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## PM Modi Inaugurates Mumbai Cruise Terminal, Launches Rs 34,200 Crore Projects

### 'Won't Contest Polls Without Chief Minister Face': Tejashwi Yadav Ahead Of Bihar Elections

**Bihar. (Agency)**

Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav said that the Grand Alliance will not contest the upcoming Bihar assembly election without a Chief Ministerial candidate at the forefront while taking a swipe at the Bharatiya Janata Party. "Are we the BJP that we do not have any faces? We definitely will not contest the elections without projecting a Chief Ministerial face," Yadav told NDTV in an exclusive interview on Friday. He made his remarks while traveling on the supplementary Adhikar Yatra, covering regions missed during the main Opposition march two weeks ago.

Yadav has consistently pushed for Congress's Rahul Gandhi as the Prime Ministerial face of the Opposition INDIA bloc. Although some leaders voiced concerns, Gandhi has not publicly reciprocated by endorsing Yadav as the Chief Ministerial pick for Bihar.

Addressing this, Yadav said: "Wait a little bit. It is the people who would decide on the Chief Minister. But having a Chief Minister or a government is not the main thing. We have to build Bihar. It makes no difference if there is a delay of five or 10 days."

**Yadav Hints At Ambitions To Be Named CM Face**

The RJD leader further emphasised that once seat-sharing discussions conclude, the alliance will settle the leadership question, but underlined again that the coalition will not head to the polls without naming a Chief Ministerial face.

Yadav dropped prominent hints about his own ambitions on August 31, the penultimate day of the opposition yatra.

Speaking at a rally in Ara, he declared, "This is a copycat government. We need an original CM, not a duplicate one," taking direct aim at Kumar.

**>Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's all-out campaign on 'vote chori' and the SIR exercise has raised eyebrows within his own party, with fears it could alienate allies and voters in Bihar. With Gandhi building up the "hydrogen bomb" hype, the Congress faces a dangerous gamble.**

**New Delhi. (Agency)**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during the 'Samudra se Samridhhi' programme on Saturday, inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for several development projects across multiple sectors worth more than Rs 34,200 crore while also stressing the importance of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India)'. A major focus of the event is the maritime

sector, with PM Modi inaugurating and launching projects worth more than Rs 7,870 crore. These initiatives span critical infrastructure upgrades across key Indian ports.

Addressing the large gathering at Jawahar Maidan in Bhavnagar, PM Modi said, "This event is being held in Bhavnagar, but is for the entire nation. Today, to decide the direction of India from 'Samudra' (ocean) to 'Samridhhi' (progress), Bhavnagar has been chosen as the centre of the event. I congratulate the people of Gujarat and Bhavnagar for this."

The Prime Minister also expressed gratitude for the birthday wishes and said that the "love and blessings I have received from every corner of India and the world are my greatest treasure and strength."

Several children made paintings and sketches for the Prime Minister. Seeing this, he thanked them for the love and asked the officials to collect the art

Hailing the 'Sewa Pakhwada' events, PM Modi said, "From Vishwakarma Jayanti to Gandhi Jayanti, that is, from September 17 to October 2, millions of people across the country are



participating in 'Sewa Pakhwada'. I have been informed that in Gujarat, too, a 15-day 'Sewa Pakhwada' is currently underway. Over the past 2-3 days, many activities have taken place."

"Blood donation camps were organised at various places, and so far, over 1 lakh people have donated blood. This is the information from only Gujarat. Lakhs of

people also joined the cleanliness drives organised across the nation," he said.

"Health camps are also being organised in the country, with a special focus on women. I thank everyone who is associated with these works of service," he added. PM Modi also paid tributes to Krishnakumar CG and said, "By joining Sardar Sahab's mission, he made a significant contribution to India's unity. Inspired by such great patriots, we are strengthening India's unity and the spirit of 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat'."

Speaking about the 'Samudra Se Samridhhi' programme, the Prime Minister said, "21st-century India sees the ocean as a huge opportunity. A little while ago, several projects worth thousands of crores of rupees were inaugurated and had their foundation laid here to accelerate port development. To promote cruise tourism in the country, an International Cruise Terminal was also inaugurated today in Mumbai."

## A historic step in bringing governance closer to the people in Delhi: CM Rekha Gupta

**The Sikh Times**  
**Simmi Kaur Babbar**

New Delhi, 20 September 2025

On the occasion of the 'Sewa Pakhwada' being observed to mark the birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, yet another significant chapter of public service has been added for the residents of Delhi. Chief Minister Mrs Rekha Gupta yesterday inaugurated an innovative initiative, 'MLA on Wheels - Rekha Sarkar Aapke Dvaar' from the MLA office at Old Pankha Road in the Janakpuri constituency. The main objective of this special initiative is to bring governance closer to the people, eliminating the need for them to visit government offices to resolve their concerns repeatedly. Now, grievances, essential services, and matters of public interest will be addressed directly within their local area. Through

the 'Government at Your Doorstep' program, citizens will benefit from faster services, efficient processes, and transparent administration. Chief Minister Mrs Rekha Gupta remarked that democracy is strengthened only when people's problems are resolved at their doorsteps. This, she said, is the greatest achievement of the mobile office, which will serve as a bridge between the government and the people. The special programme was attended by the local MP Mrs Kamaljeet Sehrawat, along with Delhi's Home, Urban Development, Education and Energy Minister Mr Ashish Sood, and other distinguished guests. On this occasion, the Chief Minister said that Honourable Prime Minister Narendra Modi has always emphasised that the true meaning of leadership lies in service to the people. She added



that this unique initiative of her government has been inspired by the Prime Minister's vision that an elected representative's position is not one of power but of service and dedication. Furthering this idea, Delhi Cabinet Minister Mr Ashish Sood conceptualised the mobile office. He explained that through this facility, citizens will no longer need to wander from place to place in search of solutions to their problems. The vehicle will travel throughout the constituency, reaching people

directly, registering their grievances, and forwarding them to the concerned departments. A laptop, stenographer, and clerk have been provided in the vehicle to ensure that people's concerns are properly recorded and immediately passed on to the MLA for prompt action. The Chief Minister highlighted that the mobile office will particularly benefit mothers, women, the elderly, and persons with disabilities, who often face difficulties in travelling. Now, this vehicle will reach their homes, interact with them, and ensure that their concerns are addressed. She stressed that 'MLA on Wheels - Rekha Sarkar Aapke Dvaar' is a historic step towards bridging the gap between governance and the people in Delhi, and it will certainly set an example across the country.

**Continued news page 2**

## Kejriwal Slams BJP Over Repeated Bomb Threats In Delhi Schools, Calls For Urgent Action

**Delhi schools face repeated bomb threats, causing panic and closures. Arvind Kejriwal criticizes BJP's security management as police and bomb squads investigate.**

**New Delhi. (Agency)**

AAP Convener Arvind Kejriwal and former Delhi CM on Saturday slammed the ruling BJP government over repeated bomb threats received by the city's schools.

In a social media post on X, Arvind Kejriwal said that despite the repeated bomb threats received by the schools in a year, no one has been caught yet. "Delhi's schools are repeatedly receiving bomb threats. Panic has ensued everywhere, schools are shut down, and fear is spreading among children and parents... but in a year, no one has been caught, nor has any action been taken," wrote Kejriwal.

The former Chief Minister of Delhi sharply criticised the government's management of security in the national capital and emphasised that parents live in fear every day. "The four-engine BJP government can't even manage the capital's security. Parents are living in fear every day. When will all this end?" asked Kejriwal. Earlier, several schools in various

areas of Delhi received bomb threats through phone calls early this morning. Among the schools that received these threats were DPS Dwarka, Krishna Model Public School, and Sarvodaya Vidyalaya. As a precaution, students and staff were evacuated from the premises. In response to the threats, police teams and bomb disposal squads were promptly dispatched to the schools. One of the targeted schools, DPS Dwarka, has closed its school today and postponed the mid-term exams, which were scheduled for the day, citing 'unavoidable circumstances'.

"Dear Parents Kindly note that the school will remain closed today i.e Saturday, 20 September 2025 due to unavoidable circumstances. All school buses and private vans/ cabs are being sent back immediately. Parents are requested to kindly be there at the stops to pick up their wards. Parents of private commuters must come to pick their wards in case they have dropped them to school."



## 20 Chinese grenades recovered, terror plan thwarted in J&K's Poonch sector

**A joint search operation in the Poonch sector led to the recovery of a major weapons consignment, including Chinese hand grenades. Authorities say the cache was intended for terror activity but was intercepted following timely intelligence.**

**Srinagar. (Agency)**

A significant cache of weapons, including 20 Chinese hand grenades, was recovered by joint security forces during an intelligence-based operation in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch sector. The recently dumped arms, including grenades and other ammunition, were intended to be moved to the hinterland for terror-related activities. Sources told that timely intelligence foiled the conspiracy.

Last month, in a related security operation, joint security forces recovered two Chinese grenades as they arrested two Lashkar-e-



Taiba (LeT) terrorist associates in North Kashmir's Bandipora district. Apart from Chinese grenades, two under-barrel grenade launcher grenades, and 10 AK-series rifle rounds were also seized from the terrorists. During the Bandipora incident, one Army jawan sustained injuries in an exchange of fire.

According to the authorities, the seized arms are linked to ongoing terror campaigns in the region. Meanwhile, the Jammu and Kashmir Police's Counter Intelligence unit conducted intensive searches across seven districts in Kashmir—Srinagar, Baramulla, Anantnag, Kupwara, Handwara, Pulwama, and Shopian—in connection with a terror crime case, recovering incriminating material, including digital devices and documents.

## "Potholes Caused By Nature": DK Shivakumar Amid Backlash Over Bengaluru Roads

**Bengaluru. (Agency)**

Responding to criticism regarding the pothole menace in Bengaluru, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, who is also the Bengaluru Development Minister, stated on Saturday that potholes are not created but develop because of natural causes and heavy rain. Speaking to reporters in Bengaluru, Shivakumar said, "We are here to sort out the problem. The BJP is doing politics; let them do whatever they want. This evening, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah is also conducting a meeting. Potholes are

caused by nature; no one wants to create them." He added that the increase in vehicles, heavy traffic, and excessive rain in Bengaluru had led to more potholes.

"We have already filled more than 7,000 potholes, and there are still over 5,000 left on Bengaluru's roads. We have asked the Police Commissioner to submit a report on the condition of potholes," Shivakumar stated.

"Even common citizens are reporting them. We cannot stop the BJP from doing politics. Let them block roads or



do whatever they want. We are here to find solutions. In all BJP Assembly constituencies, I have released grants

for BJP MLAs without discrimination, even though the discretion was mine," he added. Shivakumar further questioned, "After giving them money, why did the BJP MLAs not fill the potholes? Even now, we are releasing Rs 25 crore for BJP MLAs. Let them do their job."

Earlier, while facing criticism over IT companies leaving Bengaluru due to its poor road infrastructure, Shivakumar had said on Thursday, "No one can threaten or blackmail the government."

## Rajnath Singh to visit Morocco on September 22, launch 1st Indian defence plant

**Bengaluru. (Agency)**

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will undertake a two-day official visit to Morocco from September 22-23, at the invitation of Minister Delegate of National Defence of Morocco, Abdelatif Loudiyi. This will be the first-ever visit of a Rajnath Singh to the North African nation, underscoring the growing strategic convergence between India and Morocco.

A key highlight of the visit will be the inauguration of Tata Advanced Systems Maroc's new manufacturing facility for the Wheeled Armoured Platform (WhAP) 8x8 at Berrechid. The plant is the first-ever Indian defence manufacturing facility in

Africa and marks a milestone that reflects the global expansion of India's defence industry under the Atmanirbhar Bharat



initiative. During his stay, the Defence Minister will hold a bilateral meeting with Loudiyi to strengthen defence, strategic, and

industry cooperation. He will also call on Morocco's Minister of Industry and Trade, Ryad Mezzour, to explore avenues for industrial collaboration. Singh will also interact with the vibrant Indian community in Rabat.

Both nations are expected to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Cooperation in the field of Defence. The MoU will establish an institutional framework to expand bilateral defence engagement, including exchanges, training, and industrial linkages.

The Indian Navy has been making regular port calls at Casablanca in recent years, and the agreement will further consolidate these ties.



Front continued news

A historic step in bringing governance closer to the people in Delhi: CM Rekha Gupta

On this occasion, Delhi Cabinet Minister Mr Ashish Sood said that the launch of Delhi's first mobile office by the Chief Minister is truly an innovative experiment in connecting citizens with the spirit of "Government at Your Doorstep". He mentioned that extensive research had been carried out for this initiative, and it was found that nowhere else in the country does such a mobile office system exist. This mobile office has facilities such as a computer operator, Wi-Fi, microphones, and seating for up to 10 people, enabling it to travel anywhere and listen to public grievances. Mr Ashish Sood added that many women and elderly citizens were previously unable to reach the MLA office with their problems, but now this mobile office will go directly to their homes to listen to their concerns. He further said that under the leadership of Chief Minister Mrs Rekha Gupta, the Delhi Government is consistently working to provide citizens with accessible and improved services.

News box

Five new monitors soon in Gurgaon to boost real-time AQI checks

Gurgaon.(Agency)

In a move to plug the gap in state's air quality network, Haryana state pollution control board has cleared a plan to set up five additional continuous ambient air quality monitoring (CAAQM) stations in the city and one each in Rewari and Hajar.Right now, most of the existing stations in Gurgaon are lying defunct, leaving the city, which consistently figures among the country's worst polluted, effectively blind to real-time air quality data. "Each station will cost around Rs 2 crore. We will float a tender for the project next week and locations for these stations will be finalised after that. These will track key pollutants such as PM2.5, PM10, nitrogen oxides, sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide, and ozone, feeding data to the pollution board's portal. This will help the administration both in designing interventions and in enforcing restrictions when air quality dips," said JP Singh, senior environment engineer, HSPCB.

100 students fall sick at Gurgaon school; teams inspect kitchen

Noida.(Agency)

Gurgaon: Around 100 students complained of stomach pain at a private school over the week, prompting immediate intervention from the Haryana education department. A special inspection team, which included district food safety officer Dr Ramesh Chauhan, visited Shiv Nadar School on Friday to check the food



arrangements and kitchen facilities.During the inspection, Dr Chauhan examined the school's kitchen and collected four food samples — prepared rice, rajma, pasta and green salad — which were subsequently seized and sent to a laboratory for testing.While the food safety department highlighted its preventive measures, Shiv Nadar School has denied the allegations, saying the school continues to follow "strict hygiene and food quality standards.

Bihar trio behind digital arrest, ran mule accounts in Ghaziabad

Noida. (Agency)

Three people were arrested for defrauding a resident of Rs 1.7 crore after putting him under digital arrest from Sept 9 to 15.The accused, Prince Kumar, Vidyasagar Yadav, and Avnish Kumar, all from Bihar, were arrested in Ghaziabad. The complainant, a resident of Sector 62, filed an FIR on Sept 16, alleging that fraudsters posing as CBI officials contacted him via a video call.According to the police, they claimed his mobile number was involved in illegal transactions related to the high-profile Naresh Goyal case. They coerced him into transferring Rs 1.7 crore into multiple bank accounts while forcing him to stay on a video call.Police have been able to recover about Rs 17.48 lakh of the duped money by freezing several suspicious accounts linked to the gang, and the refund to the victims is in process."Probe revealed that at least six complaints from different states are registered against the same accounts on the NCRP (National Cybercrime Reporting Portal)," Shavya Goyal, additional deputy commissioner of police, said.The trio confessed to operating mule accounts to channel fraudulent money. They worked on a 10% commission basis and used to deposit the remaining amount into accounts of other gang members.In this case, police said, Prince received Rs 2 lakh, Rs 72,000 landed in Avnish's account, and Rs 57,000 in Vidyasagar's. Teams have been formed to catch others who could be involved in this racket.As cybercons keep inventing new ways to target the vulnerable, cops have urged the public to remain vigilant and not panic if threatened with legal action over accounts falsely linked to crimes and immediately report such calls to the police.In another incident, cops arrested a property dealer accused of orchestrating a multi-crore land fraud using forged documents, including a fake bank NOC.

Monsoon gone, pothole fix on the way in Noida

Nuh.(Agency)

Noida: In the aftermath of monsoon, several roads across the city have been left riddled with potholes, prompting the Noida Authority to repair them and restore ease in commuting.On Sept 11, a report published in TOI said that several arterial roads and key intersections were left with deep potholes and rough patches following the monsoon, disrupting traffic and raising accident risks. One of the worst-hit spots is outside the Okhla Bird Sanctuary, where a rough patch lies in the middle of the carriageway. Thousands of people travelling from Delhi to Noida via Kalindi Kunj are forced to slow down on the uneven surface.A Noida Authority official acknowledged the problem and said repairs would be carried out soon. "Roads usually develop potholes during the rainy season. We issued a tender to hire a contractor to repair roads, undertake painting of guardrails and barriers, and fix road signs in sectors 50, 51, 71, 74, 75, 76, 77, and 78. The roads will be repaired within a month," the official said.Residents said that the damaged stretches, particularly in 7X



sectors, are causing serious inconvenience and even damaging vehicles.Shreya Sharma, a resident of Sector 75, said the roads developed dangerous craters at multiple locations.

"Last week, I was driving my Hyundai Creta home when I bounced off a large pothole near Panchsheel Pratishtha in Sector 75. The vehicle's oil tank struck the ground, was damaged, and the engine

stopped. I incurred a heavy loss due to this pothole. The Authority must fix them to ensure the safety of people and vehicles," she said.

Brajesh Sharma, who lives in Antriksh Golf View, Sector 78, added that monsoon rains left many stretches in the 7X sectors with large potholes and rough patches. "We conduct traffic awareness programmes as volunteers and inform the district road safety committee, but we never get a response. Potholes are a serious issue, and quick solutions are needed," he said.After months of rainfall, the city's roads revealed the familiar pattern of cracks and potholes. During monsoon, rainwater seeps through tiny gaps in the asphalt, weakening both the surface and the foundation beneath. Bitumen loses strength when saturated, loosening the top layer, while the soil and gravel base absorb water, lose stiffness, and settle unevenly. Heavy traffic then pounds these weakened spots, breaking the surface and quickly turning cracks into full-fledged potholes.

Classroom to crossroad: No boundary wall, Nuh school turns village thoroughfare

Bhimnagar (Nuh).

