

President Murmu, PM Modi Extend Raksha Bandhan Wishes, Emphasise Bond Of Protection

► **Raksha Bandhan is a Hindu festival dedicated to the love between brothers and sisters. This year, Raksha Bandhan is being celebrated on August 9.**

New Delhi. (Agency)

President Droupadi Murmu extended her heartfelt greetings on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan, wishing all countrymen in India and abroad. In a post on X, she described the festival as a symbol of the unbreakable bond of love

► **President Droupadi Murmu extended Raksha Bandhan greetings to all Indians in India and abroad**

► **Murmu urged citizens to pledge towards a prosperous India where women feel safe and empowered**

► **Prime Minister Modi and other ministers also extended heartfelt Raksha Bandhan greetings**

preserve India's rich heritage and moral values.

"On the auspicious occasion of Raksha Bandhan, I extend my heartiest greetings and best wishes to all my countrymen living in India and abroad. This auspicious festival of Raksha Bandhan is a symbol of unbreakable love and trust between brothers and sisters, which enhances the spirit of harmony and cooperation in the society. This festival gives us an opportunity to preserve our rich cultural heritage and moral values. This festival gives the message of respect and protection of mothers, sisters and daughters," she posted on X.

She urged citizens to pledge towards building a prosperous India where every woman feels safe and empowered to contribute to national development.

"On this auspicious occasion, let us all pledge to build a prosperous India, where every woman is safe and can make her important contribution to the development of the nation," she said.



significance in strengthening the bond between siblings."Best wishes on the special occasion of Raksha Bandhan," PM Modi wrote on X.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah also extended heartfelt greetings to the nation on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan, a festival celebrating the unbreakable bond of love and trust between siblings.

In a post on X, Shah said, "Heartfelt best wishes to all countrymen on the sacred festival of 'Raksha Bandhan,' dedicated to the unbreakable bond of love, trust, and commitment to protection between brothers and sisters. I pray to God that this festival becomes a source of joy and enthusiasm in everyone's life." Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, on the occasion, emphasised the festival's significance beyond the traditional rakhi thread.

and trust between siblings. Highlighting the cultural significance of Raksha Bandhan, President Murmu noted that the festival provides an opportunity to

Earlier today, Prime Minister Narendra Modi also extended his greetings on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan. In his message, he conveyed best wishes to the nation, emphasising the festival's

What Sharad Pawar Said On Joining Hands With Nephew Ajit Pawar

New Delhi. (Agency)

NCP (SP) president Sharad Pawar on Saturday said Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's presentation on "vote theft" was well-researched and well-documented, and it is up to the Election Commission of India (ECI) to look into the matter. Addressing a press conference in Nagpur, Pawar admitted that the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi should have been more careful before the elections in Maharashtra. "We should have looked into it earlier and been careful," he said. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has described the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls as an "institutionalised chor" and claimed that the Election Commission was "openly colluding" with the BJP to carry out this "theft" with the objective of taking away the voting rights of the poor.

Pawar said Gandhi had made his presentation with detailed proof. "The ECI should look into it," he said. The veteran leader lamented that Shiv Sena (UBT) president Uddhav Thackeray's seating at a dinner meeting hosted by Rahul Gandhi has become an unnecessary controversy.

"There was a PowerPoint presentation. When we watch a movie on screen, we don't sit in front but at the back. Farooq Abdullah and I sat at the back. Similarly, Uddhav Thackeray and Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah were also seated at the back to watch the presentation properly," he said. He further stated that the Opposition is yet to decide its stand on the Vice-Presidential election slated for September 9.

Pawar also rejected speculations about his faction joining hands with the ruling NCP led by his nephew Ajit Pawar. "We will never align with a BJP-led alliance," he asserted.

Uddhav Thackeray's last-row seat at Rahul Gandhi dinner meet gets BJP taunt

Leading the charge, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said when the undivided Shiv Sena was part of the NDA, Uddhav always sat in the first row.

New Delhi. (Agency)

A war of words erupted between the BJP and the Shiv Sena (UBT) after the saffron party claimed that Uddhav Thackeray was "insulted" by being made to sit in the last row during a dinner meeting hosted by Rahul Gandhi recently. Uddhav, his son Aaditya Thackeray and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Raut were spotted sitting in the last row while Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi was giving a presentation on alleged voter fraud by the Election Commission.

Leading the charge, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said when the undivided Shiv Sena was part of the NDA, Uddhav always sat in

the first row. "For us, his respect always came before our own. We have realised what kind of respect and honour he gets there (in the INDIA bloc)," Fadnavis said.

Rubbing it in, Fadnavis underlined that Uddhav always spoke of not bowing before Delhi. "Uddhav used to say he will not bow before Delhi. See the situation now, when they are not even in power. It is painful. When he was with us, he was always seated in the front row," he further said.

Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, whose rebellion in 2022 ended Uddhav's tenure, mocked his former boss by saying that

Congress had eventually shown the Thackerays their place. "Those who mortgage self-pride and abandon Bal Thackeray's ideals will not feel anything about it (insult)."



self-respect in this picture!" the caption read.

UDDHAV CAMP HITS BACK AT BJP

Hitting back at the BJP, Raut said Uddhav was given a front-row seat but went back for a better view of the presentation screen.

"We were sitting in the front, but the TV screen was hurting our eyes, so we moved to the back. Look at the other pictures of Uddhav ji. Rahul Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi showed him and his family their home," the Rajya Sabha MP said. Calling the BJP "useless", Raut further said,

"The BJP is stuck on who sat where. A presentation was going on against the BJP's vote theft."

Amit Shah's Aug 29 visit to kickstart BJP's political narrative for 2026 Assam polls: CM Sarma

GUWAHATI. (Agency)

Union Home Minister Amit Shah will initiate a process of building a political narrative for the BJP for next year's Assam assembly elections when he visits the state on August 29, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.

With Prime Minister Narendra Modi also scheduled to visit the state within 10 days of Shah's tour, the BJP's Assam unit is working to ensure the success of the two trips, he said. "Union Home Minister Amit Shah will come on August 29 and inaugurate the newly constructed Raj Bhavan in Guwahati," Sarma told reporters after attending a preparatory meeting at the BJP's state headquarters here on Friday evening for the two high-profile visits.

In the second engagement of the day, Shah will attend a convention of recently elected panchayat representatives of NDA, and later in the evening, he will be the chief guest at the birth centenary celebration of the state's first non-Congress CM, Golap Borbora, Sarma added. The chief minister maintained that Shah's visit is of significance as state elections are six to seven months away.

The speech by Amit Shah ji to the panchayat representatives will be an important one ahead of the elections. The process of political narrative building will definitely start from that day," Sarma said. The BJP and its allies will seek to form the government for



the third successive term in next year's assembly polls. Sarma said PM Modi will commence his visit to the state on September 8 from Golaghat district, where he will dedicate to the nation the first bio-ethanol refinery in Numaligarh, set up at a cost of over Rs 4,000 crore. He will then travel to

Mangaldai and lay the foundation stones for three projects - the Guwahati Ring Road, a bridge over the Brahmaputra river between Narenji and Kuruwa and the Mangaldai medical college and hospital. The prime minister will inaugurate the birth centenary celebration of Bharat Ratna Bhupen Hazarika at a programme in Guwahati later in the evening, Sarma added. Though all the programmes of the PM and Shah, except the panchayat representatives' meet, are government ones, the BJP is working to ensure the success of all the events, he said. "All BJP MPs, MLAs, and district leaders are meeting here to ensure that the visits.

Maharashtra permits production of state-made liquor to revive local industry, compete with foreign brands

Once a sought-after national brand in the 1980s, Maharashtra-made foreign liquor has declined with the rise of global labels, leaving local makers struggling to survive.

MUMBAI. (Agency)

To boost the investment, generate jobs locally and increase revenue, the Maharashtra government has issued a resolution permitting the manufacturing of the 'Maharashtra Made Liquor' (MML) foreign liquor in the state.

As per a government notification, MML means any foreign liquor manufactured within Maharashtra by a licensee holding a licence in Form PLL as appended to the Maharashtra Distillation of Spirit and Manufacture of Potable Liquor Rules, 1966, by using grain-based spirit and conforming to the conditions prescribed by the government from time to time.



A senior government official from the excise department said that in Maharashtra, there are a total of 48 liquor manufacturing firms, out of which 16 are almost closed, while as many are partially operational. "In the 1980s, Maharashtra-made foreign liquor was a brand across the country, which was in great demand as well. But over a period of time, with the massive entry of foreign-made liquor and their branding, the local brand lagged, and now, they are struggling to survive. This new decision, boosting local industry, is the last attempt to revive the local liquor industry," he added.

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar, who is also excise minister, has constituted a study group committee under the head of additional chief secretary Valsa Nair to recommend ways to increase the revenue.

This study group had suggested Maharashtra government promote the grain-based spirit - foreign liquor under the banner of Maharashtra Made Liquor so that sick liquor factories will get the opportunity to revive themselves by competing with foreign-made liquor companies.

"Defence Production Soars To Rs 1.51 Lakh Crore, Jumps 90% In 5 Years": Rajnath Singh

► **Annual defence production reached Rs 1,50,590 crore in FY 2024-25, an 18% rise since FY 2019-20, when it was Rs 79,071 crore. DPSUs contributed 77% and private sector 23% of total defence production**

New Delhi. (Agency)
 Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday said the annual defence production has soared to an all-time high of Rs 1,50,590 crore in FY 2024-25. The milestone represents a robust 18 per cent growth over the previous fiscal's output of Rs 1.27 lakh crore, and a staggering 90 per cent increase since FY 2019-20, when the figure was Rs 79,071 crore, the minister informed. Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) and other PSUs accounted for nearly 77 per cent of total production, while the private sector contributed 23 per cent.

The share of the private sector, which increased from 21 per cent in FY 2023-24 to 23 per cent in FY 2024-25, reflects the sector's growing role in the defence

ecosystem of the country. The Minister lauded the collective efforts of the Department of Defence Production and all stakeholders - DPSUs, public sector manufacturers, and the private industry in achieving this landmark. He termed the upward trajectory as a clear indicator of

India's strengthening defence industrial base. Both public and private segments of the industry have demonstrated consistent year-on-year growth, attributed to far-reaching policy reforms, enhanced ease of doing business, and a strategic focus on indigenisation over the past decade. The overall production of DPSUs and private sector has increased by 16 per cent and 28 per cent, respectively in FY 2024-25.

"This record-setting achievement underscores the growing momentum of the government's push to self-reliance in defence manufacturing under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative spearheaded by Prime Minister Narendra Modi," according to a Defence Ministry statement.

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6 months on, Haryana's key green body is headless

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Haryana's State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA) — the body that clears industrial, mining and infrastructure projects — has been without a chairperson since Feb 2025. The post remains vacant as the Union environment ministry (MoEFCC) has rejected several nominees sent by the state govt for not meeting eligibility criteria. According to MoEFCC guidelines, SEIAA appointees must have at least 15 years of experience in environmental management, pollution control or ecological planning. However, the names proposed by CMO include retired bureaucrats who do not have domain expertise. This May, the chief minister's office (CMO) had proposed the name of a former IRS officer, who is assembly speaker Harvinder Kalyan's brother. In June, the names of two retired IAS officers — Ankur Gupta and RS Verma — were proposed, but neither had experience in handling the environment department. Unlike some other states, which advertise vacancies, Haryana picks

names through the CMO. Asked about the nomination method, state environment minister Rao Narbir Singh said, "We are in the process and will fill the post at the earliest." Former SEIAA members and environmentalists said retired bureaucrats without relevant technical backgrounds often fail to grasp the complexities of impact assessments or compliance conditions, weakening the authority's oversight. "Whenever there's a vacancy, aspirants approach the CM. There is no advertisement, no evaluation, only just recommendation," said a senior environmental consultant who has worked closely with SEIAA. The environment ministry has advised all states to adopt open and merit-based processes to ensure competent professionals lead these authorities, particularly given the increasing court scrutiny and ecological challenges. The Centre has rejected at least three names nominated by the state govt recently. In 2023, Lt Col (retd) Monish Ahuja was nominated for the spot, but he was rejected in early 2024 due to insufficient

experience in environmental science, a key requirement under Appendix VI of the EIA notification, 2006. Similarly, the nomination of IRS officer Devinder Singh Kalyan was also rejected for not meeting the domain expertise. Most recently, Haryana proposed two retired IAS officers, Ankur Gupta and R S Varma, for the roles of chairperson and member, respectively. However, their appointments haven't been approved so far. The chairperson's tenure is three years. The prolonged vacancy in Haryana has stalled dozens of project clearances, many involving environmentally sensitive areas like the Aravalis, floodplains and sand mining belts. In 2021, NGT criticised the Haryana SEIAA for failing to monitor sand mining and ignoring its own clearance conditions. The absence of a chairperson is particularly critical now, given the volume of mining leases, highway expansions and housing colony proposals awaiting review in Gurgaon, Faridabad and Yamunanagar — all of which require timely and robust environmental

appraisal. Environmentalists said SEIAA appointments must be based on clear professional benchmarks.

"In the recent years, the post has repeatedly been filled by retired IAS officers, many of whom lacked formal training or expertise in environmental science or related technical fields. While administrative experience is valuable, it cannot substitute for specialised environmental knowledge essential for appraising complex Environmental Impact Assessment reports, pollution control norms and understanding ecological sensitivities of proposed projects. Appointing a qualified expert will not only strengthen the scientific integrity of the decision-making process but also restore public confidence in the state's environmental regulatory framework," said Varun Gulati, an environmentalist, adding that this mismatch of expertise has often led to delayed decisions, inadequate scrutiny of projects and weakened regulatory enforcement, compromising the very objective of environmental protection.

Audit flags double payment risk & poor record keeping at Gurgaon civic body

Gurgaon.(Agency)

The Haryana Local Audit Department has uncovered several discrepancies in the operations of MCG, while checking security deposit refund cases, and stated in its report that the civic body failed to attach original measurement books (MBs) and opted to submit copies of FIRs for the missing records instead. The auditors criticised this approach, stating it's "not a healthy practice and reflects poor upkeep of original records, thus the chances of double payment and excess payment could not be ruled out".

Consequently, MCG has been urged to investigate the lapses and instruct officials to maintain accurate records to prevent double payments. The audit also pointed out that some projects were completed at costs much lower than the sanctioned estimates, suggesting that "the estimates prepared by MCG were not realistic".

For instance, the repair of a manhole cover and desilting of a sewer line in ward number 23 was estimated at Rs 91 lakh but was completed for Rs 61 lakh, revealing a discrepancy of approximately Rs 30 lakh. The audit identified 10 such projects carried out in fiscal year 2023-24, where "estimates were deemed unrealistic".

In another case, construction of a reinforced cement concrete (RCC) underground tank, renovation of boosting station structures and installation of interlocking tiles at the existing boosting station in Dayanand Colony was estimated at Rs 85 lakh. However, the actual expenditure was Rs 56.5 lakh, resulting in a gap of Rs 28.6 lakh between the estimate and the actual cost. MCG has been advised to prepare more realistic estimates. The audit report emphasised, "This shows that the estimates prepared by the corporation were not realistic. Therefore, it is strongly advised that the minimum requirements, guidelines issued by the urban local body department may be followed strictly in true spirit to avoid any kind of irregularity in execution of

A week into youth's murder probe, police unearth motive — body shaming

Gurgaon. (Agency)

A weeklong probe that began with the discovery of a body on the campus of a govt school at Jatauli in Pataudi has unearthed murder plot that allegedly originated in relentless body-shaming.

A muscular youth, Karn (20), allegedly reminded the two friends he regularly hung out with — Akash and Shiv Kumar, both 21 — how scrawny they were in comparison. Regular taunts about their physique by Karn became an irritant to the two companions, investigators said.

In the early hours of Aug 3, the three friends scaled the walls of the Govt Primary School in their village to hang out and smoke. Karn, again, remarked about his friends' leaner physique. Enraged, one of them allegedly struck Karn with a stone and the other stabbed him with a pair of scissors he was carrying. The two then

dragged Karn's body into a washroom on the campus and fled the spot, police said. "Akash and Shiv were arrested on Aug 7.



During interrogation, they revealed that the deceased was more muscular and stronger, and often bullied them. This led to frequent arguments. On the day of the incident, after another confrontation, they attacked him with a stone and a pair of scissors. They then strangled him with a cloth," police spokesperson ASI Sandeep

Kumar said on Friday. On Aug 4, a Monday, as the school opened after the weekend, some students spotted blood stains and told their teachers about it. The staff called a teacher of a nearby school, who then alerted cops. A police team went to the primary school and found at the end of the blood trail Karn's body. A case for murder was subsequently registered.

Investigators, the spokesperson said, found it challenging to identify the body as it had been on the campus for over a day and had started decomposing. Karn's family identified the body after spotting tattoos and other markers.

"Police are conducting a thorough investigation, and the accused will be presented in court for police custody. Further questioning will be carried out to uncover any additional motives," the spokesperson said.

Steel stalemate: Chilla flyover project hits another roadblock

Noida. (Agency)

The Chilla elevated road project — a critical infrastructure initiative aimed at alleviating traffic congestion at the Noida-Delhi border — is once again mired in controversy. A fresh dispute between Noida Authority and UP State Bridge Corporation Limited over steel quality and unpaid dues threatens to derail the project's timeline, which has already been plagued by delays since its inception in 2012.

The Authority recently issued a notice to the corporation, alleging the use of substandard steel in piling work. In response, the corporation demanded that the Authority release nearly Rs 100 crore in dues for work completed by the current contractor — MG Contractors Pvt Ltd, in partnership with R&C Infraengineers.

Officials at the bridge corporation have warned that construction can be halted if payments are not released immediately,

potentially delaying the project by up to six months because of the demobilisation of equipment and manpower. The Authority has said that while payments will not be withheld if the work meets contractual standards, it will not compromise on construction quality. "Payments will never be an issue, but the quality of construction could be one. Instructions are already in place to clear the payments in keeping with the norms," said Vijay Rawal, DGM (civil) at the Authority. The corporation has submitted two bills — one for over Rs 34 crore on Aug 6 and another for Rs 57 crore on July 10, with the first bill still unpaid. It has also sought payment for work carried out by the previous contractor, totalling over Rs 7 crore, which includes two running bills as well as an escalation claim submitted in 2021 and 2022. Citing the contract agreement, the bridge corporation reminded the Authority that 90% of payments must be released within 10 days

of submission. Delays in payment, they argued, violate contract terms and adversely affect cash flow and work schedules. The dispute coincides with the Authority's concerns over construction quality. During a site review on July 25, a team led by Authority CEO Lokesh M discovered that a non-approved grade of steel was allegedly being used in the piling work. Lokesh M expressed dissatisfaction with the project and issued a notice to the corporation to replace the steel with the approved grade. The construction company defended its choice, arguing that the steel brand in use was approved by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) and even complied with BIS, IRC, and central govt specifications. They also sought formal permission to continue with the steel brand. The Chilla elevated road project has faced numerous setbacks since its conception.

