New Delhi: 5 August: Delhi Government's Minister for Social Welfare and SC/ST Welfare, Ravinder Indraj Singh, dedicated the newly completed construction of streets, roads, and drainage systems in the SC settlements of Katewara village, located in the Bawana constituency. The Cabinet Minister stated that all basic infrastructure in SC settlements will be upgraded as part of a comprehensive transformation. He emphasized that providing basic amenities to SC communities is a top priority for the government. Noting the long-standing lack of infrastructure in Katewara's SC settlements, the minister assured that continuous efforts are being made to bridge this gap. He also inspected other ongoing development works in the village and directed officials to ensure high-quality completion of the under-construction community hall (Chaupal). During his interaction with local residents, the Minister highlighted several key welfare initiatives by the Delhi Government. He said that Hon'ble Chief Minister Smt. Rekha Gupta has given clear directions to ensure the development of essential facilities such as roads, drinking water, electricity, parks, and proper drainage in all SC settlements. The Delhi Government is fully committed to extending development to the farthest corners of the city. The Minister also stated that all eligible SC students are to be provided timely disbursement of pre-matric/post-matric scholarships and merit scholarships. Students pursuing Polytechnic, ITI, or skill development courses will receive a monthly stipend of ₹1,000. Plans are also underway to increase the financial aid provided to SC students studying abroad. Long-closed hostels for SC/ST students in Delhi will be reopened, and new hostels will be established in each district. To empower the poor and marginalized communities financially and promote self-reliance, the Delhi Scheduled Castes Financial and Development Corporation (DSFDC) is also being restructured.

## Final Trial Run of NDM-6 Diesel-Hydraulic Loco Conducted Successfully on DHR

Maligaon, 5th August: The final trial run of the newly procured NDM-6 Diesel-Hydraulic (DSL) Loco for the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway (DHR) was successfully conducted recently, from Darjeeling to Siliguri with three coaches. This follows the earlier successful uphill trial run from Siliguri to Darjeeling. The NDM-6 loco, specially designed for narrow gauge heritage routes like the DHR,



is equipped with upgraded safety features and offers improved performance and reliability. The loco has been introduced to enhance operational efficiency on the UNESCO World Heritage section, ensuring safer and more sustainable travel across the picturesque hill terrain. This development marks a significant step in preserving the charm of the DHR while incorporating modern engineering enhancements. The trial runs are a part of routine safety and performance evaluation before inducting the loco into regular service. Further two additional NDM-6 Diesel Loco are under procurement and will soon be introduced into the DHR. Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) remains committed to the preservation and modernization of heritage railway systems like DHR while continuing to provide safe and comfortable travel for passengers.

## Noida orders 2 more sheds in shelter to tackle cattle chaos

**Noida.** A day after TOI reported a traffic disruption caused by buffaloes on the Noida Elevated Road, senior officials from Noida Authority inspected a cow shelter in Sector 135 and issued directions to improve its management and prevent stray cattle from straying onto roads. Additional CEO Sanjay Kumar Khatri, accompanied by general manager (public health) SP Singh, public health officer Indu Prakash Singh, and others, visited the facility on Wednesday. "We have directed officials to ensure no stray cattle are found on the roads. If spotted, they must be caught and brought to the shelter," Khatri said. Referring to the buffaloes seen on the elevated road, he said they appeared to belong to local farmers. "There are villages in Noida where people keep cattle. Sometimes, owners take them out for grazing. Since their movement isn't fixed, it's difficult to monitor them," he added.

Spread across 20,000 sqm near the Yamuna floodplains, the Sector 135 shelter has been operational since 2019 and currently houses around 800 cows. It plays a key role in addressing the city's stray cattle issue and also features a biogas plant that processes cow dung into usable energy. Khatri instructed officials to build two additional sheds at the shelter to accommodate about 100 more cows. He also called for the segregation of pregnant and lactating cows and flagged damaged infrastructure, such as the fodder room's main gate and a tin shed, for urgent repair. Other directions included the concretisation of a shelter section and installation of water pipelines along all rows to ensure regular cleaning. Assistant project engineer Sushil Kumar, who was absent without prior intimation, faced disciplinary action and will forfeit one month's salary. The inspection followed Tuesday's incident where a herd of buffaloes moving in the wrong direction on the high-speed Noida Elevated Road, between Sector 18 and Sector 60, brought traffic to a crawl around 12.30 pm.

## Fatalities in rear-end crashes on Delhi-Gurgaon expressway double in a yr

**Gurgaon:** Fatalities due to rear-end collisions on the Delhi-Gurgaon Expressway, or NH-8, in the city have more than doubled in a year – a finding that traffic police say has become a cause of concern. Official data shows that the number of rear-end collisions on the expressway was 108 in 2023 and it rose 70% to 184 in 2024. Fatalities in these accidents increased from 45 in 2023 to 99 last year, a hike of 120%. Gurgaon traffic police said on Thursday that such collisions are often caused by drivers of heavy vehicles who tend to speed beyond the permissible limit on the expressway. The speed limit is 100 kmph for cars and other light vehicles on the expressway, and 80 kmph for trucks, buses and other heavy vehicles. Cops said on Thursday they have identified six expressway "hotspots" where such accidents are common. These are 32nd Avenue Entry, Rajiv Chowk, Hero Honda Chowk, Kherki Daula, IMT Manesar and Bawali Chowk. Many of the fatal accidents are around junctions or U-turns, where drivers ahead often slow down and speeding vehicles fail to hit the brakes in

time. On Wednesday, traffic police took up this issue at a meeting of the district's road safety committee. "High speed of heavy vehicles is the main cause of rear-end collisions. Actions like speed control and joint fines will be intensified to prevent such accidents. Road safety is our priority, and all departments must work in coordination to achieve this," said DCP (traffic) Rajesh Mohan. Other measures under consideration are training workshops for drivers. Commuters said trucks and buses are driven rashly on the expressway. "The truck drivers have no regard for norms and rules, particularly during night-time, when traffic on the expressway is leaner. Authorities to devise some ways to regulate this rash driving," Suchita Sundaram, who lives in Sector 51, said on Thursday. TOI had

reported earlier this year that around 44% of road accidents in Gurgaon were reported on the expressway, or NH-8 that connects Delhi with Jaipur. A major chunk of fatalities in – 40% – in expressway crashes were that of pedestrians, data showed. Residents have said that the lack of foot overbridges also forces people to cross the expressway, putting pedestrians at a higher risk. The expressway is among the busiest intercity stretches in India. Conservative estimates log average ridership at 3 lakh passenger cars daily. TOI reported earlier this month that the 18 km expressway in Gurgaon and 10 km in Delhi will be repaved for the first time since the speedway connecting the two cities was opened to traffic in 2008. Other upgrades will include reinforcing pavement layers on stretches with flyovers, service roads and underpasses, replacing metal beam crash barriers with concrete ones, rectifying road engineering defects at accident-prone spots, upgrading lighting, and improving signage to make the expressway safer.

## Mercury rises to 38.2°C, thunderstorm brings brief relief in Gurgaon

**Gurgaon.** A sudden spell rain accompanied by gusty winds brought the city some much-needed respite on Thursday evening. The thunderstorm – which began around 5 pm and lasted only 15 minutes – was intense, with winds reaching speeds of up to 40 kmph. The relief was temporary. However, as temperatures remained high, minimum temperature was recorded at 26.9°C, a slight rise of 0.8°C compared to the previous day. The maximum temperature climbed to 38.2°C, also a notch higher than the day before. According to IMD, this weather pattern is the result of a Western Disturbance and an upper air cyclonic circulation hovering over Punjab and its

surrounding regions. These systems are expected to bring more rain over the next two days. The IMD has forecast light to moderate rainfall at many places in Punjab on May 29 and 30, with a continuation at a few locations thereafter. Haryana and Chandigarh are likely to witness similar rainfall patterns – initially at a few places on May 29, expanding to many areas on May 30, and persisting in isolated pockets beyond that. The intense thunderstorm left a trail of destruction in several residential areas. In H Block of Vatika India Next, Vikshit Sharma described a scene of chaos and near-misses. "Around 20 trees and large branches came crashing down during the storm. Some of them landed on

parked cars causing some damage," he said. Mapsko Casabella, RWA president Dham Veer Singh said the damage extended from H Block to Signature Villas. "Several trees were uprooted. The winds were so strong, they pulled up the roots clean off the ground. A glass door on the balcony shattered due to gusty wind," he said. Police helped in removing uprooted trees from both sides of NH-48 near IMT Chowk, Wazirabad Chowk, Z Chowk, and Bakhtawar Chowk. The weather system is also expected to be accompanied by thunderstorms, lightning, and gusty winds reaching 50 to 60 kmph at isolated locations in Punjab, Haryana, and Chandigarh during this period.

## Noida farmers protest for revised circle rates, abadi plots



**Noida.** A group of more than 100 farmers gathered in protest outside the Greater Noida collectorate on Wednesday. The farmers, under the banner of Kisan Sangharsh Morcha, demanded the immediate implementation of recommendations by the high-power committee formed following similar protests last year. Other demands raised at the protest included allocation of 10% abadi plots, revision of circle rates pending for 11 years, proper settlement of rural colonies, resolution of issues faced by NTPC-affected families, and

allotment of vending zone shops to landless families. Farmers also accused the administration of delaying action despite concrete suggestions submitted by the state-appointed committee over nine months ago. In Feb 2024, a high-power committee constituted by the UP govt, was tasked with reviewing long-pending demands related to land compensation and rehabilitation, in response to sustained farmer protests. Headed by Revenue Board chairman Rajneesh Dube and comprising senior officials including the Meerut divisional

commissioner and the Noida district magistrate, the committee submitted its report in Aug 2024. The committee's key recommendations included conducting satellite and physical surveys of rural settlements, demarcating abadi land boundaries, resolving compensation delays, separating encroachment cases from plot allotment, completing pending leaseback processes, prioritising landless families in vending zone allocations, and initiating skill development programmes for youth from farming families. However, the

committee rejected certain farmer demands, such as increasing the abadi plot quota to 10% and allowing commercial use of residential plots, citing legal constraints. The high-power committee submitted its report on Aug 27, 2024. It contains clear and practical solutions to long-standing farmer issues. Why is the administration sitting on it for so long?" questioned Dr Rupesh Verma, district president of All India Kisan Sabha. "We were patient, but now the movement will only grow stronger until each point in that report is acted upon." Farmer leaders also alleged a lack of sincerity in the administration's approach. "They make promises in meetings, but nothing happens on the ground. The authorities are more concerned about investors than the farmers whose land built these cities," said Verma. Meanwhile, district magistrate Manish Kumar Verma told TOI, "We assured the farmers that the recommendations of the high-power committee will be implemented at the earliest. Such policy-level implementation often takes time at state govt level. The process of revising circle rates is already underway." On the issue of 10% abadi plots, the DM said that the committee found the request legally unviable.

## News box

### Government pulls plug on free internet for students' tablets in Gurgaon

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The decision, however, has sparked concerns among teachers and potentially impacts digital learning initiatives across the state. In the city alone, around 33,000 students received these devices under the e-Adhigam scheme. The estimated number of tablets distributed across the state is around 500,000. The devices were primarily given to govt school students in classes 10, 11, and 12. In April 2022, govt approved the procurement of 5 lakh tablets at a cost of Rs 620 crore, alongside Rs 47 crore worth of SIM cards, to provide a free internet facility with a daily data limit of 2 GB. The tablets had SIM cards installed that were recharged for internet use only, with no calling facility.

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# India-UK Parliamentary Delegation Meets in Delhi

## The Sikh Times

New Delhi, 5 August: Our shared democratic values and historic ties continue to guide the evolving partnership between India and the United Kingdom," stated Hon'ble Speaker Vijender Gupta during a courtesy meeting with the visiting British Parliamentary Delegation, led by Her Excellency Mrs. Nusrat Ghani, Deputy Speaker of the UK House of Commons, at the Delhi Legislative Assembly. The British Parliamentary Delegation was led by Her Excellency Nusrat Munir Ul-Ghani; Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons and comprised of several distinguished dignitaries and officials, including Sarah Davies, Clerk Assistant in the House of Commons; Abigail Samuels, Private Secretary to the Deputy Speaker; Natalia Leigh, Head of Political and Bilateral Affairs at the British High Commission in New Delhi; Alexandra Knowles, Deputy Head of Political and Bilateral Affairs at the British High Commission; Bhavna VJ, Senior Political and Economic Adviser; and Parul Kavia, Political Adviser. During the interaction, Gupta emphasised the strategic transformation of India-UK relations into a contemporary, multi-dimensional partnership shaped by frameworks such as the Comprehensive Economic



and Trade Agreement (CETA) and the India-UK

Gupta also apprised the delegation of the Delhi facilitating access to valuable archival materials held by the British Council, stating, "We request that these records be made available at the earliest to support our efforts to document and preserve this institution's legacy for future generations." In her remarks, Her Excellency Nusrat Ghani expressed deep appreciation for the hospitality extended by the Delhi Legislative Assembly and acknowledged both its historic legacy and its modern relevance. She commended the Assembly's strides in embracing digital innovation and sustainability, describing it as a forward-looking model of 21st-century legislative governance. Emphasising the Delhi Assembly's role as a beacon of progressive insti-

Vision 2035. "With our roadmap now expanded to cover trade, technology, education, defence, climate action, and innovation, we stand together as partners in global progress," he remarked. He further underscored the valuable contributions of the Indian diaspora and Indian businesses in enhancing bilateral economic engagement. Education featured prominently in the discussions. Shri Gupta noted that more than 170,000 Indian students are currently enrolled in UK universities. He warmly welcomed the initiative by UK universities to establish campuses in India—particularly the University of Southampton's forthcoming campus in Gurugram—and praised the 2022 mutual recognition of academic qualifications as a pivotal development in academic mobility and cooperation.

### NAME CHANGE

I, SUMA JOHN DIO POOTHEEKAD MATHEW JOHN RIO K-113 E. POCKET-1, PHASE-II, SHEKH SARAI, NEW DELHI-110017 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SUMA ELIAS

### NAME CHANGE

I, Suniti Kumar S/o Jagdish Chand R/o 312, Sec-16-A, Kheri, Kalan, Faridabad, Haryana-121002 have changed my name to Suniti Gulhar.

### NAME CHANGE

I, Pravini Kumar S/o Jai Prakash R/o H.no.6013, Sec-C, Pocket-6, Vasant Kunj, Delhi-110070 have changed my name to Pravini Kumar.