"Human barriers" protecting children and a constant threat of stray cattle — a govt school in Bhimnagar village of Nuh's Tauru block has transformed into a "shortcut".With no boundary wall, no gate, and plenty of stray animals and parked tractors, the school offers a free pass to anyone wanting a quick route home or a place to park their trolley.

In short: Government Primary School doubles up as a public pathway amid encroachments and ownership disputes.

Spread over 1.5 acres, the school has 126 students, four teachers and five classrooms. But the learning atmosphere is constantly under siege.Teachers say they spend more time guarding children from strays and machines than focusing on lessons.

At lunchtime, staffers are forced to seat children in confined corners, with one teacher even placing a chair as a human barrier to keep kids from wandering near tractors or open areas.While the school serves as a classroom by day and a public passageway by evening, for parents and teachers, the demand is simple — finish the boundary wall and install a gate.Meanwhile, children are caught in the middle of an endless tug-of-war

between bureaucracy and local muscle. Additional district commissioner Nuh Pradeep Malik says the root of the problem is a dispute over ownership.The education department, representing the school, asserts the land belongs to them,



while the individuals who constructed houses on the site claim ownership.

School principal Ajeet Singh said, "We can't keep our children safe all the time. During recess, we are more worried about animals or outsiders straying into the premises than about the kids playing. Even partial fencing would help us immensely."The lack of fencing has also robbed children of play spaces. During rains, the grounds get waterlogged, leaving students wading through slush.

In battle to check fall in sex ratio, Haryana's latest frontier — ‘miracle healers’

Noida. (Agency)

On the streets of Haryana, a new breed of "miracle healers" are promising expecting mothers the impossible — a guaranteed male child or even the power to "change" the sex of an unborn baby.Carrying bottles of powders, pills and oils, the claims of these self-styled vendors — though entirely baseless — are finding takers among families desperate for sons, exposing a troubling new front in the state govt's ongoing struggle against gender bias.Health workers, especially ASHA and other grassroots staff, first noticed the trend during routine home visits. Expectant mothers mumbled to them about these "secret remedies", convinced by these healers that the symptoms they

were showing meant they were carrying a girl. What's worrying was that they believed that their fate could be "corrected" with their miracle medicines. "These quacks tell women that if they experience certain symptoms, it means they are carrying a girl.

They then offer drugs to 'correct' it and guarantee a boy. This is nothing but playing with emotions at the most vulnerable stage of a woman's life," a health department official said.

These "remedies", however, are nothing less than insidious. Many are abortifacients, capable of causing miscarriages or severe foetal abnormalities. "This is not just illegal. It's about protecting unborn girls and ensuring mothers aren't harmed by

false hope," said another official.

Authorities are now moving swiftly to clamp down on the practice. Chief medical officer Alka Singh announced that raids would be conducted in markets and residential areas to trace such vendors.

"These medicines are manipulative products designed to prey on desperation and reinforce a harmful gender bias," she added.According to Singh, health department teams will seize the illegal substances, while the vendors will face charges under the Drugs and Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisements) Act as well as the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act.

Leachate from Bandhwari flowing into Aravalis unchecked, finds inspection

Ghaziabad. (Agency)

There's no mechanism — neither any trenches nor protective lining on collection ponds — at the Bandhwari landfill to dispose of leachate without harming the Aravalis, an inspection ordered by the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has found.The report, activists said on Thursday, lays bare MCG previous submissions to NGT that all leachate — toxic viscous discharge from solid waste — was being collected daily and sent to a treatment facility.

The inspection, conducted on August 27 by officials of the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and the Union ministry of environment, was ordered after residents filed a petition before NGT alleging that leachate from the landfill was spilling onto village roads for over a year, creating serious health hazards.The inspection report, submitted to the tribunal on Wednesday, said that leachate from on-site storage ponds was flowing through temporary drains and concrete pipes into the forest land, where it collected to form stagnant pools. Critically, no garland drains were constructed around the landfill to contain the runoff."The leachate overflowing from the on-site ponds and nearby areas is carried through temporary kutcha drains and channelised via a concrete pipe, which also facilitates

vehicle movement over it. After passing through this concrete pipe, the leachate is further routed through kutcha drains into the plantation/forest area, where it stagnates and collects in the form of a pond. It was noted that garland drains for leachate collection had not been provided around the landfill," the report said.The inspection team discovered three ponds created at the site to store leachate, but none had impervious linings to prevent seepage into groundwater.Inspectors could examine only one pond due to rain and unsafe conditions, the report noted.MCG officials, it said, failed to provide design details of the ponds or explain how they had earlier claimed that daily leachate generation was 200 kilolitres, when no measuring system existed at the site.No treatment facility operates at Bandhwari itself.According to the report, civic officials told inspectors that leachate is transported to the Behrampur treatment plant in Sector 48. But records there showed that only 3,756 kilolitres of leachate was received from Bandhwari in June — averaging about 125 kilolitres per day, far lower than the corporation's estimated 200kl generated in a day.Further, the Behrampur facility's tests indicated compliance with basic discharge standards for parameters such as pH, biochemical oxygen demand, and

chemical oxygen demand. But no analysis was conducted for nitrogen, phosphorus, heavy metals or other contaminants typically present in landfill leachate, which the report warned "can affect the functioning of the STP".

For the past two months, the report said,



leachate has been mixed directly with untreated sewage and discharged into public sewers without quality checks — a violation of Environment Protection Rules.It concluded that the landfill site lacks even basic safeguards against groundwater contamination and uncontrolled leachate overflow."MCG has been giving false statements in court. The inspection report clearly mentions that there is no leachate management in place. It's a clear case of forest land being gradually eaten up by a govt agency itself. It is damaging the ecosystem and also hampering wildlife and people who live in the vicinity," said Vaishali Rana, an

environmentalist and one of the petitioners in the case.Asked about the report, an MCG official said the corporation has hired consultants who are currently preparing a detailed project report to set up leachate processing plants at Bandhwari.

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## Video shows passersby rescuing driver Gaganpreet Kaur from overturned car

New Delhi: In a tragic road accident in Delhi on Sunday afternoon, a BMW X5 crashed into a motorcycle near the Dhaula Kuan-Delhi Cantonment stretch, killing 52-year-old Navjot Singh, a deputy secretary in the Finance Ministry, and seriously injuring his wife, Sandeep Kaur. Son alleges BMW crash victim died after being taken to wrong hospital owned by woman driver. Here's what BMW crash accused told police about the 19km hospital detour CCTV and eyewitness footage from the scene shows passersby pulling Gaganpreet Kaur, the driver of the BMW, out of the overturned vehicle. Police say the car hit a divider before ramming into the couple's motorcycle near a metro station. Tragic accident in #Delhi: Finance Ministry's Deputy Secretary Navjot Singh died after a speeding #BMW, driven by Gaganpreet Kaur, hit his motorcycle near Delhi Cantt. His wife, Sandeep Kaur, critically injured. Video taken by passer-by #bmwaccident #DhaulaKuan pic.twitter.com/Z4K8E1WWw5 Following the crash, Gaganpreet Kaur and her husband, Parikshit Makkar, transported the injured couple to NuLife Hospital in GTB Nagar, approximately 19 kilometers away from the accident site, with the help of a Samaritan. The decision to bypass nearby hospitals has sparked outrage from the victim's family. Navjot's son, Navnoor, told ANI that the delay in reaching medical care may have cost his father his life. Adding to the family's concerns, it has emerged that Gaganpreet's father is one of the owners of NuLife Hospital. The victim's family has alleged that there were attempts to tamper with evidence at the facility. Gaganpreet, 38, was admitted with minor injuries and arrested on Monday. She faces charges of rash driving, culpable homicide not amounting to murder and destruction of evidence. Navjot Singh's father, Balwant Singh, a retired Indian Air Force officer, expressed deep grief over the loss.

## Court upholds DU prof's termination

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court has upheld the termination of a senior faculty member at Delhi University's Jesus and Mary College (JMC) for demanding bribe and other illegal gratification from students in exchange for attendance and marks. In an order passed on September 12, Justice Jasmeet Singh observed that solicitation of such favours "is grave and strikes at the core of academic integrity." The court dismissed a petition filed by Dr Thelma J Talloo, former Reader in the Commerce Department at the JMC, who had challenged an arbitral award of October 23, 2012, passed by the Appeals Committee of Delhi University affirming her dismissal for misconduct. The court said: "In view of the matter, the proceedings were fair, the findings are supported by evidence and the penalty has already been tempered by leniency. Hence, under Section 34 of the Act, no ground for setting aside or further modification of the award is made out by the petitioner. For the said reasons, the petition filed under Section 34 of the Act challenging the award dated October 23, 2012 passed by the Appeals Committee constituted under Clause 9 of Annexure to Ordinance XII of the University of Delhi, is hereby dismissed." The case traces back to 2008 when students accused Dr Talloo of demanding money and goods, including a pearl string, in return for academic favours

such as attendance and marks. Following the complaints, the college and the university constituted an inquiry committee, which upheld the charges of misconduct. An appeals com-

mittee later confirmed the findings but reduced the penalty from dismissal to termination, ensuring that her retirement dues were not affected. Dr Talloo had claimed before the court that the complaints were fabricated, motivated by personal enmity and fuelled by



BMW crash turns court battle: Accused blames ambulance, bus; prosecution slams cover-up' After examining the record, Justice Singh found no infirmity in the arbitral award and declined to interfere. The petition was accordingly dismissed.

administrative bias. She argued that the audio recording produced against her had been edited and that the inquiry process denied her fair defence and adequate legal representation.

## DFS to deploy 24 quick response vehicles in city

New Delhi: The Delhi Fire Service (DFS) will deploy 24 newly procured quick response vehicles (QRVs) across the city from September 17 to strengthen emergency response in fire-prone and congested areas, government officials said. The compact vehicles, equipped with advanced ultra high-pressure pump extinguishing systems, are mounted on XL6 vehicles and designed to swiftly navigate through narrow lanes and heavy traffic. According to officials, the initiative, costing Rs 8.61 crore, is being implemented in three phases. In the first phase, 24 QRVs have been procured and will be

deployed at high-risk locations, including Janakpuri, Najafgarh, Vasant Kunj, Rohini, Jahangirpuri,



Lajpat Nagar, Paharganj, Geeta Colony, Dwarka and Alipur. Tenders for an additional 26 vehicles have already been floated under Phase II, while proposals for 50 more QRVs are in place for

Phase I. Officials said the innovation was aimed at preventing small fires from turning into major blazes by enabling quicker arrival and immediate suppression. Each vehicle carries a 100-litre water tank and operates at just 21 litres per minute, using water mist for cooling, foam for oxygen cut-off and jet systems to handle different types of fires efficiently. Initially, these QRVs will be operated by existing DFS personnel, while plans are underway to outsource manpower in subsequent phases. "This strategic deployment will significantly improve our ability to respond rapidly to emergencies in high-density and hard-to-reach areas, protecting both lives and property," officials added.

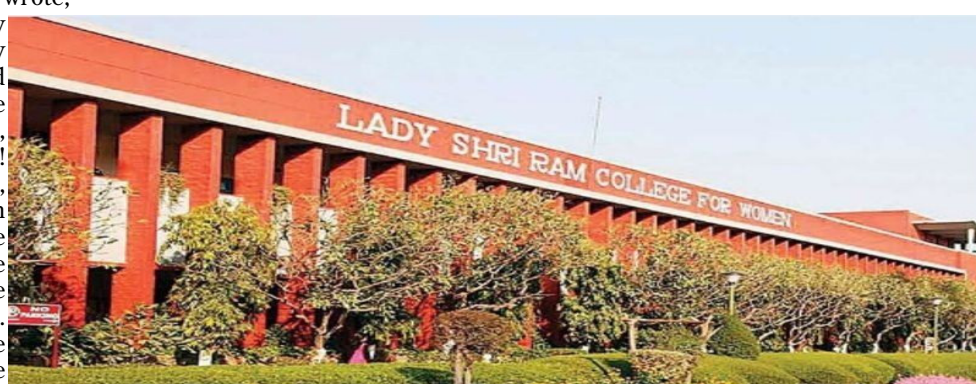
## Ex-diplomat issues 'unconditional apology' for controversial remarks

### The Sikh Times

New Delhi: In a message addressed to Principal Kanika Ahuja, he wrote, "Dear Principal Ahuja, I am truly sorry for any remarks during my interaction with your students and staff that upset them — sincere unconditional apologies. Stay safe, stay blessed. Vande Mataram! Ambassador Dr Deepak Vohra, Special Advisor in Africa, Made in Bharat for the world." Though he declined further comments, he confirmed to The Tribune that he has written this apology message. "My unconditional apologies," he said. The apology comes after the LSR Students' Union condemned Deepak Vohra's remarks in strong terms. The union said, "The Students' Union of Lady Shri Ram College expresses its unequivocal condemnation of the remarks made during the recent speaker session by Deepak Vohra." It added that what was meant to be a platform "to reflect on India's future and engage with themes of national growth, policy and diplomacy" was instead

"marked by comments that were not only divisive but also misogynistic, derogatory, Islamophobic, queerphobic

the session, which perpetuated misogyny and fostered an atmosphere of hate within the community." The union also



and offensive in nature." The statement further criticised Deepak Vohra's response to the principal's comment, saying, "His remark about wishing to be reborn as a man, when called out for a dismissive response to the Principal's suggestion of being reborn as a woman to study at LSR, revealed a mindset that reflects a deeply ingrained misogyny." The union demanded "a public apology from him for the remarks made during

acknowledged shortcomings in the background check and said it "remains committed to being accessible and accountable" and "exercises due diligence in shaping platforms of dialogue within our college community." Earlier, the LSR Alumni Association, ELSA, issued a petition condemning the event. Aanya Wig, an ex-executive committee member of LSR Alumni Association, told The Tribune, "The talk by Deepak Vohra

## Bed-ridden wife bids goodbye to Navjot close to point where he dropped her daily

South Indian lunch at Karnataka Bhawan. Sandeep did not know she was spending her last moments with Navjot who passed

Force officer, the accident came as a shocker. "My son, Navjot, was about to be promoted in some days and the family



away later that day following a crash between his bike and a BMW. At Navjot's family home in West Delhi's Hari Nagar too, an overwhelming sense of grief loomed as relatives, friends and neighbours gathered to catch the last glimpse of their friend, brother and mentor. For 80-year-old Balwant Singh, a former Air

Force officer, the accident came as a shocker. "My son, Navjot, was about to be promoted in some days and the family

killed, wife injured as BMW hits bike in Delhi Her final date with Navjot was meant to be here in the midst of beeps of hospital machines, a stretcher and a sense of deep loss. Moments she said. Navjot's son Navnoor Singh, meanwhile, turned 22 today and said the birthday would forever remain a tragic memory coming close after the date of his father's untimely demise. Navjot's post-mortem was carried out at Deen Dayal Upadhyay (DDU) Hospital from where he was taken to Venkateshwar Hospital in Dwarka's Sector 12 and then to his Hari Nagar house. A Deputy Secretary with the Union Finance Ministry's Department of Economic Affairs, Navjot died in the crash that left his wife seriously injured and still recuperating in the hospital. The accident took place on Sunday afternoon after a speeding BMW crashed into their bike near the Dhaula Kuan Metro station. Gurugram-based Gaganpreet, who was driving the BMW, rushed them to a hospital in GTB Nagar, about 19 kms away from the accident spot. The journey took 40 minutes and doctors declared Navjot dead on arrival. Sandeep was later shifted to another hospital. Family members of the deceased are still trying to grasp why Gaganpreet decided to take a bleeding Navjot 19 km away when several other options existed in the vicinity.

## Stage set for DUSU polls, 73 candidates file nominations for 4 key posts

New Delhi: The nomination process for the Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU) elections concluded on Wednesday with a large number of candidates filing their papers for the four key posts. The last date for the withdrawal of nominations is September 11 (Thursday). Candidates can withdraw their nominations by 12 noon tomorrow and the final list of candidates will be published by 5 pm. Polling for the high-stakes student body elections will take place on September 18 and the counting of votes will be held on September 19. This year, 21 candidates have filed nominations for the post of president, 15 for vice-president, 20 for secretary and 17 for

joint secretary. Among the main student outfits, the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) has fielded six candidates, National Students' Union of India (NSUI) seven and All-India Students' Association (AISA) and Students' Federation of India (SFI) alliance four. Independent candidates have also entered the contest. The estimated voter strength for the upcoming election is between 2.8 lakh and 3 lakh, making DUSU polls one of the largest student elections in the country. The day was also marked by traffic restrictions in and around Delhi University's North Campus where the nomination process was held. According to a Delhi Police advisory, traffic was regulated between 1 pm and 5 pm on several key

stretches, including Chhatra Marg, Sudhir Bose Marg, Guru Teg Bahadur Marg, Satyawati Marg and Prof ND Kapoor Marg. Diversions were put in place at important intersections such as St Stephen's College red light, Kranti Chowk, Patel Chest and Mall Road. Commuters were advised to avoid the affected stretches during restricted hours and refrain from roadside parking to ensure smooth flow of vehicles. "The nomination process at Delhi University concluded smoothly today, with all arrangements running in an orderly and transparent manner. We are committed to ensuring a free, fair and peaceful election process," said Prof Raj Kishor Sharma, Chief Election Officer, DU.

## Delhi govt announces Rs 6K monthly aid for persons with disabilities

New Delhi: The Delhi Government has announced a special financial assistance scheme for persons with disabilities requiring high support, under which eligible beneficiaries would receive Rs 6,000 per month. Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said the initiative aims to ensure dignity and security for persons with disabilities and their families. Approved earlier by the Delhi Cabinet, the scheme would be formally inaugurated tomorrow by Union Home Minister Amit Shah on the occasion of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthday. The financial support would be directly transferred to Aadhaar-linked bank accounts of beneficiaries and can be used to cover the cost of caregivers, therapies, counselling, assistive devices and other essential services. According to the Chief Minister, individuals with at least 40 per cent disability who are certified as having "High Support Needs" — with a score between 60 and 100 by the District-level Assessment Board — would be eligible for the scheme. Applicants must also be residents of Delhi for at least five years, have a family income below Rs 1 lakh annually, and complete Aadhaar-linked verification. Registrations and applications would be processed online through the government's e-District portal. Calling the move a "historic decision" for one of the most vulnerable sections of society, Gupta said,

at the college and the action later by the alumni and students goes on to show that no one (should) or will be allowed to use LSR as a platform to spread misogyny, racism or attack a specific religion." "If he truly is apologetic for what he said on the campus, he should make a statement as public as his speech. I condemn what he said, not just as an alumna of the college but as a woman in this country," she added. Gayatri Srivastava, an alumna from the 1996 batch, told The Tribune, "During our time, Dr Meenakshi Gopinath was the Principal and such a situation would have been unthinkable." Notably, Deepak Vohra had earlier told the media that he had no idea why his lecture prompted this kind of reaction. The controversy began on September 11 when Deepak Vohra, a former ambassador to Armenia, Poland and Sudan, addressed over 700 students at LSR during a session titled "Unstoppable India 2047." Students alleged that his remarks were sexist, casteist, misogynistic and communal. The event, organised by the BA Programme Department, was intended to engage students on national issues but instead triggered protests.