Accused of rape at 16, sentenced by JJB at 35, acquitted by Pocso court at 39 over faulty probe

Noida. (Agency)

A 39-year-old man was acquitted by an children's court-cum-special Pocso court earlier this week, bringing to a close his strange judicial journey. Accused of raping and impregnating a minor at 16, his sentencing happened 19 years later in 2021 at the Juvenile Justice Board (JJB). Since he appealed, the special Pocso court took up a critical examination of statements of witnesses and documentary

evidence on record and found "gross mistakes of facts" in the appellant's order, and finally acquitted him of all charges. An FIR in the case was



filed at Dadri police station on July 2, 2002, on a complaint submitted by the father of the girl, then 14, after she complained of severe abdominal pain and was found five months pregnant by doctors. While the trial began in a regular Pocso court, the proceedings were transferred to the JJB in 2012 after the age of the man was determined to be 16 years at the time of the alleged crime. On Feb 9, 2021, the board pronounced him guilty under IPC Section 376 (rape) and handed him a three-year sentence. But he remained out on bail as he filed an appeal, counsel Jitendra Bhati for the appellant said. The special Pocso court initiated a critical examination of the case as no written objections were filed by the girl's family, nor any additional documentary or oral evidence filed by either of the parties. The court observed several discrepancies in evidence, including

no reason was assigned as to why the minor was not examined under section 164 CrPC. "No DNA test was conducted to establish the foetus with the appellant, and the medical examination report says sexual intercourse of the victim with some male even in the past 72 hours of conducting the medical examination report," the court noted.

It concluded that the appellant deserved the benefit of the doubt in the case, as the girl, during her examination before the JJ board, admitted there was an old family rivalry between the two families. The court noted that in cases of rape and penetrative sexual assault, medical corroboration of oral evidence was not mandatory, but in this case, the foetus had not been collected, nor was a DNA test performed to ascertain if it matched with the appellant. There was also no detail on record if the foetus was aborted.

News box

New cleanliness crusaders: MCG now sets up safai monitoring cell

Gurgaon.(Agency)

The 57 newly appointed assistant sanitation inspectors must ensure that spots where garbage is often dumped are cleaned regularly, and any violation of waste management norms are dealt with at the earliest, MCG commissioner Pradeep Dahiya ordered on Friday. Dahiya, who issued the directions at a meeting on Friday, said waste should not be found scattered near pick-up sites or other hotspots. "If a trolley is full, it should be emptied immediately," the commissioner said. Officials were also told to monitor illegal dumping of waste or debris, enforce solid waste management rules, plastic waste management rules, construction and demolition (C&D) waste management rules, and penalise those misusing drinking water. Moreover, they were directed to conduct surveys to determine who collects waste from homes and where it is disposed of, ensuring that household waste reaches the secondary collection point. "All inspectors should be in touch with their area's councillors, RWA representatives, and residents to address and resolve local issues. If there are any problems, they should immediately inform the junior engineer concerned. Strict action will be taken against officers and employees found careless in their work," said Dahiya.

The MCG chief added that all inspectors should reach their designated areas by 7am daily and register the attendance of sanitation workers on the solid waste management portal. Out of the 57 assistant sanitation inspectors appointed through the Haryana Skill Employment Corporation, 15 were assigned to zone 1, and zones 2, 3, and 4 were allocated 14 inspectors each.

Action comes at a time complaints from residents about dumping of garbage along roadsides and in colonies across the city have mounted. Lalit Suraj Bhola, who lives in Sector 9A, said on Friday, "There is no dedicated agency for door-to-door waste collection. No sanitation workers are coming for sweeping the roads. The residents' associations across the city have managed to hire tractor trolleys for doorstep waste collection as we cannot depend on MCG. The civic body awards contracts to agencies who don't have the required infrastructure and then these companies further sub-let

Gurgaon school murder: Full-day hearings to expedite trial

Gurgaon. (Agency)

In a move to speed up proceedings in the 2017 school murder case, the trial court has decided that the entire day be devoted exclusively for the hearing of this case from Sept onwards. The decision comes after more than two years of proceedings, during which only 21 of 123 witnesses listed by the CBI have had their statements recorded. By dedicating full days to the trial, the court aims to facilitate a swifter process, allowing for more witness testimonies during every hearing. The case involves a former Class XI student — now 23 — who was apprehended by the CBI in Nov 2017 for the alleged murder of a Class 2 boy inside the school toilet. The accused, who was 16 at the time of the crime but is now being tried as an adult, was granted bail by the Supreme Court in Oct 2022. A separate trial is underway against five police officials at a CBI court in Panchkula for the botched up initial probe in which the cops had taken a school bus driver into custody. Initially handled by additional chief judicial magistrate Amit Gautam, the case has now been transferred to the court of additional sessions judge Puneet Agarwal. The next hearing is scheduled for Sept 12, when the court will sit for the entire day from 9am to 4.30pm. The court is aiming to complete recording the testimonies of at least four witnesses during every session. Sushil Tekriwal, who represented the victim's father in court, said the court had instructed the CBI to present the maximum number of witnesses possible at every hearing. "The court's directive is a response to the slow pace of the trial, which saw only 12 witness statements being recorded in the first six months and nine more over the following year and a half. The Supreme Court has also emphasised the need for a speedy trial. So, the trial court has sought to increase the frequency of hearings by seeking dates at short intervals or increasing the number of witnesses per hearing," he added.

Fazilpuria firing case: 1 more held after gunfight

Ghaziabad .(Agency)

A 24-year-old, the second suspect of the three assailants who opened fire at rapper Fazilpuria last month, was arrested after a brief gunfight with Manesar cops in the early hours of Friday. Ramandeep, who belongs to Sirsa and also goes by the name 'Petrol', sustained a bullet injury to his leg and is admitted to the Civil Hospital in Manesar. Police said they believe Ramandeep was one of the assailants who were tracking Fazilpuria's movement before opening fire at the singer's car in Sector 71 on July 14. No one was injured, but gangster Sunil Sardhania, who claims allegiance to the Himanshu Bhai gang, took credit for the attack. Sardhania has been demanding that the popular Haryanvi singer pay up Rs 5 crore allegedly owed to an associate — a claim that Fazilpuria has denied. Asked if Ramandeep was acting on the orders of the gang, Gurgaon police spokesperson ASI Sandeep Kumar said on Friday that the case is under investigation. ASI Vinit Kumar, deployed at the Manesar Crime Branch, said in his complaint that cops got a tip-off about Ramandeep's movement in the industrial town on a motorcycle without a number plate. Kumar, along with head constables Harish Kumar and Naresh Kumar, and constable Manjit Kumar, established a check post on the service road of Manesar-Panchgaon Chowk Road. Around 1.20am, cops spotted Ramandeep on a Splendor bike and signaled to him to stop. But Ramandeep took a sudden U-turn and tried to flee into the adjacent fields. Ramandeep opened fire and threatened the cops with a country-made pistol, the ASI said. When cops asked him to surrender, he fired another shot at the team. Police fired in the air to warn him, but that prompted Ramandeep to fire two more shots.

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16-year-old girl rescued from prostitution racket in Dwarka

New Delhi: A 16-year-old girl was rescued from a prostitution racket during a raid conducted by the Dwarka Police on Tuesday. The child revealed that she was trafficked into the trade nearly a year ago and was forced to attend to 8 to 10 clients every night. The minor confessed that whenever she complained of pain, she was given painkillers to suppress the symptoms and sent back to work. For her labour, she was handed only Rs 500 and that too neither frequently nor voluntarily. When she begged to leave, the traffickers threatened her with videos they had recorded, warning her that they would be leaked if she resisted or tried to escape. A year ago,

she was lured by a friend who told her that she would introduce her to someone who will solve all



her financial problems. "My friend introduced me to one 'bhaiya' who promised me lot of money. I did not realise what I was being pushed into. As soon as I understood and I want-

ed to quit, they threatened me and said if I tried to escape, they would make my videos public," she indicating he did not know. "He doesn't know. I have told him that I work in a call centre so my work hours are at night," she said. Every day, she leaves home around 5 pm and attends clients till 5-6 am. Every day without any leave, anywhere five to 10 customers visited her. "Our team posed as customers and got in touch with the linchpin. It took us almost a month to gain his trust. Finally, after much dilly-dallying, advance online payment and change of location, he finally called us to Dwarka. We immediately informed Dwarka's Western Range DCP Ankit Kumar Singh who promptly informed his team and prepared for the raid," Manish Sharma,

Senior Director, Association for Voluntary Action, said. Association for Voluntary Action is a partner of Just Rights for Children which is a network of over 250 NGOs working for child protection. The accused once again changed the address last minute and called them to a flat in Mohan Garden near Dwarka. DCP Singh immediately coordinated with the Mohan Garden police station to ensure that the raid was conducted. When the team reached the spot, they found several empty bottles of alcohol, antibiotic tablets to treat vaginal infections and painkillers, along with other medicines, in the flat. While one man named Ibrahim

has been arrested, the police have lodged an FIR under Section 143(4) of the Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023, which pertains to the offense of human trafficking, specifically involving the exploitation of a child. "We have witnessed many such isolated cases of prostitution in home-based settings or through massage parlors post-Covid. We believe these networks can be dismantled more effectively if we follow the money. With so many customers transferring payments through online modes, tracking this financial trail can help us identify and apprehend the entire chain involved in the exploitation," Sharma said.

Senior lawyers can't mention cases for urgent hearing in my court from August 11: CJI Gavai

New Delhi: Chief Justice of India BR Gavai on Wednesday said that from next Monday no senior advocate will be allowed to mention cases for urgent listing and hearing in his court as he intended to give juniors an opportunity for better exposure. Sworn in on May 14, CJI Gavai had reverted to the practice of oral mentioning of cases for urgent listing/hearing by lawyers and discontinued the practice adopted by his predecessor Justice Sanjiv Khanna. Justice Khanna had discontinued the practice of oral mentioning of cases by lawyers and asked them to either send emails or written letters instead. "There is a great demand that no matters should be mentioned by senior counsel," CJI Gavai said after senior counsel AM Singhvi tried to mention a matter. He asked the court staff to put out a notice that no senior lawyer will be permitted to mention cases for urgent listing and hearing in his court from Monday. "From Monday, no senior counsel, I mean designated senior counsel, will be allowed to mention matters. Let juniors get an opportunity to do it," the CJI said. Singhvi said he has no problem so long as it applied to all senior lawyers. "This will be practised at least in my court," the CJI said, adding that it is up to other judges to follow it. It has been a long-held practice for lawyers to mention their cases before the CJI-led Bench at the outset of the day's proceedings for urgent out-of-turn listings and hearing of cases.

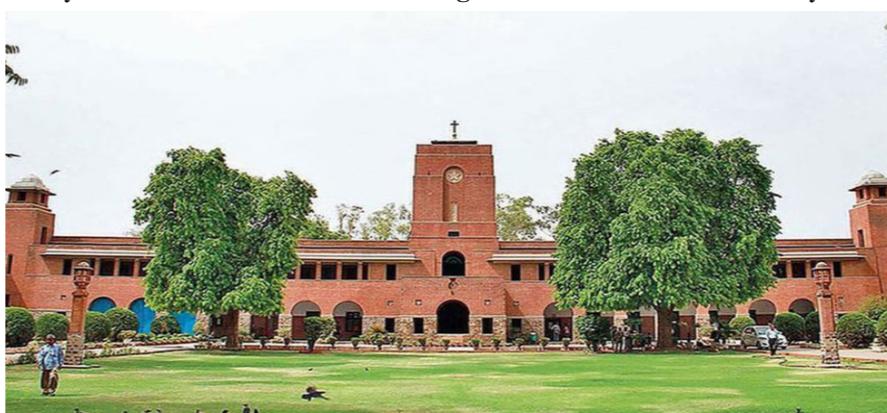
Mid-entry window for UG admissions in Delhi University to open

New Delhi: Delhi University will open its mid-entry admission window for undergraduate programmes from 5 pm on Friday, allowing fresh candidates who missed earlier rounds to apply for the current academic session. The university released its list of vacant seats on Thursday, following the conclusion of the latest round of upgrade. The mid-entry provision, available under the Common Seat Allocation System (CSAS), will remain open until 4:59 pm on August 10. Candidates who did not register earlier or failed to complete the second phase of admissions can apply by paying a fee of Rs 1,000. "This is an opportunity for those students who were unable to participate in the CSAS earlier due to various reasons. Through mid-entry,

they can now enter the admission process," a university official said. The

tion round, DU had reopened its upgrade window from August 2-3. Of

August 7. After the closure of the mid-entry window, Delhi University will



latest data shared by Delhi University shows that 71,130 students have already secured admissions across 79 undergraduate programmes being offered in 69 colleges. The university has a total of 71,624 UG seats for the 2025-26 academic year. As part of the previous alloca-

the eligible students, 34,069 applied for a higher preference, while 35,889 chose to freeze their existing allocation. As a result, 5,930 students received upgraded seats. The process of document verification and fee payment for the latest upgraded allotments continued until

release its third allocation list on August 13. This will be followed by the first allocation lists for ECA, sports, and CW quotas on August 15. The university has announced that the entire UG admission process will be completed by August 19.

IIT-Delhi develops breakthrough method to recycle denim into high-quality garments

New Delhi: In a significant breakthrough, researchers from the Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi (IIT-Delhi) have developed a method to recycle denim waste into knitted garments without compromising on quality. Led by Prof Abhijit Majumdar and Prof BS Butola of the Department of Textile and Fibre Engineering, the team successfully converted waste denim into yarn with minimal damage to fibre properties by optimising process conditions. The recycled yarn is then blended into knitted fabric using seamless whole-garment technology, resulting in garments containing 25 per cent to 75 per cent recycled yarn. The team found that up to 50 per cent recycled yarn content could be used in knitted clothing without affecting the feel of the fabric. "To reduce the roughness of recycled yarns, a softening treatment is applied, ensuring the final product feels just like one made from virgin materials," said Prof Majumdar. He added that while

the study focused on denim waste, the method could be extended to other types of textile waste. The research, published

in the Journal of Cleaner Production, also included a life cycle assessment (LCA) to quantify environmental benefits in the Indian context. PhD scholar Satya



in the Journal of Cleaner Production, also Karmakar collected energy and material

data from the Panipat textile recycling cluster. The LCA showed that recycling could mitigate 30-40 per cent of environmental impacts such as greenhouse gas emissions, acid rain and fossil fuel depletion. For ozone layer depletion, the reduction is as high as 60 per cent. Using recycled fibres also reduces the demand for virgin cotton, thereby saving water, pesticides and fertilisers used in cotton cultivation — a process that alone contributes 24 per cent to global warming among all production stages. "The team is now exploring the feasibility of recycling textile waste multiple times," said Prof Butola. India generates about 3.9 million tonnes of post-consumer textile waste annually, of which only 4 per cent is recycled. Most of this waste ends up in landfills due to variability in fibre blends and colours. Mechanical recycling also weakens fibre quality, making it challenging to produce high-quality garments from recycled textiles.

3 held for performing car stunts on road

New Delhi: The police have arrested three individuals for performing dangerous car stunts on a public road, after a video of the incident went viral on social media. Three vehicles used during the stunts have also been seized. According to the police, the video, which circulated widely online, captured the suspects engaging in risky behaviour near the Shobha City traffic signal in Sector 108, under the jurisdiction of Rajendra Park police station. In the footage, three young men were seen standing atop a moving car. Behind them, several others were spotted in 8 to 10 vehicles, with sunroofs open and some individuals emerging from windows while filming the stunt and performing hazardous manoeuvres. The arrested accused has been identified as Himanshu (22), a resident of Khaika village near Sohna, Sagar (24) and Kaushal (24), residents of Peeragarhi in Delhi. "The accused not only endangered their own lives but also put the safety of others at risk by performing these stunts on public roads," said a police spokesperson. "We have recovered three vehicles used in the act — two Mahindra Thars and one Toyota Fortuner. A further investigation is underway, and more arrests are expected soon."

No posters, no dhols, no roadshows: DU declares war on poll pollution

The Sikh Times

New Delhi: With the Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU) elections approaching, the university has, for the first time, issued a comprehensive set of anti-defacement guidelines well before announcing the poll date, marking a departure from last year's controversy when the High Court had to step in after widespread defacement, in and around the campus, delayed the declaration of results. In 2024, the Delhi High Court had directed the university to ensure all campaign graffiti and posters were removed before vote counting could begin. The court made it clear that the exercise was "corrective rather than punitive" and ordered that results, originally scheduled for September 27, be declared only after DU submitted an affidavit confirming the clean-up. The outcome was eventually announced in November. Learning from the episode, the university's latest notification seeks to pre-empt violations. One of the most notable provisions mandates that all students sign an anti-defacement affidavit at the time of admission, on the lines of the existing anti-ragging declaration. Colleges, departments and affiliated centres will also hold orientation sessions to sensitise students on discipline, the protection of

public property and acceptable campaign conduct. The notification also says the campaigning will be tightly regulated.

potential defacement or related offences by them or their supporters. As per the guidelines, candidates have also been

instructed to immediately remove any unauthorised posters, especially those with misspelt names aimed at evading accountability, and report such instances to the nearest police station within 24 hours. "Failing to do so may invite a fine of Rs 25,000, suspension, rustication, or even disqualification from contesting elections," it stated. The rules impose a blanket ban on posters, rallies, roadshows, vehicle-mounted

loudspeakers, "Shakti Pradarshan" and the use of dhols, even after results are declared. Only legitimate electronic media campaigning is allowed, and candidates' names must match official school certificates unless legally changed and accepted by the university. Colleges and departments will form Prevention of Defacement of Property Committees, mirrored at the university level, with details displayed on notice boards and websites. Institutions are encouraged to host candidate debates, which may be recorded and uploaded online. Additionally, entry of outsiders has been restricted, and colleges have been asked to consider installing biometric or facial recognition systems for access control. The officials said acts of defacement will be treated as gross indiscipline, attracting penalties under the university ordinances, the Metro Rail (Operation and Maintenance) Act, 2002, the Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act, 1984, the Delhi Prevention of Defacement of Property Act, 2007, and orders from the NGT and Delhi High Court. "DUSU office-bearers will be permitted to book only three venues, the Conference Centre, Shankar Lal Hall and Room 22 of the arts faculty for official events, subject to clearance from the DUSU adviser and payment of fees," the officials added.