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## NEWS BOX

## US-China trade talks stalled, may need Trump-Xi intervention: Treasury Secretary

**UPDATED.** US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said Thursday that trade negotiations with China are currently stalled and may require direct involvement from President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping to move forward. Speaking to Fox News, Bessent highlighted the complexity of the talks and said progress has slowed since the temporary 90-day truce reached earlier this month. "Given the magnitude of the talks, given the complexity ... this is going to require both leaders to weigh in with each other," Bessent said, expressing confidence that China would respond once Trump makes his position clear. The temporary deal helped calm markets but failed to address deeper US concerns about China's state-controlled economic model. Since then, the Trump administration has turned its focus to trade talks with other partners, including Japan, India, and the EU. Bessent earlier said that some trading partners, including Japan, were negotiating in good faith and showed no change in stance following the trade court ruling. He's scheduled to meet a Japanese delegation in Washington on Friday.

Earlier on Wednesday, a US trade court ruled that President Trump exceeded his authority by imposing most tariffs on Chinese and other imports under an emergency powers act. However, within 24 hours, a federal appeals court reinstated the tariffs, temporarily pausing the lower court's decision to review the government's appeal. The court has set deadlines, with plaintiffs required to respond by June 5 and the administration by June 9.

## China to resume Japanese seafood imports it halted over Fukushima water discharge

**TOKYO.** China will resume Japanese seafood imports that it banned in 2023 over worries about Japan's discharge of wastewater from the damaged Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant into the sea, a Japanese official said Friday. The issue has been a significant political and diplomatic point of tension for the wary Asian powers. Agriculture Minister Shinjiro Koizumi said the two sides reached an agreement after Japanese and Chinese officials met in Beijing and the imports will resume once the necessary paperwork is done. China did not immediately comment. China blocked imports of Japanese seafood because it said the release would endanger the fishing industry and coastal communities in eastern China. Japanese officials have said the wastewater must be released to make room for the nuclear plant's decommissioning and to prevent accidental leaks. They say the treatment and dilution will make the wastewater safer than international standards and its environmental impact will be negligible. Friday's announcement is based on an agreement between the two nations that Beijing would take steps toward ending the ban by joining water sampling missions by the United Nations' International Atomic Energy Agency. The March 2011 nuclear meltdowns followed an earthquake and tsunami. There were meltdowns in the plant's three reactors, causing large amounts of radioactive water to accumulate. The water release has been a milestone for the plant's battle with an ever-growing radioactive water stockpile that officials say has hampered the daunting task of removing fatally toxic melted debris from the reactors.

## Canada Wildfires Spread To 2nd Province, Over 17,000 Residents Evacuated

**Ottawa.** The western Canadian province of Saskatchewan declared a wildfire emergency on Thursday, becoming the second to do so after neighboring Manitoba had ordered 17,000 people to quickly flee their homes in remote communities a day earlier. "It's a very serious situation that we're faced with in Saskatchewan," the province's Premier Scott Moe told a news conference. "We are putting in place every measure possible to prepare our communities," he continued. Around 4,000 residents were evacuated from the province earlier this week, and more evacuations appear possible with no rain in the weather forecast. "Looking ahead, it doesn't look good. It looks like it is going to further deteriorate," Moe added. Manitoba declared a province-wide state of emergency late Wednesday and ordered the evacuations of several small towns and Indigenous communities as the province experienced its worst start to a wildfire season in years. Many of the weary evacuees arrived in the provincial capital Winnipeg on Thursday after a long and harrowing nighttime drive on jammed roads. In two remote northern Indigenous communities in Manitoba, "Air Force planes were deployed and...in the process of evacuating people," Canada's Emergency Management Minister Eleanor Olszewski said Thursday. At a city hockey arena set up as an emergency shelter, Matthew LaRosa, who fled the town of Flin Flon in northern Manitoba with his mother Lisa, told the Free Press it had simply been a "long day." Yesterday, when we got the evac notice, it was, 'Go to the house, grab everything, load the truck and get out of town,' he told the daily.

Winnipeg Mayor Scott Gillingham said in a news release, "We know many families are arriving with little more than the clothes on their backs." As thousands flee dangerous wildfires, Winnipeg will do what we've always done in times of crisis: open our doors and stand together," he said. Long way from home!

"People are exhausted," Luc Mullinder, head of the Manitoba branch of the Red Cross, told AFP.

# Chinese students 'anxious' and 'angry' after Rubio vows to revoke US visas

**HONG KONG.** Chinese students studying in the US are scrambling to figure out their futures after US Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced on Wednesday that some of them would have their visas revoked. The US will begin revoking the visas of some Chinese students, including those studying in "critical fields" and "those with connections to the Chinese Communist Party," according to the announcement. China is the second-largest country of origin for international students in the United States, behind only India. In the 2023-2024 school year, more than 270,000 international students were from China, making up roughly a quarter of all foreign students in the US. Rubio's announcement was a "new version of the Chinese Exclusion Act," said Liqin, a Chinese student at Johns Hopkins University, who asked to be identified only by his first name out of fear of retaliation. He was referring to a 19th-century law that prohibited Chinese from immigrating to the US and banned

Chinese people already in the US from getting citizenship. He said Wednesday was the first time he thought about leaving the US after spending a third of his life here. Chinese international students are a point of tension. China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Mao Ning, called the US decision unreasonable. "Such a politicized and discriminatory action lays bare the US lie that it upholds so-called freedom and openness," she said Thursday, adding that China has lodged a protest with the US. The issue of Chinese students studying overseas has long been a point of tension in the bilateral relationship. In 2019, during Trump's first term, China's Ministry of Education warned students about visa issues in the US, with rising rejection rates and shortening of visas. Last year, the Chinese Foreign Ministry protested that a number of Chinese students were unfairly interrogated and sent home upon arrival at US airports. Chinese state media has long hyped gun violence in the US and violent



protests during the pandemic, and portrayed the US as a dangerous place that wasn't safe for its citizens. The tense bilateral relationship has also meant that some Chinese students are opting to study in the UK or other countries over the US after the pandemic. Zou Renge, a 27-year-old public policy master's student at the University of Chicago, said she had planned to take some time off and work in humanitarian aid programs abroad after graduating at the end of this year. But now, she will refrain from leaving the US and

will look for jobs in the meantime. "In a very uncertain environment, I'll try my best to find myself a solution," she said.

### Hong Kong seeks to draw in talent amid uncertainty

Some were eager to capitalize on the uncertainty facing international students in the US. Hong Kong's leader John Lee told lawmakers on Thursday that the city would welcome any students who have been discriminated against by American policies to study in the city. "The students who face unfair treatment can come from different countries beyond the US. I think this is an opportunity for Hong Kong," he said. "We will work with our universities to provide the best support and assistance." That followed a widely shared post by the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) inviting Harvard students to "continue their academic pursuits" there after Trump said he would revoke the university's ability to accept international students.

## Time has come: Moscow bats for revival of Russia-India-China troika format

**MOSCOW.** Moscow is genuinely interested in the revival of activities within the framework of the Russia-India-China (RIC) format, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said on Thursday. "I would like to confirm our genuine interest in the earliest resumption of the work within the format of the troika -- Russia, India, China -- which was established many years ago on the initiative of (ex-Russian prime minister) Yevgeny Primakov, and which has organised meetings more than 20 times at the ministerial level since then, not only at the level of foreign policy chiefs, but also the heads of other economic, trade and financial agencies of the three countries," Lavrov was quoted as saying by Russian news agency TASS. The foreign minister was addressing an international social and political conference on forming a single and equitable system of security and cooperation in Eurasia in the city of Perm in the Ural Mountains, where Europe borders with Asia, at the



plenary session of the conference. "As of today, as I understand, an understanding has been reached between India and China on how to ease the situation on the border, and it seems to me that the time has come for the revival of this RIC troika," Lavrov stressed. He also alleged that NATO is blatantly trying to lure India into anti-China intrigues. "I have no doubts that our Indian friends, and I say this on the basis of confidential conversations

with them, obviously see this trend that can be actually deemed as a large provocation," Lavrov said. The RIC troika was frozen since the Galwan crisis in June 2020. However, the bilateral meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in Russia's Kazan in October 2024 was seen as a thaw when the two leaders expressed the need to improve bilateral relations.

## Most LGBTQ+ adults feel Americans don't accept transgender people, Pew poll finds

**WORLD.** LGBTQ+ people in the US see lower social acceptance for transgender people than those who are lesbian, gay or bisexual, a new Pew Research Center poll found. Pew found that about 6 in 10 LGBTQ+ adults said there is "a great deal" or "a fair amount" of social acceptance in the US for gay and lesbian people. Only about 1 in 10 said the same for nonbinary and transgender people — and about half said there was "not much" or no acceptance at all for transgender people. Giovanni Santiago, a 39-year-old transgender man and Air Force veteran who lives in Northeast Ohio and was not a participant in the survey, said he feels that acceptance for transgender people has declined in the last few years — roughly in step with the rise of state laws banning gender-affirming care for transgender minors, regulating which school and public

bathrooms transgender people can use and which sports they can play. He said he's seen acceptance get worse nationally, following the lead of some places that were early adopters of restrictions. "They were like the anomaly of ignorance and in hatred, especially towards trans people," Santiago said. "But now we see that it's just kind of sweeping the nation, unfortunately." Still, Santiago said he doesn't fear for his own personal safety — a contrast with most transgender people, who said they have feared for their safety at some point. "I guess I don't feel it as much because I live a life that most people don't know that I'm trans unless I specifically tell them," said Santiago, who runs a nonprofit dedicated to supporting transgender youth. The survey of 3,959 LGBTQ+ adults was conducted in January, after US President Donald Trump was

elected but just before he returned to office and set into motion a series of policies that question the existence of transgender people. On his first day, Trump signed an executive order calling on the government to recognize people as male or female based on the "biological truth" of their future cells at conception, rather than accept scientific evidence that gender is a spectrum. Since then, he's begun ousting transgender service members from the military, and tried to bar transgender women and girls from sports competitions for females and block federal funding for gender-affirming care for transgender people under 19, among other orders.

A poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research conducted in May found that about half of US adults approve of how Trump is handling transgender issues.

## He'll always be with us: Trump to terrific' Elon Musk as he exits his team

US President Donald Trump on Thursday praised billionaire Elon Musk as the entrepreneur announced his departure from the White House advisory post he held as head of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). The two will address the media together at a press conference scheduled for Friday at 1:30 p.m. EST in the Oval Office. "This will be his last day, but not really, because he will, always, be with us, helping all the way. Elon is terrific!" Trump wrote on Truth Social. He also confirmed the upcoming press conference, saying, "I am having a press conference tomorrow at 1:30 pm EST with Elon Musk at the Oval Office." Musk confirmed on Wednesday that he is leaving his post, a move welcomed by Tesla investors after a turbulent year for the company's stock. The decline was partly attributed to backlash over Musk's vocal support for Trump and far-right political figures in Europe. "As my scheduled time as a Special Government Employee comes to an end, I would like to thank President @realDonaldTrump for the opportunity to reduce wasteful spending," Musk posted on X (formerly Twitter) on Wednesday. "The @DOGE mission will only strengthen over time as it becomes a way of life throughout the government," he added. The Tesla and SpaceX CEO had led efforts to streamline



government operations through DOGE, but recent legislative moves and mounting external pressures influenced his decision to step down. Earlier this week, Musk criticised the price tag of the Republicans' tax and budget legislation currently progressing through Congress. This came after he recently vowed to scale back his political spending, following nearly USD 300 million in contributions last year to Trump's presidential campaign and other Republican candidates. The White House expressed its appreciation for Musk, with Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt acknowledging the billionaire's role in launching DOGE and his efforts to cut waste, fraud, and abuse. "We thank him for his service. We thank him for getting DOGE off the ground," she said during a briefing.

## 44 killed in Israeli strikes in Gaza amid hunger crisis after warehouse loot

**Gaza.** At least 44 people were killed in Israeli attacks across the Gaza Strip on Thursday, rescuers said, a day after a World Food Programme warehouse in the centre of the territory was looted by desperate Palestinians. After a more than two-month blockade, aid has finally begun to trickle back into Gaza, but the humanitarian situation remains dire after 18 months of devastating war. Food security experts say starvation is looming for one in five people. The Israeli military has also recently stepped up its offensive in the territory in what it says is a renewed push to destroy Hamas, whose October 7, 2023 attack triggered the war. Gaza civil defence official Mohammad al-Mughayir told AFP "44 people have been killed in Israeli raids", including 23 in a strike on home in Al-Bureij. "Two people were killed and several injured by Israeli forces' gunfire this morning near the American aid centre in the Morag axis, southern Gaza Strip," he added. The centre, run by the US-backed

Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF), is part of a new system for distributing aid that Israel says is meant to keep supplies out of the hands of Hamas, but which has drawn criticism from the United Nations and the European Union. "What is happening to us is degrading. The crowding is humiliating us," said Gazan Sobhi Areef, who visited a GHF centre on Thursday. "We go there and risk our lives just to get a bag of flour to feed our children." The Israeli military said it was looking into the reported deaths in Al-Bureij and near the aid centre. Separately, it said in a statement that its forces had struck "dozens of terror targets throughout the Gaza Strip" over the past day. In a telephone call Thursday with EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas, Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi said Israel's "systematic starvation tactics have crossed all moral and legal boundaries". Hordes of hungry people

On Wednesday, thousands of desperate



over the deepening hunger crisis. AFP footage showed crowds of Palestinians breaking into the WFP facility in Deir al-Balah and taking bags of emergency food supplies as gunshots rang out. "Hordes of hungry people broke into WFP's Al-Ghafari warehouse in Deir al-Balah, central Gaza, in search of food supplies that were pre-positioned for distribution," the UN agency said in a statement. The issue of

aid has come sharply into focus amid starvation fears and intense criticism of the GHF, which has bypassed the longstanding UN-led system in the territory. Israel's ambassador to the United Nations Danny Danon told the Security Council that aid was entering Gaza by truck -- under limited authorisation by Israel at the Kerem Shalom crossing -- and accused the UN of "trying to block" GHF's work through "threats, intimidation and retaliation against NGOs that choose to participate". The UN has said it is doing its utmost to facilitate distribution of the limited assistance allowed by Israel's authorities. The world body said 47 people were wounded Tuesday when crowds of Palestinians rushed a GHF site. A Palestinian medical source reported at least one death. GHF, however, alleged in a statement that there had been "several inaccuracies" circulating about its operations, adding "there are many parties who wish to see GHF fail".

Gujarat HC grants relief to news anchor accused in defamation, atrocities case after complaint by senior Congress leader

**Vadodara . (Agency)**

The Gujarat High Court on Monday granted relief to an Ahmedabad-based news anchor in a case of defamation and atrocity, filed by Congress leader Dr Tushar Chaudhary, based on the assurance of the Additional Public Prosecutor that the journalist will be served a notice of 15 days in case the investigating officer deems it appropriate to arrest her.