## Students protest over iron gates near V-C office at Ambedkar varsity

New Delhi: Ambedkar University turned into a site of spirited protest on Tuesday, as students rallied against the administration's move to install permanent iron gates around key campus areas, including the Vice-Chancellor's office, the museum, the IT lab and the canteen. The demonstration, organised by the All India Students' Association (AISA), began near the university library, where students gathered under the "protest tree", raising slogans and singing protest songs. Marching towards the main gate, they called for an immediate halt to the construction and demanded the reopening of spaces they claim are being unfairly restricted. "Today a protest is being organised in Ambedkar University, Delhi, opposing the installation of iron gates that is being done to syphon off the administration area and the VC Office at the Kashmir Gate campus," students said. The dispute dates back to April, when temporary barricades were erected following the suspension of a student who had criticised the Vice-Chancellor's Republic Day speech. Since then, the university's main gate has remained closed, forcing students to use a back route that they describe as unsafe due to poor lighting and reported incidents of harassment. "A large part of an already small campus has remained inaccessible to the students, wherein the student-facing offices have been shifted so that the rest of the administration can be distanced from the students. This barricading has also led to a longer route to the canteen, meaning students have no access to the VC Office and administration area," said Prerna, AISA president at Ambedkar University. Students say they noticed construction work beginning on Monday and allege that the university is now installing iron gates to permanently block access to these areas, with the work expected to be completed within days. Prerna (PhD, women's and gender studies) and Aameen (PhD, urban studies) met with the university Proctor to press their demands. However, the Proctor reportedly told them the installation of the gates was "non-negotiable." Students say they remain determined to continue their protests until the campus is "open and accessible once again."

## BMW crash in Delhi: Court denies bail to Gaganpreet Kaur, directs preservation of CCTV footage

New Delhi: A Patiala House Court on Wednesday denied bail to Gaganpreet Kaur, who was arrested in connection with the fatal BMW crash that took place in Delhi on September 14. The court has also issued a notice on an application filed by Kaur's counsel seeking the preservation of CCTV footage from the accident site. The matter is scheduled for hearing on Thursday. Kaur, 38, a resident of Gurugram, was sent to two-day judicial custody following her arrest on Monday. The accident resulted in the death of Navjot Singh, a Deputy Secretary in the Department of Economic Affairs. Singh was riding a motorcycle with his wife when it was allegedly hit by Kaur's BMW near Delhi's Dhaula Kuan area. While Singh died on the spot, his wife sustained serious injuries. According to Delhi Police, medical reports confirmed that Kaur was not under the influence of alcohol at the time of the crash.



NEWS BOX

Rising Diabetes In US Kids: Can Mounjaro Be The Answer? New Study Says Yes

**WORLD.(Agency)**  
A new study has shown that Mounjaro, a GLP-1-based drug, can significantly reduce blood sugar levels and support weight loss in children as young as 10 years old who are living with type 2 diabetes, according to a report by New York Post. This marks a potential breakthrough in paediatric diabetes care, as the medication is currently approved only for adult use. Drug manufacturer Eli Lilly is now looking to expand approval for younger patients, based on the promising results. The need for new treatments is urgent, given the growing prevalence of type 2 diabetes among American youth, as per the news report. According to the CDC, the diagnosis rate in children nearly doubled from 9 per 100,000 in 2002 to 18 per 100,000 in 2018. If current trends persist, the number of young people with type 2 diabetes in the US could jump from 28,000 in 2017 to a staggering 220,000 by 2060. Researchers hope that medications like Mounjaro could play a crucial role in managing the condition early, helping children avoid serious health complications later in life. "Type 2 diabetes in children and teens is increasing at an alarming rate, yet treatment options are limited, and this patient population remains underserved," Dr. Kenneth Custer, executive vice president and president of Lilly Cardiometabolic Health, said in a statement.

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“The SURPASS-PEDS results show Mounjaro delivered statistically significant improvements in A1C, BMI and other critical cardiometabolic risk factors, while maintaining a safety profile generally consistent with adult studies. By undertaking this research, we can better support children and adolescents living with this condition.”

Venezuela Accuses US Of Waging "Undeclared War", Urges UN Probe

**Caracas.(Agency)**  
Venezuela on Friday accused the United States of waging an "undeclared war" in the Caribbean and called for a UN probe of American strikes that killed over a dozen alleged drug traffickers on boats in recent weeks. Washington has deployed warships to international waters off Venezuela's coast, backed by F-35 fighters sent to Puerto Rico in what it calls an anti-drug operation. "It is an undeclared war, and you can already see how people, whether or not they are drug traffickers, have been executed in the Caribbean Sea. Executed without the right to a defense," Defense Minister Vladimir Padrino Lopez said as he attended a military exercise in response to the US "military threat." Attorney General Tarek William Saab later added that "the use of missiles and nuclear weapons to murder defenseless fishermen on a small boat are crimes against humanity that must be investigated by the UN." Foreign Minister Yvan Gil, for his part, took to Telegram to urge the UN Security Council "to demand the immediate halt of US military actions in the Caribbean Sea." "The biggest US naval deployment in the Caribbean in decades and the US strikes on alleged drug boats have stoked fears the United States is planning to attack Venezuelan territory. On Wednesday, Venezuela launched three days of military exercises on its Caribbean island of La Orchila in response to the perceived threat from a US flotilla of seven ships and a nuclear-powered submarine. La Orchila is close to the area where the United States intercepted and held a Venezuelan fishing vessel for eight hours over the weekend. Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, whom the United States accuses of running a drug cartel, has urged citizens to join militia training to "defend the homeland." Late Thursday, he announced that troops will provide residents of low-income neighborhoods with weapons training. Maduro, for whom Washington has issued a \$50 million bounty on drug trafficking charges, suspects the Donald Trump administration of planning an invasion in pursuit. Trump says US forces have "knocked off" three boats crossing the Caribbean, but Washington has only provided details and video footage of two of the strikes that killed 14 people described as "narco-terrorists" by the US leader.

Gaza Civil Defence Says 450,000 Palestinians Have Fled Amid Israeli Attacks

**Gaza City. (Agency)**  
Gaza's civil defence agency said Friday that 450,000 Palestinians have fled Gaza City since Israel began its offensive to seize the territory's largest urban centre. "The number of citizens displaced from Gaza to the south has reached 450,000 people since the start of the military operation on Gaza City in August," said Mohamed al-Mughayir, an official of



the rescue force, which operates under Hamas authority. The Israeli military, which has called on residents to evacuate as it presses its ground assault, had told AFP that it estimated "approximately 480,000" people had fled the city.

Trump's 'reckless' H1-B fee will have negative impact on IT industry, say US lawmakers and community

**Critics warned of a potential crisis for the US technology sector's competitive edge with Trump's new plan to impose the "staggering" H1-B fee.**

**NEW YORK/WASHINGTON.(Agency)**  
US lawmakers and community leaders voiced concern over US President Donald Trump's plan to impose a USD 100,000 fee on H-1B visa applications, calling the move "reckless" and "unfortunate" that will have a "huge negative" impact on the IT industry. Trump's USD 100,000 H-1B visa fee is a "reckless attempt to cut America off from high-skilled workers who have long strengthened our workforce, fuelled innovation, and helped build industries that employ millions of Americans," Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi said. Krishnamoorthi said



many H-1B holders ultimately become citizens and launch businesses that create well-paying jobs in the US. "While other nations race to attract global talent, the United States should strengthen its workforce and modernise our immigration system?not erect barriers that weaken our economy and security," he said. Former advisor to president Joe Biden and Asian-American community leader on immigration policy, Ajay Bhutoria, warned of a potential crisis for the US technology

sector's competitive edge with Trump's new plan to impose the "staggering" H1-B fee. "The H-1B programme, a lifeline for innovation that has attracted top talent from around the world, faces unprecedented barriers with this massive jump from the current USD 2000-USD 5000 total fee, which will crush small businesses and startups reliant on diverse talent," Bhutoria said. Bhutoria added that the move will drive away skilled professionals who power Silicon Valley and contribute billions to the US economy. He said the move may backfire by pushing talent to competitors like Canada or Europe. He called for a balanced reform like exempting startups or prioritising merit-based selection instead of "this extreme overhaul." Khanderao Kand of the Foundation for India and Indian Diaspora Studies said the USD 100,000 fee for H1-Bs is a very unfortunate policy with huge negative impact on businesses particularly software and tech industry as well as US-educated STEM talent who are already struggling due to negative impact of AI and tariffs.

'Jaish' No More. Hit By Sanctions, Banned Terror Group Changes Name

**WORLD.(Agency)**  
Banned terrorist group Jaish-e-Mohammed will now be known as Al-Murabitun - which means 'defenders of Islam' in Arabic - within Pakistan, intel sources told NDTV this week. The new name will be used during the 'memorial' next week for Yusuf Azhar, the brother of founder Masood Azhar. Sources said the group - responsible for the attack on the Indian Parliament in 2001, the 26/11 Mumbai attacks, and on the Army in Jammu and Kashmir's Uri and Pulwama - wants to de-link from the 'Jaish-e-Mohammed' name because sanctions make it difficult to access funding. The name change, however, is only expected for its Pak operations, sources said. A July report by the Financial Action Task Force, a global anti-terror funding watchdog, underlined the funding challenge facing the terrorist group. The FATF said the Jaish is now using digital payments, i.e., e-wallets and UPI transfers, to channel money into rebuilding itself. According to the

FATF five such e-wallets have been traced so far, and each has direct links to the terrorist group and members of



founder Masood Azhar's family. The goal, reports indicate, is to raise nearly four billion Pak rupees to set up over 300 'markaz', i.e., hubs or training centres. Routing funding via digital wallets means Pak can say it has 'cut off' funding - via formalised means like bank transfers - and comply with FATF rules, but the Jaish still gets money. NDTV this week accessed a dossier detailing re-building efforts by the Jaish after its base in Pak's Bahawalpur was destroyed by India

during Operation Sindoor. India launched missile strikes against nine terrorist camps, including Bahawalpur, on May 7 in response to the Pahalgalam terror attack. The dossier indicates the Jaish-e-Mohammed and other targeted terrorist groups, including Hafiz Saeed's Hizbul Mujahideen, have begun re-locating deeper into Pakistan, setting up bases in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province that shares an international border with Afghanistan. As part of that rebuilding process the group is also on a recruitment drive; in fact, one such drive was conducted in Garhi Habibullah, a town in Mansehra district, on September 14. The drive - headlined by Jaish commander Masood Ilyas Kashmiri, whose speech included exposing Pak's links with terror groups operating on its soil - was held seven hours before the India-Pakistan cricket match in Dubai, and included Pak Army and police providing protection.

Texas University Head Steps Down In 'Gender Ideology' Row

**WORLD.(Agency)**  
The president of a major Texas university is stepping down on Friday after being accused of tolerating "transgender indoctrination" at the public school. The resignation of Mark Welsh as head of Texas A&M University comes amid a conservative crackdown on higher education by the administration of President Donald Trump. "President Welsh is a man of honor who has led Texas A&M with selfless dedication," university chancellor Glenn Hegar said in a statement that did not address the reasons for his departure. "At the same time, we agree that now is the right moment to make a change and to position Texas A&M for continued excellence in the years ahead," Hegar added. Welsh's resignation comes after a video went viral of a "whistleblower" student

confronting a professor over the teaching of "gender ideology" in a children's literature class. In the hidden camera video, the student is heard telling the professor, "I'm not entirely sure this is legal to be teaching because



according to our president there's only two genders." "I don't want to promote something that is against our president's laws as well as against my religious beliefs," the unidentified

student adds. The professor responds that what she is teaching is not illegal and "if you are uncomfortable in this class, you do have the right to leave." Trump, on his first day in the White House, signed an executive order saying "It is the policy of the United States to recognize two sexes, male and female." The video went viral after it was posted online by a Texas state lawmaker, Brian Harrison, who called it a case of "transgender indoctrination" and urged Texas Governor Greg Abbott to fire both the professor and Welsh. Harrison also released an audio recording in which the student confronts Welsh and asks him to dismiss the professor. "That's not happening," Welsh responds, although he did later fire the professor. Welsh, a former four-star US Air Force general, took the helm of Texas A&M in 2023

Pakistan Minister On Whether Saudi Arabia Will Get Involved If There Is War With India

**World. (Agency)**  
Saudi Arabia will defend Pakistan in the event of India declaring war on its neighbour, Pak Defence Minister Khawaja Asif told reporters in Islamabad Friday, emphasising the 'strategic mutual assistance' component of the deal two countries signed this week. "Yes, absolutely. There is no doubt about it..." Mr Asif told Geo TV, a Pak news channel, drawing parallels with Article 5 of the NATO agreement that refers to 'collective defence', which essentially means a military attack against one bloc member is an attack on all. The Pak minister, however, stressed the deal with Saudi Arabia is a 'defensive' rather than 'offensive' arrangement, again drawing parallels with NATO. "If there is aggression, whether against Saudi Arabia or Pakistan, we will jointly defend against it," he told Geo TV. "We have no intention of using this pact for any aggression," Mr Asif told Reuters separately. "But if the parties are threatened, then obviously this arrangement will become operative." He also confirmed Pakistan's nuclear weapons are available for Saudi Arabia's use, although the former's stated doctrine says the warheads are for use only against India. Our capabilities will absolutely be available under this pact," he said, noting also that Pak



had always allowed inspections of its nuclear facilities and never committed violations. A senior Saudi official, asked if the deals means Pak is now obliged to offer a nuclear shield, told Reuters, "This is a comprehensive defensive agreement that encompasses all military means." The 'mutual defence' agreement was signed during Pak Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's visit to Riyadh this week. As reported by NDTV earlier, a key clause of this pact states that "any aggression against either country shall be considered an aggression against both". In response, the Indian government said the Pak-Saudi pact "formalises a long-standing arrangement between the two countries" and that the implications are being considered. Military and political analysts told Reuters the deal effectively marries Riyadh's money with Islamabad's nuclear arsenal, and represents a big win for both sides. For Pakistan, the positive is, of course, formidable financial backing and the prospect of an 'Arab nations alliance'. For Saudi Arabia it means a 'nuclear shield'. It also means that Israel.

Estonia says three Russian fighter jets entered its airspace in 'brazen' incursion

**World. (Agency)**  
Estonia summoned a Russian diplomat to protest after three Russian fighter aircraft entered its airspace without permission Friday and stayed there for 12 minutes, the Foreign Ministry said. It happened just over a week after NATO planes downed Russian drones over Poland and heightened fears that the war in Ukraine could spill over. Foreign Minister Margus Tsahkna said Russia violated Estonian airspace four times this year "but today's incursion, involving three fighter aircraft entering our airspace, is unprecedentedly brazen." Estonian Defense Minister Hanno Pevkur also said that the government had decided "to start consultations among the allies" according to NATO's article 4, he wrote on X, after Russian jets "violated our airspace yet again." Russian officials did not immediately comment. European governments rattled Russia's violation of Poland's airspace was the most serious cross-border incident into

a NATO member country since the war in Ukraine began with Russia's all-out invasion in February 2022. Other alliance countries have reported similar incursions and drone crashes on their territory. The developments have increasingly rattled European governments as U.S.-led efforts to stop the war in Ukraine have come to nothing. The European Union's foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas called Friday's incursion "an extremely dangerous provocation" that "further escalates tensions in the region." "On our side, we see that we must show no weakness because weakness is something that invites Russia to do more," she said. "They are increasingly more dangerous — not only to Ukraine, but also to all the countries around Russia." Estonia, along with fellow Baltic states Lithuania and Latvia and neighboring Poland, are staunch supporters of Ukraine. Italian F-35 fighter jets respond to Russian incursion. The Russian MIG-31 fighters entered



Estonian airspace in the area of Vaindloo Island, a small island located in the Gulf of Finland in the Baltic Sea, the Estonian military said in a separate statement. The aircraft did not have flight plans and their transponders were turned off, the statement said, nor were the aircraft in two-way radio communication with Estonian air traffic services. Italian Air Force F-35 fighter jets, currently deployed as part of the NATO Baltic Air Policing Mission, responded to the incident, according to the statement. In a post on social media, NATO

spokesperson Allison Hart described the incident as "another example of reckless Russian behavior and NATO's ability to respond." NATO fighter jets scramble hundreds of times most years to intercept aircraft, many of them Russian warplanes in northwest Europe flying too close to the airspace of its member countries, but it's rarer for planes to cross the boundary. Dozens of NATO jets are on round-the-clock alert across Europe to respond to incidents such as unannounced military flights or civilian planes losing communication with air traffic controllers. Separately, Maj. Taavi Karotamm, spokesperson for the Estonian Defense Forces, told The Associated Press the Russian planes flew parallel to the Estonian border from east to west and did not head toward the capital, Tallinn. Karotamm said the reason for the border violation is unknown, but added that it may have been to "shift the focus of NATO and its members on to defending itself."



## ‘Dharmasthala petitioners seeking investigation of more sites must place more independent information’: Karnataka HC

**Karnataka .(Agency)**  
The Karnataka High Court Thursday stated that two petitioners seeking an investigation into more alleged burial sites concerning the Dharmasthala burials case must submit more independent information apart from that put forth by the initial complainant. The petition, brought by two Dakshina Kannada residents, including the uncle of a 17-year-old girl who had been sexually assaulted and murdered in 2012, is being heard by a bench consisting of Justice M Nagaprasanna. The petition requested that the Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the matter be directed to inspect and excavate the sites identified by the petitioners, or to appoint a court commissioner to accompany the petitioners to the site. The counsel for the petitioners, Deepak Khosla, stated that if the SIT went to the sites indicated by the petitioners with sniffer dogs, etc, they might find dozens more skeletal remains over those already discovered.