Police arrest teenage realtor for gunning down gardener over closed gate in south Delhi

New Delhi: Santal, who also worked as a caretaker of the property, was shot in the chest. Police have arrested 19-year-old Piyush Yadav, a local real estate agent, for gunning down the older man. They said the incident took place around 2 am near the Shamsian Ghat in Dera village. "A police team rushed to the spot after receiving information that women were crying loudly in the neighbourhood. Upon reaching, it was found that a man had been shot and was lying motionless near the cremation ground," an officer said. An empty cartridge was recovered from the spot, he said. "During the investigation, it was revealed that the accused had a verbal altercation with the victim over the closing of a gate of the property. The altercation escalated, and in a fit of rage, Piyush allegedly shot Santal and fled the spot," the officer said. When questioned, Piyush confessed to the crime and led the police to the gun he had hidden in his house. Police said Santal took care of several properties in the vicinity, while Piyush Yadav ran his real estate business from Chhatarpur Phase 2. Santal's body was taken to Safdarjung Hospital for a post-mortem.

Delhi University rolls out 'zero tolerance' policy for campus defacement

New Delhi: With the Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU) elections for fast approaching, the university administration has announced a stringent "zero tolerance" policy against defacement, under the banner of its "Green Election, Clean Election" initiative. The announcement was made following a meeting on Tuesday, attended by the Chief Election Officer, members of the Proctorial Board, Maurice Nagar SHO, DUSU office bearers and student representatives. An official statement from the DU Election Committee said, "The committee also apprised the representative that there would be zero tolerance for defacement during the current DUSU elections." All candidates have been directed to use only handmade posters and to strictly adhere to specified campaign expenditure limits. The university's crackdown follows complaints from past years, when graffiti, unauthorised banners and posters covered walls, flyovers, and metro pillars across both North and South campuses. This year, authorities say, enforcement would be much more vigilant.

Panipat man charred to death, another injured as car catches fire after accident in Delhi

New Delhi: A 40-year-old man was charred to death while another was injured after their car caught fire following an accident in outer north Delhi's Hulambi Khurd area in the early hours of Sunday, an official said. The incident occurred around 2 am near Jhanda Chowk on Urban Extension Road II, under the jurisdiction of Narela Industrial Area police station, the official added. According to the police, a PCR call was received and a team rushed to the spot where they found a white Ertiga in a burnt condition. The driver was found dead, while another was rescued from the adjacent seat. He was injured. The driver was identified as Vipender and the injured as Jagbir, both residents of Haryana's Panipat, police added. Jagbir was immediately shifted to the SRHIC Hospital in Narela, while the dead body was moved to the BJRM Hospital, a police officer said. Initial investigation suggests that the Haryana-registered SUV might have lost control and crashed before catching fire, though the exact cause is still under investigation, the officer said. A case has been registered, and further investigation is under way to ascertain the cause of the fire and the circumstances surrounding the accident, the officer added.

Heavy rain batters Delhi, leads to waterlogging at many places

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NEWS BOX

Kenya has eliminated sleeping sickness, says WHO**JERUSALEM. (Agency)**

GENEVA: Kenya has eliminated sleeping sickness as a public health problem, the World Health Organization announced on Friday, making it the 10th country to do so. The vector-borne disease, formally called human African trypanosomiasis, is endemic in sub-Saharan Africa. Without treatment, HAT is generally fatal, the WHO says. Sleeping sickness is transmitted to humans through the bites of tsetse flies that have acquired the blood parasite *Trypanosoma brucei* from infected humans or animals. Rural populations dependent on agriculture, fishing, animal husbandry or hunting are deemed most at risk of exposure.

"I congratulate the government and people of Kenya on this landmark achievement," WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in a statement.

"Kenya joins the growing ranks of countries freeing their populations of HAT. This is another step towards making Africa free of neglected tropical diseases."

The parasites can cross the blood-brain barrier into the central nervous system. Generally, this is when more obvious signs and symptoms of HAT appear, says the WHO: behaviour changes, confusion, sensory disturbances and poor coordination. Sleep cycle disturbance, which gives the disease its name, is a prominent feature. The first cases in Kenya were detected in the early 20th century.

Besides Kenya, the others that have now eliminated sleeping sickness as a public health problem are Benin, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Rwanda, Togo and Uganda.

Niger announces nationalisation of its only gold mine**NIAMEY. (Agency)**

Niger's military government has announced the nationalisation of the country's sole industrial gold mine, accusing its Australian operator of "serious breaches" as the junta seeks greater control of natural resources. The military junta has ruled the West African nation since seizing power in a 2023 coup, promising to crack down on Niger's myriad security issues. Junta in Niger, neighbouring Burkina Faso and Mali have ramped up pressure on foreign mining companies in recent years, with Niger nationalising the local branch of French uranium giant Orano in June. Australian group McKinel Resources Limited took control of the Societe des mines du Liptako (SML) gold mine, situated on the bank of the River Niger, in 2019 after purchasing a majority stake from a public firm. "In view of serious breaches (and) with a view to saving this highly strategic company, the state of Niger has taken the decision to nationalise SML," said an order from junta leader, General Abdourahamane Tiani, read on state television on Friday.

"This measure is in line with the vision of the president of the republic, which is to promote the full appropriation of its natural resources by the Nigerien people," it said.

In 2023, industrial gold production at the mine amounted to 177 kilograms, while artisanal production in the country totalled 2.2 tonnes, according to a report by the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. Niger's junta said since McKinel's takeover of SML, the mine has fallen into an "alarming economic situation".

It criticised the Australian firm for failing to implement a \$10 million investment plan which the junta said has led to tax and wage arrears, worker layoffs and "significant increased debt", as well as production stoppages. In May, a bomb blast in jihadist-riven west Niger killed at least eight workers at the SML mine in the Tillaberi region. The army has deployed more than 2,000 soldiers to fight the jihadist groups in the surrounding region, at the epicentre of the violence wracking the country.

Trump once again claims he 'settled' India-Pakistan tensions, repeats 'planes downed' remark**WORLD. (Agency)**

US President Donald Trump on Friday repeated his claim that he got "things settled" between India and Pakistan after a four-day military clash that he said could have escalated into a "nuclear conflict."

Speaking at the White House, Trump once again alluded that five or six planes were "shot down" during the confrontation between the subcontinent neighbours. He did not clarify whether the losses were on one side or shared between both.

Notably, India has reiterated that both halted hostilities after direct talks between their militaries, rejecting the role of any US mediation. Trump made the comments flanked by Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev and Armenia's Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan after they inked a US-brokered peace agreement during a trilateral signing ceremony.

"As President, my highest aspiration is to bring peace and stability to the world. Today's signing follows our success with India and Pakistan," the US President said. "They were going at it, they were going at it big and they were two great leaders that came together just prior to what would have been a tremendous conflict, as you know, a nuclear conflict, probably," he added. Asserting that he is settling conflicts through trade, Trump said, "I got things settled with India, Pakistan. I think it was trade more than any other reason. That's how I got involved."

"I said, 'You know, I don't want to be dealing with countries that are trying to blow up themselves and maybe the world'. They are nuclear nations," he added. Trump referred to the conflict between India and Pakistan twice during his remarks at the event, adding them to the nearly 35 previous occasions where he has claimed that he stopped the war between the two countries through trade.

Nagasaki marks 80th anniversary of US atomic attack

Dozens of doves, a symbol of peace, were released after a speech by Nagasaki Mayor Shiro Suzuki, whose parents are survivors of the attack.

NAGASAKI. (Agency)

Nagasaki is marking the U.S. atomic attack on the southern Japanese city 80 years ago and survivors are working to make their hometown the last place on earth hit by the bomb. The atomic bomb dropped by the United States on Nagasaki on Aug. 9, 1945, killed some 70,000 people, three days after the bombing of Hiroshima killed 140,000. Japan surrendered on Aug. 15, 1945, ending World War II and the country's nearly half-century of aggression across Asia. About 2,600 people, including representatives from more than 90 countries, attended a memorial event Saturday at Nagasaki Peace Park, where Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba spoke. At 11:02 a.m., the exact time when the plutonium bomb exploded above Nagasaki, participants observed a moment of silence

as a bell rang. Dozens of doves, a symbol of peace, were released after a speech by Nagasaki Mayor Shiro Suzuki, whose parents are survivors of the attack. He said the city's memories of the bombing are "a common heritage and should be passed down for generations" in and outside Japan. "The existential crisis of humanity has become imminent to each and every one of us living on Earth," Suzuki said. "In order to make Nagasaki the last atomic bombing site now and forever, we will go hand-in-hand with global citizens and devote our utmost efforts toward the abolition of nuclear weapons and the realization of everlasting world peace." Survivors and their families gathered Saturday in rainy weather at Peace Park and nearby Hypocenter Park, located below the bomb's exact detonation spot, hours before the official ceremony. Others prayed at churches in Nagasaki, home to Catholic converts who went deep underground during centuries of violent persecution in Japan's feudal era.

The twin bells at Urakami Cathedral, which was destroyed in the bombing, will ring together again after one of the bells that had gone missing following the attack was restored by volunteers. Despite their pain from wounds, discrimination and illnesses

from radiation, survivors have publicly committed to a shared goal of abolishing nuclear weapons. But they worry about the world moving in the opposite direction. Aging survivors and their supporters in Nagasaki now put their hopes of achieving nuclear weapons abolition in

remaining survivors. The number of survivors has fallen to 99,130, about a quarter of the original number, with their average age exceeding 86. Survivors worry about fading memories, as the youngest of the survivors were too young to recall the attack clearly. "We must keep records of the atomic bombing damages of the survivors and their lifetime story," said Yokoyama, whose two sisters died after suffering illnesses linked to radiation.

Her organization has started to digitalize the narratives of survivors for viewing on YouTube and other social media platforms with the help of a new generation. There are younger people who are beginning to take action," Yokoyama told The Associated Press on Friday. "So I think we don't have to get depressed yet."

Nagasaki hosted a "peace forum" on Friday where survivors shared their stories with more than 300 young people from around the country. Seiichiro Mise, a 90-year-old survivor, said he is handing seeds of "flowers of peace" to the younger generation in hopes of seeing them bloom.

**Israel's plan to take over Gaza City stirs fears for civilians, hostages****JERUSALEM. (Agency)**

Israel said Friday it will intensify its 22-month war with Hamas by taking over Gaza City, stirring fears for Palestinian civilians and Israeli hostages still held in Gaza, and renewing international pressure for an end to the conflict.

Israel's air and ground war has killed tens of thousands of people in Gaza, displaced most of the population, destroyed vast areas and pushed the territory toward famine. The timing of another major ground operation is unclear. It will likely require mobilizing thousands of troops and forcibly evacuating civilians, almost certainly worsening Gaza's humanitarian crisis. An official familiar with the plans to take over Gaza City said the operation would be "gradual" and that there is no start date. The official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive matters. The U.N. Security Council announced an emergency meeting on Israel's plans was rescheduled to 10 a.m. EDT on Sunday after originally being scheduled to take place at 3 p.m.

EDT on Saturday. The U.N. Mission of Panama, which holds the council presidency this month, provided no details, but Saturday is the Jewish Sabbath and Israel is certain to want to speak at the meeting.



Mediators from Egypt and Qatar are preparing a new framework that will include the release of all hostages — dead and alive — in one go, in return for an end of the war in Gaza and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the strip, two Arab officials told The Associated Press. Before Israel's Security Cabinet approved the plan to take over Gaza City, Prime Minister

Benjamin Netanyahu had outlined more sweeping plans Thursday in an interview with Fox News, saying Israel planned to take control of all of Gaza. Israel already controls around three-quarters of the territory. Hamas rejected Israel's plans. "Expanding of aggression against our Palestinian people will not be a walk in the park," the group said in a statement.

Netanyahu had signaled plans for even broader war. International powers, including Israeli allies France, Britain and Canada, have stepped up criticism of the war amid mounting shock over media reports showing starvation.

Germany said Friday it would not authorize the export of military equipment that could be used in Gaza until further notice. Tensions could rise further if Netanyahu follows through on the more sweeping plans to take control of the entire territory, two decades after Israel's unilateral withdrawal. Israel's new plan may be aimed in part at pressuring Hamas to accept a ceasefire on Israel's terms.

A man suspected in a shooting at a Montana bar that left four people dead was captured Friday just a few miles from where the shooting happened after hundreds of law enforcement officers spent the past week scouring nearby mountainsides, authorities said.

Michael Paul Brown, 45, was taken into custody around 2 p.m. near the area where authorities had focused their search in the days following the Aug. 1 shooting at The Owl Bar in Anaconda, about 100 miles (190 kilometers) from Missoula. Montana Attorney General Austin Knudsen said during a news conference that about 130 law enforcement officers made a hard push Thursday after getting tips that helped verify they were looking in the right area. "It's not someplace he'd been hiding. He was flushed out," Knudsen said.

Gov. Greg Gianforte first confirmed Brown's capture on social media Friday afternoon, saying it was the result of what he called a "Herculean effort" from law enforcement officers across the state.



The community finally would be able to sleep tonight, Anaconda-Deer Valley County Attorney Morgan Smith said, adding that the case is just the beginning for prosecutors who will be seeking to charge Brown with the killings. It was not immediately clear if Brown had legal representation. Email and phone messages were left Friday with the Montana public defender's office. State authorities have not said what sparked last week's shooting, which left a female bartender and three male patrons dead. The victims were identified as Nancy Laurette Kelley, 64; Daniel Edwin Baillie, 59; David Allen Leach, 70; and Tony Wayne Palm, 74. Brown's niece, Clare Boyle, said Kelley worked previously as an oncology nurse and was a close family friend who helped Brown's mother when she was sick. Bar owners from around the state have pledged to donate a portion of sales to a fund for each of the victims' families.

Donald Trump says he will meet Putin on August 15 in Alaska to discuss ending the Ukraine war

Trump said his meeting with Putin would come before any sit-down discussion involving Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

Washington. (Agency)

President Donald Trump said he will meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin next Friday in Alaska to discuss ending the war in Ukraine, a potential breakthrough after weeks of expressing frustration that more was not being done to quell the fighting.

The Kremlin has not yet confirmed the details, which Trump announced on social media, but both nations had said they expected a meeting could happen as soon as next week. Such a summit

may prove pivotal in a war that began more than three years ago when Russia invaded its western neighbor and has led to tens of thousands of deaths — although there's no guarantee it will stop the fighting since Moscow and Kyiv remain far apart on their conditions for peace. In comments to reporters at the White House before his post confirming the date and place, Trump suggested that any agreement would likely involve "some swapping of territories," but he gave no details. Analysts, including some close to the Kremlin, have suggested that Russia could offer to give up territory it controls outside of the four regions it claims to have annexed. Trump said his meeting with Putin would come before any sit-down discussion involving Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. Trump also previously agreed to meet with Putin even if the Russian leader would not meet with

Zelenskyy. That stoked fears in Europe that Ukraine could be sidelined in efforts to stop the continent's biggest conflict since World War II. Trump's announcement that he planned to host one of America's adversaries on U.S. soil broke with expectations that they'd meet in a third country. The gesture gives Putin validation after the U.S. and its allies had long sought to make him a pariah over his war against Ukraine. Early in Putin's tenure, he regularly met with his U.S. counterparts. That dropped off and the tone became icier as tensions mounted between Russia and the West after Moscow illegally annexed Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula in 2014 and faced allegations of meddling in the 2016 U.S. elections. Putin's last visit to the U.S. was in 2015, when he attended the U.N. General Assembly meeting in New York. The meeting in Alaska would be the first U.S.

Suspected gunman, police officer dead in shooting near the CDC and Emory University, police say**ATLANTA. (Agency)**

A man opened fire outside the headquarters of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta on Friday, leaving bullet marks in windows across the sprawling campus and killing a police officer before he was found dead in a nearby building, authorities said. The attack, which unfolded near neighboring Emory University, prompted a massive law enforcement response to one of the nation's most prominent public health institutions, but no one else was reported to be injured.

At least four CDC buildings were hit, Director Susan Moniz said in a post on X. Images shared by employees showed multiple agency buildings with bullet-pocked windows, underscoring the breadth of the damage to a site where thousands of scientists and staff work on critical disease research. The gunman was found on the second floor of a building across the street from the CDC campus and died at the scene, Atlanta Police Chief Darin Schierbaum said. He added that "we do not know at this time whether that was from

officers or if it was self-inflicted." The shooter was armed with a long gun, and authorities recovered three other firearms at the scene, according to a law enforcement official who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the ongoing investigation. The gunman's motive is still unknown this early in the investigation, Atlanta Mayor Andre Dickens said.

Officer David Rose was killed in the gunfire, the DeKalb County Police Department said in a Facebook post. Atlanta Mayor Andre Dickens said in a statement that Rose served in the Marine Corps and graduated from the DeKalb Police Academy in March. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported DeKalb County CEO Lorraine Cochran-Johnson struck at the emotions of the loss. "This evening, there is a wife without a husband. There are three children, one unborn, without a father," Cochran-Johnson said. When the shooting began, staff at a nearby restaurant hunkered down and said they heard a string of gunshots. "It sounded

like fireworks going off, one right after the other," said Brandy Giraldo, the chief operating officer of The General Muir restaurant. She then saw people running past her business. Two people paused to



warn them of a shooter nearby. When Anurag Mehta and his wife heard about the shooting, they tried to get to their 3-year-old son in a preschool near the CDC, but they were unable to approach. "I was thinking that when I left for work this

morning, was that the last time I saw my son?" said Mehta, who later learned his son was safe. No CDC employees or visitors were harmed, Moniz said. "As we navigate the aftermath of this event, we want to express our eternal gratitude to law enforcement personnel who were injured and share our deepest condolences to the family and friends of the DeKalb County Police Officer who was killed in the line of duty," she wrote in an email sent to employees. Moniz said Monday would be a remote workday so the agency could conduct a security assessment before people return to their offices. In her X post, she called the shooting an "attack on our Roybal Campus," referring to the office complex. The CDC and Emory's main campus are surrounded by affluent wooded neighborhoods in northeast Atlanta. All three institutions line up along Clifton Road. The area is hard to access, and notoriously traffic-choked, but on Friday few cars were in evidence as a warning siren blared. Gov. Brian Kemp praised the efforts of first responders.

Hidden Stories: this historic garden rests in isolation in Pune's Aundh, yearning for visitors

Pune. (Agency)

A towering mango tree with a wide, scaly trunk and regal foliage stands beside an uneven track, almost appearing to be surveying its surroundings like the Peshwas who had planted it back in 1799. Sheltered in its shade, one is barely aware of the roar of the Pune traffic from Ganeshkhind Road as vehicles hurry past a key biodiversity heritage site in the country. Instead, the breeze carries the smell of leaves and the chatter of mynas, parakeets, and kingfishers.