Justice Nirzar Desai was hearing the petition by Gopi Maniar-Ghanghar, anchor of Ahmedabad-based Nirbhay News Channel, for quashing and setting aside the FIR lodged at Tapi District, based on Chaudhary's complaint under Section 356 (Defamation) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and various sections of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989. Chaudhary is the newly appointed Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leader in Gujarat Assembly.

The court order stated, "Public Prosecutor Hardik Dave has made a statement before this Court upon instructions received by the Dy. SP Nikita Shiroya (SC/ST Cell Tapi Vyara) that... the investigation is at very initial stage and therefore, it would serve the end of justice if this Court records the statement of learned Public Prosecutor that in case, during the course of investigation, if the investigating officer deems it appropriate to arrest the present applicant, she will be given a clear notice of fifteen days and upon receipt of the notice..."

The court further said, "The applicant would be at liberty to avail appropriate remedy so as to take remedial measure to seek relief against her proposed arrest. Such a period would start from the date of receipt of the notice by the present applicant."

Chaudhary's complaint is also against Jagdish Mehta, group editor of Rajkot-based Headlines News channel. Chaudhary has alleged that the journalists had defamed him and his deceased father, former Gujarat Chief Minister Amarsinh Chaudhary.

**NSUI workers protest outside private university in Ahmedabad, allege harassment of student over fees**

**Ahmedabad . (Agency)**

THE National Students' Union of India (NSUI) on Monday protested outside TransStadia University, a private university in Ahmedabad's Maninagar area, alleging harassment of a student by the university authorities over pending fee and late fee penalty.

Sanjay Solanki, secretary of NSUI, alleged that a student, despite having the "freeship card", was being asked to pay the fee. Solanki demanded that a police complaint be registered in the matter.

"Despite bearing the freeship card, he was repeatedly asked by the university authorities to pay the fee. Under psychological pressure, he tried to commit suicide and was rushed to the hospital. His mother's health also deteriorated on Monday. We demand action against officials who are responsible for his condition. We also want his medical expenses to be reimbursed. The student is not able to speak due to his medical condition," Solanki said.

When stopped by the police and university authorities, the protesting workers forcibly tried to enter the premises. Spokesperson of the TransStadia University, in an official statement, said, "In this case, the fee follow-up communication was shared via a broadcast group only. Any claim to the contrary is entirely unfounded and appears to be a deliberate attempt to misrepresent and malign the university. We are fully cooperating with authorities and urge everyone to refrain from spreading misinformation. We trust that the due process will prevail."

# Man, son assaulted in Mumbai's Mira Road over objection to pigeon feeding amid ongoing controversy

**The Bombay High Court has directed BMC to take strict action against unauthorised pigeon feeding in public spaces, citing serious health hazards.**

**Mumbai.(Agency)**

A 69-year-old man and his son were allegedly assaulted with an iron rod by four people in Mumbai's Mira Road after the senior citizen objected to a woman feeding pigeons in their residential complex.

The incident comes close on the heels of a Bombay High Court order that directed the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) to take strict action against unauthorised pigeon feeding in public spaces, citing serious health hazards. The court also emphasised penal action against citizens who continue to flout the ban. Following the directive, the Maharashtra government instructed BMC to strictly implement the order across the city.

Ranjit Andhale, Inspector, Kashimira Police Station, said they have registered an FIR under sections 118(1), 115(2), 352, and 3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) based on the complaint lodged by the man's son.



"While no one was hospitalised and the injuries are not serious, we are verifying the claims about the iron rod being used. There was no prior enmity between the parties. Notices

have been issued to the suspects, and no arrests have been made yet," said Andhale.

According to the Kashimira police, Mahendra Patel and his son, Premal, 46, were assaulted

Sunday morning at the D B Ozone building near Thakur Mall in Mira Road. Mahendra Patel noticed a woman, identified as A Vyas, 56, feeding pigeons in the common area of the building. Patel reportedly asked her to stop, pointing out that it attracts more pigeons and creates hygiene issues for residents.

The brief exchange escalated into a heated argument, with Vyas allegedly abusing Patel. Premal came to the spot after hearing the commotion, and confronted Vyas over her behaviour towards his father.

The matter escalated further when three others, identified as Somesh Agnihotri, and two unnamed individuals allegedly joined Vyas and physically assaulted the man and his son. According to Premal's complaint, the group allegedly kicked, punched, and attacked them with an iron rod. One of the accused even attempted to strangle him, he told the police.

## Civil society groups hold symbolic hunger strike in Pune protesting atrocities against Palestinians

**Pune .(Agency)**

UNDER THE banner 'A Hunger Strike of Solidarity – For Gaza!', several progressive organisations and concerned citizens from Pune came together on Saturday to protest the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Palestine. The symbolic hunger strike, held at Sambhaji Garden, called for an immediate end to the violence in Gaza and demanded urgent food and medical aid for the Palestinian people.

Chanting slogans such as "Stop the genocide in Palestine!", "Start food aid immediately!" and "Free Palestine!", protesters demanded that the Indian government take a firm and unequivocal stand in support of Palestine, continuing its historical position of backing Palestinian sovereignty and justice.

For nearly two years, and even before, Israel has been accused of carrying out relentless attacks on Gaza. Protesters highlighted that innocent women, children, and men are being killed daily in aerial bombings, and that the situation has worsened with Israel blocking the supply of essential goods such as food and medicines. They pointed out that this amounts to a deliberate starvation strategy, which can amount to a war crime. The protest in Pune was part of a larger international campaign from July 27 to August 3, during which citizens across the globe staged hunger strikes and solidarity demonstrations.

According to a spokesperson from Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL), the airport's "in-house Bird Aircraft Strike Hazard Management (BASHM) team employs a data-driven approach that goes beyond regulatory requirements to effectively minimise bird strike risks. Real-time automated bird monitoring systems alert our bird chasing team, enabling immediate

MB Krishna, a city-based ornithologist, shares, "The whole area where the airport is built, used to be a lake. Additionally, the surrounding areas are agricultural, which explains the bird population."

Krishna added that since the bird species have been

there long before the airport came up, their lives should be prioritised.

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usage".

The event was jointly organised by several progressive groups including the Street Mukti Andolan Sampark Samiti, National Alliance of People's Movements (NAPM), Pune Collective, DYFI, SFI, Nava Samajwadi Party, Lokshahi Utsav Samiti, PUCL, among others.

Several notable voices addressed the gathering. Prof. Dr. Parimal Maya Sudhakar spoke of India's historic opposition to the partition of Palestine and its consistent support for peaceful resistance led by Yasser Arafat.

He warned against Israel's expansionist ambitions across Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon and urged the Indian government to uphold its legacy by supporting Palestinian liberation.

## Techie dupes cybercrime victims via fake legal aid firm in Bengaluru

**The police said the accused had set up a call centre in Kasturi Nagar, employing 12 people as tele-callers to identify and target cybercrime victims seeking legal help.**

**BENGALURU.(Agency)**

A 37-year-old software engineer has been arrested by the CCB for creating a fake legal aid service and cheating cybercrime victims. The accused Thufail Ahmed is a resident of Kothanur and a native of Cuddalore in Tamil Nadu.

According to the police, a victim from Ramamurthy Nagar had lost Rs 1.5 crore in a cyber fraud in February. While searching online for legal aid services, the victim was

contacted by Ahmed, who posed as a representative of 'Quickmoto Legal Service' and collected Rs 12.5 lakh from the victim promising to recover the lost money through legal means, but duped her.

Police found that the company had no physical office. However, another fake firm operated by the accused under the name 'India Legal Service' was traced in Kasturi Nagar and Ahmed was arrested.

The police said the accused had set up a call centre in Kasturi

## Kempegowda International Airport most prone to bird strikes among airports in South India

**BENGALURU.(Agency)**

Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport (KIA), which is accustomed to global admiration for its prized Terminal 2, has found itself associated with a concerning statistic. According to data revealed by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), KIA stands out as the airport most prone to bird strikes in the South Indian region, while ranking fourth behind Delhi, Mumbai and Ahmedabad at the national level.

A total of 535 bird strikes were reported at KIA from 2022 till May 2025. Hyderabad and Chennai registered 420 and 379 respectively, for the same time period.

Bird strikes are inadvertent collisions between aircraft and birds, often with the former hitting flocks of the latter.

While statistically harmless in most cases, bird strikes happen during the two most critical phases of flying: take-off and landing. Most bird strikes cause critical harm, if any, to a single engine, which still gives pilots the leeway to

execute emergency landings. However, in one of the most infamous cases of bird strikes, US Airways Flight 1549 – an Airbus A320 – had to make an emergency landing on the Hudson

River, having suffered a dual-engine failure after a flock of geese hit the aircraft shortly after take-off.

But why is Bengaluru unfortunately above the rest of the South Indian airports in this regard? As



MB Krishna, a city-based ornithologist, shares, "The whole area where the airport is built, used to be a lake. Additionally, the surrounding areas are agricultural, which explains the bird population."

Krishna added that since the bird species have been

there long before the airport came up, their lives should be prioritised.

According to a spokesperson from Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL), the airport's "in-

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## Rajkot: Woman held for 'kidnapping' niece to extort money from brother; friend also nabbed

**On July 24, the child's father had reported at Gandhigram police station that his sister Reema and 6-year-old daughter had gone missing**

**Ahmedabad .(Agency)**

A woman and her advocate friend were arrested for allegedly kidnapping her 6-year-old niece to extort her brother for money, said Rajkot City Police on Monday.

On July 24, the child's father had reported at Gandhigram police station that his sister Reema and 6-year-old daughter had gone missing.

Days later, the police learnt that the woman and the child were in Madhya Pradesh. Further investigation led the police to Indore where the girl and her aunt were found unharmed. They were brought back to Rajkot and handed over to the family.

ACP Radhika Bharai said, "After the woman and her niece were returned to their family, Reema said they were both abducted. So, her brother filed a complaint with the

Pradyumna police station."

The ACP said Reema, who is unmarried, stays with her brother and his family in the same house. "Recounting the incident, Reema told her family that on July 24, when she left the house with her niece, they both were gagged and put in a car and taken to Indore," said ACP Bharai.

The police then began another investigation into the case and found that the whole conspiracy had been hatched and carried out by Reema and an advocate named Rajveersinh Zala, said police.

"Reema and Rajveersinh had met around seven months ago and had talked about the financial dispute between the siblings. That is when the plan was hatched. They believed that instead of just Reema going missing, the kidnapping of the child would make her



father more amenable to paying the money (the supposed ransom amount)," said the ACP. Reema and Zala were booked for kidnapping, criminal conspiracy and kidnapping with intent to extort. Reema was arrested on August 2.

Since Zala was still missing, the Detection of Crime Branch (DCB) of Rajkot City Police got involved in the case and traced him to Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh, where he was admitted to a hospital.

ACP B B Basiya of the Crime Branch said, "We found Zala admitted to a hospital in Ujjain on Sunday. He said he had consumed some poisonous substance. Once the doctors cleared him, we got a transfer remand and brought him to Rajkot, where he was promptly placed under arrest." Further investigation is underway.

## It's the world's job to spin around, our job is to be the axis

If you like to choose allegory and atmosphere out of cinematic art to describe the contemporary, a piece of classic Hitchcock horror would seem to be in our midst. There's a bird species that's seeing an increase in its population these days. No, not the pesky pigeon, which has been rendered jobless by email. There's another that's squeaking and gnawing at our window panes. It is the black swan. It's absurd. By definition, it shouldn't be there. Certainly not in such numbers. But being devoid of logic or precedence is no disqualification these days. A handful of years ago, we were stalked by a genocidal virus. Half a season ago, we had war. A small spat in a nuclear family. Both sides complained to Papa. He came and sorted it out. His fondness for young, attractive model democracies is, anyway, all over the news in America.

This is one version of the story, not particularly unprecedented if you look at Indo-Pak history. And Donald J Trump speaks only the truth. His social media platform is named for that. Every time you repost what he writes there, it's apparently called a "retruth". Those fervently "retruthing" his version in Parliament included Rahul Gandhi, who threw that into the debate along with a gauntlet to the government. If you believe otherwise, he thundered, say it clearly that Trump is no Mahatma Gandhi. But we know that in classical Indian logic, for every assertion, the opposite is equally untrue. Meanwhile, across the border, in Pakistan, it seems America has struck oil! No one from the colonial British to the contemporary Chinese had the foresight to dig beneath those bungalows in Abbottabad. Snake oil, perhaps? The Pakistani army is known to have inexhaustible reserves. Well, in material terms, past US prospectors have talked about shale. Hope our sensitive radars don't get alarmed by the sounds of fracking. Actually, no, this is just Trumpspeak. It means they have dug deep and discovered a new kind of strategic depth. Old-timers may recall that Rafi song which Lalu Yadav once quoted in parliament and got even Manmohan Singh grinning like a Cheshire cat: it's okay if you don't love me, as long as you don't love that—other—guy. Alas, it is happening.

This is a genuinely unforeseen twist. India languishing as the great unwanted democracy, while the US and China compete for influence over semi-demi-democracies like Pakistan and Bangladesh that we wouldn't sniff at. We are anyway too chic for this neighbourhood. Nobody likes us much in our alleged 'natural sphere of influence', and we have to constantly 'reset' ties with even the likes of the Maldives. SAARC is dead in the water. Iran may replace us as the 'I' in BRICS if we don't watch out. And we are flexing our Quad muscles, in a strategy that may be rendered obsolete if Trump, cannier than his neo-con predecessors, does a Kissinger and kisses and makes up with China. There are other events unfolding in our times that are rather unusual in their skew. In Bihar, if you take the Election Commission's words at face value, the human population is plummeting. It's either on account of some strange virus that nearly exclusively attacks Muslims and women, or due to a hitherto unknown tendency among these groups to resort to mass exodus. And having voted with their feet, how can they again vote with their fingers? Classical Indian logic again. In New Delhi and its outskirts, a population being gently persuaded to consider exodus by an empathetic police force is those at the very bottom of the socio-economic pyramid—people who speak the language I speak, Bengali, but minus the teflon coating of religion and other markers. Soon after the Pahalgam attack, hundreds who answered to that description were suddenly seen to be unworthy of being on land and turned into boat people. Some allegedly lost their balance on the high seas.

WE live in absolutely unprecedented times. Antonio Gramsci, writing nearly a century ago, captured such global shifts with prophetic clarity: "The old world is dying, and the new world struggles to be born: now is the time of monsters." That diagnosis now feels less philosophical and more predictive. We are not witnessing a managed transition from one global order to another. We are living through an interregnum; a turbulent pause with no promise of resolution.