Special Public Prosecutor B N Jagadeesha stated, “Their case is based on two representations given to SIT. Basis is the statement made by the original complainant (Chinnaiah), who is now treated as an accused... our investigation discloses that he is lying.” On a query from the bench regarding what independent information the petitioners had, Khosla said, “They have visited certain sites and found that what the complainant had told them is substantially true... Do we need a thousand bodies? Ten bodies?” The bench orally observed that more people might then start coming before the court and claim that they had seen the bodies, comparing the situation to a “Pandora’s box”.

Khosla further stated that apart from the original 13 sites identified by Chinnaiah, the petitioners had come upon more but had not disclosed them for fear of tampering with evidence.

The court ordered, “The issue now would be if the petitioners have independent information other than what was already in possession of the original complainant, which was investigated into and all the investigation process had culminated into the original complainant himself turning an accused.

## Mothers of 2 Harni boat tragedy victims ‘whisked away’ from viewing gallery of VMC board meet

**Ahmedabad .(Agency)**  
Four months after Sarla Shinde and Sandhya Nizama, mothers of schoolchildren Roshni Shinde and Vishwa Nizama who died in the 2024 Harni boat tragedy, were dragged away from an event of the Vadodara Municipal Corporation (VMC) for interrupting Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel’s address in May, both Shinde and Nizama were allegedly removed from the viewing gallery of the VMC’s general board meeting and then whisked away by the police on Thursday evening. Both Shinde and Nizama had arrived at the VMC’s viewing gallery with the passes issued by the VMC. Both the women were taken to the Navapura police station. At the police station, Congress leaders and other victims of the Harni Boat tragedy arrived in support of the two women. The police released the duo later after recording their statements, senior police officials said.

The incident has sparked outrage and also resulted in corporator Ashish Joshi — suspended by the BJP after the May incident — filing a police complaint seeking probe into the alleged corruption in the Harni Lake redevelopment project, which was undertaken under public private partnership in 2017. An official of the VMC said, “The passes were issued based on the forms signed by two BJP corporators – Poonam Shah and Parul Patel. The two women also underwent a security check and were in the viewing gallery only for about two minutes.” Sarla Shinde said, “The last time when we went to the CM’s event, they dragged us out like criminals because we allegedly violated protocol, but this time, we had valid passes, we underwent security check and were allowed in. Yet, we were removed within two minutes and pushed into police vans.

# Bombay HC flags lack of student safety measures as 70% govt schools have no CCTV in Maharashtra

**Mumbai .(Agency)**  
The Bombay High Court on Friday raised concern over lack of implementation of Government Resolution (GR) on safety measures for school children in Maharashtra. It observed that nearly 70% government schools lacked CCTVs and steps for security of students during transportation were not taken in 72% of such schools. The court asked the government to install CCTV in all schools in an expeditious manner. The court directed the government to upload details of compliance of the May 13 order on the website concerned within one week so that appropriate action could be taken against schools not abiding by the same.

This came after the School Education department informed the court that CCTV facility was yet to be

installed in 45,315 (70.92 %) schools out of the total 63,887 government schools in Maharashtra including zilla parishad and municipal schools. The court was also informed that of the total 44,435 private/aided/partly aided or self-funded schools, 11,139 (25.06%) schools were so far lacking such facilities. The said data has been updated till August 29, 2025. A division bench of Justices Revati Mohite-Dere and Sandesh D Patil was hearing a suo motu plea initiated by it taking cognisance of news reports of the alleged sexual assault of two four-year-old children by a cleaning staff member at a school in Thane district’s Badlapur.

On Friday, Additional Public Prosecutor (APP) Prajakta Shinde for state government informed the



bench that the education department had uploaded May 13 GR on safety of school students on its website and officers are being deputed in various districts to take stock of implementation of the GR and data of compliance will be made available.

APP Shinde, when asked, submitted that the state Women and Child Development (WCD) department, however, has not issued such a GR for residential schools in the state. Moreover, it was informed that the state Tribal Development department has issued GR for

Ashram Shalas. The bench noted it was “extremely unhappy” and “surprised” that the WCD had not taken any steps to issue GR despite assurance during an earlier hearing on June 24. “One department does not know what the other is doing. It is a sorry state of affairs. Also ensure periodic surprise checks to see if CCTV facilities are made available,” the HC orally remarked. The court ordered the WCD to issue such GR keeping in mind safety requirements of residential schools within two weeks. The court also perused details submitted by the state government related to compliance of the May 13 GR by government and private schools as on August 29. Besides lack of CCTV facilities, the court noted that complaint boxes were yet.

## Oppn demands probe into 14.71 lakh increase in voters’ numbers after Assembly polls

**Sapkal also asked whether the increase in electors is due to youngsters turning 18 years, or due to migration, suggesting these causes should be examined.**

**Mumbai .(Agency)**  
The Opposition on Friday demanded that the increase of 14.71 lakh electors in just seven months since the state Assembly polls be probed, calling for a detailed analysis of the data. On Friday reported that the total number of electors in Maharashtra rose from 9.70 crore on November 27, 2024 to 9.84 crore on June 30, 2025. The data shows a total net addition of 18.80 lakh voters, while 4.09 lakh voters were deleted from the rolls. The State Election Commission has announced it will use the updated voters’ list as of July 1, 2025.

“Considering these 14.71 lakh new electors, the total number of electors added in Maharashtra since the 2024 Lok Sabha elections is almost 55 lakh. Addition of that many electors in less than a year is unprecedented and requires close scrutiny of the data. How can the number of electors increase

so much in less than a year? It has never happened before,” said Maharashtra Congress



chief Harshvardhan Sapkal. Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and other Opposition parties in Maharashtra have repeatedly raised questions about the increase of 40.81 lakh electors

between the 2024 Lok Sabha polls and the 2024 state Assembly polls.

They have described this growth as “unnatural,” arguing that it may have impacted the election outcome. Sapkal also asked whether the increase in electors is due to youngsters turning 18 years, or due to migration, suggesting these causes should be examined. He questioned why the election commission extended the electoral roll date to July 1, 2025 instead of using the roll as of the Assembly polls. “What is the reason? Why was this date decided? What is the logic?” he asked.

NCP (SP) working president and Lok Sabha MP Supriya Sule said the data needs “to be studied in detail and has to be scrutinised.” “We have seen the increase in the number of electors. This trend needs to be studied in detail and data has to be scrutinised,” she said.

## Salary packages increase in IIM-Ahmedabad; Only 2 international offers, both from Dubai

**Ahmedabad .(Agency)**  
Even as the annual salary package offered to Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA) students in the two-year Post Graduate Programme in Management (MBA-PGP) witnessed an increase, the international offers were limited to just two this year. Both median and mean salary packages recorded an increase of around 2 lakh compared to last year while the international offers this year were only two against eleven in 2024. For 2025, the median salary offered to the batch of 406 eligible students is Rs 34.59 lakh per annum and the mean salary is Rs 35.50 lakh per annum. In 2024, the median and mean salary offered to the batch of 395 eligible students was Rs 32 lakh per annum and Rs 33.23 lakh per annum, respectively.

The BFSI (Banking, Financial Services, and Insurance) continued to be the sector with the highest package.

The top recruiters among the 178 firms that participated with around 261 different roles in the placement process in 2025 continued to be Boston Consulting Group, Accenture Strategy,



American Express Bain & Co and McKinsey & Company.

Boston Consulting Group made the most offers (including pre-placement offers) at the end of the final placement process with 35 offers, followed by Accenture Strategy with 31 offers and Bain & Co with 17 offers. In the investment banking sector, Goldman Sachs was the largest recruiter (including PPOs), making nine offers, followed by Avendus Capital with seven offers. This year, the finance function witnessed a 13.7 per cent increase in the number of net offers, the general management function witnessed close

to a 5 per cent increase in the number of net offers, and the strategy function witnessed a 33 per cent increase in the number of net offers against last year.

The General Management domain revealed Adani Group to have made the highest number of offers (including the pre-placement offers) at six, followed by Tata Administrative Services, which rolled out five offers.

In the laterals process, FinIQ made the highest number of offers, followed by Navi Technologies. Also, BrowserStack and Vector Consulting Group rolled out five offers, respectively. Atharva Kapadnis, Recruitment Secretary of MBA-PGP 2025, IIMA, attributed the success of the placement process at IIM Ahmedabad to “a direct result of our dedication to achieving the perfect student-recruiter fit, which is crucial in today’s dynamic job market”.

“Despite facing strong headwinds, IIM Ahmedabad provided students with the flexibility to explore multiple dream options, ensuring they could continue pursuing new opportunities even after securing initial offers,” he added.

# ‘Haryana Banao Abhiyan’ renews push for separate capital & HC

**Those associated with the campaign, ‘Haryana Banao Abhiyan’, have argued that Haryana’s buildings located in Chandigarh should be repurposed for other state functions.**

**Chandigarh .(Agency)**  
A group of prominent personalities in Haryana have intensified their campaign for demanding the establishment of a separate high court and the state capital, along with the relocation of key administrative offices from Chandigarh, to accelerate the state’s development. Those associated with the campaign, ‘Haryana Banao Abhiyan’, have argued that Haryana’s buildings located in Chandigarh should be repurposed for other state functions. On Friday, a delegation of the Haryana Banao Abhiyan Samiti, comprising senior lawyers and retired officials and led by former central government officer MS Chopra, met Assembly Speaker Harvinder Kalyan, seeking his intervention in securing a separate capital and an independent HC for the state. The Samiti also submitted a memorandum to the Speaker. “It has been 58 years since Haryana was separated from Punjab, but unfortunately, it does not have its own capital and a separate High Court.

Because of this, the golden opportunity of creating a distinct identity for the state based on its glorious history and rich ancient culture is being wasted,” Chopra said. “The sacred land of Haryana holds an important place in India for its ancient civilisation, rich culture, glorious history, spiritual prosperity, and social harmony. But today, Haryana is deprived of its own capital. Building a modern capital at an appropriate location will accelerate the development of underdeveloped areas of the state and strengthen its economy,” he added.

Recently, former Haryana chief secretary SC Chaudhary, former vice-chancellor of Chaudhary Devi Lal University (Sirsa) Radheshyam Sharma, and Padma Shri Haryanvi folk singer Mahavir Guddu also joined the campaign.

“The creation of 22 districts from the original seven districts was indirectly justified to provide administrative and judicial services closer to the people, but as the capital lies in



one corner of the state, most people from far-off regions have to travel long distances and pay thousands of rupees in tolls to reach administrative offices and the high court. Due

to lakhs of pending cases in the Punjab and Haryana High Court, the people of Haryana face long delays in justice, which also proves costly,” SC Chaudhary said.

Randhir Singh Badhnan, convener of the campaign and former chairman of the Bar Council of Punjab and Haryana, said, “Even though they are demanding a separate capital and a separate high court, Haryana’s rights on Chandigarh will not be given up.” Chandigarh, a union territory, serves as the capital of both Punjab and Haryana. According to a samiti’s communique, more than 14,25,047 cases are pending before Haryana’s district and subordinate courts, while over 4,50,000 cases are pending before the HC. “In addition, lakhs of cases are pending before various commissions, tribunals and other authorities. It is estimated that over 45 lakh people in Haryana are involved in litigation, and most litigants suffer due to delays in case disposal. Quick resolution of cases is of utmost importance for both litigants and advocates of Haryana. To solve this issue, both Haryana and Punjab need separate high courts,” the samiti added.



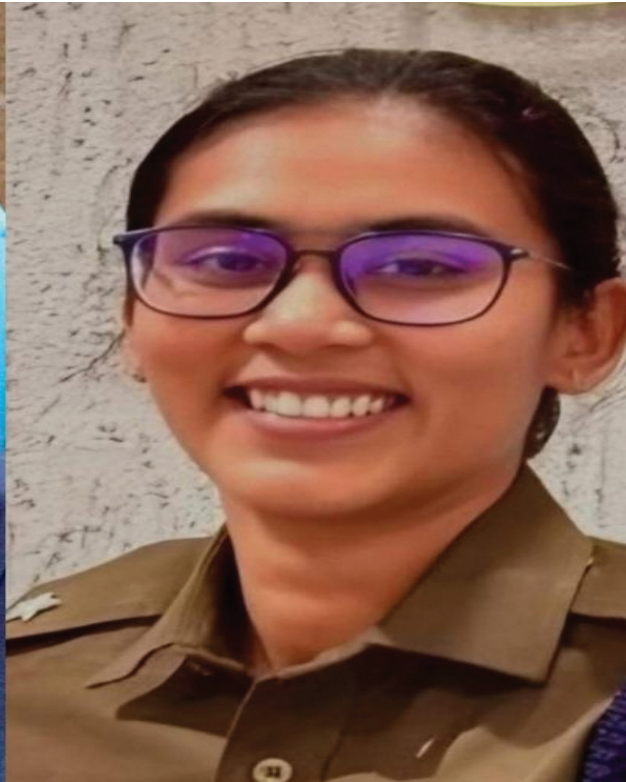
## AI teaching tools not a panacea, but can be a force multiplier

Long after the printing press arrived, we started using books for learning. In modern times, teachers began using projectors, smartboards, and tablets in classrooms as the technology evolved. Now, artificial intelligence has entered this long lineage of tools. But if history is any guide, pedagogy—and not the latest technology—moves the needle in learning. Good teaching methods always centred on how instructors engaged students, not the tools. Studies of technology in classrooms across decades offer a cautionary insight. Tools alone rarely boost learning. You need the proper pedagogy around them. A large-scale meta-analysis of 67 studies on English language teaching found that digital technology had a strong positive effect compared with traditional teaching without tech. That is promising. Yet, another review into computer-assisted learning from China found meaningful outcomes only when the content was personalised and integrated into teaching, not just presented through devices. Another recent study assessed AI support tools that provided personalised guidance, adaptive quizzes and real-time feedback. The students reported better time management and improved performance. In other words, AI tools delivered value when embedded in active learning strategies, not when left to replace them. Similarly, another study showed improved knowledge, skills, self-confidence and satisfaction among learners when teachers used technology tools in well-designed learning environments, including social interaction and feedback. A pattern emerges here. Tech is a multiplier—but only with good teaching design. Higher-education surveys show educators and students recognise that AI should assist, not supplant, teachers. We cannot automate human qualities such as critical thinking, creativity and ethical reasoning. Teachers remain vital mentors, problem-solvers, and emotional anchors. A recent initiative at IIT Delhi reflects this. Even as 80 per cent of students use generative AI tools, the institution emphasised AI literacy, ethical training, and mandatory disclosure of AI usage in assignments. Students perform better when learning becomes active rather than purely didactic. Active learning techniques involve engaging students in solving problems, discussing ideas, and collaborating. AI platforms can support active learning. For example, intelligent tutoring systems, which give step-by-step practice and targeted feedback, have moved students from the 50th to the 75th percentile on learning tests. Feedback matters. Student achievement improves significantly when technology-rich learning environments include explanatory feedback (not just grading). That requires careful teaching design. AI that merely assesses is less effective than AI that helps students understand why they made an error. It is tempting to imagine AI as a cure-all. Yet research cautions that screen-based learning can undercut deep comprehension. A recent neuroscience study found that 10-12 year olds retain meaning better on paper than from screens. Page turning and writing create neural engagement that digital formats often don't. And at its worst, technology can distract. Gamified learning, despite high enthusiasm, usually shows weak test performance gains. The warning here is that entertainment alone isn't enough for effective learning. IIT Delhi's AI committee offers a real case in balancing innovation and pedagogy. They surveyed more than 500 academic community members. While AI tools helped simplify concepts, educators insisted on systemwide policies for usage disclosure and fairness. AI adoption surveys show teachers value AI for efficiency but demand that critical thinking and academic integrity remain human mediated.

## Speaking truth to Pawar

A young IPS officer has set an example by standing firm against Maharashtra Deputy CM

MAHARASHTRA Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar is like the proverbial cat with nine lives. The BJP-Shiv Sena government (2014-19) accused him of siphoning off funds when the Congress-NCP (Nationalist Congress Party) alliance was in power. Pawar had served as the state Water Resources and Irrigation Minister from 1999 to 2009. Later, he was given the clean chit in the irrigation scam. In 2023, he jumped ship with some of his supporters, originally from the NCP, and formed a splinter group that extended support to the BJP. Recently, the Deputy CM found himself in trouble after a young IPS officer, Anjana Krishna, posted as SDPO (Sub-Divisional Police Officer) at Karmala in Solapur district, got the better of him. She recorded her conversation with Pawar, showing him in an extremely poor light. He tried to squirm out of the spider's web but got inextricably entangled. The Mahayuti government, led by Devendra Fadnavis, had ordered that sand mining of riverbeds in the state would not be permitted without the written nod of the designated district revenue officer. Pawar's faithful followers, like those of other important politicians in the state, presumed that all laws and rules framed by parties in power could be broken by those who owed allegiance to the ruling alliance. As the Police Commissioner of Thane in 1981, I was 'requested' by a Congress MLA close to then Chief Minister, AR Antulay, to desist from raiding distilleries manufacturing illicit liquor! I politely pointed out to the gentleman that the laws were enacted by his own party and not by the police. If his party wanted the illicit liquor business to flourish for whatever reason, he needed to approach his own party bosses to abolish the prohibition law that required the police to prevent distillation in the interest of people's health. As the Police Commissioner, I was duty-bound to implement the government's policies. After leaving my office, the MLA told anxious police inspectors awaiting his signal that they had been saddled with an 'insane' boss who believed that laws instituted by legislators were sacrosanct! Ajit is not the only senior politician to browbeat 'government' servants, who are actually 'public' servants. There were fewer upstarts among the politicians in the early years of my service. In fact, the very first one I encountered was in my 11th year of service when I was given the charge of Superintendent of Police, Poona city. A year later, a commissionerate was formed in Poona (Pune). The state's Home Minister, Balasaheb Desai, issued verbal orders to the Commissioner "not to fire" at miscreants who had resorted to looting and burning during a communal clash. That order conveyed down the line was ignored by me on the second day of the clashes when the riots escalated. That was what finally saved the police from ignominy.