Ganeshkhind Garden, located at the Ganeshkhind Research Center behind Savitribai Phule Pune University and a stone's throw from Spicer College, is a 145-acre expanse where history intertwines with botany, and trees serve as important landmarks. In fact, there are more than 4,500 trees here. "Even the people who live in the Aundh neighbourhood don't know that they have such a beautiful site nearby. They could come more often, have their walks here, and conduct visits for nearby schools," says Meghna Bhandari, a citizen who is involved in protecting and raising awareness about natural resources.

Ganeshkhind Garden was established as a Centre for Taxonomic Studies by botanist George Marshall Woodrow in 1872. It was intended as a site for scientific research into horticulture. To this day, the garden contains tracts of mango and guava orchards, an avenue of legacy mahogany trees, and dense fields of crops, besides populations of insects and other biodiversity. When British forces needed medicinal plants

The interest of the British in setting up such gardens goes back to the 17th and 18th centuries, when Pune was a seat of the Marathas that controlled the central and southern parts of the Indian sub-continent and was, consequently, a formidable power against the East India Company, whose garrison was in Khadki.

FIR against 72 over 'irregularities' in appointment of 42 assistant teachers in UP's Mau

Lucknow. (Agency)

A case has been registered against 72 persons, including three former district social welfare officers and four Education Department officials, in connection with alleged irregularities in the appointment of 42 assistant teachers at 19 Ambedkar Schools in Uttar Pradesh's Mau district, officials said.

These schools run with the financial support from the Social Welfare Department.

The accused also include the 42 assistant teachers accused of securing the teachers' posts using forged documents, and the managers of the Ambedkar Schools where the appointments were made, it is learnt. The three former district social welfare officers previously posted in the district allegedly played a role in facilitating the irregular recruitment. Among the four Education Department officials are the then assistant basic education officers and block education officers (BEO), who were responsible for verifying the eligibility and credentials of candidates. The case was registered after a detailed investigation initiated on a complaint submitted to the chief minister, alleging large-scale fraud in the recruitment process. The inquiry revealed that several appointments were made on the basis of forged academic and professional certificates. Rashmi Mishra, Social Welfare Officer, Mau, who is also the complainant in the case, said the appointments were made from 2014 onwards. The schools where those teachers were appointed have been informed about the inquiry report, she added.

The State argued the acquittal was

112 illegal Bangladeshis deported from Mumbai region; total this year jumps to 719

Mumbai. (Agency)

In a major crackdown on illegal Bangladeshi immigrants in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), the police on Thursday deported 112 people — 92 from Mumbai, and 20 from Mira-Bhayander and Thane. As per documents accessed by The Indian Express, while the immigrants were taken to Pune on Wednesday, they were later transported to the Assam-Bangladesh border in a special Indian Air Force (IAF) aircraft on Thursday, where they were handed over to the security forces of Bangladesh.

With the deportation of 92 immigrants from Mumbai on Thursday, the total number of deportations from the city alone has climbed to 719 this year, said a senior police officer. By comparison, a total of 152 Bangladeshi nationals were deported from Mumbai in the whole of 2024. The documents show that the illegal immigrants were detained from across the city between June 12 and August 5. While 92 of them were from Mumbai — 40 women, 34 children and 18 men — the breakup of the

20 who were detained and deported from Mira Bhayander and Thane was not available. "This time the government decided to drop the illegal immigrants at the Assam-Bangladesh border, which is highly secured and manned by the Indian Army and it is next to impossible to enter through the border there. They were handed over to the Bangladesh border security force," a police officer said.

Another officer on condition of anonymity said, "From January 1 till August 5 this year, the Mumbai police have deported 719 Bangladeshi nationals staying illegally in the city."

The deported Bangladeshi nationals were detained by various police stations across the city and most of them were detained in the last week of July after they were ascertained to have violated visa norms and entered India illegally via the Indo-Bangladesh international border. A senior IPS officer said, "They were deported to

Bangladesh under Section 3 (2) (c) of the Foreigners Act 1946 after completing the required legal process." The deportation

Bandra residence on January 16. Shariful was found to have a duplicate Aadhaar card with his photo and an Indian SIM card, which he allegedly procured illegally in India.

Describing the details of the operation, a senior police officer said once their informants tipped them off about suspicious people at building construction sites across the city, they were called to the police station. Following this, police collected evidence — call data records (to check if they had made international calls regularly to Bangladesh) or bank transactions — and then they were detained for legal procedure.

The documents show that out of the 92 deported from Mumbai, the highest number were from Andheri's Amboli area, from where a total of 11 were apprehended. The data further showed that in at least four cases only the mother was found to be staying with her minor kids illegally.

'Can we move out of our homes?: Pune residents urge noise regulation as dhol-tasha groups gear up for Ganesh festival

Pune. (Agency)

As Ganesh Chaturthi approaches, dhol-tasha pathaks in Pune have started prepping hard with their daily practice. But the noise pollution created particularly in residential areas has become an issue for residents. People from various parts of the city are demanding that the municipal authorities and the police put in place sound regulations, continuous monitoring, and group limits for the dhol-tasha rehearsals.

Dhol-tasha is a traditional musical ensemble, particularly popular in Maharashtra. It features two distinct drums: the dhol, a large, double-headed cylindrical drum, and the tasha, a smaller, high-pitched, single-headed drum, akin to a kettle drum.

"Playing dhol-tasha is a good cultural activity, but playing it loud for hours in the immediate vicinity of a residential area is affecting our health. People suffering from high blood pressure, some are cancer survivors or have other ailments, cannot manage such high decibels and their health is adversely impacted," said Vihang Shah, a resident of Baner and founder of Green Clean Safe Bharat.

"Along with senior citizens, even youth are affected. They are studying in colleges or schools and preparing for exams. With continuous exposure to high-decibel noise from dhol-tasha pathaks, they cannot focus well and may suffer from hearing ailments in old age," Shah added. He emphasised that dhol-tasha groups are always welcome, but they need to practice in dedicated public spaces or auditoriums far from residential areas, as residents have limited choice to leave their homes.

This year, Ganesh Chaturthi will be on August 27, initiating a 10-day festival that concludes with the immersion of idols, in a ritual known as Ganesh Visarjan. Speaking to The Indian Express, Dr Kalyani Mandke, a practising audiologist based in Sadashiv Peth, said, "Not just elderly, pregnant women or children, but every age group suffers through the noise levels that exceed a certain limit, let it be through DJ, dhol-tasha or any other source."

Axis Mutual Fund investors cheated | Rs 91 crore credited in family accounts of former fund manager: ED

Joshi was produced before the special court on Friday and was sent to judicial custody after the ED did not press for his further custody for interrogation

Mumbai. (Agency)

The Enforcement Directorate (ED), probing the alleged cheating of investors by Viresh Joshi, former chief trader and fund manager of Axis Mutual Fund, has said around Rs 91 crore was credited from shell companies to the bank accounts of his family members. The ED claimed to have details of 31 such accounts involved in the transactions.

Joshi was arrested by the ED on August 2 for the alleged misuse of confidential information on the trades to be executed on behalf of Axis Mutual Fund to preemptively trade stocks and generate substantial illicit gains through front-running. It is considered illegal in the securities market when brokers or traders execute orders for their own benefit using advance knowledge of pending client orders.

Joshi was produced before the special court on Friday and was sent to judicial custody after the

ED did not press for his further custody for interrogation. The ED remand application in the case alleges that Joshi is associated with members of 'organised crime syndicate'



engaged in large-scale front-running. It claimed further that money generated through the illegal practice was layered through various accounts, suspecting the proceeds of crime to be Rs 300

crore. "...the generated proceeds of crime... were routed through the accounts and managed and controlled by Viresh Joshi, including the mule accounts linked to 282 individuals/entities. He subsequently layered and placed the proceeds of crime in his family members' bank accounts and finally used it for acquiring several immovable properties," the ED claimed, adding that these properties were bought in India and abroad. It alleged that no explanation or documentary proof was provided on the suspected transactions.

The ED claimed that as part of his job profile, he was privy to confidential information which he shared for personal gain. Joshi's lawyer Manan Sanghvi had told court that the Income-Tax department had frozen assets and his custodial interrogation was needed. It was also submitted that these issues were put before the SEBI in its probe.

UP man acquitted in dowry case after wife's suicide, Allahabad HC orders Rs 2 lakh compensation for him

"We are of the staunch view that the State... has not applied its judicial mind... the life and liberty of the accused... has been twice at jeopardy and hence, would be suitably compensated," the court observed.

Lucknow. (Agency)

The Allahabad High Court has directed that Rs 2 lakh be paid to a man acquitted in a dowry-related harassment case, observing that he was subjected to "vexatious criminal prosecution," while dismissing an Uttar Pradesh government appeal against his acquittal.

"We are of the staunch view that the State... has not applied its judicial mind... the life and liberty of the accused... has been twice at jeopardy and hence, would be suitably compensated," the court observed.

The order came on an appeal filed under Section 378(3) of the CrPC challenging the acquittal of Dhirendra Kumar, whose wife, Pinki Jaiswal, was found dead in their house in March 2022. An alleged suicide note recovered by police cited "academic stress" and stated neither her parents nor in-laws were responsible. The trial court acquitted Kumar on July 4, 2024.

The State argued the acquittal was

"misconceived" and sought leave to appeal. Kumar's counsel countered that the trial court had correctly evaluated evidence, including the suicide note produced by the prosecution.



Quoting Section 378 of the CrPC, the court noted that directions to file appeals against acquittals must be exercised "sparingly and with circumspection" and only on "substantial and compelling reasons... good and sufficient grounds... very strong circumstances, a

distorted conclusion and apparent mistake." Mere reproduction of these phrases, it added, is not enough; reasons must be "clear and explicit" in the application for leave to appeal.

The bench said Kumar, who got an "honourable acquittal," must be paid Rs 2 lakh within 30 days "as just and proper compensation for vexatious criminal prosecution."

The FIR, lodged by the deceased's brother at Sikandrabad police station, Bulandshahr, accused Kumar of dowry harassment under IPC sections 498-A, 304-B, 316, 506, and provisions of the Dowry Prohibition Act. The brother alleged that Kumar refused to bear her food and education expenses, disowned her pregnancy, demanded more dowry, and threatened to kill her. The suicide note, however, said she was pursuing an M.Ed and ended her life due to "study stress." The postmortem found death due to asphyxia from hanging and confirmed she was not pregnant. Police filed a chargesheet after investigation.

'Nothing is perfect, need to evolve better system to replace Collegium: Justice Oka

The media, on the other hand, can mould public opinion and reflect on whether something was right or wrong, he said

Mumbai. (Agency)

Justice (retired) Abhay S Oka, former Supreme Court judge, on Friday said while some people may have a view that the Collegium system for appointment of judges is "wrong", a better system has to be evolved as "no system can be perfect".

The Collegium of senior-most SC judges makes recommendations to the central government for appointment of judges to High Courts and SC. Justice Oka, who retired as an SC judge on May 24 this year, was part of the SC Collegium for the last six months of his tenure. On Friday evening, he was speaking on "Holding the Government to Account: The Role of an Independent Judiciary and a Free Press" at Mumbai Press Club.

Somebody may say that the Collegium system is wrong. But we have to evolve a better system to replace the existing Collegium system. No system can be

perfect. Every system will have its flaws. Judiciary has its flaws. Executive has its flaws. So, we have to find a better system. Evolve a better system," Justice Oka said in response to a question on "lacunae" in the Collegium system.

Responding to a question on delay in appointments of judges, Justice Oka said that it is happening after the recommendations are made by the SC Collegium. "There are judgments in place that the government can send a name for reconsideration. And after it is reconsidered by the Collegium, then the government has to sign on the dotted line. That judgment is not being implemented."

Speaking on the issue of fundamental right of speech and expression, Justice Oka said that the judge may not like something said or written or expressed by someone through an art form. "But as a judge, my duty is to see whether there is violation of



fundamental rights and if any offence is made out, I cannot travel beyond that duty and it ends by writing a strong judgment, coming down heavily on infringement of a

fundamental right under Article 19 (1) (a). As a judge, I do not have power to say what the person has expressed is right or wrong." The media, on the other hand, can mould

public opinion and reflect on whether something was right or wrong, he added. He also said that "whether there is an emergency or no emergency, the fundamental rights of citizens are always under threat in one form or the other" and the role of judiciary and media is important in such a situation. Justice Oka further said that the right to live in a pollution-free environment is part of Article 21 (right to life and personal liberty) of the Constitution, therefore "it is the duty of the court to ensure that the laws relating to the environment are strictly enforced."

On the debate between development and environment, Justice Oka remarked, "... laws relating to the environment must prevail. But have we done enough? There is always an attempt made by the executive to overreach the orders of the court when it comes to orders on the environment," the former judge added.

Bold roadmap to an economic dawn in Kerala

Kerala, long celebrated as god's own country, is today grappling with an economic paradox that belies its natural beauty and human development achievements. While the state boasts of high literacy rates, robust healthcare systems, and a globally admired social model, its economic underpinnings are alarmingly fragile.

The state's unemployment rate stood at 9.6 percent in 2022-23, significantly higher than the national average of 4.1 percent. The industrial sector remains stagnant, contributing only 23 percent to the gross state domestic product, compared to the national average of 29 percent. Meanwhile, Kerala's public debt has surged to 73.57 lakh crore, exacerbated by declining central transfers and fiscal constraints. The state government spends more every year on debt servicing than on development—and it ends up borrowing more to pay off the interest on its past borrowings.

Kerala's economy has long been buoyed by remittances from its diaspora, but this over-reliance on external inflows—which once accounted for nearly 30 percent of Kerala's economy—has left the state vulnerable to global shocks. The pandemic-induced disruptions exposed the fragility of this model, with remittances declining and unemployment surging. The unemployment rate remains stubbornly high, the industrial sector stagnant, and the fiscal health precarious, with mounting debt and dwindling revenues. Meanwhile, the state's industrial sector remains woefully underdeveloped, hamstrung by bureaucratic red tape, outdated labour laws, and an aversion to private enterprise. The agricultural sector, once a cornerstone of Kerala's economy, has also suffered from declining productivity and climate-related challenges. If Kerala is to reclaim its place as a beacon of progress, it must confront these challenges with bold, pragmatic reforms that prioritise ease of doing business, investor confidence, and sustainable development. To extricate itself from this economic quagmire, Kerala must embrace a new paradigm that fosters entrepreneurship, attracts investment, and ensures equitable growth. For instance, under the Kerala Shops and Commercial Establishments Act, 1960, women working night shifts must be grouped in teams of at least five, with a minimum of two female employees per group, for safety reasons. Employers are also required to provide safe transportation for female employees commuting during night hours. While these provisions aim to ensure safety, they also limit employment opportunities for women in sectors that require flexible work arrangements, such as IT and hospitality. Employment laws specify too many details, which can sometimes reduce Kerala's competitiveness in attracting IT firms, especially when compared to states with more flexible labour laws. Many companies have argued in favour of a broad mandate—for example, a 45-hour work week—with the actual details left to the company to apply in accordance to its practices and operational requirements. By amending the law to balance worker rights with economic competitiveness, Kerala can unlock its full potential and position itself as a leading hub for innovation and investment. On the ease of doing business, which has increasingly become an empty slogan, Kerala must shed its reputation as a bureaucratic labyrinth and create an environment where businesses can thrive without undue interference. This requires streamlining regulatory processes, digitising approvals, and ensuring time-bound clearances. Kerala is notorious for the number of hurdles any proposal must clear before it sees the light of day. While the state government claims to have streamlined clearances, investors and businesspeople tell me a different story. The state should slash regulations and establish single-window systems across the board (and not just in one or two favoured areas) for investors and entrepreneurs, reducing the procedural delays.

I am grieving for my friend, the late Hemant Karkare, who was a good man and a professional. He was one of the officers

Karkare was killed by Pakistani terrorists who attacked Mumbai on November 26, 2008. We mourned his death at that time. Today, we mourn the demise of justice after seven accused, including former BJP MP Pragya Singh Thakur and Lt Col Prasad Purohit, were acquitted in the 2008 Malegaon blast case.

A day before he was killed, Karkare had called on me for advice on a ticklish problem he was facing while carrying out his duties honestly and faithfully. The state Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) headed by him had initially suspected jihadis of involvement in the terror attack near a mosque in Malegaon, a Muslim-dominated town in Nashik district, on September 29, 2008. Six local Muslims had died when a bomb planted on a motorcycle had exploded. Later, it was found that the bike had been registered in Gujarat in the name of Pragya, a feisty, hardcore Hindutva activist. She had become a Sadhvi and either sold or handed over the bike to a close aide, Ramji Kalsangra, who has remained untraceable till date. The markings on the engine and chassis had been erased, but experts had restored one of the two markings. I had no reason to disbelieve my friend. He had no motive to implicate fellow Hindus, including a Hindutva activist and an Army officer, with whom he had no previous acquaintance. Evidence of meetings held in cities of different states by Pragya with Lt Col Purohit and five others had been collected. The group, which included Kalsangra, called itself Abhinav Bharat. It appeared to Karkare and also to me that the group had a grouse against the government for not acting more forcefully against the jihadis despite their terrorist depredations. The group seemed to have decided to act independently to take revenge, which they had attempted in a very amateurish manner and certainly not in the manner of the jihadis schooled and trained in the obnoxious practice of killing innocents. The acquittal of all seven accused by a special court of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in the Malegaon case was widely anticipated. Karkare had been advised by a top BJP leader from Delhi to go slow on Pragya (a request that unnerved him and nudged him to seek my counsel). The

consequent transfer of the probe from the Maharashtra ATS to the NIA (controlled by the Union Home Ministry); the visit of an NIA officer to the office of Special Public Prosecutor Rohini Saliyan in Mumbai, asking her to "go slow" on the prosecution; the replacement of a highly respected prosecutor like Saliyan probably because she publicly berated the NIA for trying to influence her; the fact that the probe agency told the NIA court that there was no evidence to prosecute Pragya and Lt Col Purohit, and that the ATS had planted the RDX in the house of one of the accused—all this pointed to the intention of the rulers to ensure that the accused were set free.

It is tragic that justice is being dished out on the wishes of the powerful and not according to the truth of the matter. In our police training institutions, we are told to ferret

members of the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI), a known jihadi terrorist organisation. When the Bombay High Court acquitted them, many co-religionists of the acquitted men rejoiced! In the Malegaon case, too, some co-religionists celebrated when the seven accused were acquitted.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis proclaimed, "Terrorism was never saffron, is not, and will never be!" Did the CM suggest that Karkare, a good Hindu himself, had manoeuvred the investigation to spite fellow Hindus? I grieve for Karkare and his team members. Similarly, I grieve for former Police Commissioner Anami Roy and his dedicated officers who worked for months to nail the culprits in the Mumbai train blasts case. Many of my friends and well-wishers disagreed with me when I said that the Bombay High Court was wrong in its decision to acquit the jihadis.