Perhaps for the first time in the past 80 years, after the end of World War II, humankind is witness to a four-continent conflict playing itself out concurrently. These confrontations are the rise of unprecedented trade tensions across the world, triggered by US President Donald Trump's attempt to destructure the international architecture of commerce. The Russia-Ukraine war that began in February 2022, the Israel-Hamas-Hezbollah-Houthi-Iran conflict that broke out in October 2023 and the rise of China since the early 1990s that has attained portentous overtones in broad sections of the world's political geography. The added dynamics are the latest India-Pakistan standoff—the worst after the Kargil war 26 years ago and the US bombing of Iran. Thailand and Cambodia are also having a go at each other. In more ways than one, therefore, the doctrinal concepts that underpin international relations are regressing back to the 17th century, when Cardinal Richelieu intellectualised *raison d'état*, i.e. each nation will act in its own best interest and the doctrine of balance of power—the alliance system hypothesised by Hugo Grotius and implemented by King William III of England. How does India navigate this global meltdown, especially when President Trump seems hell bent on gaslighting the international trading order and countries are at each other's throats, both figuratively and literally? Trump's reciprocal tariff order, which will come into effect this week, seeks to impose punitive tariffs on nearly 70 countries. The US average tariff that began this year at 2.5 per cent will sit at an average of 18.4 per cent once the new levies take effect. Canada, the largest trading partner of the US, has been hit with a tariff of 35 per cent. India will be taxed at 25 per cent plus a yet indeterminate penalty for buying armaments and energy from Trump's 'friend', Russian President Vladimir Putin.

India, fortunately, is not in uncharted waters. It has a template that goes back to 1947. Once the dust had settled on three decades of the most ferocious

bloodletting between 1914 and 1945 that left a 100 million people dead, the victorious allies then decided to fight against each other.

They split the world into two blocs—the Soviet Union-led Eastern bloc, a Communist dystopia, and the US-led Western bloc, a democratic phantasm. The Western bloc had no compunction about supporting the most brutal dictators on the planet and the Eastern bloc the most revanchist capitalists when and wherever it suited them. India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, realised very early in the new global game that formally commenced with Winston Churchill's speech at Fulton Falls on March 5, 1946, that the liberating nations of

economy and its organic place in the Global South. Oxymoronically, it is the United States of America that is providing that opportunity to China, India and a host of other countries by the inconsistent behaviour of its current dispensation. This window will perhaps close in another two years when the US mid-term elections are held. The American people are realising that this Make America Great Again (MAGA) is harming them more than doing any good.

In Trump's tariff wars lies a huge opportunity to remake the international politico-economic and strategic architecture. The US will not fade away or be isolated and neither should it be but it will be rebalanced, given that it is diffident about taking any further responsibility of being the single biggest balancer of power—a task that it has ably shouldered until now.

Beyond the "he said, she said" of Parliament, which, unfortunately, is how it has evolved over the decades—a gladiatorial arena to score brownie points, rather than a forum for informed discourse or discussion—as well as large sections of the media which refused to soberly report the May 7-10 India-Pakistan conflict, "serious folks" must realise that we are living in exceptional times. It is not easy to navigate these uncharted and choppy waters of a world unmoored. To say that Indian foreign policy has succeeded or failed is a specious and a needlessly imprudent binary. If indeed there

was ever a realm of fifty shades of grey, it is here and now. Application of mind, an understanding of the multi-dimensional transformations that are playing themselves out concurrently, nuance and constant calibration of positions will see us through these 'interesting times'. The United Nations-led multilateralism is dead. Its obituary was very eloquently written in 2020 when the world was struck by the Covid-19 epidemic. In March that year, when close to six billion people were under some form of lockdown, the UN Security Council (UNSC) could not meet to discuss this global epidemic because China held the rotating presidency for that month and scuttled any discussion for fear of being called out. The UN system could do nothing about it. The UNSC finally met for the first time to discuss the pandemic on April 9, 2020, only after the Dominican Republic took over the rotating presidency. When humankind required global leadership, it was missing in action.



Asia, Africa and South America were looking for a third way, away from bloc politics. Nehru, along with a couple of other leaders, crafted the exceptionalism called non-alignment that is now called multi-alignment. As the Cold War intensified and various denial regimes from food to technology were weaponised by bloc politics, India's third Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, focused on self-reliance, now rechristened Atmanirbharta. These two strategic continuums still hold the field and need to be re-energised with full vigour as large sections of the world are completely adrift in an uncharted ocean. They are looking for leadership. India, like many other nations, had to adjust and even reset its trajectory in international relations in the early 1990s as the swirl of global events created unprecedented situations that were pregnant with both possibility and catastrophe. India rode out these storms successfully. It is now better placed than ever to provide this leadership because of its \$4-trillion

## No safe havens for predators in power

**Prajwal Revanna was a parliamentarian when he indulged in sexually depraved behaviour, targeting women without consideration for their age or background**



in sexually depraved behaviour, targeting women without consideration for their age or background. The police built a watertight case, based on convincing evidence from the rape survivor, and sexually explicit videos, which went public during the 2024 parliamentary elections. The

videos Prajwal shot sealed his fate. Given its high-profile nature, the case aroused public suspicion that extraneous pressures might try to be at play. It was also expected that the 47-year-old illiterate village woman would back out under pressure. However, she deserves accolades for having the courage to take on the powerful family. She has received justice, but the wounds will remain. She needs secure and sensitive rehabilitation to get on with her life.

The former MP's conviction is bound to impact the regional party, which commands the support of farmers in the Old Mysuru belt, spanning the districts of Hassan, Mandya, Mysuru and Channapatna. Though suspended from the party, Prajwal will remain a source of constant embarrassment to his uncle and Union minister HD

Kumaraswamy and JDS patriarch HD Gowda, and could push his father Revanna into the political boondocks, if not the JDS itself. The case must call upon political parties to introspect and enforce stricter internal codes of conduct among their leaders and elected representatives.

## Raksha Bandhan: A celebration of all bonds that matter

**Raksha Bandhan is an opportunity to celebrate the important relationships in our lives. The rakhi becomes a symbol of friendship and care, not just for siblings, but also for friends, teachers, colleagues and relatives of all kinds, across all backgrounds**

Saturday, August 9, is the festival of Raksha Bandhan, and, as ever, I find its deeper implications fascinating. The origin story goes that Indra, king of the celestials, had to fight big, bad Vritra, a powerful negative force who wanted to take over and rule the world. Indra, as the leader of the celestials, was duty-bound to fight him to protect the universe. He fought very hard, to the point of fighting just for survival, but kept being bested. Rishi Dadhichi, an ardent devotee of Lord Shiva, had a body suffused with extraordinary spiritual power that could manifest as physical strength. The gods asked him to surrender his body so that Indra could fashion a weapon from his bones. Dadhichi gladly did so and sat down to meditate on Lord Shiva, who, the belief goes, is the 'prana' or breath that keeps us alive, the only barrier between life and death. Rishi Dadhichi sent himself into samadhi, a state of deep concentration and inner withdrawal, through which he willed his breath to leave his body. Indra thus obtained his Vajra or thunderbolt from Rishi Dadhichi's bones. But that alone was not enough. Indra's inner spirit had to be made strong again after the psychological damage caused by repeatedly losing to Vritra. Indra's wife, Shachi Devi, then tied a thread that she had prayed over on his fighting wrist. In the next battle, when he felt that he was going under, the sight of that thread gave him back his fighting spirit, and he made an enormous effort, drawing on every last bit of his strength and will to win. He managed to vanquish Vritra once and for all. He succeeded in saving the world, his, and ours, from a cruel, dangerous would-be tyrant. Shachi Devi became known thereafter as 'Indrashakti Shachi'. This, I discovered later, was the official name given to one of

the queens of Thailand in the 20th century. There is even an NGO in Delhi called the Dadhichi Deh Daan Samiti (Dadhichi Body Donation Society). Its website says, "Dadhichi Deh Daan Samiti is a registered Public Charitable Society. Its fields of work include organ donations, body donations, blood donation, stem-cell donation registry and other causes for persons with disability. The Samiti spreads awareness, motivates, registers pledges for body/organs donations and coordinates the donation between a donor and the medical institution after the death of a donor. A donated body is used for several purposes. Anatomical examination: Teaching students and healthcare professionals about the structure and functions of the human body. Research: Scientific studies that improve the understanding of the human body. Education and training: Training and practice for healthcare professionals, especially for those learning surgical techniques." Amazing, is it not, how ancient legends from civilisational heritage still animate the modern Indie world, from personal names to good causes?

I also enjoy the thoughtful modern ads made for Raksha Bandhan. YouTube has several compilations, if you look for 'Rakhi Ads' or 'Raksha Bandhan Ads'. It's too cynical and easy to see them merely as marketing opportunities for chocolates and gifts. They are often very well-made and touching, even thought-provoking, in the deeper messages they try to convey. One such message is that Raksha Bandhan is a time-honoured calendar opportunity to heal rifts and misunderstandings between siblings, and reach out to

heal and reconnect with no loss of face, dissolving the usual ego barriers. Raksha Bandhan enables that unconditionally.

Another message, the primary one, is that it enhances family bonds, not only those of blood family but also chosen family. We are fully empowered to see it as an affirmation and celebration of important and



meaningful relations in our lives. A rakhi thus becomes the world's oldest friendship band, not only for brothers and sisters who share DNA, but for friends, teachers, colleagues, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins and not restricted by caste or creed, either. This universal friendship band includes the people whom we chose, and who chose us, because they want us in their lives, with respect, inclusion and affection.

The lunar calendar date of Raksha Bandhan falls in the

month of Shravan (Avani in the South) when Danishta (Avittam in the South) is on the ascendant. Danishta is the 23rd of the 27 nakshatras or lunar asterisms in Indian astronomy. In Western astronomy, it is identified with the star Beta Delphini. Our tradition represents it with a drum or musical instrument and declares that it is ruled by the eight Vasus, a celestial group that bestows wealth and abundance.

As usual in anything Indian, there are layers to this. A person can be rich materially but be sadly poor in having people. So, the Vasus preside over relationship wealth, too, not just over money and career opportunities. Thereby, Raksha Bandhan thoughtfully provides us with the repeated chance, year after year, to embrace and affirm our meaningful relationships. More than a religious ritual, this festival is thus a social and emotional opportunity given to each person to say, "Hey, I care. I celebrate having you as a friend", to the people

who matter. The practice of waving a lamp, applying tilak, and sharing sweets is more cultural than actually 'religious'. Because "dhoop, deep, mala, tilak" are cultural markers of auspiciousness for us. They are native to this land, and everyone can have them if they also choose to share these pretty customs, as theirs too. Rakhis are thus an emblem of caring and emotional security—and, charmingly, today, girls wear them as well.

## Odisha minister Suresh Pujari asks Bar Associations to find consensus location for new court

Responding to queries from mediapersons, the minister said lawyers of western and southern Odisha are demanding permanent benches in their regions

### BHUBANESWAR (Agency)

With the Opposition BJD questioning the state government about the fate of the high court bench in western Odisha, Revenue minister Suresh Pujari on Monday said the Bar Associations should come up with a consensus location where it can be established.

Responding to queries from mediapersons, the minister said lawyers of western and southern Odisha are demanding permanent benches in their regions. The necessary course of action should be to find a location acceptable to all for which they should come to a common platform and discuss the issue.

"The second important aspect is that the Governor and Chief Justice of Orissa High Court have an important role to play in sending a composite proposal to the Supreme Court for approval. The state government has the responsibility to develop infrastructure and bear the recurring cost of the bench," he said.

## Five killed in two road accidents near Tiruttani

### CHENNAI (Agency)

Five people died in two separate road accidents near Tiruttani in Tiruvallur district within 24 hours.

Early on Monday morning at Arcot Kuppam, two men from Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh - Shahjahan (50) and his brother Humayun (70) - died after the car they were travelling in rammed into a stationary tipper lorry. The car was driven by Humayun's son Habib. He also sustained injuries in the accident.

The police said they were enroute to Chennai to seek emergency medical care for Humayun, who was critically ill when the car rear-ended the lorry parked on the roadside.

Fire and rescue teams who arrived at the spot pulled the three men out of the mangled car and sent them to the Tiruttani Government Hospital. Police said Humayun had died on the spot and Shahjahan succumbed to injuries a few hours later.

The Kanakammachatram police have registered a case and are questioning the lorry driver. Earlier on Sunday evening, three from a family died and their driver critically injured, after a car crashed into a tamarind tree near SP Kandigai in RK Pet.

The deceased have been identified as Stalin (40), Sampath Kumar (38) of Krishnagiri, and Kannagi (50) of Namakkal. They were returning from Nallattur after attending a funeral in a car driven by Karthik, a driver they had engaged.

Around 5 pm, while on the way to Hosur, the car veered off the road and hit the tree. Stalin and Sampath died on the spot; Kannagi died while being taken to the Tiruttani Government Hospital. Karthik is currently undergoing intensive care treatment at Rajiv Gandhi Government Hospital in Chennai. The RK Pet police have registered a case and an inquiry is underway.

## Torrential rain upends plans, grinds Hyderabad to a halt

### HYDERABAD (Agency)

By late Monday afternoon, Hyderabad had turned into a city of stranded commuters and impassable roads. A heavy, unrelenting spell of rain brought traffic to a standstill, upended daily routines, and left neighbourhoods waterlogged as residents waded through another episode of the city's chronic vulnerability to even a few hours of downpour. Raj Bhavan Road was among the first to go under. The massive rainwater holding structure constructed on the road overflowed, turning the stretch into a shallow canal. "We had to start diverting vehicles from Khairatabad circle," said a traffic constable posted at the site. "It just wasn't safe."

In Ameerpet, the usually congested Maitrivanam junction took on the appearance of a lake. Rajesh, a resident returning from Sanathnagar, found himself stuck mid-route. "My bike stopped moving. The silence was under water," he said, soaked and stranded.

### Two-hour crawls and soaring fares

Across the city, office-goers and students found their regular commutes doubled or worse. "It usually takes me 45 minutes from Madhapur to Uppal. Today it was two hours," said Meenakshi, an IT professional and frustrated commuter. "Half the time I was just stuck at a signal watching rain fly sideways," she said. Traffic was jammed on the stretch between the Cable Bridge and IKEA, while app-based ride fares surged sharply. "A ride from Mehdiyatnam to Somajiguda was showing '480, triple the usual rate," said Nikhil, a student. "I waited under a Metro pillar instead."

In the wee hours of Monday, Yadadri Bhuvanagiri, Nalgonda, Suryapet, Jangaon, Warangal, Mahbubabad and Bhadrakothagudem districts witnessed heavy rains, with some places receiving over 100 mm and others reporting drizzles.