When an inquiry into the riots was instituted, the minister, of course, was not prepared to admit to his verbal instructions. His first instinct was to protect his own skin. Anjana Krishna was very polite while talking to the Deputy CM on the phone of one of his supporters, who had got in touch with him. She asked Pawar to call her on her own mobile phone so that she could be sure that it was the Deputy CM himself who was ordering her to permit sand mining of riverbeds, thus ignoring written orders of the government. Ironically, the state government is encouraging builders to redevelop even well-constructed and perfectly safe buildings as part of its development agenda. The fact is that 'eviction' of residents, even those like me who are awaiting passage to the next world, is a cruel act, based sometimes on the needs of larger families, but more often on sheer greed. The neglect of the old and infirm is intrinsic to this mad rush to redevelop buildings which do not call for such a step. The state government does not seem to care for the health of citizens, especially the very young, the very old and the sick, who have to endure the steep rise in pollution levels caused by the razing of buildings and the construction activity that follows. It does not think about nature's revenge when sand is mined indiscriminately

from riverbeds. If regulations are in place to prevent such sand mining, loopholes are left by empowering lesser officials to bypass the rules. Coming back to the young officer who bested a powerful politician, I must give her credit for turning the spotlight on a disturbing phenomenon. Powerful politicians force 'meek' bureaucrats and police officers to disregard the laws which they themselves have passed to lull gullible people into believing that they have public health and safety uppermost in their minds. Actually, what they really seek is an avenue to generate funds needed to get the votes that will keep them in power as long as possible. Anjana seems to have her wits about her. I would never have thought of recording the conversation with any politician, high or low. I do not know how she managed that, but whatever people may say about her methods, the end in this case did justify the means. Politicians seeking to bully officials will now be put on notice. Anjana's career must be followed closely. If she continues to adhere to the Constitution and worship at the altar of justice and rule of law, keeping away from the temptations that are bound to come her way in the police service, she would do a great service to the IPS and the people of this great country.

## Credible voter list essential, national SIR must be inclusive

The exercise must remain strictly administrative, and the courts must pitch in to ensure that political messaging does not stray into ideological territory. Migrants also need consideration

The Election Commission of India assessed the preparedness for a nationwide Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls last week. The exercise, necessary to keep the voter list accurate, must be handled with care and fairness to strengthen confidence in the electoral process. Bihar's recent experience serves as a cautionary reminder of the consequences of a rushed exercise being perceived as mismanaged. The revision also became a political flashpoint, with the focus shifting to citizenship verification. The opposition claimed that the citizenship of large groups of voters from the border districts was being questioned. The matter even reached the Supreme Court. Public arguments between political leaders and the commission widened the trust deficit. What should have been a routine administrative process ultimately dented the institution's credibility. The lesson is clear: transparency and consultation are essential. Political parties, state governments and the electorate must be taken into confidence before new procedures are introduced. The commission should announce future SIRs in states much



in advance, along with clear timelines, a list of accepted documents, and accessible grievance redress systems. Two matters in particular require clarification: whether citizenship verification applies nationwide or only in the border states, and the precise set of documents required to prove identity, residence, and citizenship. Timing also matters; in states where assembly elections are due in

2026, the commission must not hurry through the revision, providing enough time for corrections and objections. Schedules hurried through only raise suspicion and make it harder for voters to protect their rights. Publishing the list of documents beforehand is especially important in rural and border regions, where sudden demands can create chaos and resentment. States such as Assam, West Bengal, and Jammu & Kashmir require special sensitivity. Here, demographic issues are politically charged, and any hint that the SIR is linked to partisan narratives could inflame tensions. The exercise must remain strictly administrative, and the courts must pitch in to ensure that political messaging does not stray into ideological territory. Migrants also need consideration. Millions of workers move seasonally and may be at risk of exclusion. Adequate notice and holding the revision during lean months when migrants return home are essential safeguards. Ultimately, the measure of success is not just technical accuracy, but whether the process produces an inclusive and credible voter roll.

## Despair, desperation over jobs in Bihar

The state's youth find it hard to avert unemployment due to lack of opportunities

BARELY had the dust settled on Rahul Gandhi's Voter Adhikar Yatra in Bihar that Gen Z youth staged protests in neighbouring Nepal and overthrew its government. The leaderless Nepalese protestors expressed their disgust at corruption, the government's authoritarian ban on social media and a lack of concern for youth aspirations and public welfare. They targeted the 'nepo kids', the children of the rich who led an extravagant lifestyle, while the ordinary youth suffered. In Bihar, Rahul's yatra pushed the issue of democratic accountability in the people's court, even as Bihari boys shouted the slogan of 'padhaai-kamaai-dawaai' — education, employment and healthcare. The similarity of issues, the timing and the geographical proximity of a state and a nation lead to several questions about resentment of the youth against indifferent rulers. Can we understand the churn in Bihar politics through the prism of the Nepal protests? Have unemployment and widening inequality, combined with democratic backsliding, emerged as decisive factors in tipping the political scales? And what lessons does poll-bound Bihar draw from the upheaval in the neighbourhood? Drawing on three years of ethnographic work in an urban gali in Patna, I have gathered accounts of ordinary Bihari youth's struggle to avert unemployment. Youth unemployment has been very high in Nepal — quoted to be upwards of 20 per cent — whereas it is claimed to be on the decline in Bihar and now stands at 10 per cent. Yet, Bihari youth find it hard to overcome the odds, with no opportunities for meaningful education in rural areas. They flock to

urban galis in Patna, where low-cost coaching centres proliferate. These centres lure subaltern aspirants with the guarantee of success in bharti (recruitment) for government jobs. The centres are run in the name of their 'sirs' — Bipin sir teaches English to rustic Biharis, Guru Rahman promises daroga bharti and Goswami sir offers coaching in 'sampoorna ganit' i.e. 'entire mathematics'. In the same gali, Samrat Ashok sir claims his lineage from the legendary Maurya dynasty ruler and offers a 'dhamaka bumper' offer for his course pack — what was earlier priced at Rs 3,500 is now offered at Rs 500, exhorting students to enrol fast. The king of the gali, however, is Khan sir, a 'youth icon' who teaches with a pronounced vernacular accent, has his own YouTube channel and leads youth protests against paper leaks in exams for government recruitment. Over a thousand students sit through his lectures every evening, while many more sit outside the classroom and pay attention to him on TV screens. Others simply hang around to beg for photocopies of his lecture notes as they cannot afford even the 'low fees' for coaching. I am told that there are millions of 'online' students who attend Khan's lectures on their mobile phones as they cannot afford the cost of living in Patna. Dealing with unemployment is being accepted as an individual responsibility in Bihar (and elsewhere in



India). Even as public sector employment is shrinking in neo-liberal India, its lure persists. It is seen as the only way out of the desperation of rural lives, immersed in hopeless agriculture. The coaching 'sirs' themselves are unemployed young men of a senior generation, who are selling hopes to ordinary youth in a mad scramble for government jobs. Coaching is their self-employment and only avenue for self-respect in a society that stopped offering social mobility opportunities a long time ago. Hopelessness, joblessness and desperation are all being managed in this informal coaching

enterprise as a project of hope for youth aspirations. The critical difference between Nepali and Bihari youth is the missing climate activist, the rapper, the DJ in the Patna gali. Instead, Bihari youth are drawn to markets built on the promise of success — a phenomenon in which poor people themselves accept the retreat of the State and rely on shadow markets to lead them on.

Political protests, even over genuine issues concerning the youth such as contractual entry into the Army as Agniveers, are perceived as risky ventures for unemployed Bihari youth. There is a chance that they will be arrested and get 'bad character' certificates from the police, rendering them permanently unemployable. Better to bear the ignominy and run the mile every morning as part of physical training necessary for bharti.

Before the break of dawn, I visit Patna's Gandhi Maidan — the city centre and nerve centre of its political history, replete with poetic calls for 'singhasan khaali karo, janata aati hai' — lines of Rashtrakavi Dinkar which became the rallying cry for anti-Emergency youth crusaders in 1975-77. There, I find thousands being trained by physical training coaches. Many young aspirants jog barefoot in the race for employment. No songs, no poets and no time for the politics of protests for these Bihari youth. And Nepal is not even a 'guess question' in the coaching textbooks there.



# Bhujbal takes aim at former mentor Sharad Pawar, draws flak

**Mumbai . (Agency)**

A day after senior Maharashtra minister and NCP leader Chhagan Bhujbal questioned the role of “some MLAs” of NCP (SP), his former mentor Sharad Pawar’s party, in the violence at Antarwali-Sarati village of Jalna district in September 2023, which propelled Maratha activist Manoj Jarange-Patil to prominence, Pawar’s daughter and Lok Sabha MP Supriya Sule asked Bhujbal to submit evidence, if any, to Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, who also handles the Home department. On Thursday, during a meeting of the All India Mahatma Phule Samta Parishad in Nagpur, Bhujbal made the remarks. “Jarange-Patil had staged hunger strikes at least 25 times before that. No one used to take note. But, two years ago, he was on hunger strike and had refused to go to the hospital as requested by police. However, the previous night, a meeting was held in which some MLAs from

NCP (SP) took part. Stones were stored at the agitation site and police were attacked... After this, police carried out lathicharge... no one knew Jarange-Patil at the time but the support of the NCP (SP) emboldened him,” Bhujbal said, without naming the MLAs. On



Friday, Bhujbal clarified that he did not name NCP (SP) chief Sharad Pawar for being behind it. “Whatever I have said is on video,” he added.

Sule, replying to Bhujbal, said she considers him as a fatherly figure and has deep respect

for him. “With folded hands, I request Bhujbal ji to let all know about the details of the meeting. When was it held, where was it held and who attended it,” she said. Sule added that as Fadnavis also holds the Home portfolio, “in case of possession of such information, it should be given to the Home department”.

“When Bhujbal was with the Shiv Sena, he used to praise Balasaheb Thackeray. Then for 20 years, Sharad Pawar became his leader. Now, he thinks Devendra Fadnavis is his leader. It is democracy. Everyone has a right to say what they want,” said Sule.

NCP (SP) OBC unit chief Raj Rajapurkar was, however, more direct and said Bhujbal’s identity as a OBC leader is because of Pawar. “Had it not been for Sharad Pawar, Bhujbal’s identity would not have been of an OBC leader... if Bhujbal is really

concerned about OBCs, he should donate his property to the needy OBCs,” said Rajapurkar.

He added that Bhujbal was targeting Pawar after “taking a contract (supari) from someone”.

## A cup of history: Kolkata pandal rewrites tea’s story

**Kolkata . (Agency)**

Alipore Sarbojanin has turned an everyday drink into a unique Durga Puja theme. Titled “Cha-Pan Udar” (Tea as Upheaval), the pandal uses tea as a lens to portray history, struggle, politics and popular culture, transforming the space into a living museum of one of the world’s most consumed beverages.

Highlighting the Chinese philosopher Laozi’s words “Tea is the philosopher’s stone”, the display traces tea’s origins in China and its spread across continents, touching on colonial trade and wartime anecdotes.

Artist Pradip Das and a team of 30–35 art students have painted the pandal’s walls to narrate this evolution:

from Maniram Dewan’s introduction of tea planting in Assam and the exploitation of plantation labourers, to today’s chai startups such as Chai Point, Chaayos and MBA Chaiwala that recast a humble cup as a modern business opportunity.

At the entrance visitors are greeted by a striking fighter-jet installation recalling, recalling a lesser known wartime story, during the Second World War, the Royal Air Force dropped sealed tea canisters from planes to soldiers fighting in the jungles of Burma, keeping their spirits alive. Inside, the theme broadens to show how tea has also been a backdrop for power and politics.

## Vadodara’s old city area witnesses communal clash over social media post



**Vadodara (Agency).**

A social media post purportedly targeting a particular community led to violent communal clashes in Vadodara late on Friday night, with a crowd gathering outside the City police station demanding an FIR. The rioting and stone-pelting occurred in the Panigate and Juni Ghadi areas of the walled city area close to midnight on Friday.

On Saturday morning, senior police officials said that the process to book those responsible for the rioting and probe the complaint against the alleged social media post has begun. As the crowd gathered outside the police station, Leena Patil, Joint Commissioner of Police, Vadodara City, who rushed to the spot along with several units of the local police and Crime Branch, addressed the protesters on a public address system and requested them to disperse with an assurance that the police would look into the matter. Patil, along with community leaders, also tried to placate the crowd.

Several teams of the Vadodara city police conducted combing operations in the area throughout the night to ensure that the incident did not flare up again, senior police officials said. “The minority community members said they had come across an AI-generated social media post that had hurt their religious sentiments. They gathered in large numbers at the City police station, demanding an FIR. We assured them that we are looking into the issue. Meanwhile, teams are scanning CCTV footage to identify those who indulged in stone pelting and caused law and order breach in the area,” a senior police official said.

Andrew Macwan, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Zone IV, told The Indian Express on Saturday morning that the police had initiated the process to lodge an FIR against the accused. “We are in the process of lodging the FIR in the rioting case.

# Amid yellow alert, 60 mm rain sweeps city on Fri; Lake levels surpass 99 pc

**Mumbai . (Agency)**

Following a brief lull, heavy rain activity resumed amid a yellow alert issued in the city on Friday when the suburbs received 60 mm rain until evening. However, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has indicated that rain activity is expected to subside over the weekend with only light to moderate rain predicted for the region, starting Saturday. Data furnished by the weather bureau showed that between Thursday and Friday, the suburban observatory in Santacruz received 2 mm rainfall while the Colaba station received 10 mm rainfall. However, on Friday morning the city woke up to overcast skies and rain activity gathered pace during the day in an unexpected spell. In light of the rain activity, the IMD sounded a yellow alert stating the possibility of thunderstorms with lightning, gusty winds and moderate showers in Mumbai and its neighbouring districts of

Thane, Palghar and Raigad.

Records showed that between 8.30 am and 5.30 pm on Friday, the Santacruz station received 60 mm rainfall even as the Colaba station clocked in only 1 mm rainfall during the same period. Besides island city, several other pockets where the IMD had sounded a yellow alert remained dry on Friday. This includes Alibag station which received only 5 mm rainfall, Ratnagiri station that recorded 2 mm rainfall and Dahanu in Palghar district which logged in no rainfall.

Explaining the rain activity, Athreya Shetty, an independent weather forecaster told The Indian Express, “Currently, there is a circulation over Madhya Maharashtra region while there is also a lot of moisture in the air as monsoon winds are in the flat pattern. Together, these factors have led to rain activity over the past few days



including Friday. Besides this, generally, day time heating also leads to thunderstorms popping in during the latter half.”

While the IMD has issued no alerts for the next four days stating possibility of light to moderate rainfall, weather observers have

stated that thunderstorms are likely to continue in the region. Even as September is the driest of the four monsoon months in Mumbai, the city has been experiencing continuous spells of showers over the past two weeks. While the city receives an average of only 359 mm rainfall in the month of September, the suburban station has already clocked in over 330 mm rainfall so far.

In light of the continued spells, the total stock in the seven lakes supplying Mumbai’s daily potable water finally surpassed the 99 per cent of the total capacity on Friday. At 99.32 per cent, the lake levels soared to 14.37 lakh litres which is the highest in the past three years. Last year, on the same day, the lake levels had remained at 98.61 per cent while in 2023, the total water stock touched 97 per cent during the same period.

## DNA test clears baby-swapping row at Sohana hospital

**Mohali . (Agency).**

A dramatic baby-swapping controversy at Sohana Multispecialty Hospital ended Friday after DNA tests confirmed the newborn girls’ parentage beyond doubt, the hospital management announced. The row erupted after Sandeep Singh, whose wife delivered on September 11, alleged that the hospital had first shown him a baby boy and later handed over a girl. Hospital administrators said that they tried to convince the parents, but eventually sought police intervention to facilitate a DNA test.

Hospital officials said the DNA report, opened in the presence of the Sohana SHO, the baby’s family, and other dignitaries, provided “100% proof that Sandeep Singh and Ramanpreet Kaur, residents of Karnal, are the biological parents of the baby girl.” “Today, we are happy that the DNA report has arrived, and it has been proven beyond doubt that the baby girl belongs to the

couple,” said Chief Administrator Adarsh Suri, adding that the institution “takes pride in its ethical and quality service over the years.” Doctors Nisha Manon and Akanksha Dogra, who supervised the delivery and postnatal care, said, “All hospital protocols were



followed and video evidence showed the baby girl was presented to the parents immediately after birth.” The hospital also condemned gender discrimination, noting the couple already have two daughters and were blessed with another girl.

## Punjab floods in court: AG, senior advocate spar over desilting of rivers

**Chandigarh . (Agency)**

The Punjab and Haryana High Court on Friday witnessed animated exchanges between

senior advocate Gurminder Singh Garry and Punjab Advocate General M S Bedi on whether the state’s ongoing desilting drive in rivers is a genuine flood-control exercise or a cover for commercial sand mining. The arguments came up before the division bench of Chief Justice Sheel Nagu and Justice Sanjiv Berry during the hearing of a petition that has challenged the government’s desilting policy. Garry argued that while farmers are allowed to clear silt deposited on their own fields

and use or sell it, the state’s policy of large-scale desilting of rivers such as the Sutlej and Ravi has effectively turned into a sand



mining operation without mandatory environmental clearance. “Nobody is against desilting if done legally and properly,” he told the bench, adding that guidelines framed by

the Union government, the National Green Tribunal (NGT), and the Supreme Court mandate prior clearance whenever removal of riverbed material has commercial implications.

In his submissions, Garry noted that no action was taken to remove silt after the 2023 floods until the 2025 monsoon period, questioning the claimed urgency for flood mitigation. He pointed out that the state’s Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting in December 2023 emphasized revenue generation from the sites, with tenders floated at royalty rates akin to mining, indicating a commercial intent rather than mere maintenance.

# Hidden Stories: A Pune walk reveals untold stories about women who keep the city’s trash moving

The Recycling Trail or the Waste Trail, an effort of SWaCH, amplifies the voices of Pune’s waste pickers and aims to bring their stories to light.

**Pune . (Agency)**

By 6 am, Sarika Shivsagar, her pushcart loaded with two large buckets and a bag, has arrived at the entrance of a multi-storeyed residential building in Pune’s Prabhat Road. Armed with a bucket as tall as her waist, her hands gloved till her bangles, she goes door to door, picking up bags of garbage that have been left outside the apartments. Most residents have packaged their wet and dry trash into tightly knotted garbage bags, but many have heaped them all together. Back at the gate, Shivsagar swiftly segregates the waste—uneaten sandwiches and egg shells tumble into piles of onion, potato and garlic peels in a bucket; soggy takeaway containers, empty capsule strips and dented bottles are tossed into another bucket, while packets and boxes that can be recycled go into a bag. The building’s sleepy occupants are neither curious nor interested in what happens to their garbage once it has been removed from their thresholds. But, four or five times a month, a diverse group of people—corporates,

educationists, students and citizens—gather around waste workers such as Shivsagar in different parts of Pune to get a first-hand experience of the journey of trash. The Recycling Trail or the Waste Trail is an effort of SWaCH, an organisation that has waste pickers on its Board. Since 2000, SWaCH has been working to improve the living conditions of waste pickers and ensure they have a dignified livelihood. The Trail is a way to make voices such as Shivsagar’s heard and to bring her story to light. “Mera education bahut nahi hai (I am not very educated). I loved studying, but I could only study till Class VII. I have been working as a waste picker for 18 years. I like my work because there is money, and samman (respect). I live with my in-laws and sons. There used to be a time when waste pickers used to wake up at 3 am to clean garbage from the roads, where we were bitten by dogs and rats and harassed by the police and local men. Now, as part of SWaCH, I work three hours,



picking up the garbage and taking it to the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) vehicles. For the rest of the day, I work as a domestic help and look after my family,” she says.