I am convinced that the guilty have got off the hook in both cases. Courts go by evidence on record. They acquit the accused even if they sense their guilt. The reliance of the prosecution on oral witnesses and more importantly on confessions should be abandoned. The emphasis should shift to forensic evidence, which is hard to refute.

With the aim of achieving this goal of shifting to forensic evidence, the police top brass needs to address the current culture in all police establishments of relying solely on witnesses who are prone to pressures or inducements. The emphasis on forensics should begin at training institutions.

Interrogation of suspects should be monitored by CCTV cameras, as done in many advanced democracies. We are spending crores of rupees every year on modernisation, but the purchase of equipment alone will not spur police investigators to change their methods. A new culture has to be instilled into them daily. And all of them should be trained in forensics and subtler methods of interrogation. A whole new breed of interrogators should be the ultimate goal. A massive awareness campaign should be launched to educate the public on the need to discourage custodial violence. I remember a state Home Minister gently upbraiding me for "not even slapping" a boy suspected of theft in the house of one of his acquaintances! "What kind of police are you," he asked me!



out the truth and collect proper evidence to bring the culprits to book. If police investigation agencies go about arraigning in courts of law the persons identified by their political masters and exculpate the real perpetrators of the crime, the entire concept of the rule of law will crumble like a house of cards.

Unfortunately, sides are taken on the grounds of religion, caste or linguistic identities of the culprits. In the 2006 Mumbai train blasts case, the 12 persons convicted of killing 187 commuters and injuring 800 others were

RBI keeps powder dry to respond to tariff turmoil

The higher trade tariffs announced by the US later on Wednesday could fuel inflation and hit India's growth prospects, which puts the MPC's decision to preserve its ammunition in perspective

The RBI's Monetary Policy Committee has left the key policy rates unchanged. Even though retail inflation touched a six-year low of 2.1 percent in June, the central bank did not see the need to reduce the rates further. As a result, they remain above the pre-pandemic levels, while the real interest rate adjusted for inflation is at 2-3 percent, well above the desired 1.5-2 percent. Analysts, however, reason that Wednesday's decision—a calibrated pause while maintaining the policy stance at 'neutral'—allows the central bank flexibility to respond to unforeseen challenges. As Governor Sanjay Malhotra explained, geopolitical tensions and global trade uncertainties pose significant downside risks to growth and inflation. So, the decision to pause allows options to respond in more turbulent times. Moreover, the cumulative 1 percentage point rate cuts announced earlier are yet to filter through the credit system and the broader economy.

Despite the pause, some believe that the rate easing cycle is alive and kicking, thanks to RBI's liquidity measures. By



providing adequate and timely liquidity, the central bank is ensuring that banks and financial institutions transmit the 100-basis-point cuts to borrowers. Meanwhile, headline inflation is expected to edge up in Q4, though the overall 2025-26 print will likely settle at 3.1 percent, lower than the targeted 4 percent for the first time in at least three

years. That said, inflation is expected to rise again to 4.9 percent in Q1 of 2026-27 driven by the base effect. The higher trade tariffs announced by the US later on Wednesday could fuel inflation and hit India's growth prospects, which puts the MPC's decision to preserve its ammunition in perspective. A neutral stance retains policy firepower to respond with rate changes in the event of further global shocks. As for GDP growth, the RBI kept the 2025-26 estimate unchanged at 6.5 percent, suggesting that it remained optimistic about domestic economic resilience amid global headwinds. However, Donald Trump's later announcement of raising tariffs on Indian goods to 50 percent may prompt a recalibration, as they would sharply affect exports and the manufacturing sector. Then there could be untold dangers if the global financial conditions freeze—another reason for the RBI to remain cautious. Though the market expects at least another 25-basis-point cut in 2025, much will depend on global trade retrenchment, domestic demand softening, and the rupee's trajectory.

Silence on Gaza genocide condemns us

Several significant philosophies have extolled the virtue of silence as a form of prudence. But staying silent on the genocide happening in Gaza is an outright moral failure.

Across time and cultures, the adage 'silence is golden' has come to embody the virtue of restraint in speech. It perhaps originated in the ninth-century Arabic saying: "If speech is silver, then silence is gold." The sentiment it conveys echoes in religious traditions, too.

Prophet Muhammad, as reported in Sahih al-Bukhari, advised Muslims to either speak good or remain silent. The Epistle of James in the New Testament urged Christians to be "quick to listen and slow to speak". And in its 17th chapter, the Bhagavad Gita describes silence (maunam) as an "austerity of the mind" (tapa maanasam). Such pronouncements have strengthened the belief that silence is not the absence of speech, but the presence of meaning—deep, intentional, and spiritual. However, this perception often overlooks the fact that what the aphorisms endorsed was judicious restraint, not muteness born of indecision or avoidance. In other words, silence is noble only when it is chosen as a form of prudence in the face of great responsibility. When it accompanies oppression, it joins in the crime and becomes its voice. Hence, Prophet Muhammad declared that the highest form of jihad is "a word of justice" (kalimatul adl) spoken against a tyrannical ruler (sultaan jaa'ir). Jesus too inspired courage in his followers saying: "What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the rooftops." And in the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna tells Arjuna that there is nothing more honourable than fighting a righteous war (dharma yam sangramam) to uphold justice. Indeed, no serious philosophy upholds silence as a virtue when injustice demands a response. Yet, betraying its original nuance, the phrase "silence is golden" has been used to shield selfishness or cowardice, thus transforming silence into quiet hypocrisy.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in the political

quiescence surrounding Israel's ongoing assault on Gaza—an onslaught that many experts now describe as genocide. It has already claimed over 60,000 lives, razed entire neighbourhoods, and now threatens to starve a million innocent people to death, including countless children. Across time and cultures, the adage 'silence is golden' has come to embody the virtue of restraint in speech. It perhaps originated in the ninth-century Arabic saying: "If speech is silver, then silence is gold." The sentiment it conveys echoes in religious traditions, too. Prophet Muhammad, as reported in Sahih al-Bukhari, advised Muslims to either speak good or remain silent. The Epistle of James in the New Testament urged Christians to be "quick to listen and slow to speak". And in its 17th chapter, the Bhagavad Gita describes silence (maunam) as an "austerity of the mind" (tapa maanasam). Such pronouncements have strengthened the belief that silence is not the absence of speech, but the presence of meaning—deep, intentional, and spiritual. However, this perception often overlooks the fact that what the aphorisms endorsed was judicious restraint, not muteness born of indecision or avoidance. In other words, silence is noble only when it is chosen as a form of prudence in the face of great responsibility. When it accompanies oppression, it joins in the crime and becomes its voice. Hence, Prophet Muhammad declared that the highest form of jihad is "a word of justice" (kalimatul adl) spoken against a tyrannical ruler (sultaan jaa'ir). Jesus too inspired courage in his followers saying: "What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the rooftops." And in the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna tells Arjuna that there is nothing more honourable than fighting a righteous war (dharma yam sangramam) to uphold justice. Indeed, no serious philosophy upholds silence as a virtue when injustice demands a response. Yet, betraying its original nuance, the phrase "silence is golden" has been used to shield selfishness or cowardice, thus transforming silence into quiet hypocrisy.

as a virtue when injustice demands a response. Yet, betraying its original nuance, the phrase "silence is golden" has been used to shield selfishness or cowardice, thus transforming silence into quiet hypocrisy. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the political

quiescence surrounding Israel's ongoing assault on Gaza—an onslaught that many experts now describe as genocide. It has already claimed over 60,000 lives, razed entire neighbourhoods, and now threatens to starve a million innocent people to death, including countless children. Silence in the face of these atrocities can perhaps be excused in lands where denouncing Israel brings the threat of imprisonment or worse. But what explains the silence of those who, free to speak, choose not to? Evolutionary psychology suggests that an intense fear of outsiders that prevailed among early humans persists even today because natural selection honed our protective instincts. In contrast, modern humans possess the cognitive sophistication necessary for negotiation or conflict resolution. Yet, they exhibit atavistic tendencies as if evolution had passed them by.

Scientifically speaking, behavioural modernity equipped

Homo sapiens with remarkable cognitive powers such as abstract thought, complex language, social cooperation, cultural imagination, and technological innovation. These advances should have made us more empathetic and peaceable. Yet the paradox of our species is that we used the very intellect evolution granted us to refine violence. We expanded organised warfare, perfected weapons of mass destruction, and became more violent than Neanderthals ever were. Among the non-violent majority, human fellowship failed in subtler ways—through social identitarianism, propaganda, and ignorance of history. If most people today confine their solidarity to those who share their nationality, religion, or class, it is because disinformation-driven mistrust paints the 'other' as a threat. As a result, even after being endowed with the capacity for unity, we chose division. This moral failure often takes the form of silence, cloaked in specious justifications: that the victims are in a distant land; that speaking out brings us no gain, while staying quiet costs us nothing; that condemning genocide might endanger our interests; that a single voice cannot sway the oppressors; and that our solidarity will do little to alter the victims' fate. But these are lame excuses. They are shamelessly invoked to avoid confessing the uncomfortable truth: we are silent because we don't care. Needless to say, it cannot be denied that silence can, at times, be a powerful form of resistance. But this holds only for the oppressed who are stunned into wordlessness by trauma. For those who watch from safety, silence is no act of dignity or courage. It is an abdication of social responsibility by which they not just surrender their freedom of speech but lose their humanity. This makes reclaiming our humanity the biggest requirement for most of us today. But it is not an easy task. Mirza Ghalib had warned:

Bar Council issues notices to 16 lawyers over alleged bench-hunting in Roop Bansal case

Privilege Committee cites *prima facie* evidence of attempts to manipulate bench assignment in Punjab and Haryana High Court; seeks responses from Abhishek Manu Singhvi and Mukul Rohatgi

Chandigarh .(Agency)

The Privilege Committee of the Bar Council of Punjab and Haryana has initiated proceedings against 16 lawyers, including two senior advocates, over alleged attempts to manipulate the bench assignment process in a high-profile corruption case involving Gurugram-based real estate developer Roop Bansal. In an order dated August 7, 2025, the Committee directed the advocates to appear in person or through counsel on August 16 at 3 pm, along with their replies. The list includes Senior Advocates Rakesh Nehra and Puneet Bali, besides Advocates J.K. Singla, Sidharth Bhardwaj, Aditya Aggarwal, Gagandeep Singh, Anmol Chandan, Baljeet Beniwal, Harsh Sharma, Sauhard Singh, Rupender Singh, Ankit Yadav, Ashim Singla, Akash Sharma, Ms. Bindu, and APS Shergil.

The move follows observations made by the Punjab and Haryana High Court in CRM-M-19843-2025 (Roop Bansal vs State of Haryana), where Chief Justice Sheel Nagu, in the open court, flagged concerns over "bench shopping" and warned that such conduct was "destroying the Bar." The Indian Express had reported that the Bench had asked Bansal's

legal team to produce the advocate who filed a fresh plea in the matter "just to get the case out of a particular Bench." The Committee, chaired by Raj Kumar Chauhan, said the matter was taken up *suo motu* to "uphold the dignity of the legal profession, ensure the maintenance of legal ethics, and discharge the responsibilities entrusted under law."



It further wrote, "In the battle of justice and injustice and in between the righteous and wrong, in Mahabharata, the silence of Bhishma and Drona in the Court of Hastinapur, during Draupadi's humiliation, reveals a timeless truth – when those trained in law and morality remain silent in the face of injustice, the law itself collapses."

Citing legal maxims and historical analogies, it likened any attempt to subvert judicial

processes to an "invasion of the Temple of Justice," comparable to "the desecration of the Somnath Temple in the 11th century."

From the records, the Committee said it appeared that Advocate J.K. Singla "orchestrated the game plan" but that it was "highly unbelievable" such an effort could be carried out alone. "There might be some big ingenious mind advocates behind the curtains, which has to be unearthed," it noted, terming the alleged conduct as "tactful, systematic and in an organized manner." The order invoked Section 6(c) and (d) of the Advocates Act, 1961, empowering the Bar Council to take action in cases involving professional misconduct. It also acknowledged the "complexity of tactics such as bench hunting, bar hunting or forum shopping" allegedly adopted by some lawyers and businessmen "for ulterior motives." The Committee said it would also seek responses from senior advocates Abhishek Manu Singhvi and Mukul Rohatgi "to fairly and comprehensively adjudicate the matter." Additionally, it invited information, complaints, or any material from advocates and affected persons via its official email and WhatsApp number.

Traffic not hit by Congress' protest at Freedom Park



BENGALURU.(Agency)

The protest at Freedom Park by ruling Congress leaders, joined by Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi and AICC President Mallikarjun Kharge, concluded peacefully without any untoward incidents.

A total of 4,459 police personnel were deployed for security, including 12 DCPs, 45 ACPs, 128 police inspectors, 421 police sub-inspectors, 591 women personnel, 14 Karnataka State Reserve Police platoons, and two women platoons. Their presence ensured not only a smooth event but also an orderly flow of traffic.

As the protest coincided with the Varamahalakshmi festival and a long weekend, many residents had either stayed indoors or travelled to their hometowns, resulting in lighter-than-usual traffic. The traffic police created separate lanes for VVIPs and Congress workers. In the wake of the Chinnaswamy Stadium stampede, which claimed the lives of 11 RCB fans, the police have been taking extra precautions to prevent such tragedies at large gatherings. Traffic wardens were also roped in for assistance.

Barricades were placed on one side of the road at KR Circle towards Freedom Park. Vehicles ferrying protesters and those belonging to Congress leaders were directed to separate lanes. Palace Road, from Mysore Bank Circle to Freedom Park, was reserved exclusively for VVIP vehicles. The police also managed the flow of people to prevent crowding at a single point, ensuring they were directed straight to the venue.

Security delays at KIA cause 15 AI Express pax to miss flights



BENGALURU.(Agency)

Around 15 passengers scheduled to board Air India Express flights from Kempegowda International Airport's (KIA) Terminal 2 on Thursday missed their departures due to longer security screening times.

According to sources, the delay was caused by heightened security measures implemented by the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) ahead of Independence Day. Although passengers had arrived at the terminal, they were unable to complete the check-in and boarding process before the gates closed. Those who missed their flights were accommodated on other flights by the airline, a source said.

A social media post had claimed that more than 40 passengers missed their flights due to miscommunication, lack of proper guidelines, and server issues faced by Air India Express. However, sources clarified that the primary reason was the delay in reaching the boarding gates, and urged passengers to be aware of the additional time required for security clearance.

The Sikh Times

Maligaon, 09th August: In line with Indian Railways nationwide Swachhata Campaign launched in connection with the Independence Day Celebrations 2025, N. F. Railway has initiated a series of cleanliness drives and awareness programmes across all its divisions, workshops and establishments. The campaign, which commenced on 01st of August, will continue till 31st of October 2025, focusing on spreading awareness and fostering public participation to ensure a cleaner and greener railway environment. To mark the beginning of the campaign, the Swachhata Pledge was taken by officers, staff and volunteers across the N. F. Railway network. A notable event was held in the Tinsukia Division, where a

'Prabhat Pheri' was organized, followed by the pledge-taking ceremony. Bharat Scouts and Guides actively participated in the initiative, organising a Nukkad Natak and station cleaning drive at New Tinsukia Railway Station to engage the public on the theme of

"Say No to Plastic Pollution" were distributed among passengers to discourage the use of single-use plastics. An intensive cleanliness drive of the railway tracks, especially beyond the platform areas, was carried out under the Swachhata Abhiyan. Awareness on proper garbage disposal has been emphasized through a focused "Use the Dustbin" campaign, complemented by public announcements, anti-littering signage and counselling sessions. Further, cleanliness efforts extended beyond station premises into railway colonies, where community-led Shramdan programmes were conducted to promote civic responsibility among railway families. The campaign also featured installation of Swachhata-themed selfie booths at major stations, distribution of informative pamphlets and display of anti-littering notices across platforms, footbridges and waiting halls. Regular announcements are being made at stations and onboard trains, urging passengers to adopt hygienic practices and proper usage of bio-toilets. As the campaign progresses, N. F. Railway remains committed to reinforcing Indian Railways vision of a cleaner and healthier travel experience for all. Wide and effective publicity of the Swachhata Campaign was carried out through the official social media handles of N. F. Railway to create awareness among the public, highlight ongoing activities across various divisions and stations, and encourage active participation from rail users in maintaining cleanliness and hygiene across the railway network.

Bribery case outlives the very municipal body where it began

The state, however, filed an appeal seven years later, which remained pending until its final disposal this week.

HYDERABAD.(Agency)

The Telangana High Court has finally drawn curtains on a bribery case that lingered in the judicial system for nearly 20 years by upholding the acquittal of a former junior assistant in the tax section of the erstwhile Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad (MCH). Justice EV Venugopal dismissed the state's appeal challenging the 2013 verdict of the Special Judge for Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) Cases, which had acquitted the accused. The appeal was filed by the Inspector of Police, ACB, City Range-II, Hyderabad. The case traces back to February 2005, when B Srinivas, a resident of Begumpet, approached MCH for mutation of a recently purchased property. The prosecution claimed that the accused officer demanded a Rs 500 bribe to process the application. Srinivas

refused and subsequently lodged a complaint, prompting the ACB to set a trap. Though the accused was arrested, and the prosecution claimed to have established demand and acceptance of the bribe under the Prevention of Corruption Act, the trial court in 2006 acquitted him, citing failure to prove key elements of the offence. The state, however, filed an appeal seven years later, which remained pending until its final disposal this week.

In the high court, the state argued that the trial court had erred despite evidence pointing to both demand and acceptance. The defence maintained that no official favour was due at the time of the alleged incident and highlighted the complainant's admission during cross-examination that the complaint stemmed from a personal grievance after the accused insisted on proper documentation.

cleanliness. A special cleanliness and awareness campaign was also launched at Guwahati Railway Station. As part of this, pamphlets

to transfer the money. Believing him, the victim sent the amount through the scammer's app between June 9 and July 31, 2025. Apart from investing his hard-earned money, the victim even took a loan to make further



profits. The app showed a total amount of Rs 8.42 crore. However, when he requested to withdraw the money, the fraudsters told him to pay Rs 10 lakh more. Realising he had been scammed, he approached the Hyderabad police. Based on his complaint, a

case was registered under Sections 66C, 66D of the IT Act and Sections 111(2)(b), 318(4), 319(2), 336(3), 338, 340(2) of the BNS. 15 cybercriminals held in week-long crackdown Hyderabad: Cyberabad Cybercrime police arrested 15 individuals from various states in connection with 11 cybercrime cases that occurred between July 29 and August 4. Among the 15 arrests, 12 individuals were linked to trading fraud, two to gaming fraud, and one to business fraud. The police have seized 14 mobile phones, eight debit cards, one Aadhaar card, one PAN card, 13 SIM cards, and four proprietorship stamps. The Cyberabad police advise citizens to remain cautious of investment and trading scams that promise high returns

15 cybercriminals held in week-long crackdown Hyderabad: Cyberabad Cybercrime police arrested 15 individuals from various states in connection with 11 cybercrime cases that occurred between July 29 and August 4. Among the 15 arrests, 12 individuals were linked to trading fraud, two to gaming fraud, and one to business fraud. The police have seized 14 mobile phones, eight debit cards, one Aadhaar card, one PAN card, 13 SIM cards, and four proprietorship stamps. The Cyberabad police advise citizens to remain cautious of investment and trading scams that promise high returns

12 hours of rainfall and waterlogging brings traffic to halt during peak hours

The rainfall once again exposed the city's inadequate drainage infrastructure and the lack of coordinated emergency response.