"We are also in support of a permanent bench of the high court to deliver justice at the doorsteps of the people. As a member of the Lok Sabha, I had raised the issue several times

and trying to build a consensus over a single location," Pujari said. He said the Justice Jaswant Singh Commission had recommended some broad principles and criteria to be followed while deciding the question of expediency and desirability of establishment of a bench of a high court away from the principal seat, and factors to be borne in mind while selecting the site. It is for the lawyers of the state to act as per the criteria set out by the commission.

The issue has been reignited after the Maharashtra government issued a notification for establishment of an HC bench at Kolhapur, which will become operational from August 18, 2025.

However, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi had last year ruled out the possibility of setting up a HC bench in the state following the Supreme Court order saying there is no justification for such bench in Odisha.

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A source said each horse daily covers 10km minimum and the patrolling, especially at night, helps keep the criminal elements in check. "The horses can go to every nook and corners of dark alleys. Since the stray dogs are afraid to come closer to the horses, the cops on patrol need not worry about the safety of the horses or theirs. That's the biggest advantage when compared to the cops patrolling on two-wheelers. If there is any

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# Want to work remotely? First village for WFH in Himalayas is ready for you

**Agency New Delhi.**

Yakten, a small village in Sikkim's Pakyong district surrounded by emerald hills, has just been declared India's first Digital Nomad Village. Once known only to its residents, this quiet settlement is now at the heart of a pilot project under the state's Nomad Sikkim initiative, a bid to draw global remote workers into the Himalayas while boosting local incomes.

The project, a collaboration between the Pakyong district administration and NGO Sarvahitey under the 'Nomad Sikkim' initiative, aims to transform select locations, like Yakten, in the Himalayan state into spots for digital professionals from across the country and even abroad. The initiative is also aimed at providing sustainable income opportunities for homestay owners. This is a time when India's digital nomad population is growing. According to the 2025 State of Digital Nomads report by Nomad List, about 1.7 million Indians, or roughly 2

percent of the global nomad community, now combine work with travel. A 2022 Deloitte India Workforce and Workplace survey further found that nearly 80% of Indian professionals prefer remote or flexible arrangements.

## LAND OF NATURAL BEAUTY SIKKIM MEETS DIGITAL NOMADS

Yakten offers a cool Himalayan climate, with summer highs around 24 degrees Celsius and winter nights dipping to about 4 degrees Celsius. There are currently 8 homestays with 18 rooms in the village where digital workers can spend months working in peace. For a private homestay with fast Wi-Fi and coworking access, the 6,000 per week plan is ideal for shorter stays. For longer stays, the 15,000-per-month plan offers a dedicated workspace, cultural activities, and full support. Yakten's nearest railhead, New Jalpaiguri (NJP), lies about 140 km away, while Bagdogra Airport is 125 km



away, and the state capital Gangtok is just 30 km from India's first nomad village. "Sikkim has always been a land of natural beauty and rich culture. What Nomad Sikkim is doing is connecting that cultural strength with the global digital economy," the state's Lok Sabha MP Indra Hang Subba told India Today Digital. For Subba, the Nomad Sikkim initiative is not just another tourist scheme. "This is tourism with purpose, where visitors don't just come and go, but become part of the local story, supporting livelihoods and preserving heritage," the representative

added.

For the founder of NGO Sarvahitey, Prem Prakash, the idea is bigger than just tourism; it is about helping the local communities thrive. "With Nomad Sikkim, we're not just offering work-friendly stays in stunning locations; we're building an ecosystem where local communities thrive alongside global talent. Our goal is simple: to make Sikkim the most inclusive and sustainable hub for digital nomads in South Asia," Prem Prakash told India Today Digital. The initiative also addresses a local challenge, which, in a way, is not too local and applies to most tourist destinations across the world. For years, homestay operators have struggled through the long off-season, which stretches nearly half the year. With very few visitors arriving in Yakten between April and September (monsoon in the Eastern Himalayas), incomes often dried up.

## 5 illegal Bangladeshis arrested for forcibly trying to enter Red Fort: Cops

**Agency New Delhi.**

Delhi Police on Tuesday said that it has arrested five Bangladeshi "illegal immigrants" for allegedly attempting to forcibly enter the Red Fort premises amid the heightened security drills in view of the upcoming Independence Day event.

According to officials, the arrests were made near the Red Fort's access control point by a police team deployed in the area. The men, aged between 20 and 25, failed to produce valid entry passes during routine checks and were found to be residing in the country illegally.

"All of them are illegal immigrants. They tried to forcibly enter the Red Fort premises," the police said. Deputy Commissioner of Police (North District), Raja Banthiya, said the five were intercepted by police personnel on August 4. During questioning, it emerged that they had entered India illegally about three to four months ago and were working as labourers in Delhi. "They claimed they were unaware that the Red Fort has been closed for the public since July 15. Bangladeshi documents were recovered from them, but no suspicious material or activity came to light during their interrogation," Banthiya added.

The incident came amid a security clampdown across the capital ahead of the 78th Independence Day event on August 15. Delhi Police has launched a special drive to identify and deport illegal immigrants, particularly those living near sensitive installations. Officials confirmed that central agencies have also questioned the five men. They are now being processed for deportation as per legal protocol.

## No subsidies, EV registrations see massive drop



**Agency New Delhi.**

Delhi's electric mobility push appears to be stalling, with a steep drop in electric vehicle registrations raising concerns about the city's clean transport ambitions. Once hailed as a frontrunner in the EV adoption race, the capital is now grappling with the aftershocks of subsidy withdrawal.

In December 2023, electric vehicles accounted for 19.5 per cent of total vehicle sales in the city. But in July 2025, that figure collapsed to just 4.8 per cent, according to official data. While total vehicle registrations rose to 67,000 last month, only 3,425 of them were electric.

The reversal has been linked to the discontinuation of subsidies that were previously passed on to buyers, said officials. These incentives, provided under the Delhi Electric Vehicle Policy, were halted in January 2024, during the tenure of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government. Though the AAP extended the policy framework, no financial benefits were disbursed throughout the year.

Later, the new BJP government further dashed hopes of reviving the subsidies, as it did not announce the resumption of cash benefits—despite extending the existing EV policy until March next year. Officials pointed out that EV registrations over the past four months have fallen below 2022 levels, when the market was still recovering from COVID-19 disruptions.

Additionally, Delhi buyers are increasingly turning to neighbouring states offering extra incentives, further slowing electric mobility adoption in the national capital. "Electric cars in Uttar Pradesh are now cheaper by up to ₹3 lakh due to local incentives. Many Delhi residents are opting to register their vehicles in NCR districts like Ghaziabad and Gautam Budh Nagar to cash in on those benefits. This trend is causing Delhi to lose EV registrations," a transport official said. If subsidies are not resumed, the current trajectory could derail Delhi's target of making 25 per cent of all vehicle sales electric, as outlined in its EV policy.

## PM Modi to inaugurate new Central Vista building to house multiple ministries

**Agency New Delhi.**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to inaugurate the Kartavya Bhawan office complex located in Central Vista, the country's central administrative area. This state-of-the-art complex in Delhi will house key ministries, including the Home Ministry, Department of Personnel and Training (DPT), Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of MSME, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, and the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser.

These ministries currently function out of ageing buildings such as the Shastri Bhawan, Krishi Bhawan, Udyog Bhawan, and Nirman Bhawan, all constructed between the 1950s and 1970s. The new facilities at Kartavya Bhawan aim to reduce repair and maintenance costs, boost productivity, improve employee well-being, and enhance overall service delivery.

Kartavya Bhawan is designed with sustainability at its core. The building is highly energy efficient and features special glass windows that keep the building cool and reduce outside noise, solar panels that generate over 5.34 lakh units of electricity annually, rainwater harvesting, zero-discharge waste management, and electric vehicle charging stations.

The new building also features IT-ready and secure workspaces, ID card-based access controls, integrated electronic surveillance, and a centralised command system. This modern infrastructure will improve inter-ministerial coordination, enhancing collaboration between ministries.

## First day, first show: Stormy session over Operation Sindoos



**Agency New Delhi.**

The first day of the monsoon session of Delhi Assembly witnessed stormy scenes with repeated altercations breaking out between treasury and opposition benches. BJP legislators accused the AAP of derailing discussions related to public issues while the opposition MLAs alleged that the government was misleading people. Ruckus erupted during the discussion on Operation Sindoos, with CM Rekha Gupta hitting out at the opposition during her speech over 'anti-India narratives' while the AAP accused the BJP-led Centre of announcing ceasefire under the "US pressure".

Hitting out at the INDIA bloc, Gupta said, "These people do not love Bharat, but they love anti-national forces because they see their own reflection in them... if you listen to them, it feels like they are spokespersons for Pakistan... They do not trust their own army, their own prime minister but they trust foreign countries," she said. AAP's Sanjeev Jha's remarks against PM Modi irked the ruling dispensation with Speaker Vijender Gupta asking him to apologise. He was marshalled out for refusing to comply.

Uproar was witnessed during presentation of the Delhi School Education (Fee Regulation and Transparency) Bill, 2025, with the AAP demanding the bill be sent to the select committee for multi-party scrutiny. Their demand was rejected, following which AAP MLAs stormed the well of the House before staging walk out.

## Former J&K Governor Satyapal Malik dies at 79 after prolonged illness

**Agency New Delhi.**

Former Jammu and Kashmir Governor Satyapal Malik died on Tuesday at the age of 79 after a prolonged illness. The veteran leader died around 1 pm at Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital in New Delhi, where he was undergoing treatment. Malik served as the last Governor of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir from August 2018 to October 2019. It was during his tenure that Article 370 was abrogated, revoking the state's special status on 5 August 2019. Today marks the sixth anniversary of that landmark decision.

A three-time parliamentarian and former Union Minister of State, Malik was the first politician to be appointed as Governor of Jammu and Kashmir since the onset of militancy in the region. He was later appointed as the Governor of Goa and subsequently served as the Governor of Meghalaya until October 2022. Earlier, in 2017, he had briefly

held the post of Governor of Bihar. Malik's political career began as a socialist face in the late 1960s. Started as a student leader, his career saw him move through different political affiliations, including the Chaudhary Charan Singh's Bhartiya Kranti Dal,



Congress and VP Singh-led Janata Dal, before eventually joining the BJP in 2004. Due to his closeness with Chaudhary Charan Singh, he entered electoral politics in 1974 and was elected as an MLA from Baghpat for the first time. He later joined the Lok Dal along with

Charan Singh, who appointed him as the party's General Secretary. In 1980, Malik entered the Rajya Sabha representing Lok Dal. However, he didn't remain long. In 1984, he joined the Congress and returned to the Rajya Sabha in 1986.

Following the Bofors scandal during Rajiv Gandhi's tenure, Malik resigned from the Congress in 1987 and joined VP Singh's Janata Dal. In 1989, he won the Lok Sabha seat from Aligarh as a Janata Dal candidate and was sworn in as the Union Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs and Tourism.

In 2004, Malik joined the BJP under Atal Bihari Vajpayee's leadership but lost the Lok Sabha election to RLD chief Ajit Singh in Baghpat. During the first Modi government, Malik was appointed head of a parliamentary panel to review the land acquisition bill. His panel opposed the bill, and the government shelved it.

## Rape convict Ram Rahim gets another parole, 14th such relief in 8 years

**Agency New Delhi.**

Jailed Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh, who is serving a 20-year sentence for raping two of his disciples, has been granted a 40-day parole, sources said on Tuesday. This is the 14th such parole granted to the self-proclaimed godman in the past eight years. After securing fresh parole just three months after his previous release, Ram Rahim walked out of Rohtak's Sunaria jail early Tuesday morning. The 57-year-old will be staying at his Sirsa-headquartered Dera until his expected return to the jail on September 14. Frequent releases of Singh, who was convicted in 2017 for raping two of his disciples and in 2019 for the murder of a journalist, have



consistently drawn criticism from various quarters. He was last granted a 21-day furlough on April 9, and prior to that, received a 30-day parole in January this year, just ahead of the February 5 Delhi Assembly polls. Earlier, on October 1 last year, he was also granted a 20-day parole before the October 5 Haryana Assembly elections. Dera Sacha Sauda, led by

Singh, commands a large following across Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, and several other states. In Haryana, the sect has a particularly strong presence in districts such as Sirsa, Fatehabad, Kurukshetra, Kaithal, and Hisar. Ram Rahim is currently serving a 20-year sentence for the rape of two female disciples, a conviction handed down by a special CBI court in August 2017. In January 2019, he was also convicted, along with three others, of the murder of journalist Ram Chander Chhatrapati, and sentenced to life imprisonment. While he was acquitted in May 2024 by the Punjab and Haryana High Court in the 2002 murder of the sect's former manager Ranjit Singh, Singh's convictions in the rape and journalist murder cases remain.

## Opposition loves anti-national forces, not Bharat, says Rekha Gupta in Assembly

**Agency New Delhi.**

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Monday alleged that the opposition parties love anti-national forces but not Bharat and hailed PM Narendra Modi for Operation Sindoos to avenge the Pahalgam terror attack.

The Chief Minister made the remarks while speaking in the Delhi Assembly during a debate on Operation Sindoos and Operation Mahadev. She said Operation Sindoos was a befitting reply to Pakistan after the Pahalgam attack in which some women lost their loved ones, asserting that Prime Minister Modi played a huge role in protecting the dignity of "our sisters". Hitting out at the Congress-led INDIA bloc, the chief minister said, "These people (Opposition) do not love Bharat, but they love anti-national forces because they see their own reflection in them." "The opposition parties came together to form INDIA bloc. The name is 'INDIA' but if you listen to them, it feels like they are spokespersons for Pakistan... Even in the

Lok Sabha, many people raised questions on Operation Sindoos. They do not trust their own army, their own prime minister but they trust foreign countries," she said. The Chief Minister also attacked the Congress over the issue of Partition.

"In 1947, your party (Congress) was in power. You took credit for India's Independence but not for Partition. Why didn't you take responsibility of 1962 Indo-China war?" the chief minister said. Earlier, AAP MLA Sanjeev Jha was marshalled out of the Delhi Assembly on Monday after he refused to apologise for making objectionable remarks during a discussion on Operation Sindoos. Participating in the discussion on the motion to thank the prime minister, home

minister and the armed forces for Operation Sindoos and Operation Mahadev, Delhi Home Minister Ashish Sood said the two operations represent the

charges. In his speech, Jha attacked the Centre for accepting the "ceasefire" during India-Pakistan military conflict and used words that the Speaker directed to be expunged from the records.

Speaker Vijender Gupta also asked Jha to tender an apology to the House. However, as Jha remained defiant, he was marshalled out in the direction of the Speaker. Jha hit out at the BJP, saying the decision of ceasefire was made by US President Trump and criticised the central government for accepting it.