The Waste Trail begins with a glimpse into the history of waste collection in the city—how the drought of 1972 brought a flood of landless labourers into the city. Pushed into the margins of society, the migrant men fended for themselves by working at construction sites. But the women were subject to harassment and abuse by contractors at these sites. Ultimately, picking garbage, sorting and

selling these became a more lucrative option. “To this day, almost 70 per cent of waste pickers with SWaCH are women, and the work is passed on generationally among women of the family. The men are usually sons, husbands or brothers of these women,” says Amogh Bhongale, Outreach and Communication Lead at SWaCH, who is among the walk leaders. The second stop of the Waste Trail is a feeder point, where the doorstep waste collection meets municipality vehicles. “The organic waste, which could not get composted at source, is handed over to a PMC vehicle. Another PMC vehicle will pick up the dry waste,” says Bhongale. The visitors to the Trail learn how waste pickers stock the dry waste—bottles, packets and boxes—that they can sell for Rs 4,000 per month in modular storage spaces, called pinjras. “Across the city, there are 300–350 pinjras that three or four waste pickers share to store the materials before selling them every week,” says Bhongale.



# With over 23,000 votes, NOTA emerges as silent game-changer

**>In some posts, the NOTA count even surpassed votes for major candidates from various alliances and independent contenders, signalling a growing frustration with the available choices.**

**NEW DELHI.** While the DUSU 2025-26 elections saw intense competition between ABVP, NSUI, and the left alliance (SFI-AISA), an unexpected force quietly made its mark — the None of the Above (NOTA) option. With 23,674 votes across the four main posts, NOTA has become a powerful voice of student dissent, reflecting widespread discontent among DU students. Last year, 20,748 students chose NOTA, but this year's tally marks a noticeable rise, with 5,820 votes for Vice President and the highest counts for Secretary (7,365) and Joint Secretary (7,314). In some posts, the NOTA count even surpassed votes for major candidates from various alliances and independent contenders, signalling a growing frustration with the available choices.



Vishesh Tripathi, a student at DU, pointed to the influence of money and power in the elections, saying, “The chances are that the blatant display of money and power made the genZ go for the NOTA option. We wanted to know, who is the real leader?”

Echoing a similar concern, Nishtha, a second-year law student, called NOTA's rise a “strong message” for change in the kind of politics practiced at DU. She said, “In a university known for its politically active student body, this level of disengagement or protest voting is both rare and revealing. NOTA's rise sends a strong message that students want change — not just of party, but of the kind of politics being practiced.” As DU continues to be a microcosm of national politics, the sharp rise in NOTA signals a growing demand for clean, issue-based and student-centric politics. Campaigns filled with sloganeering and muscle-flexing may no longer be enough to win the trust of the entire electorate.

## DPS Dwarka, other Delhi schools receive bomb threat; students, staff evacuated



**Agency New Delhi.** Multiple schools in Delhi, including DPS Dwarka and Krishna Model, received a bomb threat on Saturday morning. The bomb threats were received via phone calls, and the authorities were contacted immediately. Police teams rushed to the school campuses to further investigate these threats, and staff members and students were evacuated from the premises. Bomb squads are currently searching the area, and investigation is underway. In a notice issued by DPS Dwarka, the school authorities said, “Kindly note that the school will remain closed today i.e Saturday, 20 September 2025 due to unavoidable circumstances. All school buses and private vans/ cabs are being sent back immediately.” Delhi Police is currently investigating a wider probe regarding a string of bomb threats across schools in Delhi. Last week, the Delhi High Court was evacuated due to a bomb threat, which later turned out to be a hoax. The Delhi High Court bomb threat was received via email, where the sender threatened to blow up the judge's chamber.

## On way back home from school, two children get hit by train in Northeast Delhi, die



**Agency New Delhi.** On their way back home from school, two girls, aged 7 and 8, were run over by a train at the Nangloi railway station in Northeast Delhi on Friday afternoon, police said. “At about 1 pm, a train struck the two children near Nangloi railway station at Sukhi Nahar, on the Bahadurgarh side”, an officer said. Police said the incident happened when Sahista Parveen (8) and Raunak Khatun (7) were heading from school towards their home in Prem Nagar. “When they were trying to cross the tracks, one intercity express hit them. The operator was unable to halt the train in time and the students died on the spot,” the officer said. After the incident, the parents of the girls, along with local residents, staged a protest at the railway track. “Following the accident, around 500-700 people assembled at the site and blocked the railway track, resulting in disruption of rail traffic,” a senior officer said. “Local police and Government Railway Police staff reached the spot, controlled the crowd, and restored train movement,” said DCP (Railways) KPS Malhotra.

## Umanshi's independent battle: NSUI rebel outpolls Left, cites work for performance

**Agency New Delhi.** In the midst of ABVP's sweeping victory and NSUI's lone consolation, one independent candidate stood out—Umanshi Lamba. A former NSUI member, Umanshi rebelled after being denied a ticket by the party she had loyally served until 2024. With this being her final chance to contest, she entered the race as an independent, determined to make her mark. Claiming NSUI's senior leadership had “lied” to her by backing out of their promise on nomination day, Umanshi chose to fight alone. Her efforts paid off as she secured over 5,000 votes, surpassing the combined total of the Left alliance's presidential candidate, Anjali, who garnered 5,385 votes. Steering clear of flashy resources or large-scale campaigning, Umanshi relied on sheer grit, meeting students individually. On being asked how she did it alone with no solid backing and support, she said, “I visited every college at least ten times. People knew me for my work. It is not necessary that people only know the candidates who travel in big cars and walk with hundreds of supporters,” she said. Among the nine presidential candidates in the fray this year, Umanshi was the only female contesting independently. Umanshi said, “I was the first female candidate in the University's history to contest independently and I am proud of what I did.” Although she didn't win, her campaign sparked conversations about the role of independents in DU politics.



# Meet the members of the newly-elected DUSU

**Agency New Delhi.** The Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) reclaimed the post of president from the Congress-backed National Students' Union of India (NSUI), as it went on to win three key posts in the Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU) elections. The NSUI was left with just one post. When the final votes were tallied after 21 rounds on Friday, ABVP's Aryan Maan secured the president's post with 28,841 votes — well ahead of NSUI's Joslyn Nandita Choudhary at 12,645 votes and Left-backed candidate Anjali at 5,385.

**Meet the members of the newly-elected DUSU.** ABVP's president-elect Aryan Maan A Hansraj College graduate, Aryan Maan is pursuing a degree in Library Science. Hailing from Bahadurgarh in Haryana, he is an active football player. He has been at the forefront of several key student movements

organised by ABVP, particularly those against fee hikes and in favour of improved university infrastructure. **NSUI's vice president-elect Rahul Jhasla** A final-year Master's student in Buddhist Studies, Rahul Jhasla has



been at the forefront of student activism for the past two years, demanding improved campus and sports infrastructure, better hygiene in hostels and classrooms, access to clean drinking water, and the establishment of a Women Development Cell. He enjoys strong support from Purvanchal and

Rajasthan student communities. **ABVP's Joint Secretary-elect Deepika Jha** Currently pursuing MA in Buddhist Studies, Deepika Jha from Bihar is a graduate of Lakshmi Bai College. She has been deeply involved with ABVP's 'Students for Seva' initiative and has contributed significantly to student-led social transformation activities, including community schools and the Ritumati campaign for menstrual hygiene awareness. **ABVP's Secretary-elect Kunal Chaudhary** A PGDAV graduate now enrolled in the Buddhist Studies programme, Kunal Chaudhary from Delhi is a graduate of PGDAV College. He brings leadership experience to the panel, having served as the president of the PGDAV College Students' Union in 2023. For several years, Kunal has been a prominent voice in student activism, consistently championing student concerns.

## Rs 57,000 crore fixed to rid Delhi of waterlogging & drainage woes

**Agency New Delhi.** Union Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Friday launched Delhi's new drainage master plan to address the city's waterlogging and sewage challenges in the next three decades. The plan seeks to reshape the city's drainage network at an estimated cost of Rs 57,000 crore, with the Centre pledging financial assistance to support its rollout. The plan has divided the city into three basins—Najafgarh, Barapullah and Trans-Yamuna—and hired consultants to redesign the drainage network. “The Central government will be helping the state to implement the drainage master plan,” said Khattar. The last comprehensive drainage

master plan was prepared in 1976 when Delhi had a population of 60 lakh. Now, with the population



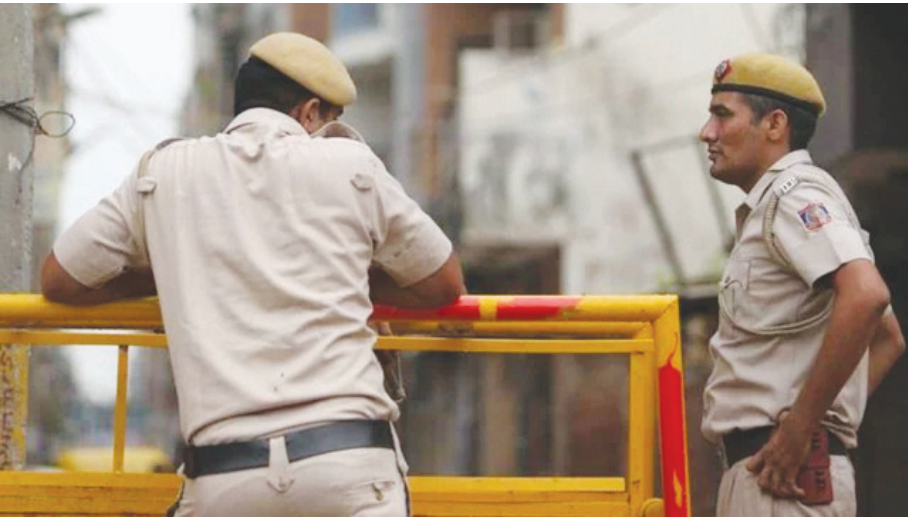
touching nearly 2.5 crore, the city's drainage system is facing increasing pressure. The national capital has approximately 18,958 km of drainage network under the jurisdiction of eight civic agencies and departments, including PWD,

irrigation and flood control, MCD, DDA, NDMC etc. The new drainage master plan targets 30-year solution for urban flooding. The consultants have analysed factors like slopes, depressions, and the existing old and insufficient infra to improve drainage efficiency. After the DPR is approved, the agency will start the process of inviting tenders from private companies to carry out the work on the ground. Feasibility study has been done on micro and macro level. Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said, “We have been visiting legacy waterlogging points. We do not work from air-conditioned rooms.” “The drainage master plan is a guarantee card of no waterlogging,” said Water Minister Parvesh Verma.

# Till September, Delhi Police froze drug offenders' assets worth over Rs 20 crore — four times the amount seized last year

In addition to physical assets such as luxury vehicles, land, apartments and farmhouses, the police have traced money transfers, bank accounts and digital wallets to disrupt the cash flow of drug networks.

**Agency New Delhi.** In a major crackdown, the Delhi Police has frozen properties worth Rs 21.5 crore belonging to alleged drug traffickers and narcotics dealers in the first nine months of 2025—more than four times the amount seized during all of last year, official data shows. These assets, linked to 30 accused individuals, include luxury vehicles, land parcels, apartments, and farmhouses. In comparison, assets worth Rs 5 crore were seized from 19 drug offenders in 2024, while assets worth Rs 38 lakh were frozen from three drug individuals in 2023. In addition to physical assets such as luxury vehicles, land, apartments and farmhouses, the police have traced money transfers, bank accounts and digital wallets to disrupt the cash flow of drug networks. Authorities leveraged the National Integrated Database on



Arrested Narco Offenders (NIDAAN), the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU-IND), and the Inter-Operable Criminal

Justice System (ICJS) along with other digital platforms to correlate case data, financial records, and communication

trails, officers said. “Earlier, the arrest of one trafficker often led to another, filling the gap. Now, with the seizure and freezing of financial assets, the entire chain of operations is weakened. Our approach has shifted from individual-centric policing to network-centric policing, thereby dismantling cartels rather than just arresting carriers,” said Special CP (Crime) Devesh Chandra Srivastava. The Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF) of the Crime Branch played a central role in the crackdown, accounting for Rs 17.5 crore of the total assets frozen. Plans are underway to establish specialized teams within the ANTF focused solely on financial investigations, Srivastava said. “Training is also provided to officers in forensic accounting, cyber-financial investigations, and cryptocurrency tracing,” he added.



NEWS BOX

Mentor Rohit Sharma, comedian Virat Kohli: Yashasvi Jaiswal on Indian legends

New Delhi. (Agency)

Yashasvi Jaiswal opened up on his experience playing alongside Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli in the Indian cricket team. Jaiswal, who made his debut for the Indian Test team in 2023, opened with Rohit at the top and has shared some key partnerships with Kohli. Rohit and Jaiswal scored 1269 runs in 28 innings that they batted together and opened up on the influence of the former India Test captain on his career. Speaking to Mashable India, the opener said that Rohit has been a mentor for him during his career and has helped develop mentally and in terms of his playing style. Jaiswal said that Rohit is an amazing human being and you learn a lot just by being around the 38-year-old.I really enjoy being with Rohit bhai. He has taught me so much and helped me a lot in developing myself, both mentally and overall. He is truly an amazing human being. When you are around him or talk to him, you learn a lot — in fact, just by watching him, you can learn so much," said Jaiswal. When it



came to Kohli, Jaiswal revealed the star batter's funny side and how he is able to keep everyone laughing. The young opener said that Kohli is sharp when it comes to observing someone to make a joke and claimed that he would make you laugh with his witty remarks."Paaji is amazing, really strong. I've batted with him many times. He's so much fun, and he's really funny too. If you spend time with him, you'll just keep laughing, it's a different level altogether. If he tells you something about someone, he'll explain it in full detail — it's incredible. He's so sharp. Like, if you ask me to explain something in a funny way, I might try but it won't come out funny. But if he says it, then 100 percent you'll end up laughing for sure," said Jaiswal. The southpaw had partnerships in 10 innings alongside Kohli and the duo put on 361 runs during that time. Jaiswal was a part of Rohit and Kohli's final Test assignment before they decided to retire from the format in May 2025

Surya namaskar: In a meaningless pursuit, SKY shines by not batting

New Delhi. (Agency)

In meaningless pursuits, Surya Kumar Yadav reveals his character. O Captain, My Captain.Slotting himself at No. 11 in Friday's match against Oman at the Asia Cup, not coming in to bat for easy runs-- that is Surya.We will come to that. But, we need to rewind.After the facile win against Pakistan, Surya was thrown to the press. He was accused of not shaking his hand with the rival captain, Salman Agha—a decision taken by others to justify Indian participation in the Asia Cup, a meaningless rubber.Bear in mind that Surya is a batter. His job is to score runs, and, because he is also the captain, lead Team India on the field, not in geopolitical sparring.At the press conference that follows the Pak encounter, he is expected to bear the burden of India—its expectations, its animus, its billion hopes, its unsaid frustration with the participation in a tournament the country



just doesn't want to watch. On his shoulders is a rare burden—he is the first captain to face Pak after Op Sindoor, and yet be a sport. At the post-match presser, a Pakistani journalist pops a question about his decision not to shake hands with Agha. The question is interrupted midway by someone, perhaps trying to protect him from politics. That's when Surya shines.His face retains the pre-querry balance. The chewing gum in his mouth feels the same violent molars. “Bindaas poocho,” he says. Then he goes on to answer the question. Bindaas—fearless. “Some emotions are beyond the spirit of the game.”O Captain, my Captain. He really is bindaas.

A final lap fumble: How a tactical error cost Gulveer Singh a spot in the final

New Delhi. (Agency)

"Street smarts are an athlete's asset. Some come with their A game. But it's not every day that you are in top form or situations will unfold the way you imagine them on the drawing board. Form books are ripped up; an unknown might aspire to be a star; someone lurking behind you or in front of you might go for broke and you, with all your training, would be left holding the broken remains of a World Championship dream. Inside any event is life's microcosm — be prepared for any eventuality.Gulveer Singh, on whom rode the hope of a 5000m final finish, couldn't give the finishing touches to a qualifier he held the keys to. For almost 4800m, he rode the wave, the perfect running, sticking to the group, ready to hit the pedal when the situation and time demanded. Except that it never came. When he should have floored the gas pedal, he took his foot off, looked back in the rear-view mirror and others passed him. One of those names was Norway's Jakob Ingebrigtsen, the reigning World and Olympic Champion.In terms of the weather, it was perfect. Temperatures had dropped to 23 degrees; the wind was across the track;

Tokyo reflected his training base in Colorado's temperatures. The middle-distance and long-distance races are tightly focused dramas; different actors playing out their parts, the end scene always deciding who would win the lead or be in the lead group.Right from the start, till almost the last 200 metres, there was no head-spinning mixture of geometrical forms. It was easy-paced, going to the throb of a steady rhythm and momentum. For Gulveer, it was the perfect day, the perfect race for a perfect top eight finish — the ticket to Saturday's final. It also had some big names — Grant Fischer, Stanford graduate, the Paris Olympics 5K and 10K bronze medal winner, the 18-year-old Ethiopian Biniam Mehary, Bahrain's Birhanu Balew, the 2022 Asian Games gold medallist over 5K and 10K, Jimmy Gressier, who had won the 10k gold medal a few days back.In the lead group of 5-6 runners, Gulveer appeared comfortable in the first two laps. He did move up to 3rd as Eisa Mohammed, who would fade away in the latter part of the race, had the initial lead

running with Saymon Amanuel. With nine laps to go, the American Fischer moved up, disrupting the group followed by Kenya's Cornelius Kemboi and Gressier. With eight laps remaining, it seemed that Gulveer

steady throb of a drum, a pulse beating in the middle of the stadium. If you increased pace and went ahead, the rest wouldn't follow. In such kind of races, without the allure of a podium finish, the mind plays it differently.