Chandigarh .(Agency)
Flooded streets, clogged drains, and halted traffic painted a grim picture of urban vulnerability in the face of monsoon fury as over 12 hours of rainfall on Friday brought peak-hour traffic in Chandigarh and neighbouring cities to a standstill, leaving commuters stranded and frustrated for hours.

The city recorded 86 mm of rainfall from 8:30 am to 8:30 pm, resulting in waterlogging in several areas and nearly an hour of traffic jams in and around the city, including Mohali, Zirakpur, and Dera Bassi. Key roads witnessed major congestions, especially from Chandigarh to Zirakpur, PGI to Sarangpur leading to Mullanpur and the Ambala National Highway, where vehicles remained stuck from Zirakpur to Dera Bassi for a long time.

Waterlogged roads posed a serious challenge to two-wheeler riders as they had to wade through waterlogging or abandon their vehicles. In a related incident, lightning struck a house at Sector 39-D earlier in the day, but no loss of life was reported, though the property suffered

significant damage. "I was trapped as water reached to the silencer of my scooter. I had no option but to wade it out. There was no help in sight," said Anuj Bhalla, a city resident, who got stuck on his two-wheeler in

Phase 7, Mohali. "For such situations, the administration must deploy emergency teams to assist those stuck in the water." Manpreet Singh, who was driving from PGI to Khuda Lahora, said, "It took me more than an hour to cross 10 minutes. Vehicles were bumper



to-bumper, and people were visibly frustrated. This level of unpreparedness for monsoon is shocking." Jogiinder Kaur, travelling to Ambala, shared a similar experience. "I was stuck for more than an hour between Zirakpur and Dera Bassi. The traffic wasn't moving at all. I had to cancel my plan." The rainfall once again exposed the city's inadequate drainage infrastructure and the lack of coordinated emergency response.

The UT Administration reopened one of the floodgates of Sukhna Lake around 7.30 pm on Friday after the water level rose alarmingly close to the danger mark of 1,163 feet owing to incessant rainfall in Chandigarh and its catchment areas. The gate was lifted to a height of three inches to release excess water into the Sukhna Choe, which eventually flows into the Ghaggar river. This marks the second opening of the floodgate in just over 24 hours. The first operation took place on Wednesday around 11 am, after a gap of nearly two years, and the gate remained open until 11 pm that night.

104 Helpline: Over 7,000 effective interventions into mental health-related calls in Gujarat in five years

Ahmedabad .(Agency)

The 104 Suicide Prevention Helpline of Gujarat has received a total of 8,763 calls since its inception in September 2019 till June 2025. Of these, 7,372 were classified as "effective" calls, meaning the callers required and received some form of counseling or intervention, according to the official data from EMRI Green Health Services.

Ahmedabad accounts for the highest number of calls, 2,766, followed by Vadodara (584), Banaskantha (533), and Rajkot (453). Around 30 to 40 per cent of callers are repeat users, many of whom directly request the same counselor.

The majority of callers are men aged 30 to 35, typically mid-career individuals struggling with emotional isolation, family pressure, or professional stress, the data reveals. The 104 Helpline, which connects callers to trained counselors, follows a four-stage intervention process designed to provide immediate relief and sustained support.

If necessary, emergency responders like the local police or the 181 women's helpline are brought in. The helpline classifies calls under seven broad categories: mental illness, family-related conflict, romantic relationship issues, medical illness, physical or sexual harassment, education-related stress, and others.

In addition to suicide prevention, the 104 Helpline also provides health-related information, including guidance on immunization, maternal health, and government health schemes.

It serves as a bridge between the public and the healthcare system, particularly for those whose needs are urgent but not immediately life-threatening, unlike the 108 ambulance service.

Film on 104 Helpline 'CALL 104', a film based on the working of the state's 104 Health Helpline, was screened on August 1 at an event held in Ahmedabad. During the event, several beneficiaries and counselors shared their stories and experiences with Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel. Speaking on the occasion, Vinod Damor, a beneficiary, shared the story of his cousin Anant who had been battling suicidal thoughts.

"He had dreamed of becoming a doctor, but his father forced him to join engineering. After that he completely lost interest in life," Damor said. "We encouraged him to call 104. They (counselors) helped him find a reason to keep going. Today, he's leading a happy life," Damor said.

Usha Patel, a counselor working with 104 Helpline, said: "I've been able to save lives, sometimes just by listening and other times by stepping in with real-time support."

Railways Announces Discount On Return Journey Tickets Ahead Of Festive Season

►Under the "Round Trip Package for Festival Rush" scheme, bookings will open on August 14 for onward journeys scheduled between October 13 and October 26.

Agency New Delhi.

The Ministry of Railways has announced an experimental "Round Trip Package for Festival Rush" scheme aimed at easing passenger congestion and ensuring smoother travel during the upcoming festive season. According to a Railway Board circular issued on August 8, the scheme offers a 20 per cent rebate on the base fare of the return journey for

passengers booking confirmed tickets for both onward and return travel for the same set of passengers, class, and origin-destination pair.

The initiative aims to redistribute crowding, facilitate hassle-free bookings, and enhance the utilisation of train services, including special trains, in both directions.

Under the scheme, bookings will open on August 14, 2025, for onward journeys scheduled between October 13 and October 26, 2025. The corresponding return journey must be booked using the connecting journey feature for travel between November 17 and December 1, 2025. Advance reservation

period norms will not apply to the return journey booking. The scheme will be valid across all classes and trains, except those operating with flexi-fare pricing, and will



only apply to confirmed tickets. Both onward and return journey tickets must be booked using the same mode, either

Internet (online) booking or counter booking at reservation offices. No additional fare collection will be performed if any arise during charting for these PNRs.

No fare refund is permissible for tickets booked under this scheme. The scheme applies to all classes and trains, including special trains (on demand), except for trains with Flexi fare.

It also does not allow any modifications or additional concessions to be permitted. The offer excludes the use of rail travel coupons, vouchers, passes, and PTOs for the discounted return trip. The Railway Board has directed zonal railways to ensure wide

publicity through the press, media, and station announcements to inform passengers about the scheme.

Experts urge calm, strategic engagement as US tariffs strain India ties

Agency New Delhi.

As tensions grow in Indo-US relations following the imposition of 50% tariffs by the United States on Indian goods, three leading foreign policy and trade experts have cautioned against overreaction while underlining the need for strategic introspection and persistent engagement.

Speaking at a panel discussion hosted by The Indian Futures on Wednesday, former ambassadors and trade officials stressed that although the situation is serious, the India-US relationship remains fundamentally resilient. Sujan Chinoy, former envoy to Japan, compared the current churn in the global order to "William Golding's Lord of the Flies", warning that a descent into chaos could ensue if rules and order are discarded. While acknowledging that President Donald Trump's trade policies have rattled New Delhi, he maintained that the bilateral partnership "is not irreparably ruptured" and urged both countries to take "the right decisions in the next few months".

Chinoy highlighted India's trade surplus with the US and pointed to potential fallout for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), which account for 80% of Indian exports to the US.

He also warned that continued visa restrictions could harm India's services sector and student mobility. On defence ties, however, he noted "substantial progress", with several foundational agreements signed and more under negotiation.

Former Ambassador to Russia Pankaj Saran echoed Chinoy's optimism but added that India must acknowledge the "asymmetry" in its relationship with a global power like the US. "There will always be frictions. We should focus on what we can control," he said, advocating for a better understanding of key actors in Washington to avoid surprises. He cautioned that unilateral decisions such as the tariff hike may not be easily reversed and called for India to "support the US agenda where possible", such as on Ukraine diplomacy.

IIT Delhi decodes method to recycle denim waste into high-quality garments

Agency New Delhi.

In a major step towards sustainable fashion, researchers at IIT Delhi have developed a method to recycle denim waste into high-quality knitted garments without compromising on comfort or durability.

At a time when India produces nearly 3.9 million tonnes of post-consumer textile waste annually, most of which ends up in landfills, this innovation offers a promising solution to one of the fashion industry's most pressing environmental problems.

The research, led by professor Abhijit Majumdar and professor B S Butola from the Department of Textile and Fibre Engineering, addresses a key challenge in textile recycling: the loss of fibre strength and length during mechanical processing, which usually results in inferior fabrics. By optimising the recycling process, the team was able to minimise damage to fibre properties while converting discarded denim into a yarn that retained its quality. These yarns were then used to create knitted garments through seamless whole-garment technology, with recycled fibre content ranging from 25% to 75%. The breakthrough finding: up to 50% recycled yarn can be used without any noticeable difference in the feel or quality of the final product. "To reduce the roughness of recycled yarns, a softening treatment was applied to the fabric," explained Majumdar. "This ensured that the tactile feel of the garments matched that of virgin textiles."

Importantly, the process is not limited to denim. "We have demonstrated our work with denim waste, and it can be extended to any other textile waste," he added.

Beyond material innovation, the team also examined the environmental benefits of their approach. Using Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) in the Indian context, PhD scholar Satya Karmakar collected data from the Panipat textile recycling cluster to measure the impact.

The analysis showed that recycling denim waste using this method can reduce greenhouse gas emissions, acid rain, and fossil fuel depletion by 30-40%, and ozone layer depletion by up to 60%. Additionally, the method reduces dependence on virgin cotton, which is highly resource-intensive, contributing to 24% of global warming impact during its cultivation due to high usage of pesticides, fertilisers, and water.

India's defence output, exports hit record highs under Aatmanirbhar Bharat

Agency New Delhi.

The Ministry of Defence on Saturday informed that India's defence production reached an all-time high of Rs 1,50,590 crore in the financial year 2024-25. According to official data released by the ministry, this marks an 18% increase from the Rs 1.27 lakh crore recorded in 2023-24 and a 90% rise compared to Rs 79,071 crore in 2019-20. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh credited the growth to the combined efforts of the Department of Defence Production, Defence Public Sector Undertakings, other public sector units and private industry. He said the continued growth reflects the strengthening of India's defence industrial base.

Defence Public Sector Undertakings and

other public sector entities contributed approximately 77% of the total output, while the private sector accounted for 23%. The private sector's share rose from 21% in the previous fiscal year,

production rose by 16%, while private sector production increased by 28% in FY 2024-25.

The government attributes the rise to policy reforms, efforts to ease doing



business, and a focus on indigenisation under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative. The initiative aims to reduce reliance on imports and boost defence exports.

Defence exports also reached a record Rs 23,622 crore in 2024-25, reflecting a 12.04% increase over the previous year's figure of Rs 21,083 crore. Officials said India's defence sector is expected to maintain this growth momentum, supported by continued reforms, increased private participation and expanding export potential.

Year after RG Kar rape case, doctors say promises on safety, work conditions remain unfulfilled

Agency New Delhi.

One year after the RG Kar Medical College tragedy and the nationwide strike it triggered, doctors say the promises made in its wake have failed to translate into real change.

The concerns that brought thousands of medical professionals to the streets—unsafe working conditions, long duty hours and poor enforcement of protection laws—remain unresolved. The recent assault on doctors and security staff at AIIMS Patna by a sitting MLA has, they say, once again exposed the vulnerability of healthcare workers.

"Despite laws in place, weak implementation continues to leave doctors exposed to threats and

violence. The demand for secure, respectful and humane working environments has never been more urgent," said Dr Indra Shekhar, former president, AIIMS Delhi

Resident Doctors' Association (RDA) and member of the Joint RDA Action Front that led the agitation in Delhi. Dr Rohan Krishnan, chief patron, FAIMA, said both the Centre and the

West Bengal government had made specific assurances after the RG Kar incident, including better safety arrangements in hospitals. "Those promises were never fulfilled. The rising violence against doctors, especially women doctors, is deeply worrying. Medical education today has a large number of women, and because this is an emergency service, they must work night shifts and move through high-risk areas—wards with psychiatric patients, those from vulnerable socio-economic backgrounds, and even patients with criminal histories. That makes adequate security not just important, but essential," he said. Krishnan stressed that the safety of women doctors, nurses and paramedical staff must be treated as a top priority.

M for Masjid, N for...: Row over Madhya Pradesh school's nursery study material

The school principal admitted that the material, which was sourced from Bhopal, was distributed without checking its content and that, after the controversy, all parents were asked to return the charts to the school.

Agency New Delhi.

A private school in Madhya Pradesh's Raisen district has come under controversy after study material given to nursery students included terms such as 'K for Kaaba', 'M for Masjid', 'N for Namaz' and 'Au for Aurat in Hijab'. The matter surfaced when student's uncle came across the content while going through the child's learning chart at home and brought it to the family's attention.

As soon as the matter came to light, members of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) and several parents reached the school and staged a protest. They protested against the use of Urdu and Islamic terms in the learning material. Upon questioning, the school principal, I A Qureshi, admitted that the material was distributed without checking its content. The principal said the material was

sourced from Bhopal and that, after the controversy, all parents have been asked to return the charts to the school.

Kotwali police station in-charge, Narendra Goyal, reached the school after receiving information about the protest. He handled the situation and advised the protesters to file complaints at the police station and the District Education Office.

"We received information about a disturbance at the school, after which I reached the spot with a police team and brought the situation under control. On questioning, the principal admitted to distributing the material. As the protest grew, parents and ABVP members were advised to submit a written complaint to the District

Education Officer," Goyal said.

A few days before this incident, another report of children attending PDA Paathshala, run by the Samajwadi Party,



learning the English alphabet through names of political figures had surfaced. Instead of the traditional method of teaching English with examples like "A

for Apple" and "B for Ball," the PDA Paathshala uses references such as "A for Akhilesh Yadav," "B for Babasaheb Ambedkar," "C for Chaudhary Charan Singh," "D for Dimple Yadav," and "M for Mulyam Singh Yadav." Samajwadi Party leader Faraz Alam said the approach is intended to provide education while also promoting political and social awareness from an early age, based on the belief that "today's child is tomorrow's citizen."

Launched in response to the closure of government schools under the BJP-led Uttar Pradesh government, these schools aim to provide free basic education to underprivileged children. The schools also promote the party's PDA (Pichhda, Dalit, Alpsankhyak) ideology.

Delhi Man Kills Wife, 2 Daughters At Home, Cops Suspect Domestic Dispute



Agency New Delhi.

A man allegedly killed his wife and two minor daughters, aged 5 and 7, at their home in Delhi's Karawal Nagar area on Friday night.

Officials have indicated that long-standing arguments with his 28-year-old wife, Jayshree, may have been the motive behind the killings. However, the exact reason is being investigated, they said. It is not yet known how the man killed his family. A case has been filed against the man, and forensic teams have collected evidence from the spot. The bodies have been sent for post-mortem at the GTB hospital in the national capital.

The accused is currently on the run, and the police have launched a manhunt to track him down.

According to the family's neighbours, the couple used to fight regularly. "We got to know about the incident today morning at 6 am. When we opened the door, we saw the mother and two daughters on their bed. The husband and wife used to fight regularly," a neighbour said.

Centre blames heavy rain for tomato price spike in Delhi, says rates now easing with improved supply

Agency New Delhi.

The Central government said heavy rain in North and Northwest India has led to a temporary spike in the price of tomatoes in Delhi. The current average retail price of tomatoes in Delhi is Rs 73 per kg, while the rest of the country's average price is Rs 52 per kg.

In order to cool down the tomato price, the National Cooperative Consumers' Federation Of India (NCCF) has so far sold over 2.7 tonnes in the open market in Delhi at retail prices ranging from Rs 47 to Rs 60 per kg, depending on the procurement cost. NCCF's stationery outlets at Nehru Place, Udyog Bhawan, Patel Chowk, and Rajiv Chowk, as well as 6-7 mobile vans operating at various locations across the city. "It is primarily the result of heavy rainfall in the northern and northwestern regions of the country since the last week of July," said the Department of Consumer Affairs in its release. This weather-related disruption caused prices to spike to as high as Rs 85 per kg by the end of July. However, with the recovery and stabilisation of daily arrivals at the Azadpur mandi over the past week, both mandi and retail prices have begun to decline.

In contrast, major cities such as Chennai and Mumbai, which have not experienced abnormal weather conditions in recent weeks, have not witnessed a similar price surge. The current average retail prices of tomatoes in Chennai and Mumbai are Rs 50 per kg and Rs 58 per kg, respectively—substantially lower than the prevailing price in Delhi.

At present, the all-India average retail price of tomatoes is Rs 52 per kg, which is still lower than Rs 54 per kg last year and Rs 136 per kg in 2023.

"The central government has been actively monitoring and intervening to ensure stable prices of tomato, onion, and potato. Higher production of onion and potato, along with government buffer stock, ensures continued price stability," mentions the release.

NEWS BOX

**Chennai Grand Masters:
Arjun Erigaisi held, Vedit
Gujrathi suffers shock loss****PARIS.(Agency)**

Top-seeded Arjun Erigaisi was held to a draw by Dutch GM Jorden van Foreest, while Vedit Gujrathi suffered a shock defeat to Ray Robson in the second round of the Chennai Grand Masters Chess tournament on Friday, August 9. Germany's Vincent Keymer emerged as the sole leader on Day 2 after his commanding win over India's V Pranav. The Indian was able to go toe-to-toe with Keymer, but the German was able to make a comeback to secure his second win on the trot. Erigaisi and Foreest were forced to settle for a draw after an evenly-matched tactical battle. Erigaisi is now joint-second in the standings with 1.5 points, alongside Ray Robson, who stunned Gujrathi. The Indian grandmaster



and Robson were involved in a see-saw battle which saw Gujrathi secure a winning position. However, Gujrathi faltered in the end game, allowing Robson to capitalise and secure his first win of the tournament, after an intense time scramble. Anish Giri and Nihal Sarin shared the spoils in a well-balanced battle on the day, which saw the Indian ace come close to securing a big win. Nihal had found his rhythm and was in a superior position in terms of time and on the board forcing Giri on to the backfoot. However, the Dutch GM found a way to escape and secure a draw in the end. The showdown between Karthikeyan Murali and Awonder Liang also ended in a draw. In the challengers section, Indian GM Iniyar Pa impressed everyone with a commanding win over GM Harika Dronavalli, while Abhimanyu Puranik bounced back with a victory over Leon Luke Mendonca. The games involving Diptayan and Pranesh, Adhiban and Vaishali, and Harshavardhan and Aryan ended in draws.