"Operation Sindoos was an opportunity to teach a lesson to the enemy and take back the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir," the AAP MLA from Burari said. Operation Sindoos was launched by the Indian armed forces to avenge the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack in which 26 civilians were massacred.



new normal in response to terror attacks. "After terrorist attacks, dossiers are not sent any longer; instead, the army is given a clear order to eliminate the enemy," he said. Sood said those questioning the two operations should be tried under sedition

## NEWS BOX

## After India series draw, Ben Stokes eager to get to Australia for Ashes

New Delhi. (Agency)

After an epic drawn series against India, England captain Ben Stokes said that he is eager to get to Australia to play the Ashes later in the year. Stokes was one of England's standout players during the series against India, which ended 2-2 after the visitors won the Oval Test on Monday, August 4.

Stokes scored 304 runs and picked up 17 wickets in the four Tests he played, as he had to sit out of the final one at the Oval due to an injury. Speaking after the match at the press conference, the England skipper praised his team for pushing the game close against India despite the injury to Chris Woakes. Stokes said that the fight shown by the team during the series gives him confidence for the Ashes series. "When one of your bowlers goes down so early in the game, the role of the other seamers changes," Stokes said.

"Even in the second innings, the heart and desire they showed was amazing. There were many what-ifs in the last five days, makes the game great, but all (coach) Brendon (McCullum) and I asked was to give it everything. (Josh) Tongue, (Gus)



Atkinson and (Jamie) Overton showed it." "The way in which we've been able to perform throughout the series, I'm looking forward to getting to Australia and doing what we want to go out there and do."

The Ashes series is all set to start in November. Stokes pays tribute to WakesOne of the biggest moments on Day 5 was seeing Chris Woakes come out to bat with his left hand still in a sling. Stokes paid his tribute to the pacer and said that never-say-die attitude almost paid off for them in the end. "That never-say-die, never-back-down attitude we've installed in the group nearly paid off. It was never going to be a question for him to go out there. He was in a lot of discomfort even running between the wickets." "But we've had Rishabh Pant go out to bat with a broken foot, we've had Shoaib Bashir bowling.

## I believe in Jassi Bhai and myself: Siraj says he missed Bumrah during Oval win

New Delhi. (Agency)

Mohammed Siraj claimed that he always believes in himself and Jasprit Bumrah always and said he missed the presence of the star pacer during the Oval Test win. Bumrah was rested for the match and released from the squad mid-way through the game as Siraj stepped up in his absence. The 31-year-old picked up nine wickets, including a five-wicket haul in the second innings, as India secured a six-wicket win. Siraj famously said the line 'I believe in Jassi bhai' after India's T20 World Cup win last year, but now the fans are delivering the same line for him.

Peaking to the BCCI, Siraj said that Bumrah would have given a different presence during the match. 'Almighty had something good planned'

Siraj had to bounce back on Day 5 after dropping the catch of Harry Brook when he was batting on 19. The pacer said that he did ponder about the missed chance but now feels like it was all the plan of the almighty.



Siraj talked about changing his phone's wallpaper ahead of Day 5 and said it was done to remind himself to keep believing, irrespective of the situation.

"When I woke up this morning, I had this feeling from within—that I can do it, that I can change the game today. I had so much belief that I actually went on Google, searched for a 'believe' emoji, and set it as my wallpaper—just to remind myself, believe, I can do this. So thank you so much to the Almighty," said Siraj.

The Indian pacer ended the series, leading the bowling charts with 23 wickets to his name in five Tests.

# Rohen screamer seals Victory for Real Kashmir FC in Imphal Thriller

**Earlier, the match came alive with two quickfire goals in the 24th and 26th minutes, first from Real Kashmir's Marat Tareck and then TRAU's Afridi Buyamayum, setting the tone for a fiercely contested battle in front of over 20,000 fans in attendance.**

IMPHAL. (Agency)

A stunning long-range strike from midfielder Rohen Singh proved to be the difference as Real Kashmir FC edged past a spirited TRAU FC 2-1 in a gripping Group F contest of the 134th IndianOil Durand Cup, here at the Khuman Lampak Main Stadium. Earlier, the match came alive with two quickfire goals in the 24th and 26th minutes, first from Real Kashmir's Marat Tareck and then TRAU's Afridi Buyamayum, setting the tone for a fiercely contested battle in front of over 20,000 fans in attendance. But it was

Rohen's 64th-minute rocket from outside the box that ultimately sealed the deal for the Snow Leopards, clinching three vital points, despite a spirited fight from the home side. TRAU FC head coach Thangjam Saran Singh opted for an all-Indian 4-2-3-1 starting eleven with Afridi Buyamayum leading the line, flanked by wingers Monis Singh and Dhananjoy Singh, while Sapam Singh manned the goal. Real Kashmir, under Ishfaq Ahmed, set up in a 4-4-2 shape featuring Ivorian striker William Sessegnon and Russian forward Marat Tareck, supported by a backline led by Seila Toure and skipper Shahid Nazir. The match began at a frenetic pace, with both sides looking to assert dominance early. TRAU had the first real chance of the match in the 13th minute when Afridi broke through, but Real Kashmir's goalkeeper Furqan Ahmad Dar was quick off his line to deny the forward with a brave stop. TRAU controlled possession and kept probing the Real Kashmir defense with clever movements and wing play. However, it was the visitors who struck first against the run of play in the 24th minute. A perfectly lofted ball from midfielder Rohen found Marat

Tareck in the box. The Russian made no mistake, calmly slotting it past Sapam Singh to hand Real Kashmir a 1-0 lead. But the celebration was short-lived. TRAU responded immediately from the restart.



Monis Singh burst down the right flank and delivered a pinpoint cross into the box, where Afridi finished with composure to level the scores at 1-1 in the very next minute. The end-to-end nature of the contest continued with TRAU looking sharper on the wings, combining well through Monis, Dhananjoy, and Nelson. A long-range effort

from captain Shitaljit Atom in first-half stoppage time was blocked, as the teams went into the break locked at 1-1 after a thrilling opening 45 minutes. Real Kashmir came out stronger in the second half and nearly reclaimed the lead in the 52nd minute when Tareck's header from a looping cross by Mohammad Asrar was denied by Sapam Singh. Both teams kept trading attacks, but the final pass often went astray. The Snow Leopards finally capitalized in the 64th minute. After sustained pressure, Sessegnon teed up Rohen on the edge of the box, and the midfielder unleashed a thunderous strike into the net to make it 2-1.

Real Kashmir nearly extended their advantage a minute later when substitute Ahteeb Ahmad got on the end of a clever ball from Tareck, but his chipped effort rolled inches wide of the target.

TRAU's hopes took a further blow in the 77th minute when skipper Shitaljit Atom received his second yellow and was sent off, reducing the home side to ten men. Despite the numerical disadvantage, TRAU tried to hit on the counter, but Real Kashmir's defense led by Seila Toure remained resolute.

## No junk food, only discipline: Siraj's brother reveals secret behind long spells

New Delhi. (Agency)

Top-seeded Alexander Zverev advanced to an ATP Toronto Masters quarter-final against defending champion Alexei Popyrin as his fourth-round opponent Francisco Cerundolo was forced to retire with an abdominal injury on Saturday. Germany's Zverev secured a 6-4, 1-0 victory, Argentina's Cerundolo taking a medical timeout after the fifth game and finally calling a halt after less than an hour on court.

Australia's Popyrin won his ninth straight match in Canada, beating ninth seed Holger Rune 4-6, 6-2, 6-3. The 26th-ranked Aussie profited from nearly 40 unforced errors from his Danish opponent, who has been taking occasional advice from the week not high on confidence but I knew my game was there.

"I just let go of the pressure and it worked out for me," added Popyrin, who did not drop the first set did not sit well.

"I told myself to keep going and managed to play aggressive on the next break point that I got. From then on I felt much more comfortable." Furthermore, he also mentioned how Siraj didn't let the Champions Trophy 2025 snub demotivate him as he worked on his fitness and practiced hard to make a comeback.



100%, he never gives up, even when he wasn't selected for the Champions Trophy squad, he didn't let it demotivate him. Instead, he worked even harder. He hit the gym, focused on his fitness, and practiced hard every day—morning and evening. He identified what was missing and fixed it," he added.

Siraj finished as the leading wicket-taker of the Test series against England with 23 wickets from five matches (nine innings) at an average of 32.43 with two five-wicket hauls to his name. Courtesy of his performance, India managed to draw the series 2-2 as they registered their narrowest victory in Tests.

He finished the fifth Test with figures of 9/190 and was deservedly adjudged Player of the Match. Having scripted a remarkable comeback in the national side, Siraj will now eye to once again break into the ODI team after being ignored for the Champions Trophy 2025.

## Respect for Siraj would not have changed if India lost Oval Test: Shubman Gill

**Shubman Gill hailed Mohammed Siraj's match-winning impact at The Oval, emphasising that his respect within the team would have remained unchanged, regardless of the result, thanks to his consistent efforts and leadership with the ball over years.**

London. (Agency)

India's Test captain Shubman Gill lauded Mohammed Siraj after the pacer played a decisive role in India's dramatic victory over England in the fifth and final Test at The Oval. Siraj's match-winning five-wicket haul on Day 5 helped India pull off a nail-biting 6-run win and level the five-match series 2-2. But for Gill, the result alone wasn't what defined Siraj's impact—he emphasised that the respect the

seamer commands in the dressing room has been earned over years and wouldn't have changed even if India had lost. Speaking at the post-match press conference, Gill



reflected on the ups and downs of the Oval Test, especially the dropped catch by Siraj on Day 4 which allowed England's Harry Brook to go on and score a century. While that moment briefly tilted the match in England's favour, Siraj's comeback on the final day was nothing short of

spectacular. "I've said it before too, that we only believe in Siraj bhai," Gill said. "The kind of effort he has put in, even if we had lost the match, definitely the mood would've been low, but the respect he has in the dressing room would not have been affected. One moment would not have defined his respect, which he has worked hard to earn in the last 4-5 years." Siraj was at the heart of India's bowling attack throughout the Test and finished the match with figures of 4/86 in the first innings and 5/104 in the second. His relentless energy, bounce, and movement made life difficult for England's batters throughout the series. With 23 wickets across five matches, Siraj ended as the highest wicket-taker of the series—showcasing once again why he remains one of India's most trusted red-ball bowlers.

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## Spirited India level England series, but Gautam Gambhir's Test reign must end now

New Delhi. (Agency)

It does not feel right to end what was possibly the greatest hour of cricket seen in recent times with a negative story. Mohammed Siraj's magical spell with the ball on the final day of what must have been an extremely tiring Test series left the entire Oval crowd spellbound. Perhaps more so, those pinned to their TVs, phones, and laptops gasped every time a ball was bowled on Day 5 of the final Test match. Siraj, almost single-handedly, pulled off a comeback story for the ages. Defending just 35 runs on the final day, Siraj and Prasidh Krishna picked up four wickets, handing India a series-levelling win at the Oval. The victory perhaps even saved the job of Indian head coach Gautam Gambhir, whose position was under intense scrutiny heading into the last day of the series. Despite a multitude of tactical blunders, India finished the series with the most unlikely 2-2 draw—courtesy of a lion-hearted performance from the beloved

Mohammed Siraj, who achieved the status of a national hero on Monday. The moment—and its importance—seemed to sink in for Siraj as well. When the seamer came out for the press conference after his



match-winning spell on Day 5, he held back tears from one corner of his eye. When his captain Shubman Gill addressed the press at the Oval, Siraj often zoned out, perhaps lost in flashes from the series in which he bowled a grueling 185.3 overs—comfortably the biggest workload

of his entire Test career. Even for a player forged in the fire of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, this was probably too much. Bowling 185+ overs in 40 days would put most bowlers into the ground. But Siraj is Siraj. As he held back tears from one eye, he smiled with the other, crediting God for bringing joy to the 1.5 billion-strong Indian population.

The "Miyan Magic" on Monday was perhaps a good reflection of how the series against England unfolded for India. Rishabh Pant and Shubman Gill in Edgbaston, Washington Sundar and Ravindra Jadeja in Manchester, and Miyan in the Oval—India found heroes in this Test series when things looked grim. The young Indian side stood tall every time they were nearly beaten to the ground, finding inspiration on the bleakest of days, and at the worst of times. They drew a series that they probably should have won against an equally-flawed English side. India Draw Series Despite Tactical Blunders

## Sunil Gavaskar hits special dance after India's trilling Oval Test win

**Gavaskar danced post-match after India's emotional Oval Test win**

**India sealed victory by just six runs at The Oval**

**Siraj claimed five wickets in a tense Day 5 finish**

New Delhi. (Agency)

Legendary India cricketer Sunil Gavaskar turned into India's biggest cheerleader yet again as he joined the celebrations at The Oval following India's dramatic six-run win over England in the fifth and final Test on

August 4. The former India captain, who was part of the commentary panel for the high-stakes five-match series, couldn't contain his excitement as India levelled the series 2-2 in one of the most thrilling finishes in recent Test history. As emotions spilled over post-match, Gavaskar was seen celebrating with fellow commentators and team members, including Cheteshwar Pujara, who was also part of the broadcast team. In a moment that lit up social media, Gavaskar sang and danced to the patriotic classic "Meri Desh Ki Dharti" in front of a cheering crowd—showcasing yet again his undying passion for Indian cricket. The atmosphere at The Oval matched the intensity of the match itself. After four days of gripping cricket, the fifth day began with England needing just 35 runs with four wickets in hand to chase down a record target

of 374. At one stage, the game seemed to be slipping away from India, especially with Joe Root and Harry Brook scoring centuries



and anchoring the chase. But the Indian bowlers had other plans. Mohammed Siraj, who had already impressed with four wickets in the first innings, returned with fire

and precision to claim a five-wicket haul in the second. His effort was perfectly complemented by Prasidh Krishna, who cleaned up the tail. The pair bowled India to a thrilling finish, picking up the last four England wickets for just 34 runs and sealing a memorable win for the visitors. India's victory was significant not just for the result but also for what it represented—a young team, led by new Test captain Shubman Gill and missing senior figures like Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, showed incredible fight to square a tough overseas series. It was a statement win, and one that inspired a proud and spontaneous celebration from Gavaskar, a man who has witnessed—and contributed to—many of Indian cricket's defining moments.

## Indusind soars 5% as RBI nods Rajiv Anand as new CEO

MUMBAI (Agency)

Following the Reserve Bank's late last night nod to the appointment of Rajiv Anand as the chief executive and managing director for a three-year term, the shares of the accounting scam-hit Indusind Bank jumped over 5% in early trade on Tuesday to Rs 489. But as the wider risk-off sentiment hit the market, the counter pared most of the initial gains but still trading in the green.