The dynamics in play are created by each runner who tries and adheres to a common theme — hang in, last out and break in the end.

Gulveer was doing it to perfection. Once, he fell back to 9th but pulled back to the group. Did he lose energy then? For someone who has trained at the high altitude of Colorado, it was a no-brainer. Or as it seemed.

With three laps to go, the lead group widened, three in the front, the same number at the back. Gulveer

was lying 7th. With two laps left, the lead was being flipped between Fischer, Kemboi, Mehary, Mills and Netherland's Niels Laros, who had started attacking the lead group. The Dutchman would fall back as the pace quickened with two laps and then as the bell went, Gressier, Mills, Fischer, Mehary and Balew went for it.



wanted to move on, take the lead a bit, do a bit of front running but had been boxed in by the group. Each and every runner in his isolated world, doing his bit of running. Winning wasn't important. Qualifying was.He did move to the outside a bit. But was back inside. Probably that gave him confidence. It was again a slow race, like the

INDW vs AUSW: Team India to don pink jersey in support of breast cancer awareness

Haaland's header put him on 50 goals in 49 Champions League appearances, with the Norway striker reaching that milestone quicker than any other player in the competition's history.

New Delhi . (Agency)

The Indian women's cricket team will step out in a special all-pink kit on Saturday, September 20, when they take on Australia in the third and final ODI at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in Delhi. The gesture is aimed at promoting breast cancer awareness, adding a layer of social significance to an already high-stakes contest.The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) confirmed the initiative through a video on its social media handles, where captain Harmanpreet Kaur, Pratika Rawal and Sneha Rana were



among those seen donning the pink strip.“#TeamIndia will be wearing special pink-coloured jerseys in the Third ODI today to promote Breast Cancer Awareness,” read the caption on the BCCI's post.This is not the first time cricket has rallied behind the cause. South Africa's men's team have long championed the Pink Day tradition in Johannesburg, while in the IPL, franchises such as Gujarat Titans and Delhi Capitals have also sported special kits to support cancer awareness initiatives.

INDIA EYE HISTORIC SERIES-WIN

For India, Saturday's game carries added weight. With the series locked at 1-1, the hosts have a chance to claim a maiden bilateral series win over Australia, a feat

they have never achieved in ODIs. The match will also serve as their last piece of competitive action before the much-anticipated Women's ODI World Cup, beginning September 30 in Guwahati.While there have been encouraging signs across the series, particularly with India's pace attack and their top order batting, concerns linger over the middle order, which has yet to fire collectively. A composed performance against a strong Australian bowling line-up could provide the belief Harmanpreet's side needs heading into the global event.

Australia, on the other hand, will look to reassert their dominance, drawing on their depth and experience. As defending world champions, they will want to finish the series strongly and deny India a historic triumph on home soil.

With the series on the line, the contest in Delhi is expected to deliver both intensity and inspiration. For India, the pink jersey will symbolise not just solidarity with a greater cause, but also the determination to script a statement win at the dawn of a World Cup campaign.

Asia Cup Super Four: Bangladesh eye revenge against Sri Lanka in Naagin rivalry

Bangladesh will seek revenge against Sri Lanka in the Asia Cup 2025 Super Four opener on September 20, aiming to rectify their earlier Group B loss and strengthen a fragile batting and bowling lineup.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Bangladesh will be seeking revenge when they take on their 'Naagin' rivals Sri Lanka in the opening Super Four clash of the Asia Cup 2025 on Saturday, September 20, after losing to them earlier in the Group B stage. That defeat not only dented their net run rate but also exposed vulnerabilities in both



batting and bowling under pressure. For Bangladesh, the Super Four offers a chance to reset after a narrow escape from elimination.Sri Lanka, meanwhile, enter the Super Four unbeaten and brimming with confidence. Wins over Bangladesh, Hong Kong, and Afghanistan helped them to top Group B. However, their campaign has not been without flaws - batting collapses in the middle overs have been a recurring concern, nearly costing them against weaker sides.

Bangladesh will look to capitalise on those lapses.Bangladesh's progression hinged not only on their own results but also on Sri Lanka's performance in the final Group B game. Sri Lanka's six-wicket win over Afghanistan eliminated the Afghans and secured Bangladesh's passage as the second team from the group. Kusal Mendis' unbeaten 74 off 52 balls was the standout effort, anchoring the chase.Bangladesh's path to qualification was far from smooth. They started with a win over Hong Kong, lost to Sri Lanka, and then scraped past Afghanistan by eight runs. But had Afghanistan defeated Sri Lanka on Thursday, Bangladesh would have been eliminated on net run rate.

Bangladesh look to build momentum

Bangladesh went in with four specialist bowlers against Afghanistan, and that decision nearly backfired after Saif Hassan and Shamim Hossain conceded 55 runs in just four overs.



Suryakumar told JioHotstar.Rodrigues has 1,457 ODI runs at an average of 32.38 with a career-best 123 against South Africa. However, she was recently ruled out of the ongoing Australia ODI series due to viral fever, with Tejal Hasabnis named as her replacement.

Meanwhile, wicketkeeper-batter Richa Ghosh received glowing words from Sanju Samson, who praised her composure and fearless batting.“We all love watching Richa Ghosh. The way she bats and keeps wickets, she always looks calm and confident. There's a lot to learn from her. Wearing the blue jersey in this country is never easy, and there's been a lot of hard work behind the scenes,” Samson said.All-rounder Hardik Pandya also sent his wishes to the squad ahead of their campaign.

“I'm very excited and just want to wish the women's team the best of luck. The whole of India is supporting you. Go out there and enjoy the sport—don't worry too much, just be yourself. Remember, a billion people are backing you.

No World Athletics medal for India after 6 years: The highs and lows in Tokyo

India ended the 2025 World Athletics Championships without a medal, marking a first in six years in the competition. Sarvesh Kushare's high jump and Sachin Yadav's near-podium javelin throw were bright spots in an otherwise disappointing Tokyo campaign.

MANCHESTER. (Agency)

India's medal drought at the World Athletics Championships became the first time in six years when the nation returned from Tokyo without a podium finish. The closest the country came were javelin thrower Sachin Yadav, who finished fourth, and high jumper Sarvesh Kushare, who produced a lifetime-best to secure fifth place. Long-distance runner Gulveer Singh also missed out

narrowly, finishing ninth in his 5,000m heat, just fractions behind the cutoff for the final.India had hoped for strong performances across the board, but the Tokyo campaign was largely defined by near misses and unexpected setbacks. Even the nation's marquee athletes struggled to convert talent into medals. With only Sarvesh, Neeraj Chopra, and Sachin Yadav making it to finals, the tally of Indian finalists has shrunk noticeably compared to previous editions.In Budapest 2023, India sent six to seven athletes into finals, including Jeswin in the long jump, Neeraj, Manu, and Kishore in javelin, Parul in the 3,000m steeplechase, and the men's 4x400m relay team.At Eugene 2022, the finalists included Avinash (3,000m steeplechase), Sreesankar (long jump), Eldhose (triple jump), Neeraj, Rohit, and Annu (javelin).

Tokyo 2025, however, saw only three athletes — Sarvesh Kushare, Neeraj Chopra, and Sachin Yadav — reach the finals.The



contrast is stark, raising the question: is this a temporary dip in form, or does India still struggle to build consistent depth across disciplines?Sarvesh Kushare and Sachin Yadav: India's Brightest SpotsHigh jumper Sarvesh Kushare was India's brightest light. Clearing 2.28m, the 30-year-old became only the fourth Indian high jumper to finish in the top six at a World championship. The son of an onion farmer from Nashik delivered a performance that lit up the National Stadium and gave fans a rare

moment of joy amid the disappointments. In the javelin throw, defending champion Neeraj Chopra's hopes of retaining his World Championships title ended in disappointment. The two-time Olympic medallist could only manage eighth place. His compatriot Sachin Yadav, just 25 years old, threw a lifetime best of 86.27m but missed a medal by 40 centimetres. His consistent performance demonstrated his potential to be a future star, even if India came away empty-handed.Track and Field Letdowns by DisciplineIn sprints, Animesh Kujur struggled to replicate his best form, clocking 20.77 seconds in the 200m heat, far off his personal best of 20.27 seconds, and finishing last in his group. His performance reflected a larger issue: India's speed events continue to lack consistency on the world stage.Long-distance runner Gulveer Singh narrowly missed the men's 5,000m final, finishing ninth in his heat with 13:42.34. He holds the national record at 12:59.



## Japanese agency upgrades India’s sovereign rating to BBB+

**MUMBAI .(Agency)**  
Japanese credit rating agency -- Rating and Investment Information, Inc. (R&I) -- has upgraded India’s long-term sovereign credit rating to ‘BBB+’ from ‘BBB’, while retaining the “Stable” Outlook for the Indian economy.This is the third such upgrade by a sovereign credit rating agency this year, following S&P’s upgrade to ‘BBB’ (from BBB-) in August 2025 and Morningstar DBRS’ upgrade to ‘BBB’ (from BBB (low)) in May 2025, reaffirming India’s position as one of the most dynamic and resilient major economies in the world.As per R&I’s India sovereign rating review published today, the ratings upgrade is supported by India’s position as one of the world’s largest and fastest-growing economies, underpinned by its demographic dividend, robust domestic demand, and sound government policies.R&I in its report recognises the progress in fiscal consolidation by the Government, driven by buoyant tax revenues and rationalisation of subsidies, and manageable level of debt along with high growth. It also highlights India’s strengthened external stability, reflected in modest current account deficit, stable surpluses in services and remittances, low external debt-to-GDP ratio, and sufficient forex cover.  
The agency further stated that the risks associated with the financial system remain limited.“While the government has been increasing capital expenditures, it has managed to reduce the fiscal deficit thanks to the tax revenue increase backed by the strong domestic demand as well as the cut of subsidies”, the agency noted in its statement.The recent increase in tariffs by the US was acknowledged as a risk factor by the agency, however, it observed that India’s limited reliance on U.S. exports and its domestic demand-driven growth model will contain the impact. Further it observed that while the GST rationalisation will result in revenue losses, the negative impact will likely be offset to some extent by the stimulation of private consumption.The agency also praised the policies of the administration of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi aimed mainly at attracting foreign manufacturers to India, developing infrastructure, institutionalizing the legal framework to improve the business environment, reducing the reliance on energy imports and ensuring economic security.

## Gold price to touch Rs 2lakh/10 gm What Jefferies’ Chris Wood said

**CHENNAI .(Agency)**  
New Delhi: The rally in gold prices is still ongoing as the geopolitical and geo-economic uncertainty is still looming over the global landscape. Chris Wood, Global Head of Equity Strategy at Jefferies, raised his long-term gold forecast, projecting the rise of the yellow metal crossing \$6600 per ounce in the upcoming year. This could mean that the gold crossing is beyond Rs 2 lakh per 10 grams as per the current currency exchange rate.  
Gold Price Target  
In the report Greed and Fear, Wood opined that based on historical rates clubbed with rising per capita income of US households, gold could sustain this long-term upward trend. His revised projection comes just as gold touched a record high of \$3,700 per ounce ahead of the Federal Reserve’s policy decision. The current price stands at near \$3600, and Indian spot prices are at around Rs 112,845 per 10 grams.He is known for making predictions on the gold prices and has a long track record of it. In 2002, he made a projection and set a target of \$3400 per ounce that was achieved by gold only after 23 years. That estimate was based on the 1980 peak price of \$850 per ounce, adjusted for US per capita income growth of 6.3 percent annually. The projection made by him has steadily risen over time from \$4,200 in 2016 to \$5,500 in 2020 and now \$6,600 in 2025.  
As per his views, he said if gold could once again account for 9.9 percent of US per capita household income, as it had happened at the height of the 1980 bull market, the price could align with his new projection. He, reportedly, has maintained a heavy allocation to gold in his Greed and Fear portfolio, holding 40 percent since 2002, later reduced from 50 percent in 2020 when Bitcoin was introduced into his mix.

## Revised charges for Atal Pension Yojana, NPS and UPS from October 1: Know the list

**Kolkata.(Agency)**  
Atal Pension Yojana (APY), National Pension System (NPS) and the newly introduced Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) constitute almost the entire pension universe in this country. Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) is the body that has been entrusted with the responsibility of regulating this crucial sector. PFRDA has recently communicated a fee structure. These will be applicable for services delivered by Central Recordkeeping Agencies (CRAs) under the National Pension System (NPS), Atal Pension Yojana (APY), NPS-Lite and Unified Pension Scheme (UPS). The new charges will kick in from October 1 and will come in place of the currently existing rules which were issued in June 2020.According to the communication, the charges will be different for the employees of the private sector and the government sector. Let’s have a look at the new fees.



# Donald Trump tariffs: Container freight rates likely to remain subdued amid uncertainty; expected to correct 10–15%

**NEW DELHI. (Agency)**  
Container freight rates are expected to remain subdued for the rest of FY26 as uncertainty in global trade continues, driven by US President Donald Trump’s unpredictable tariff policies, industry experts said.According to ET, exporters rushed shipments to the US ahead of the August 27 deadline for a steep 50% tariff on Indian goods, targeting the Christmas season.India’s exports to the US rose 18% year-on-year to \$40.39 billion during April-August 2025, far outpacing the country’s overall export growth of 2.5% to \$184.13 billion in the same period. Meanwhile, China’s exports to India climbed over 10% to \$51.57 billion, exceeding India’s overall import growth of 2.14%, reported ET.Ajay Sahai, director general and CEO of the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO), said freight rates are likely to see a 10-15% correction due to oversupply amid weakening global demand. “Inflationary pressures are persistent, and the risk of recession in advanced markets could deal a major



blow to world trade,” he said, as per ET. The Drewry World Container Index fell 6% sequentially this week to \$1,913 per 40ft container, down from more than \$4,000 a year ago.On the South East Asia to East Coast North America route, rates dropped to \$2,600 per 40ft container from \$2,900 ten days earlier and nearly halved from \$5,500 a year ago.Bhavik Mota, head of markets (Intra Gulf & Far East, West & Central Asia) at AP Moller - Maersk, said shipments of automotive products have

declined sharply, while FMCG exports remain steady and pharmaceuticals are expected to stay resilient. “Exports of shrimp are vulnerable too. With prices climbing for end-consumers due to Trump’s tariffs, this could eventually translate into a larger drop,” he said, as per ET.Smaller Indian exporters are facing the brunt of high US tariffs, with some cancelling orders. “The end consumer will be impacted and it’s going to hurt demand. The large ones are sustaining, but smaller shippers are having problems,” said a senior shipping official.  
Not all markets are bleak. Improved trade relations with China have supported Indian imports ahead of the Diwali season, with Drewry’s Intra-Asia Container Index rising 5% sequentially to \$611 per 40ft container, reflecting firmer regional trade.  
However, industry officials warn that unless tariffs on India are eased, long-term pressures on global supply chains could intensify.

## Stock Market Ends With Gains This Week Over India-US Trade Talks, Fed Rate Cut

**Benchmark indices Nifty and Sensex ended the week with a gain of around 0.85 per cent and 0.89 per cent even as IT and FMCG counters came under selling pressure. Midcap and small-cap indices ended marginally higher.**



**New Delhi.(Agency)**  
The Indian equity benchmarks rose for three consecutive days this week before finally retreating marginally, as investors booked profits when markets touched a two-month high amid the resumption of the India-US trade talks and Fed rate cut. Benchmark indices Nifty and Sensex ended the week with a gain of around 0.85 per cent and 0.89 per cent even as IT and FMCG counters came under selling pressure. Midcap and small-cap indices ended marginally higher.PSU banks extended their rally, with the Nifty PSU Bank Index rising over 1 per cent.The Adani Group stocks saw strong buying after SEBI dismissed

allegations made by Hindenburg Research. Adani Enterprises surged 6 per cent, while Adani Green Energy, Adani Energy Solutions, Adani Power Ltd and AWL Agri Business Ltd also made strong gains with some shares surging up to 12 per cent.Technically, Nifty formed a bearish candle on daily frame but with a longer lower shadow indicating smart buying at lower levels. It formed a bullish candle on the weekly frame and has been making higher lows from the last three weeks. Since the August lows, the benchmark indices had advanced nearly 4 per cent. "With GST rationalisation set to take effect next week and festive demand

expected to strengthen, investor attention turned toward consumption-driven sectors," said analysts.Going forward, investors will closely track key US macro indicators — including GDP, jobless claims, and core inflation—for cues on the Fed’s policy trajectory. On the domestic front, the upcoming manufacturing PMI will serve as a timely barometer of industrial sentiments, offering early signs of a much-awaited demand revival.Meanwhile, the US equities hit fresh record highs, with the Dow, S&P 500, Nasdaq, and Russell 2000 climbing up to 1 per cent after the Federal Reserve resumed its rate-cutting cycle and signalled further easing. The Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) decided to cut the target Fed Funds rate by 25 basis points. The median projections put real GDP growth in the US at 1.6 per cent year-over-year in 2025, the unemployment rate at 4.5 per cent and Core PCE inflation at 3.1 per cent.

## RBI Urges Banks To Cut Service Charges On Debit Cards, Loans And Penalties To Protect Low-Income Customers And Rein In Soaring Fee Income: Reports

**This push comes at a time when Indian banks have been rapidly expanding into retail lending to diversify after earlier losses from bad corporate loans.**

**New Delhi. (Agency)**  
The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is reportedly urging banks to cut fees on several consumer products, a move that could threaten the billions of rupees banks earn from such charges. People familiar with the matter told Bloomberg that RBI officials have recently asked lenders to reduce service charges like those on debit cards, penalties for failing to maintain minimum balances, and late-payment fees. The central bank hasn’t issued any public statement or replied to media queries.This push comes at a time when Indian banks have been rapidly expanding into retail lending to diversify after earlier losses from bad corporate loans. Growth in personal loans, car financing and small-business



credit has turned the retail segment into a lucrative business, but it has also drawn the RBI’s scrutiny.According to the sources, the RBI is especially concerned about fees that disproportionately affect low-income customers. It hasn’t set fixed limits,

leaving banks to decide their own rates. Currently, processing fees on retail and small-business loans range between 0.5 percent and 2.5 percent, with some banks capping home loan charges at Rs 25,000 (about USD 285), data from online marketplace BankBazaar show.Fee income at Indian banks is already recovering. In the June quarter, it rose 12 percent year-on-year to about Rs 510.6 billion, compared with 6 percent growth in the previous quarter, according to India Ratings & Research. Meanwhile, the Indian Banks’ Association is reportedly discussing over 100 retail products that may come under RBI review, as the regulator also looks at large differences in what customers pay for the same services.