**11 ISL clubs ask AIFF to
alert SC on league
future uncertainty****New Delhi. (Agency)**

Indian Super League's (ISL) future is hanging in the balance — and 11 of its clubs want action now. They have written to All India Football Federation (AIFF) president Kalyan Chaudhary, urging him to take the matter straight to the Supreme Court. If the federation doesn't step in, the clubs say they are ready to go themselves. The trouble began when Football Sports Development Limited (FSDL), the league's organiser, pressed pause on the 2025-26 season. The reason? The Master Rights Agreement (MRA) between FSDL and the AIFF — signed in 2010 — is set to expire in December 2025. But a Supreme Court directive has stopped the AIFF from



renegotiating until a verdict is delivered in the draft constitution case. With that order in place, the league and related competitions are stuck in limbo. In their joint letter to Chaudhary, the clubs said: "We respectfully urge the AIFF, in its capacity as the statutory regulator of football in India and the principal party to the proceedings, to urgently bring the current situation to the attention of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India." The letter flagged the growing impact — stalled planning, frozen contracts, and livelihoods under threat. Chennaiyin FC has already halted first-team operations, while Bengaluru FC and Odisha FC have suspended salary payments for players and staff. Warning of wider consequences, the clubs noted: "This legal uncertainty and administrative vacuum are now threatening to cause irreversible damage to the Indian football ecosystem." They are willing to back the AIFF in court but insist they will move independently if needed. With the ISL's September-to-April season fast approaching, the clock is ticking on whether Indian football's top tier will kick off on time or face its most disrupted campaign yet.

**Paula Badosa forced to withdraw from
US Open as injury woes continue**

→ **Paula Badosa's injury woes
continued as she was forced
to withdraw from the US Open
on Friday, August 8. Badosa
was last seen in action in
Wimbledon this year.**

New Delhi. (Agency)

Spaniard Paula Badosa has been forced to withdraw from the US Open this year, the tournament's organisers announced on Friday, August 8. Badosa has been struggling with injury woes, including a chronic back issue that even made her consider retirement from the sport. Last month, the former World No.2 announced that she would be out for a few weeks due to another back injury. Badosa last played at Wimbledon this year, where she suffered a first-round exit, losing to Britain's Katie Boulter. She then revealed that she had suffered a tear in her psoas, the



muscle that connects the lower back to the top of the leg. With Badosa's withdrawal, Switzerland's Jil Teichmann will move to the main draw as the singles action will get underway on August 24.

Badosa was also forced to withdraw from the US Open mixed doubles event, where she suffered a first-round exit, losing to Britain's Katie Boulter. She then revealed that she had suffered a tear in her psoas, the

after setback. Following the latest setback, Badosa took to social media and posted a heartwarming message. The Spaniard talked about her recent struggles on and off the court and said that she doesn't run from failure anymore. "I wasn't built by easy days. I was shaped by the moments that broke me, the choices that didn't go as planned, and the times I fell short

of who I wanted to be. My setbacks weren't signs that I was weak; they were necessary chapters in a story that's still being written." "Failure taught me what success never could. It humbled me. It forced me to look inward, to ask hard questions, to rebuild with more intention and clarity. Every mistake I made sharpened my understanding of who I am and who I'm not. And while I once feared those mistakes, I now see them as some of my greatest teachers."

"There were times I thought I'd lost everything, my direction, my confidence, my sense of worth. But looking back, I realize I was only losing what no longer served me. Every loss gave space for growth. Every closed door redirected me toward a better one. ""I'm not proud of every moment in my past, but I am proud of the person those moments created. The human I am today is more resilient, more aware, and more grounded because of everything I've survived and learned. I don't run from failure anymore. I respect it because it's the reason I stand here stronger, wiser, and still becoming," said Badosa.

**Hasan Nawaz's unbeaten 63 leads Pakistan
to a five-wicket win over West Indies**

**Shaheen Shah Afridi led the
Pakistan bowlers with four
wickets for 51 runs while
Naseem Shah added 3-55.**

CHENNAI. (Agency)

TAROUBA: Hasan Nawaz hit an unbeaten 63, including a six and a clinching boundary in the second-to-last over, to help Pakistan beat West Indies by five wickets in the first one-day international on Friday. Pakistan reached 284-5 with seven balls to spare after the home side scored 280 after being sent in to bat by Pakistan, which won the preceding Twenty20 series 2-1 played in

Florida. Captain Mohammad Rizwan added 53 runs for Pakistan. "At the start, the spinners were great, but once the dew came

Earlier, Evin Lewis, captain Shai Hope and Roston Chase scored half-centuries for West Indies. Shaheen Shah Afridi led the

Pakistan bowlers with four wickets for 51 runs while Naseem Shah added 3-55.

"It was tough to play in conditions like this, and the toss had a big part," Hope said. "Maybe we could've got more runs. Credit to our bowlers for fighting at the end. We needed to score more in the middle overs. But all in all, we're still one step behind."

The second match in the ODI series is scheduled for Sunday and the third and final on Tuesday, also at Brian Lara



in it got easier," player-of-the-match Nawaz told the host broadcaster.

Stadium.

**Barcelona hand Ter Stegen captaincy
back after resolving medical dispute**

**Barcelona have reinstated
Marc-André ter Stegen as
captain after resolving a
dispute over medical clearance,
ending a dramatic 24-hour
standoff that began when he
refused to share his surgery
details with La Liga.**

New Delhi. (Agency)

Barcelona have drawn a line under a turbulent week by restoring Marc-André ter Stegen as club captain, ending a short-lived but highly public dispute over the German goalkeeper's medical clearance. The 33-year-old had surgery on his back in late July and soon found himself in the middle of an unexpected row. Reports in Spain claimed he declined to give consent for La Liga to access his medical file, a step the club allegedly wanted so they could



register him as a long-term injury and temporarily reduce his wages under salary cap rules. His refusal led to disciplinary action and the captaincy being taken away on Thursday — a shock decision for a senior player with years of service at Camp Nou. By Friday, however, the standoff was over. In a statement, Barcelona announced: "The club announces that the player Marc-André ter Stegen has signed the authorisation necessary for the club to send La Liga the medical report relating to his surgery. The disciplinary case has been closed and the player is captain of the first

team once again with immediate effect."

The fallout had grown quickly from an administrative disagreement into a leadership crisis. Now, with the paperwork signed, Ter Stegen resumes his role, although his long-term captaincy could still hinge on an upcoming squad vote to confirm the leader. His injury status

could benefit Barcelona in the short term, as it allows them to register new arrival Joan Garcia to cover the goalkeeper position. On the pitch, though, Ter Stegen's displays in key matches have faced criticism in recent seasons, meaning his return as captain comes with renewed expectations. Head coach Hansi Flick will now look to steer the focus back to football. With pre-season nearly over and the transfer deadline approaching, the club's attention shifts to finalising squad reinforcements and preparing for their title defence and a try for European glory.

APL- 4 opens with dazzling ceremony in Visakhapatnam

**The trophy for the season was
unveiled by the Union Minister,
the brand ambassador, and
the captains of the seven
participating teams.**

New Delhi. (Agency)

VISAKHAPATNAM: The fourth season of the Andhra Premier League (APL), organised by the Andhra Cricket Association (ACA), was inaugurated on Friday evening at the ACA-VDC stadium in Visakhapatnam. The opening ceremony featured power-packed performances by Tollywood actress Pragya Jaiswal and music director Charan Pakala, who also composed the anthem for the current APL season. Laser and drone shows enthralled the audience before the match. Union Civil Aviation



Minister Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu and popular actor Daggubati Venkatesh, who is also the brand ambassador for APL Season-4, attended the event as chief guests. ACA President and Vijayawada MP Kesineni Sivanath accorded them a warm welcome. Several political leaders, including TDP State President Palla Srinivas, TDP

MPs K Appala Naidu and M Sribharat, and BJP State chief P Madhav were also present. The trophy for the season was unveiled by the Union Minister, the brand ambassador, and the captains of the seven participating teams. Later, they watched the inaugural match between Kakinada Kings and Amaravati Royals. Addressing the

gathering, Union Minister K Ram Mohan Naidu affirmed that the launch of APL Season-4 in Visakhapatnam marks a fresh start for the league, with several changes introduced compared to previous editions. He said the aim is to make cricket more accessible to the public and support young talent, particularly from rural areas. The Union Minister emphasised the need for continued efforts to provide opportunities to talented players across the country. Speaking at the event, ACA President Kesineni Sivanath said seven teams are participating this season, and the focus remains on encouraging players from grassroots levels. He expressed confidence that players like Nitish Kumar Reddy would make significant contributions. He also noted that Visakhapatnam had successfully hosted two IPL matches earlier this year, with Delhi Capitals, who chose the Port City as their home ground, winning both. ACA Secretary Sana Sathish and APL Governing Council Chairman Sujay Krishna Ranga Rao, among others, were present at the ceremony.

Weekly Review: Nifty, Sensex posted roughly 1% loss, marking their longest losing streak in over five years

MUMBAI (Agency)

Indian equity markets ended the week from August 4 to 8, 2025, on a weak note, with both the Nifty 50 and the BSE Sensex posting losses for the sixth consecutive week, marking their longest losing streak since April 2020. The Nifty began the week near 24,597 and touched a high of 24,722.75 on August 4 before slipping over the next few sessions. It closed at 24,363.30 on August 8, down about 0.95 per cent for the week. The Sensex ended at 79,857.79, also losing around 0.9 per cent over the same period.

The weakness was driven by a combination of global and domestic factors. Market sentiment was rattled after the United States sharply raised tariffs on Indian goods to 50 per cent, fuelling concerns about the impact on exports and manufacturing growth. This was compounded by persistent selling from foreign institutional investors, which intensified pressure on equities. Corporate earnings for the June quarter remained subdued, with Nifty-listed firms showing only about 7.5 per cent growth, while key sectors such as IT and pharma posted disappointing numbers.

Technically, the Nifty slipped below its 100-day moving average near 24,500 during the week, signalling further weakness in the near term. While there was a modest recovery on August 7, selling resumed the next day, erasing those gains. The downturn was broad-based, with IT, pharma, and mid- and small-cap stocks underperforming, reflecting cautious investor sentiment ahead of more economic and policy signals.

Is India Post Ending Registered Post From 1 September 2025? Check Truth Behind It

CHENNAI (Agency)

New Delhi. Several social media accounts are claiming that India Post has announced the discontinuation of Registered Post from 1st September 2025. PIB Fact Check has rebutted the claims saying that it is fake news. In a tweet, PIB said, "This claim is misleading! Registered Post is not getting discontinued. It is merging with Speed Post. Here's what stays the same. Person-specific delivery, Delivery receipt and real-time tracking. Legal validity & acknowledgments". The Ministry of Communications had earlier this week issued clarification on Rationalization of Domestic Mails products. India Post is merging Registered Post with Speed Post. Following the integration, Speed Post Letter and Speed Post Parcel will provide address specific delivery, while items booked as Speed Post with registration will be delivered specifically to the addressee. Customers will continue to enjoy the benefits of registration under Speed Post while also gaining access to premium Speed Post features.

"In order to streamline mail operations, improve delivery timelines, and optimize logistics resources, the Department of Posts has rationalized its sorting infrastructure and unified the processing of both Registered and Speed Post items. This integration will enhance backend efficiency, reduce transit delays, and offer better connectivity across the network," an official release said. Both Registered Post and Speed Post are accountable services, with records maintained at each stage of transmission. The key difference lies in their delivery protocols. While Registered Post is addressee-specific (delivered only to the addressee or their authorized representative), Speed Post is address-specific (delivered to any person available at the address).

Aadhaar Face Authentication Hits All Time High Of 19.36 Cr Transactions In July 2025

New Delhi. (Agency)

Aadhaar Face Authentication recorded an all time high with 19.36 crore transactions in July 2025, as against 5.77 crore such transaction during the same period in previous fiscal. The growth indicates its growing adoption, usage and utility for both availing and providing services. Aadhaar Face Authentication solution is also showing a consistent growth month on month as well. The July face authentication transactions are a 22% growth over June, said a Cabinet note. July also recorded the highest ever face authentication transactions in a single day—over 1.22 crore (on 1 July 2025); the previous high was recorded on 1 March 2025, when over 1.07 crore such transactions were executed. More than 150 entities both in government ministries and departments, financial institutions, oil marketing companies, telecom service providers among others are using face authentication for smooth delivery of benefits and services. This AI based face authentication modality works both on Android and iOS platforms. Aadhaar face authentication has also been integrated with the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP). It is facilitating eligible beneficiaries to get their social security benefits in a secure and contactless method. Since July, 13.66 lakh beneficiaries have authenticated themselves using face authentication.

In all the 850 medical colleges and institutions under the National Medical Commission (NMC), Aadhaar Face Authentication have been adopted for marking attendance. Similarly, central recruitment organisations like Staff Selection Commission and Railway Recruitment Board too are using face authentication for candidate registration and verification.

Ease of doing business: Piyush Goyal resolves Swiss firm's land issue in 2.5 hours

Union Minister Piyush Goyal resolved a complex land allocation issue for a major Swiss company during a live business conference, highlighting the ease of business in India.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal resolved a complex land allocation issue for a major Swiss company during a live business conference, completing the process in just 2 hours and 34 minutes. The intervention occurred at the 18th SWISSMEM Industry Day, where Goyal was addressing over 1,000 Swiss industry representatives and a delegation of 90 Indian companies as part of efforts to operationalise the India-EFTA Trade and

Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA). During morning discussions with Swiss company executives, a representative from Endress Hauser Flowtec AG, a precision engineering firm operating in Maharashtra for over two decades, raised concerns about land acquisition for expanding their manufacturing facility. "When I was meeting with some of your industry persons earlier in the morning, I met a gentleman from Endress and Hauser," Goyal told the conference audience.

"Endress and Hauser is a company working in India over the last 20 years since 2003. It's grown significantly but wishes to grow further and they highlighted to me that they were in need of another 10 acres, about 40,000 square meters of land which is currently next to their plant but is a green zone."

The company required the land, designated as a protected green zone, for expansion but faced bureaucratic procedures that typically take months to complete. "At 11:33, I messaged the Secretary of

Industry in Maharashtra, my home state, with his application and a couple of slides



showing that he's doing good work there," Goyal announced to the conference.

"I've just received a reply at 2:07. How long back is that? I've lost track of time. At 2:07, so that's just about 2 hours and a half hours, 2 and a quarter hours," the Minister continued, as applause erupted from the audience. The Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC)

India's US crude imports surge in 2025; Russian supplies remain steady

New Delhi.(Agency)

India has increasingly turned to the United States to meet its crude oil needs since January 2025, with imports rising sharply, according to data from Kpler.

In January 2025, when US president Donald Trump took over, India imported 279,000 barrels per day (bpd) of crude oil from the US—a 322% jump from just 66,000 bpd in December 2024, Kpler data shows. The upward trend continued in February, with imports reaching 357,000 bpd, marking the highest level in over two years. In March, imports stood at approximately 300,000 bpd, reflecting a 247% year-on-year increase. April saw further growth, with US crude imports rising to 326,000 bpd—a 270% increase compared to April 2024—before dipping slightly to 280,000 bpd in May due to refinery maintenance. The most significant rise came in June, when imports soared to 439,000 bpd, driven by concerns over potential supply disruptions in the

Middle East, particularly around the Strait of Hormuz. In July 2025, India imported a total of 4.55 million barrels per day (mbd) of crude oil. Russia remained the top supplier, contributing 1.40 mbd, followed by Iraq at 0.91 mbd and Saudi Arabia at 0.70 mbd. The United Arab Emirates supplied 0.41



mbd, while Kuwait contributed 0.35 mbd. Imports from other countries totaled 0.78 mbd. Crude oil imports from the US increased by 23% compared to June 2025.

Although India's overall crude imports declined slightly in July, Russian oil still accounted for over 36% of the

total. The dip was mainly attributed to seasonal refinery maintenance during the monsoon season, rather than geopolitical tensions or Western pressure on Russian crude.

PS: India's crude imports fell by 0.1 mbd month-on-month to 4.5 mbd in July. This is in line with historical trends, as crude arrivals typically decline from June to August. Refineries usually undergo planned maintenance turnarounds during this period, as domestic demand softens amid the monsoon season," said Ivan Mathews, Head of APAC Analysis at Vortexa.

Lately, tensions have intensified following a statement from the US President Donald Trump announced to impose a 50% reciprocal tariff on Indian goods due to India's continued imports of Russian crude. The European Union has also renewed efforts to curb Russia's energy revenues, announcing additional sanctions, including targeting India-based Nayaara Energy, a subsidiary of Russia's Rosneft.

Gold bars likely to be exempted from US import tariffs

CHENNAI.(Agency)

The US is expected to issue an executive order exempting gold bar imports from recently imposed tariffs, in a move aimed at calming turmoil in the bullion market.

According to reports, the development follows a ruling by US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) on July 31, 2025, that reclassified one-kilogram and 100-ounce cast gold bars under a tariffed category, making them subject to a 39 per cent reciprocal duty. This overturned the long-standing assumption that such bars were tariff-exempt. The CBP decision caused immediate disruption in global bullion flows, with Swiss refiners—the main suppliers of these bars to the US—halting shipments. The uncertainty sent gold futures surging to record highs of around \$3,534 per ounce before paring gains when White House officials signalled that a clarification was imminent.

According to senior officials, the forthcoming executive order will address what they described as "misinformation" and confirm that gold bar imports will remain exempt from tariffs. The move is expected to restore confidence in the market, which had been rattled by fears of



supply chain bottlenecks and widening premiums between COMEX futures and international spot prices.

Industry players warned that the sudden imposition of tariffs could have severely disrupted bullion trading hubs in New York and London, and undermined the structure of the US futures market. Analysts said that while the planned exemption should ease immediate concerns, any delay or ambiguity in the order could keep volatility elevated in precious metals markets. The executive order is anticipated to be issued shortly, offering a reprieve to global gold trade networks and market participants who were blindsided by the CBP's ruling.

Global trade to grow 0.9% this year, says WTO; high tariffs to bite in 2026

World Trade Organisation Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala said Asian economies are projected to remain the largest positive driver of world merchandise trade volume growth in 2025, but their contribution in 2026 will be lower than predicted earlier.

New Delhi.(Agency)

The global merchandise trade is expected to grow 0.9 per cent this year due to frontloading of imports in the US due to sweeping tariffs announced by US President Donald Trump, according to the WTO forecast. It said higher tariffs will weigh on trade and it will

bring next year's expected trade volume growth down to 1.8 percent from 2.5 percent projected earlier.