The 59-year-old Anand quit the rival Axis Bank as its deputy managing director on August 3 before his appointment. He was anyways to retire from Axis Bank later this month. The three-year appointment will run until August 24, 2028, pending shareholder approval at the bank's upcoming general meeting, the bank said in a late night exchange filing.

Earlier, during the June quarter investor call, Indusind chairman Sunil Mehta had said the bank was working to strengthen its senior management bench by identifying top-quality leadership talent, both internally and externally.

Anand has over 35 years of experience in the financial services sector. He began his journey at Axis Asset Management Company in 2009 as its founding managing director and chief executive. In 2013, he moved to Axis Bank as president of retail banking, eventually joining the board in the same year. In 2018, he was appointed to lead the wholesale banking and since December 2021 he has been serving as deputy managing director, overseeing several critical functions including wholesale banking, digital banking, marketing, and corporate communications. Anand was set to retire from the bank in August.

In a note on his appointment, domestic brokerage Emkay Global said Tuesday morning, "we believe Anand brings on board an extensive experience across wholesale/retail banking, digital transformation, and capital markets, having worked across global financial institutions including StanChart, ANZ Grindlays, HSBC, and lastly at Axis Bank across various functions." However, Emkay noted "we view the appointment of a seasoned private banker, versus rumors about the risk of hiring a PSB banker, as a positive development for the bank in the long run." Yet, the brokerage believes that Anand will have the tough task of rebuilding a leadership team, reorienting the bank's asset/liability mix, reinforcing governance standards, and restoring stakeholders' confidence, before setting off a turnaround for the bank once again. "We believe clarity on the long-term strategic direction may take some more time.

## SC cancels bail of DHFL promoter Dheeraj Wadhawan in Rs 42,000 cr loan scam, orders surrender in two weeks

New Delhi (Agency)

The Supreme Court on Tuesday cancelled the bail granted to former DHFL promoter Dheeraj Wadhawan in the multi-crore bank loan fraud case and directed him to surrender within two weeks. A bench comprising Justices Sanjay Kumar and Satish Chandra Sharma passed the order after examining a medical board report, overruling the Delhi High Court's decision of September 9, 2024, which had granted Wadhawan bail on medical grounds, declaring him a "sick person."

The top court's decision came in response to an appeal filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), which argued that Wadhawan suffered from no serious medical ailments. Additional Solicitor General S V Raju, appearing for the CBI, told the court that large sums of money had been siphoned off in the case and the accused should not be out on bail. Dheeraj Wadhawan, along with his brother Kapil Wadhawan, was arrested in July 2022 in connection with the scam. The CBI filed a chargesheet in October 2022, which was later taken on record by the trial court.

The FIR was registered on a complaint by Union Bank of India, which alleged that DHFL, under the leadership of chairman-cum-managing director Kapil Wadhawan and director Dheeraj Wadhawan, conspired to cheat a consortium of 17 banks led by Union Bank.

## Anil Ambani appears before ED in Rs 17,000-crore bank loan 'fraud' case

New Delhi (Agency)

Reliance Group Chairman Anil Ambani appeared before the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday in connection with a money laundering probe linked to alleged large-scale bank loan frauds by his group companies, official sources said. Ambani, 66, arrived at the central agency's office in central Delhi around 11 am to record his statement under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). His summons followed ED searches at 35 premises belonging to 50 companies and 25 individuals, including senior executives of his business group, in Mumbai on 24 July. The investigation centres on alleged financial irregularities and the diversion of over Rs 17,000 crore in bank loans by several Anil Ambani group entities, including Reliance Infrastructure (R Infra). One key allegation involves the diversion of approximately Rs 3,000 crore in loans granted by Yes Bank between 2017 and 2019. Sources said the ED is probing a possible quid pro quo arrangement, where Yes Bank promoters allegedly received money in their companies shortly before the loans were sanctioned. The agency suspects serious irregularities in Yes Bank's loan approvals, including back-dated credit approval notes, investments without due diligence, and violations of the bank's internal credit policy.

# Filing ITR for the first time Do this before anything else

**The last date to file your ITR for the financial year 2024–25 is September 15, 2025, so it's best to begin early and avoid the last-minute rush.**

New Delhi (Agency)

If you are filing your Income Tax Return (ITR) for the first time, the process might seem confusing at first, but it doesn't have to be. With the I-T department making most things available online, it's easier than ever to file your taxes. But before you get started, there are a few important things you need to keep in mind. The last date to file your ITR for the financial year 2024–25 is September 15, 2025, so it's best to begin early and avoid the last-

minute rush. Here's a simple guide for first-time taxpayers:

### ASK FOR HELP IF NEEDED

If your income comes from just one job, you can likely file your return on your own by following a few simple steps.

But if you have income from multiple sources or wish to claim various deductions, it's better to speak to a tax expert or a chartered accountant. They can guide you and help you avoid errors.

### REGISTER ON THE INCOME TAX PORTAL

To file your ITR online, you must first register on the official income tax portal [incometax.gov.in](http://incometax.gov.in). You'll need your PAN (Permanent Account Number), which should also be linked to your Aadhaar card. Click on 'Register' at the top-right corner of the portal's home page. Enter your PAN and follow the instructions to complete the registration.

### PICK THE RIGHT ITR FORM

Different ITR forms apply depending on how you earn. Salaried people usually file ITR-1, but if you earn from business, capital gains, or other sources, you'll need a different form. Simply put, choosing the



correct form is a must, using the wrong one can get your return rejected.

### CHOOSE YOUR TAX REGIME WISELY

If you're a salaried employee, you've likely already told your employer which tax regime you've chosen. But if you still

have a choice, it's a good idea to compare how much tax you'll pay under both old and new regimes before deciding.

### COLLECT ALL NECESSARY DOCUMENTS

First-time filers should collect all key paperwork to make sure their ITR is accurate and complete. This includes Form 16, Form 26AS, AIS/TIS, interest certificates, investment proofs (like under Section 80C/80D), capital gains records, and home loan statements. You'll also need specific details such as your landlord's name, policy numbers, insurer information, and receipt or account numbers for rent or investment claims to avoid mistakes and ensure smooth processing. So, filing your first tax return isn't just about ticking a box—it's a key step in becoming financially responsible. With the right documents, correct form, and a little help if needed.

## Sunjay Kapur's mother alleges business conspiracy behind his death, seeks UK probe

New Delhi (Agency)

Rani Kapur, mother of late Sunjay Kapur, former chairman of Rs 30,000 crore Sona Comstar group, has alleged that her son's death may not have been natural. In a letter submitted to UK authorities, she has called for a full-fledged criminal investigation, citing what she claims to be evidence of murder, abetment, conspiracy, fraud, and forgery. She alleges that Sunjay was a victim of a coordinated transnational conspiracy spanning the UK, India, and potentially the United States.

Sunjay Kapur, the 53-year-old chairman of auto components company Sona Comstar, died on June 12, 2025, while playing polo at the Duke's Ground of the Old Guards Polo Club in Surrey, UK. The death was officially attributed to cardiac arrest, possibly caused by an anaphylactic reaction following a bee sting.

Rani Kapur has stated that she was coerced into signing key legal documents in the days following her son's death and that she has since been denied access to the family's assets. Her lawyer, Vaibhav Gaggar, has supported her claims and demanded that UK police initiate an independent criminal probe. They are asking for the collection of forensic evidence, including medical records, financial documents, digital data, and CCTV footage.

Sona Comstar, in response, has strongly denied the allegations. The company stated that Rani Kapur has had no role in the company since 2019 and is not a shareholder. They added that no documents have been signed by her since Sunjay's passing. The company has also issued a legal notice accusing her of making defamatory and baseless claims.

The controversy has intensified an already simmering family feud over the control of Sona Comstar and the distribution of Sunjay's estimated Rs 30,000 crore estate. Rani Kapur has raised objections to the role of Sunjay's widow, Priya Sachdev Kapur, who was recently appointed as a non-executive director at Sona Comstar. Rani disputes Priya's authority and questions her influence on family and business matters. Legal experts anticipate that the matter may move to Indian courts, where Rani Kapur could challenge the succession and control of the RK Family Trust, which holds a substantial portion of Sunjay's corporate assets. The case has the potential to become one of the most high-profile inheritance and corporate succession battles in recent Indian history.

With UK authorities now reviewing the allegations, and possible multi-jurisdictional probes on the horizon, the true circumstances of Sunjay Kapur's death and the legal status of his business empire remain uncertain.

## Who is P B Balaji, Jaguar Land Rover's new CEO

New Delhi (Agency)

Jaguar Land Rover (JLR), the luxury carmaker owned by Tata Group, has announced the appointment of P B Balaji as its next Chief Executive Officer (CEO). He will take over the top role in November 2025, after current CEO Adrian Mardell steps down upon completing his contract. Mardell will continue to support the company during the transition period. The decision was confirmed in a stock exchange filing on August 4, 2025. Balaji's appointment marks a major shift, as he moves from a financial leadership role to the driver's seat of one of the world's most recognised car brands.

### WHO IS PB BALAJI?

P B Balaji is no stranger to the Tata Group. He has been the Group Chief Financial Officer (CFO) at Tata Motors for nearly eight years, playing a key role in steering the company's finances and growth strategy. His promotion to JLR CEO reflects the group's trust in

his leadership and vision. Before joining Tata Motors, Balaji worked with Hindustan Unilever (HUL) for over eight years. He started his journey in the corporate world as Vice President



of Treasury at Unilever Singapore in 2007. Later, he moved to HUL in India, where he served as the Vice President of Finance. His strong financial background and experience of managing large organisations set the foundation for his leadership path.

### HIS EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Balaji is a highly qualified professional

with degrees from two of India's most prestigious institutions. He studied engineering at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras, graduating in the 1991 batch. After that, he completed his post-graduate studies in finance and operations at the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Calcutta.

### WHAT'S NEXT?

As CEO of Jaguar Land Rover, Balaji is expected to lead the company into a new era. With his deep understanding of finance, operations, and the Tata Group's broader vision, he is well-placed to take on the challenges of the global automotive market.

His appointment comes at a time when the car industry is evolving rapidly, with a strong push towards electric vehicles, sustainable mobility, and new technology. Industry watchers will be keen to see how Balaji brings his experience and fresh perspective to JLR's global business.

## Government's big remark as ethanol-blended petrol has car owners fuming

New Delhi (Agency)

Amid growing concerns over the impact of 20% ethanol-blended petrol (E20) on vehicle performance, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has issued a detailed clarification dismissing such fears as "largely unfounded and not supported by scientific evidence or expert analysis."

In a post on X (formerly Twitter), the ministry responded to recent media reports questioning whether E20 fuel could damage older vehicles or degrade the driving experience. Citing multiple studies and expert assessments, it stated that E20 is both safe and beneficial. According to the ministry, long-term testing of both carbureted and fuel-injected vehicles across 100,000 km showed "no statistically significant differences" in power,

torque, or fuel efficiency between E20 and conventional petrol. These tests were carried out every 10,000 km and evaluated not only engine performance but also emissions and mechanical



durability. Further assessments by the Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI), Indian Institute of Petroleum (IIP), and Indian Oil Corporation's R&D wing confirmed that even older vehicles—or "legacy vehicles"—did not suffer from abnormal wear and tear. E20 also

passed hot and cold engine start tests without any sign of engine damage.

### ONLY MINOR DROP IN FUEL EFFICIENCY

One of the most frequently raised concerns around E20 is reduced mileage. Ethanol has a lower energy density than petrol, which does result in a minor drop in fuel economy. The ministry acknowledged this but clarified that the reduction is limited to around 1–2% for vehicles designed for E10 and calibrated for E20. In older or non-optimised vehicles, it could range from 3–6%. However, this drop is far from "drastic," the ministry noted, and can be mitigated with proper engine tuning and the use of E20-compatible materials—measures that leading automakers have already adopted since April 2023, according to the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM).

## ALMM (wind) procedure amended to nudge wind OEMs to 'Make in India'

CHENNAI (Agency)

The recent amendment to the Approved List of Models and Manufacturers (ALMM) (Wind) procedure is expected to benefit domestic wind turbine original equipment manufacturers (or wind OEMs) by creating a more equitable footing between Indian and Chinese wind OEMs. This will reduce the disadvantage in manufacturing costs for Indian wind OEMs as compared to their Chinese counterparts, while strengthening the local supply chain. It will also support the credit profiles of the domestic players. A Crisil Ratings analysis of companies accounting for 85–90% of India's wind OEM industry by order book, indicates as much.

The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), on July 31, amended the procedure for including / updating wind turbine models in the ALMM (Wind) – i.e., the list of certified wind turbine models eligible for installation in the country. The amendment mandates wind OEMs to source key components—blade, tower, gearbox, generator, and special bearings which

account for 65–70% of the total cost of a wind turbine—only from ALMM (Wind Turbine Components) listed suppliers. It also mandates wind turbine data and control systems to remain within India, using local data centers, servers, and R&D facilities, which in turn should improve data security and enhance the country's cybersecurity ecosystem.

The move mirrors the shift in the solar sector, through introduction of ALMM (Solar Modules) effective April 2024, that boosted domestic manufacturing by limiting approvals to India-based suppliers. On similar lines, the current amendments will nudge the wind OEMs to 'Make in India'. Indian wind OEMs, with a market share of around 40–45%, are already sourcing most of the mandated components domestically, while Chinese wind OEMs operating in India import a higher proportion of lower-cost components from China, making their products 10–15% cheaper than those of Indian manufacturers.

The recent amendment has the potential

to level the playing field between Indian and Chinese wind OEMs. Chinese players have expanded their market share from just about 10% in fiscal 2019



procuring domestically, and thus less likely to raise prices, the policy revision could shift the market share in favour of domestic manufacturers," Haku said. To support, India has adequate, but underutilised, domestic manufacturing capacity for these components. As such, the amendment will enhance the share of these local component manufacturers and reduce dependence on imports. This is in line with government's vision of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' and will increase the sector's resilience to geopolitical shocks. Additionally, the policy also focuses on data localisation, thereby enhancing national security.

Says Gauri Gupta, Team Leader, Crisil Ratings, "However, even with this amendment, competition will remain intense as the dominant Chinese player, which commands the lion's share of the market, is expected to stay put in India. That said, the policy revision will likely bring in a more level playing field among wind OEMs."