# TCS second-highest beneficiary of approved H-1B visas after Amazon: USCIS data

**Consumers must remain alert as new GST rates take effect September 22; checking MRPs carefully ensures savings are realised, avoiding overpayment due to old pricing or retailer confusion.**

**NEW YORK/WASHINGTON.(Agency)**  
Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) is the second-highest beneficiary with over 5,000 approved H-1B visas in 2025, after Amazon, according to federal data. According to the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), Amazon had 10,044 workers using H-1B visas as of June, 2025. Coming in at the second spot was TCS with 5,505 H-1B visas approved.Other top beneficiaries include Microsoft (5189), Meta (5123), Apple (4202), Google (4181), Deloitte (2353),

Infosys (2004), Wipro (1523) and Tech Mahindra Americas (951).In a move that could significantly impact Indian IT and professional workers in the US, the Trump administration announced a staggering annual fee of USD 100,000 on H-1B visas, a move it said aims to check the "systemic abuse" of the programme. In July, USCIS had said that it has received enough petitions to reach the congressionally mandated 65,000 H-1B visa regular cap and the 20,000 H-1B visa US advanced degree exemption, known as the master’s cap, for fiscal year 2026. US President Donald Trump signed a proclamation "Restriction on entry of certain nonimmigrant workers" on Friday that will restrict entry into the United States of individuals as nonimmigrants unless their H-1B petitions are accompanied or supplemented by a payment of USD 100,000.The proclamation said the restriction shall expire, absent extension, 12 months after the effective date of this proclamation of September 21, 2025. It

said that the number of foreign STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) workers in the United States has more than doubled between 2000 and 2019, increasing from 1.2 million to almost 2.5 million, while overall STEM



employment has only increased 44.5 percent during that time.Among computer and math occupations, the foreign share of the workforce grew from 17.7 per cent in 2000 to 26.1 per cent in 2019.The key facilitator for this influx of foreign STEM labour has been the abuse of the H-1B visa, it said.The proclamation added that Information technology firms

have "prominently manipulated" the H-1B system, significantly harming American worker in computer-related fields.The share of IT workers in the H-1B programme grew from 32 percent in Fiscal Year (FY) 2003 to an average of over 65 percent in the last 5 fiscal years. In addition, some of the most prolific H-1B employers are now consistently IT outsourcing companies.Using these H 1B-reliant IT outsourcing companies provides significant savings for employers, it said, as it cited a study of tech workers that showed a 36 percent discount for H-1B 'entry-level' positions as compared to full-time, traditional workers.To take advantage of artificially low labour costs incentivised by the programme, companies close their IT divisions, fire their American staff, and outsource IT jobs to lower-paid foreign workers, it said. The proclamation cited data that said many American tech companies have laid off their qualified and highly skilled American workers and simultaneously hired thousands of H-1B workers.





# Madhuri Dixit

## And Karan Johar Burn Dance Floor With Their Thumkas On 'Dafliwale'

Bollywood came together to celebrate the legendary Shabana Azmi as she marked her 75th birthday on September 18. The veteran actor hosted an intimate yet grand bash at her residence, where the guest list included some of the biggest names in the industry. Photos and videos from the evening are now circulating online, giving fans a glimpse of the fun, nostalgia, and star power that defined the celebration.

### Madhuri Dixit And Karan Johar Steal The Spotlight

One of the highlights of the evening was filmmaker Karan Johar and actress Madhuri Dixit taking over the dance floor. The duo grooved to the evergreen classic Dafliwale Dafla Baja, instantly drawing loud cheers and applause from the guests. Videos from the night showed Karan, dressed in an all-black outfit, matching steps with Madhuri as other attendees clapped along, capturing the infectious energy of the moment.

The impromptu performance quickly went viral on social media, with fans calling it "iconic" and praising the duo's chemistry. Comments flooded in, with one user writing, "What an OG party!" while another gushed, "Epic. Nobody like KJo and Madhuri." The celebration proved yet again why Madhuri remains Bollywood's eternal dancing diva, while Karan brought his signature flair to the occasion.

### Farhan Akhtar's Sweet Dance With Shabana Azmi

Equally heartwarming was a video of Shabana Azmi herself joining the dance floor with her stepson, Farhan Akhtar. The two swayed to Señorita from Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara, a film that featured Farhan in a leading role. Their joyous performance had the entire room cheering the loudest, adding a deeply personal touch to the festivities.

The energy didn't stop there. Madhuri was later joined by Urmila Matondkar, and together they created yet another memorable dance moment. Sharing snippets from the celebration, filmmaker Faraz Arif Ansari described the evening as "legendary and incredibly special," thanking Shabana for letting him be part of the milestone event.

### Star-Studded Birthday And Shabana's Upcoming Projects

The birthday bash was nothing short of a starry affair. Rekha, Vidya Balan, Farah Khan, Manish Malhotra, Sonu Nigam, and Maheep Kapoor were among the many Bollywood personalities spotted at the event. Fans online couldn't get enough of the reunion of legends under one roof. Even as she celebrated her milestone birthday, Shabana Azmi continues to remain deeply active on the professional front. She will next be seen in Rajkumar Santoshi's Lahore 1947, co-starring Sunny Deol, Preity Zinta, and Ali Fazal. Additionally, she has a key role in Bun Tikki, directed by Faraz Arif Ansari.



## Deepika Padukone Speaks Up After Her Kalki 2 Exit, Confirms King With SRK: 'Every Decision...'



Deepika Padukone has finally addressed her exit from the Kalki 2898 AD sequel and shared exciting news about reuniting with Shah Rukh Khan for King. Posting a picture showing their hands clasped together, she wrote, "The very first lesson he taught me almost 18 years ago while filming Om Shanti Om was that the experience of making a movie, and the people you make it with, matter far more than its success. I couldn't agree more and have applied that learning to every decision I've made since. And that's probably why we're back making our 6th movie together?" Deepika tagged SRK and added the hashtags #King and #Day1, signaling a fresh chapter in one of Bollywood's most celebrated on-screen collaborations. King will mark her sixth project with the superstar since their debut pairing in Om Shanti Om in 2007.

### About Deepika Padukone's Kalki 2898 AD Sequel Exit

Vyjayanthi Movies confirmed Deepika's exit from the Kalki 2898 AD sequel via an official note on X: "This is to officially announce that @deepikapadukone will not be a part of the upcoming sequel of #Kalki2898AD. After careful consideration, we have decided to part ways. Despite the long journey of making the first film, we were unable to find a partnership. And a film like @Kalki2898AD deserves that commitment and much more. We wish her the best with her future projects."

Director Nag Ashwin also shared a cryptic post on Instagram, which went viral. Writing alongside a fan edit of Krishna's entry, he noted, "You can't change what happened, but you can choose what happens next," leaving fans speculating if this was a subtle response to Deepika's departure.

### Why Deepika Made The Decision

Industry insiders recall that this isn't Deepika's first high-profile exit. Earlier in May, she walked away from Sandeep Reddy Vanga's Spirit over an eight-hour work demand, profit-sharing clauses, and her preference to prioritise motherhood while avoiding Telugu dialogues.

## 'Religion Will Never Come Between Us': Sonakshi Sinha Opens Up On Life With Husband Zaheer Iqbal



Sonakshi Sinha, who tied the knot with longtime boyfriend Zaheer Iqbal in 2024 after nearly eight years together, is letting fans into her world like never before. In a candid chat on The Right Angle with Sonal Kalra, the actor shared her thoughts on love, interfaith marriage, family dynamics, and her new films. When asked whether religion has ever come in the way of her relationship, Sonakshi was quick to dismiss the notion. "In how we are as a couple, no. In how we are at home, in terms of the different ways that we've been brought up in, there are certain customs that he and his family follow, which I really respect, and there are certain customs that me and my family follow, which they respect.

Religion is something that will never come in between the two of us. There's never been any question, fight, or tension when it comes to that, and I think that's the most beautiful part of it. Our strength lies in respect."

The 38-year-old also revealed how her parents, actor Shatrughan Sinha and politician Poonam Sinha, have wholeheartedly embraced Zaheer as part of the family. "100% damad he is," she said with a laugh. "Everyone runs helter-skelter when he comes, saying 'Zaheer aa rahe hai, damad ji aa rahe hai.' My mom keeps asking kya khayega, kya khayega, and my dad loves spending time with him. I think they've become really good friends. When I enter the room, it's usually the two of them talking while I sit quietly!"

Speaking about her relationship with Zaheer, Sonakshi reflected on what makes their bond special after seven years of dating before marriage. "We say we want to find someone we want to grow old with. But after being with a person like Zaheer, you realise you need someone you can remain a child with. Ussi se hanshi mazak barkarar rehna hai. You are constantly laughing. This was something I was missing in my life. Ab aa chuka hai, toh I couldn't be happier."

### What's Next for Sonakshi Sinha

Away from her personal life, Sonakshi is keeping just as busy professionally. She confirmed that she has wrapped up two films, including her much-anticipated Telugu debut Jatadhara, which is expected to release by the end of the year.

# Katrina Kaif

## To Announce Pregnancy Soon? Baby Bump Photo Goes Viral

For a long time now, reports of Katrina Kaif expecting her first child with Vicky Kaushal have been making headlines. While the couple has not either confirmed or denied their pregnancy reports, a new photo has now surfaced on social media, in which Katrina's baby bump is clearly visible. Recently, a photo of Katrina Kaif surfaced on social media in which the actress was seen posing in a maroon gown, while also flaunting her baby bump. It remains unclear



if Katrina was shooting for her maternity photoshoot or if the viral picture is from some ad shoot. Soon after the picture was shared on Reddit, several social media users expressed excitement and congratulated the actress. "So so happy for her... Congratulations! ..." one of the users wrote. "My inner 14-year-old fan is screaming. Congratulations.," added another. "For a moment I thought it was some throwback to pregnant Kareena. But wohooo!!

Congratulations," a third comment read.

### How Did the Pregnancy Rumours Start?

Speculations regarding Katrina Kaif's pregnancy began on July 30, when a video of the actress and Vicky at a ferry port in Mumbai started doing the rounds. Dressed in an oversized white shirt and baggy pants, Katrina's casual outfit and careful walk led many fans to wonder if she was expecting. Comments such as "Is she pregnant?" and "Seems pregnant for sure" flooded the post, setting the internet buzzing. Before this, Katrina's New Year's Eve post in a polka-dot dress had already triggered pregnancy chatter. Many social media users linked her look to a so-called Bollywood "polka-dot pregnancy myth," drawing parallels with Anushka Sharma and Deepika Padukone, who were both spotted in similar prints while expecting. However, a flowy dress and a viral video alone do not make a baby bump, and the speculation largely remained baseless.

The rumour mill hit its peak on August 7, when a viral post claimed that Vicky and Katrina were expecting their first child in October or November. However, the twist was soon uncovered, the post was entirely fan-made and did not originate from Katrina, Vicky, or their close circle. Social media users quickly debunked the claim, with one sarcastically commenting, "Does Katrina know she's pregnant?" while another said, "They didn't confirm, and you're already spreading rumours!"







Use wall

Wall clocks are an inexpensive way to enhance the decor of any room...

Wall clocks may sound boring as decorative pieces but if selected with care they can add more meaning and character to the decor of your house. There are people who are passionate about this and take real pains to search for the perfect clock to match the interior of a home and most of the times, when used intelligently, they add an attractive touch to your house.

"I love collecting clocks of different kinds. They fascinate me. Every room in my house has a different kind of clock on its walls," says singer, Abhijeet Bhattacharya. Though there are some that have been gifted to him by his admirers and friends, most of them have been personally picked. They are indeed truly intriguing. "Whenever I go abroad I pick up ones that look interesting," he elaborates. Clocks that have a period look and those that are contemporary have both found a place in his house.

Decorative wall clocks come in many varieties and are easily available says interior designer Sheetal. Some are handcrafted and made of wood; there are others that are made up of metal, or plastic and acrylic. Precious metals like silver are also used. "The most important thing to remember when decorating with wall-clocks is to choose something that you feel represents you and in some way enhances the decor of your room," says Hitesh Somaiya, who has used clocks in interesting patterns to decorate walls. Hanging a wall-clock is pretty much like hanging a picture or a painting in a room. It is part of the overall decor. Since wall-clocks are generally inexpensive, you could actually have a collection of them. One of the ways to decorate with wall-clocks is to hang several similar ones in a row, as if they were an art gallery. You can set the clock to display real-time of some popular city in another part of the world. "My sons live abroad and I have placed three

# Clocks to enhance Home decor

clocks showing the time of Chicago, London and India in one single row," says Chandana Sengupta, an artist who has herself designed her Bandra home. Placing a dark colored wall-clock on a pristine white or light coloured wall is an eye-catching option. One of the oldest types of wall clocks are the cuckoo clocks and their timelessness will never go out of style. Even today, think wall-clocks and somewhere the thought of a cuckoo clock is bound to cross your mind. Most of these clocks are made either in the shape of a birdhouse or chalet. They have a small mechanical cuckoo bird pop out of a door on the hour to accompany the chirping noises. A cuckoo clock is among the most unusual type of clocks. A majority of them are pendulum clocks that give the time by striking the hour, using whistles that often sound exactly like the call of the cuckoo bird. Another kind of wall-clock that you can consider are those that come equipped with front-opening beveled

glass doors, polished brass lyre pendulums, and are quartz-driven. These clocks are generally key-wound with chime silence options. Some of the many finishes available are cherry, oak, mahogany, and even leather. However, for a more stylish touch, go in for antique wall clocks. Many antique wall clocks are pendulum operated and some are set in picture frames. Of late, even eclectic art deco with motifs of the sun, moon, stars, and other new age designs are becoming popular. While we are at interesting ideas for the home, why should the kitchen be left behind? So, try out kitchen wall clocks as well! There's again a large variety of designs to choose from — fresh fruits, roosters, etc. Your kitchen clock will be a great addition to your kitchen and will help to enhance an inviting, relaxing atmosphere. For the kids room especially, you can opt for neon wall clocks. Not only are they a great way to add extra light, they are also fun and funky.

## How to make baubles at home



A month more to Christmas and preparations have already begun. Making your own baubles can be fun. Make as many as you can before the D-Day and get the Christmassy feel at home...  
**You will need:**  
Ping-pong balls (table tennis balls) Red nail paint Gold sparkler tube A tube of quick fix A carpet needle or large safety pin A few meters of gold thread  
**Method:**  
-Paint the ping-pong ball with the nail paint. This can be tricky. Hold it with the tips of your thumb, forefinger and middle finger and paint one side of it. -Let it dry. Now paint the other side. You will need an even coat and for that you need to make sure that your nail paint is fresh, not dry and clumpy. Let it dry completely.  
-Now, pierce your carpet needle or safety pin to make a tiny hole on one side of the ping-pong ball. Take a four-inch piece of the gold thread, fold it in half. -Apply quick-fix on the tips and push it into the tiny hole. Hold. Let it stick to the ball. If needed apply a dot of quick-fix solution,



sealing the hole with the thread.  
-The next step is all about your creativity — you can use your gold sparkler tube to create any design you like on your red bauble. For the gold star shown in the picture put a dot of your gold sparkler on the ball and then with the help of the blunt end of the needle, give six tiny strokes pulling out the paint from the centre to form a six-pointed star.-You can also stick tiny mirrors in a pattern and make your bauble look pretty.

## Quick tips to keep your kitchen clean



Begin by cleaning your kitchen counters. If you don't use your juicer everyday, the ideal things is to stash it away somewhere out of sight and away from your kitchen counter.  
Do away with everything that you think you are not going to use in the next couple of days. Then, spray liquid cleaner and wipe the counter clean.  
Clean your gas stove/hob or oven. Make sure all the grime and the spills are wiped clean.  
Next, clean your refrigerator. Check what the leftovers are discard them. Find out which of the bottles are almost empty, or are too old. Remove the shelves and clean them. Clean the outside as well as the inside of the fridge with a soft cloth.  
Make sure your sink is free of clutter. Wash and stack away your dishes and utensils. clean the sink once it is clutter-free. Remove stubborn stains. Finish by rubbing it dry.  
Clean the floor of your kitchen last. Pick all the debris that you had thrown onto the floor from the counter top and the over and the toaster etc.

## Beginners guide to Bonsai

You can make your bonsai into master pieces provided you follow the right techniques. We list down the basics of bonsai.



1. Anyone with the interest and little space for growing plants, even on a window-sill or balcony can build and enjoy Bonsai collection.
2. The 3 main techniques to grow your own Bonsai plants are growing, pruning and shaping.  
**Growing-** select a tree from a nursery which has a thick trunk. take a small ceramic container to plant the bonsai - usually the depth of the pot should be equal to the thickness of the trunk of the plant. Place a plastic net at the base of the container, so that water can drain out. Now add the specially prepared bonsai soil made of garden soil, cow manure, broken brick pieces, sand and organic manure (available in the market). Trim 1/2 to 1/3rd pf the existing roots of the plant. leaving most if the thin white roots (known as feeder roots) and some old thick roots. Plant the tree into the pot.  
NOTE- materials matter, so if the soil good, the bonsai will take few months or even a year to grow, and two years for fruits to flower  
**Pruning:** Generally, you have to prune the roots and the foliage. Pruning bonsais is one of the more enjoyable aspects of growing bonsais.  
**Pruning roots:** Due to small containers, bonsai roots are stunted in growth. By pruning roots, you will ensure that there is space for the new roots to grow, which is critical for the health and growth of the bonsai. Prune roots twice a year and change the soil when it's done.  
**Pruning Foliage:** This is vital for aesthetic purposes. Workout a specific design in the mind for your tree and shape it into the form you desire. Removing dead leaves help keep it healthy and beautiful.  
Shaping: To create a desired shape, you can use a wire (copper wires are the best) to assist the branches to grow as per your design. Make sure that the wire is of the right thickness and does not break the branches. Hold the branch you are wiring in both hands and carefully wind the wire around it.  
3. Select the plants which can be easily trimmed and shaped, and ones with a rough bark.  
4. For the flower and fruit bonsais, four to five hours of direct sunlight is essential.  
5. Avoid too much of watering. Alternate days are good enough.  
6. Ready-made bonsais are available. Plant them into containers with the given steps  
7. Bonsais are kept indoors, but a suitable place is on the window sill, balcony, terrace or a garden shelf. Avoid keeping them in an A/C room for long.  
8. Although Bonsai trees can be grown from seeds , more developed material is already available. Seedings, cuttings or young trees with smaller leaves are usually preferred.