"World merchandise trade is now projected to grow 0.9 per cent in 2025, up from the -0.2 per cent contraction forecasted in April but down from the 2.7 per cent estimate pre-dating the tariff increases," it said. The slight increase in the projection augurs well for India. India's exports remained flat at

USD 35.14 billion in June due to global economic uncertainties, while trade deficit narrowed to a four-month low of

USD 18.78 billion during the month. World Trade Organisation (WTO) Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala said the shadow of tariff uncertainty continues to weigh heavily on business confidence, investment and supply chains.

"Uncertainty remains one of the most disruptive forces in the global trading environment," she said. It added that Asian economies are projected to remain the largest positive driver of world merchandise trade volume growth in 2025, although their contribution in 2026 will be smaller than predicted in April. North America will weigh negatively on global trade growth in 2025 and 2026, it added.

ICICI Bank hikes minimum balance to Rs 50,000: What it means for you

New Delhi. (Agency)

ICICI Bank, India's second-largest private lender, has announced a sharp increase in the minimum monthly average balance (MAB) requirement for its savings accounts, effective August 1, 2025. The change applies to all new accounts opened after that date, setting a new benchmark in the industry for the highest MAB requirement among domestic banks. Under the revised structure, customers in metro and urban branches must maintain a minimum average balance of Rs 50,000, a steep jump from the current Rs 10,000. In semi-urban areas, the MAB will rise from Rs 5,000 to Rs 25,000, while rural accounts will require Rs 10,000, up from Rs 2,500.

PENALTY AND NON-COMPLIANCE CHARGES

ICICI Bank will impose a penalty of 6 percent of the shortfall in the required MAB or Rs 500, whichever is lower. For example, a shortfall of Rs 10,000 in a metro branch would ordinarily result in a Rs 600 penalty, but under the new

rules, the fee is capped at Rs 500. The bank has also revised its cash transaction rules. Customers will get three free cash deposit transactions per month, up to a cumulative value of Rs 1 lakh. Beyond this, charges of Rs 150 per transaction or Rs 3.50 per Rs 1,000 deposited (whichever is higher) will apply. If both the transaction count and value limits are breached simultaneously, the higher of the two applicable charges will be levied. Third-party cash deposits will be capped at Rs 25,000 per transaction. Cheque return fees have been set at Rs 200 for outward returns (cheques deposited by the customer) and Rs 500 for inward returns (cheques issued by the customer) for financial reasons.

HIGHEST AMONG PEERS

The hike significantly distances ICICI Bank from its peers. HDFC Bank's MAB requirement remains at Rs 10,000 in metro and urban branches, Rs 5,000 in semi-urban branches, and Rs 2,500 in rural branches.

The State Bank of India, India's largest

lender, abolished its minimum balance rule in 2020. Most other banks keep their MAB requirements between Rs 2,000 and Rs 10,000. Banking analysts say the move signals ICICI's clear push toward premiumisation, targeting high-



wealthy savers amid India's growing GDP and skewed wealth distribution. Banks are already facing stiff competition from mutual funds, portfolio management firms, and private equity in attracting affluent clients.

To ensure basic banking access, RBI guidelines mandate that Basic Savings Bank Deposit Accounts (BSBDAs), including those opened under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, have no minimum balance requirement. These accounts, however, come with transaction limits and do not offer the same features as regular savings accounts.

WHAT'S BEHIND THE MOVE?

The hike in MAB comes just months after ICICI Bank cut its savings account interest rates by 0.25 percentage points. Since April 16, 2025, balances up to Rs 50 lakh earn 2.75 percent interest, while balances above Rs 50 lakh earn 3.25%. The move followed similar rate reductions by HDFC Bank and Axis Bank, in line with the Reserve Bank of India's consecutive rate cuts.

Rakul

Preet Singh's 'Pichle Kuch Din' In London Looked Like This

Rakul Preet Singh's photos from London showed her exploring charming corners of the city, relaxing during her free time, hitting the gym and treating herself to some tasty sweets.

Rakul Preet Singh is in London right now for the shoot of her next film, De De Pyaar De 2. Even with a packed schedule, she managed to take a break and enjoy the city in her own way. She gave fans a peek into her London diaries by posting a bunch of fresh pictures on social media. The photos showed her exploring charming corners of the city, relaxing during her free time, hitting the gym and treating herself to some tasty sweets and food items. Her posts also gave a quick look at her cool and simple style, which received love from her fans.



Rakul Gives Fans A Peek Into Her London Life
The first photo, shared on Instagram, shows Rakul happily holding a matcha drink. In the next picture, she's seen smiling at a sweet shop, clearly excited to pick out some treats. One of the images features her walking in a street, wearing a long Balenciaga jacket that caught everyone's attention. Other pictures capture her wandering through the city on her own. A few snaps also show her relaxing and taking some time to slow down between her busy schedule. In the caption, the actress wrote, "Pichle kuch din. London Diaries."

Just last week, Rakul Preet Singh was seen at the Mumbai Airport as she flew to London for the final shoot of De De Pyaar De 2. Her outfit caught attention for all the right reasons. The actress chose a cool and comfortable co-ord set that was perfect for long travel. She paired it with minimal accessories and her fresh, natural glow, due to which Rakul managed to look relaxed and stylish at the same time.

Excited To Return As Ayesha In De De Pyaar De 2
Rakul Preet Singh is excited for De De Pyaar De 2, and as per Deccan Chronicle, the actress said, "It's double dose of masala and double dose of dhamaka. I am excited to be Ayesha (her character) again. It's great to be working with

one of my most favourite teams, which includes people like Ajay Devgn Sir (her co-star), Luv Ranjan Sir (producer) and the director Anshul Sharma. It is like homecoming for me. Because when I did De De Pyaar De, it kick-started my journey in Hindi movies. After working in Telugu films, this Hindi film gave me that love, and so Part 2 has got me very excited."



Neha Dhupia

Too Busy Celebrating Parents' 49th Anniversary, Shares A Note On Love

Neha Dhupia marked a major milestone in her parents' lives last night. The actress celebrated her parents' 49th anniversary with an intimate dinner. Apart from the elderly couple and Neha, Angad Bedi and some other friends were present at the party. The pictures showed how deeply in love the elderly couple was and how happy they were to be with their family on the special occasion.

In the caption, Neha wrote, "49 years of togetherness ... #happyanniversary ma pa Babli Dhupia Pradil Dhupia ... you both light up every room you walk into with your lessons in loving, caring and living (sorry ek din late ... kal zyada hi busy hogaye the celebration main)." Apart from the picture from the party, Neha also shared a few other snaps of her parents, taken back at their home.



an embroidered oversized top and matching shorts. She paired her ensemble with sparkly black heels, light makeup, and a black smartwatch. Angad, on the other hand, wore a fresh white T-shirt with matching cargo pants. A pair of white trainers rounded off his appearance, adding just the right amount of flair.

Neha and Angad married in May 2018 in a private ceremony at a Gurudwara in New Delhi. In November 2018, Neha Dhupia and Angad Bedi began a new chapter in their lives when they had their first child, a daughter named Mehr. Three years later, in 2021, the couple received their son, whom they named Gurija.

Neha Dhupia and Angad Bedi's Recent Works

The actress last appeared in Vicky Kaushal and Tripti Dimri's Bad Newz. The film focuses on heteropaternal superfecundation,

a reproductive process in which twins are born to the same mother but have separate biological fathers. She also appeared in the reality show Roadies XX as a gang leader, alongside Prince Narula, Rhea Chakraborty, Gautam Gulati, and Elvish Yadav. Angad Bedi was last seen in the 2023 Telugu-language film Hi Nanna. The film starred him alongside Mrunal Thakur and Nani.

Neha Dhupia and Angad Bedi At Arpita Khan's Party

A few days back, Neha Dhupia and Angad Bedi were spotted at Arpita Khan's birthday bash. Neha and Angad lit up the venue with their infectious enthusiasm and easy charm. The couple arrived hand in hand and smiled brightly. Neha turned heads with her trendy blue checkered co-ord outfit, which included



Suhana Khan's Fresh Layered Cut Sets Late-Summer Hair Goals



Bollywood Gen Z style star Suhana Khan recently treated fans to a new round of beauty inspiration. In an Instagram clip shared by Hot Hair Balloon salon, Suhana was beaming with joy as she showed off her new hairdo — a look that has gone viral on the internet. Suhana was glimpsed in the video turning towards the camera with a radiant smile, her new layers swaying softly. Dressed in a relaxed tank top, her natural charm and effortless cut stole the limelight. The salon captioned the photo, "The cutest @suhanakhan2 ???? Fresh cut for my girl < " — which fans seconded as they filled the comments section with affection.

One of the users said, "Yaaasss girl! I want same same — coming soon ????," while others complimented her radiant complexion and sophisticated haircut.

The layered cut is big but also subtle — ideal for the late-summer feel. It's a gentle refresh that still packs style and energy.

The cut gave her a rejuvenated and bright look. The new look made her shine even brighter.

Suhana Prepares for Big-Screen in King
While Suhana's fashion sense is dominating the headlines, so is her next film. GQ India reports that the actress will share the screen with her father, Shah Rukh Khan, in the action-thriller King.

King will hit the theatres in mid-2026. This would be Suhana's first big-screen outing since her digital debut in Netflix's "The Archies".

The project has created a lot of buzz, and fans are dying to see her in an edgier, action-oriented role. From lighthearted salon clips to grave cinematic prep, Suhana appears set to juggle it all.

The video has already crossed 2,000 likes, and her name continues to trend among beauty enthusiasts and Bollywood fans alike. A Rising Star with Effortless Grace

Metro In Dino OTT Release: Aditya Roy Kapur, Sara Ali Khan's Romance To Stream On Netflix From August 29



Anurag Basu's latest romantic drama, Metro In Dino, which hit theatres on July 4, 2025, is now gearing up for its digital debut. Featuring a powerhouse ensemble cast — Aditya Roy Kapur, Sara Ali Khan, Ali Fazal, Fatima Sana Shaikh, Anupam Kher, Neena Gupta, Konkona Sen Sharma, and Pankaj Tripathi — the film brought together multiple stories of love, heartbreak, and self-discovery. And now, after completing its run in cinemas, it's all set to reach a wider audience online.

Metro In Dino To Stream on Netflix by Month-End?
According to a report by India Times, Netflix has bagged the streaming rights to the Anurag Basu directorial. The report hints that the film is eyeing its OTT premiere around August 29, 2025. If the timeline holds true, the release will follow the now-common eight-week gap between a film's theatrical bow and its digital release.

Produced by T-Series and Anurag Basu Productions, Metro In Dino weaves together the lives of four contemporary couples spread across Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Pune, and Bengaluru. Each storyline delves into modern-day relationships, touching on intimacy, conflict, vulnerability, and the transformative journey of self-realisation.

A Spiritual Successor to Life in a... Metro
The film is positioned as a spiritual sequel to Basu's critically acclaimed 2007 anthology Life in a... Metro, which starred Konkona Sen Sharma, Kay Kay Menon, Irrfan Khan, Kangana Ranaut, Shilpa Shetty, Shiney Ahuja, Sharman Joshi, Dharmendra, and Nafisa Ali. While the earlier film captured the raw urban loneliness of the mid-2000s, Metro In Dino updates the narrative to explore love in the era of dating apps, changing social norms, and the complexities of balancing personal aspirations with relationships.

Box Office Journey
Metro In Dino had a modest theatrical run, collecting approximately ₹52 crore net in India and ₹78.50 crore worldwide. Its release coincided with Aankhon Ki Gustakhiyaan, F1: The Movie, Maalik, and Superman, making for a competitive box office scenario.

What's Next for Anurag Basu
Known for films like Murder, Gangster: A Love Story, Barfi!, Jagga Jasoos, and Ludo, Anurag Basu continues to juggle projects that blend mainstream appeal with artistic depth. He is currently working on an untitled musical film starring Kartik Aaryan and Sreeleela.



How about a black & white home?

The two colours symbolise class in two different contexts; but a punch of the two can create such simplistic yet elegant impression. And to add to this, there's also that element of drama that one can't give away when there's a blend of black and white.

- Using black and white to decorate the flooring and to colour of small rooms is the most basic one can do. For instance, you can go for black flooring for your bathroom, and then use the bathroom fittings in white. This gives it a perfect look.
- Walls, if done well, enhance the look of every house. Paint your walls black and white. Either go

for a proportional 3:1 look by painting three walls black and one wall white, or go with diagonal walls painted in the contrast colours. Stripes in black and white or spraying black paint over white walls are others you can opt for.

- You could also paint the walls white and then use black photo frames or wall hangings on the same wall to add character.
- Tiles and floor paper in the combination of black and white look great. The checkered ones might seem out of style, but are still elegant. Use tiles lined with the contrast colours, this way it looks a little less dramatic than the one before.

Decorate your desk or tables in the black-white combo. Spread a black table cloth and display all-white objects on the table. Other ways are to use furniture with complementing shades against a black and white combination wall. This also adds modishness.

- You could also make your hosiery a part of this experimentation. Use

black and white shaded rugs, carpets, curtains (all of which suit the colour of your wall and does not look a mismatch.)

- Another important part of home decor are lights. You could use chandeliers, light shades, lamp shades which have black and white combined in hue. This way, you could keep it simple yet add the required shades

The entrance of the house brings in the main energy. Read on to find out more about the vaastu of the main entrance

The main entrance of the house is one of the most important areas. Dr Snehal S Deshpande, Advanced Feng Shui & Pyravastu Consultant tells us more about it. The main entrance is the mouth of a house which brings in main energy and here are certain rules about the dos and don'ts regarding the door.

Avoid a property which has a door facing South West as it is the entry of the devil energy and brings in struggles and misfortunes. If the wealth energy as per advanced Feng Shui of that house is good, the

occupant may prosper during initial 3-4 years. But then may face a down fall. If your house already has a door facing South West, fix 2 Hanumanji's tiles (with the Gada in his left hand) outside the door & see the difference. Certain gems like Yellow Sapphire, Earth Crystals, Lead with the Expert's advice can also further reduce the severity of this defect. But it is always better to avoid such properties.

The door facing South East is said to be a door which brings in

illness, anger and court matters. Two stickers of Gayatri Mantra should be fixed on both the sides of the door from outside. Use of gems like Coral, Yellow Sapphire etc. and copper with a proper advice will further reduce the defects of this door.

South facing door brings in sharp energy which disturbs positive energy field of the house. Door here means a highly active social life. Some times it may bring in arguments or disagreements. Again fixing two above mentioned Hanumanji's tiles outside the door will help. It can further be protected by using lead, cat's eye etc. But this door if it is in fourth Pada is very good for an occupant.

Normally doors facing East, North, North East are said to be good doors. But again there are many other things like Cuts, Extensions, Under Ground Water Tanks, Feng Shui (Flying Stars Chart) of the house which decide the wealth and health of the occupant. A few words on these topics some other time.

West facing door is also not bad for the youngsters as it has an active energy &



If sophistication and innovativeness is the extra edge you want to add to your home decor, what better than use a cocktail of the colours black and white to decorate your abode.

to your decor. Not only is the black and white combination elegant and sophisticated but it also adds quite a lot of drama to the decor. Not only does

these techniques allow you to match your home decor with your personality, but it does all this and more in an extremely expensive way. If you're the kinds who likes trying things that are out of the mundane and wants to give your home a complete makeover, we suggest you go 'Black and White'.



Follow these simple steps to rid your house of clutter.

If you're among those who keeps procrastinating tidying up and blaming lack of space for not being organised, here are a few tips that will help you declutter for good...

- Trying to do everything at one go will only make you feel stressed out. Instead, declutter for 20 minutes every day. You'll be able to get through more things without frustrating yourself.

- Avoid allowing new things into your house in the first place. Whether you've just started decluttering or have just completed it — stop bringing in new stuff!

- Instead of throwing away things you don't need, give it to someone who will be happy to use it. That way you won't even feel guilty about discarding things.

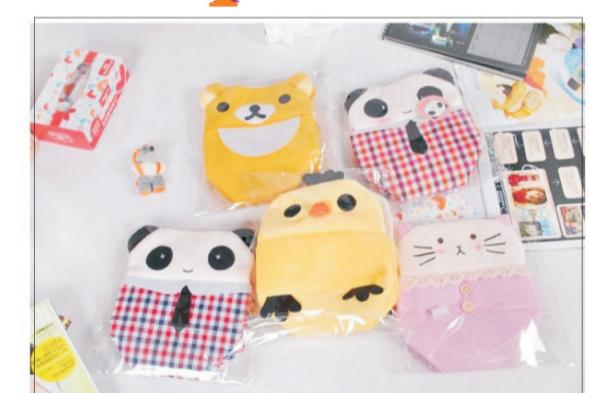
- Give yourself a date by which you will get rid of things you don't need. Make a chart or mark dates off on a calendar. The sense of accomplishment you feel will egg you on to do more.

- Listen to some music while you sort out things and give yourself a little treat once you finish.

- While sorting clothes, group them into categories — hang all the skirts together, fold and keep you jeans and tops together, keep woollens and beach clothes a little behind in your closet because you won't need them all the time.

- Plastic organisers are a great way to keep clothes sorted and in place.

Get creative with table napkins



With the spicy, oily food that we all love, our table napkins are always left with some reminders of the sumptuous meals served at our tables. Table napkins, especially the whites have a way of stubbornly holding on to stains. And if you don't want to discard the napkins that are otherwise in perfect condition, then this will prove to be the best way to salvage them. Tie and dye napkins are easy to make.

Here is what you will need: Napkins, Fabric dye, Rubber bands, A large bowl or vessel, Plastic wrap, Rubber gloves

Method: Wash napkins and let them dry. Wear rubber gloves and unfold your napkin. The rubber bands would have left designs where the colour

instructions and transfer to your bowl. Now, pinch fabric in and then using rubber bands or thread, tie up fabric together at intervals on the napkin to create a design.

Submerge the tied napkins into the bowl of dye, letting dye seep in. Remove. Let it dry (designs absorb best when left overnight.)

Once it is completely dry, remove the rubber bands and unfold your napkin. The rubber bands would have left designs where the colour

didn't dye. Rinse napkin with cold water until the water runs clear. Wash and

dry according to dye instructions. Set the table with your new napkins. Cool, na?



How to clean your kitchen

find, and should be put away after each use.

- Do not mix ammonia and bleach to clean the platform because it will create toxic fumes and leave a black patch on it.

- Identify spots in your kitchen that accumulate clutter and take a few minutes every day to clear those spots and place objects in their correct homes. Try to end each day with a clean, empty kitchen sink.

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Have a particular place for everything — utensils to appliances, clean it and put it away when it has a

plastic wrap and your parchment papers. Those items are always easy to