# Tamannaah Bhatia

Denies 'Rape Of Avantika' In Baahubali: 'Itni Pure Cheez, Gandi Nazar Se Dekhte'

**T**amannaah Bhatia has addressed a controversial scene from Baahubali: The Beginning, where her character, Avantika, is seen with Prabhas' character in a song. While the scene faced criticism and was called problematic, Tamannaah has now defended the scene. In a recent chat with The Lallantop, Tamannaah was asked about the criticism the song faced for its "navel shot, cleavage shot", and the "rape" of her character. Tamannaah Bhatia said, "This is my take. Jab log aapko control nahi kar sakte, woh ek technique istemaal karte aur woh hoi shame and guilt. Kyunki woh hamesha aapko aisa mehsoos karate hai ki aap jo bhi kare uske baare mein aapko sharmanaak hona chahiye. Jab woh aapko mehsoos kara sakte woh aap pe control paa sakte hain. This is one aspect of the conversation." Tamannaah added, "In our country, people look down upon the idea of the process by which you and I are here today. If our parents didn't come together, I don't think you'd be here. Neither would I nor would anybody else be. And we look down upon it so much, we are so repressed." She said, "Jo itni pure cheez hai, ussi ko ham sabse gandi nazar se dekthe hain. Woh nazariya jo hai, wo ham sabko aise mehsoos karate hain that we have to be ashamed about that aspect of our lives – to hide and not discuss, or we can't be open about that conversation." The actress recalled how SS Rajamouli explained the scene to her and said, "I remember when Rajamouli sir was explaining that entire sequence to me, he was like, 'She is that divine feminine, who is wounded. She is beautiful. She is feminine. She wants to be loved. But she has gone through so much hardship in her life that she feels like she needs to push everybody away. She can't let anybody inside because they will always take advantage of her. So, she holds boundaries. But, here, there is a young man who is merely trying to woo her to make her see how beautiful she is.'" The actress explained, "Agar aapko yeh visually darshana pade, toh there was an entire sequence about, kuch baali (earrings) shift ho jaati hai, bindi lag jaati hai – jab aapne aap ko dekhti hai... apna khud ka chehra dekhti hai – wo dekhti arrey mujhe hameesha se lagta tha ki maine...apne aap ko itna strong kar diya tha ki apni jo namrata hai wo kahi na kahi gum ho gayi thi." Tamannaah Bhatia vehemently denied that the scene was "the rape of Avantika". "I don't think I take the burden of that and, as creative people, I don't think it was the rape of Avantika. It was Avantika finding herself through a young man who was wooing her," the actress stated.



# Mrunal Thakur

Says Son Of Sardaar 2 Reviews Are 'Misleading', Urges Fans To Judge Film Themselves

**M**runal Thakur is currently busy promoting her film Son of Sardaar 2, which was recently released in theatres. While the actress has been sharing happy reviews from the audience, the critics have given the film mixed reactions. Now, in her recent tweet, Mrunal has called the reviews misleading. Last night, Mrunal Thakur took to her X account and asked a fan, "What are your Sunday plans?" Reacting to it, one user wrote, "The way the reviews are on Instagram

theatre with the regular audience. While sharing the reel, she wrote, "Ever since Sita Ramam, I've held on to this little ritual of watching the film in theatres with all of you. Because truly, the real magic happens when I hear your laughter, your cheers, your love echo through the halls."

"There's no bigger reward for our hard work than feeling your energy live in that moment. Go catch SOS 2 in theatres if you haven't already. And I hope it leaves you smiling, laughing, and feeling just a little more full-hearted," she further added.

News18 Showsha rated the film 3 out of 5 stars. A part of their review reads: "With all said and done, Son of Sardaar 2 is a decent watch that you can think of watching at the theatres near you with your family."

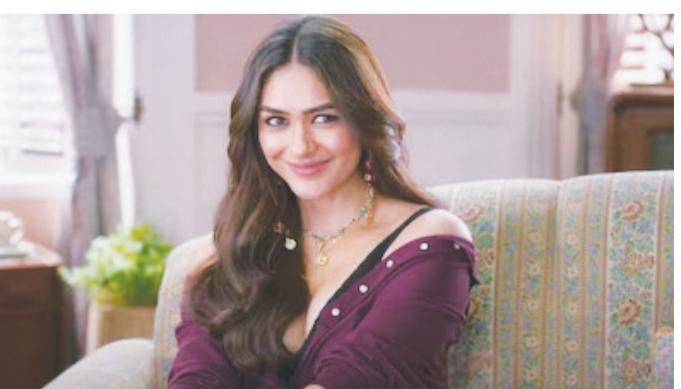
Though the film tries to give a message at the end, go with a mindset to watch some pure slapstick comedy that doesn't require you to apply your mind and logic. Lastly, be ready to be surprised by a small announcement in the end, and no, it's not Son of Sardaar

3."

The film also stars the late Mukul Dev, marking his posthumous release. Directed by Vijay Kumar Arora, the film features a powerhouse cast including Ajay Devgn, Ravi Kishan, Sanjay Mishra, Mrunal Thakur, Neeru Bajwa, Chunky Panday, Kubbra Sait, Deepak Dobriyal, Vindu Dara Singh, Roshni Walia, Sharat Saxena, and Sahil Mehta.

and YouTube, I don't even feel like watching it (Son of Sardaar 2) anymore." Responding to this, the actress quickly said, "Most of the reviews are misleading... I would appreciate it if you decide how you like it, sir."

Earlier today, Mrunal put out a reel revealing a ritual she follows after the release of her films. The actress took to her Instagram and shared a reel showing her enjoying Son of Sardaar 2 inside the



Who Is Karishma Kotak, Ex-Bigg Boss Contestant Viral After Proposal On Live TV



**K**arishma Kotak, who started her career as a fashion model, quickly evolved into a sought-after TV presenter and cricket anchor. She has been hosting several cricket leagues for years, but it was an unexpected live on-field proposal recent that has now thrown her into the spotlight. During the 2025 World Championship of Legends (WCL) final at Edgbaston, WCL co-owner Harshit Tomar stunned viewers and Karishma on live television. Shortly after South Africa clinched victory over Pakistan, Harshit was being interviewed by the anchor, and, right at the end of the segment, he spontaneously revealed his plans to propose to her.

Kotak appeared visibly taken aback, exclaiming, "Oh God," before collecting herself and wrapping up the interview. The moment rapidly went viral on social media, leaving viewers more curious about her.

Let's take a closer look at the woman's early life and professional journey.

#### Early Life & Modelling Career

Born on May 26, 1982, in London, Karishma began modelling in the UK at just 16. With her striking looks and confident screen presence, she became a popular face in the modelling world.

She truly skyrocketed to fame in India in 2006 through the prestigious Kingfisher Calendar 2006, where she starred alongside Bollywood actress Deepika Padukone. In just months, she featured in major campaigns for brands like Dove, Pond's, Wella, Titan Xylus, Tanishq, and others.

She then carved a niche as a sports host, most notably known for the Indian Premier League (IPL) Extraaa Innings T20 in 2013, the 2019 Cricket World Cup, and Global T20 Canada, 2023.

During an interaction with ETimes, Karishma cited Mandira Bedi as her inspiration for entering cricket broadcasting and emphasised her love for live sports presenting over acting roles. "Mandira truly paved the way, and I have immense respect for what she brought to the space. I never planned to be a sports presenter; it just sort of found me! But I think when passion meets preparation, the universe aligns. I've always loved cricket, and once I stepped into the field, quite literally, it just felt like home. So no, I didn't imagine it, but now that I'm here, it feels like the most natural progression," she shared.

## Bharti Singh At Tara Bhanushali's Birthday Bash With Son Gola: 'Koi Aaya Hai Ki...'



**T**elevision's favourite comedian Bharti Singh was spotted attending the sixth birthday celebration of Tara Bhanushali, daughter of actors Jay Bhanushali and Mahhi Vij. The birthday bash was nothing short of a vibrant, fun-filled affair that blended adorable moments with celebrity sparkle.

The couple hosted a Labubu-themed party, drawing inspiration from the popular doll. From pastel balloon arrangements to themed cakes and playful decorations, the event created a magical setting that delighted both young attendees and their celebrity parents.

In a video shared by Filmy Gyan Videos, Bharti can be seen arriving early with her son Laksh, lovingly known as Gola. In her signature humorous style, she is heard jokingly asking whether they are the first guests to arrive. Her interaction brought a moment of light-heartedness, making the paparazzi chuckle. Bharti looked chic in a black collared co-ord set adorned with bold white embroidery, featuring intricate starburst or floral patterns, combining elegance with comfort for the occasion.

#### Star-Studded Guest List Lights Up the Party

The guest list for Tara's birthday was nothing except Indian television's biggest names. Celebrities such as Rashami Desai, Nisha Rawal, Gurmeet Choudhary, Debina Bonnerjee, Sana Makbul attended the occasion. Their presence turned the celebration into a perfect mix of glamour and heartwarming family fun.

#### Bharti Singh and Haarsh Limbachiyya's Love Story

For those unfamiliar with Bharti's personal story, she married Haarsh Limbachiyya, a television writer and show creator, on December 3, 2017, in a dreamy destination wedding in Goa. Their love story began after working together for over seven years on various comedy shows. The couple welcomed their son Laksh aka Gola on April 3, 2022, and have since been sharing glimpses of their parenthood journey with fans.



# Can your Beauty Salon harm you?

If you're planning on some post party indulgence, here's why you should think twice

The quickest way to pamper yourself is to indulge at the salon. However, a recent study claims that a simple fish pedicure that involves tiny toothless carp nibbling away at dead skin could spread deadly infection and disease. And that's just the tip of the proverbial iceberg. So, if you have intentions of stopping by the salon for a beauty treatment, read on.

Skin-tillating? ...not at all! If you have a weak immune system, or condition like diabetes and psoriasis in particular, experts advise you to stay away

from your local beauty parlour. They warn of the dangers of contracting Hepatitis C from the use of unsterile scissors (through a nick during a haircut or even a manicure). A website even reports how American singer Paula Abdul suffered a long and painful thumb infection she picked up at a Los Angeles nail salon and testified before legislators in support of a bill to increase nail salon health standards.

"If a person is already infected with a bacterial or

fungal infection and warts or molluscum (viral) and bleeds into the water in the tank, then there definitely is a very chance this could be passed to another client, either via the fish or contaminated tank water; if this not taken care of it can be harmful," says skin expert Dr Krupa Amonkar. In addition, there is a danger of contracting the Hepatitis C virus from unsterile scissors either through a nick during a haircut or during a slip that

draws blood in a manicure. A website reports how singer and American Idol judge Paula Abdul suffered long, painful thumb infection that she apparently picked up at a Los Angeles nail salon and testified before legislators in support of a bill to increase nail-salon health standards. Mike Comins, chairman of the British Association of Cosmetic Doctors, says: "Hepatitis C is a robust virus that can live outside the body for quite a long time and may not display any symptoms at all. It can linger for decades, increasing your risk of cirrhosis and liver cancer. It's very contagious and not routinely tested for." Adds skin doctor Rita Shah, "One has to be careful. If the instruments are not sterilised properly, there's a risk they could spread blood-borne infections." Hair and now! Ever thought a simple blow dry could nix it for you? That's apparently that case.

You can actually suffer 'asphyxiation' from a Brazilian Blowdry as a major ingredient in the straightening treatment d u b b e d t h e Brazilian, or permanent, blowdry is said to be formaldehyde. And despite of certain restrictions on the amount of the chemical that can be used, and new formaldehyde-free formulations, certain firms are still selling products that can cause breathing difficulties and other unpleasant side-effects. That's a scare, not counting smaller woes like head lice from dirty brushes! And don't forget hot wax has the potential to be seriously dangerous if it's not handled properly or even a stroke from a washbasin! If you have managed to just end up to with a crick in your neck and shoulder after a shampoo, count your blessings. Research indicates that the position in which you have to hold your



neck while being shampooed over a basin could, in a few cases result in a stroke, known as Beauty Salon Stroke Syndrome. The result can be dizziness, facial numbness, and even a blood clot in the brain. This is especially dangerous for those with high blood pressure. The warning signs are out, next time you might want to do a re-think before your hairdo or manicure.

# Tattooing etiquette and tips for newbies

The shop minimum at a tattoo parlour is the overhead costs that it takes to get you tattooed. Keeping the equipment clean and sterile costs money. This includes needles, ink and workstations. Asking your tattoo technician a question like, "What's your shop minimum?" can dampen his mood.

#### Never get a tattoo in summer

Tattoo ink is made up of pigments that can fade easily when exposed to the sun's ultraviolet rays. With the weather hot all year-round in Mumbai, you can't deprive yourself of tattoos.



So, while your tattoo is healing, cover it up. Wear clothing while walking in direct sunlight and avoid the beach.

#### White tattoos are a waste

Transparent and white tattoos are a growing trend that will almost always leave you with regret. Says tribal tattoo expert Mo Naga, "You're going through the pain and healing for something that is sort of invisible. White ink falls out, gets splotchy and yellow over time. It usually ends up looking like a scar or birthmark." You don't want to go through the entire process of healing for something that looks good only for a day.

#### Machine users aren't tattoo artists

"There are many people around calling themselves tattoo artists because they know how to use the equipment," says tattoo artist Sunny Bhanushali. A tattoo machine is just a tool, knowing to use it doesn't make a person tattoo artist. While choosing the tattoo artist, always ask to see his finished work. A good tattoo artist will be very good at drawing, painting or any other art form. So the easiest way to find the right artist around you is to look at his tattoo portfolio and drawings. Don't tattoo the name of anyone besides your parent or child. Tattooing the girlfriend's name on your arm is risky business so hold off on name tats. Brash youthfulness, saving broken relationships, and even branding a partner as yours makes name tattoos a cover-up job. After his split with long-time girlfriend Winona Ryder, Hollywood actor Johnny Depp had to change the tattoo on his right arm from 'Winona Forever' to a weird 'Wino Forever'. The bottom line is: Young love ends, the tattoo stays.

All inks should be in disposable caps. Ink, cream and other materials must be divided into separate containers for each client. Visit a tattoo parlour and you will see rows of tiny white caps on a tattoo artist's work station. Tattoo ink is placed into

**If you belong to that shrinking breed of people who've never been inked, you're probably still contemplating that oft-repeated question of tattoo virgins: Does it hurt? Get past the temporary pain once you've set your mind on getting inked, and decide on the design.**

these caps because throughout the tattooing process, the artist has to constantly dip the tattoo needle into the colour of ink. Like old fountain pens, tattoo needles retain a tiny amount of ink on the tips that have to be constantly replenished. If they were to keep dipping the tattoo needle into a central, main pot of ink, it would cross-contaminate every client.

#### Have your concept ready

Says Sunny, "You need to have some concept for your tattoo. The artist will convert your idea into a creative design. If you don't have any idea about what exactly you want on your body, the artist will be at a loss about what to suggest and you might get something you regret." Also, amateur tattoo artists in the city download ready designs from internet. Don't settle for clones. Demand a custom design. It's your right to ask your artist to draw something specially for you.

