

# Security stepped up at Vijay's Chennai home after deadly Karur stampede

- At least 10 minors, including a two-year-old, died in the Karur stampede at Vijay's rally
- A crowd of 27,000 gathered at a venue with a capacity of 10,000, violating safety norms
- Vijay has announced Rs 20 lakh compensation for families of each of the 39 victims

#### Chennai.(Agency)

At least 10 minors, including a two-year-old, are among the 39 victims of the stampede at actor-politician Vijay's rally in Karur yesterday. Many of them are women and most victims are in their 20s and 30s, has found. Heartbreaking visuals of a father holding his child in

his arms and pleading for help at a hospital, and of a mother refusing to let go of her child after doctors declared death, are circulating on social media. Among the children killed in yesterday's tragedy are Hemalatha (8), Saitetsana (8), Sai Jeeva (4), Guru Vishnu (2), Sanuj (13), Dharanika (14), Pazhaniammal (11), Kokila (14), Krishik (7) and Kishore (17). The other victims include Thamarai Kannan (25), Sukanya (33), Akash (23), Dhanushkumar (24), Vadivazhagan (54), Revathi (52), Chandra (40), Ramesh (32), Ravikrishnan (32), Priyadarshini (35), Maheshwari (45), Malathi (36), Sumathi (50), Manikandan (33), Satheshkumar (34), Anand (26), Sankar Ganesh (45), Vijayaranji (42), Gokulapriya (28), Fathima Banu (29), Jaya (55), Arukkani (60) and Jayanthi (43).

The actor-politician, whose party TVK is prepping for a poll debut in the Tamil Nadu Assembly election next year, has

come under fire after sources in the state government alleged flouting of safety norms at his rally. The sources have said Vijay arrived nearly seven hours late and a crowd of 27,000 gathered at a



venue with a capacity of 10,000. The sources have also said that food and drinking water arrangements were not made at the venue.

Two top leaders of TVK, including its general secretary and Vijay's aide N Anand, have been named in a case of culpable homicide not amounting to murder. Vijay has announced a

compensation of Rs 20 lakh for the families of each of the 39 people killed in the stampede.

In a social media post through his party's official handle on X, the 51-year-old actor-politician said he is overwhelmed by grief. "I am at a loss for words to express the pain my heart endures.

My eyes and mind are clouded with sorrow. The faces of all of you whom I have met keep flashing through my mind. The more I think of my loved ones who show affection and care, the more my heart slips further from its place," he said.

"While I express my deepest condolences with indescribable pain to you who are grieving the loss of our cherished loved ones, I also stand close to your hearts, sharing this immense sorrow. This is indeed an irreparable loss for us. No matter who offers words of comfort, the loss of our loved ones is unbearable.

## 24 Bangladeshis apprehended by Assam Police, sent back: Himanta

#### Guwahati.(Agency)

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said that 24 Bangladeshis have been apprehended by the police in Cachar district for illegally entering India, and sent back to the neighbouring country.

He asserted that Assam will continue identifying infiltrators and sending them back. "Assam is always at the service of lost travellers who mistake our state for their own and will send them back promptly to their motherland Bangladesh," Sarma said in an X post on Saturday night.

T w e a k i n g lines of a Hindi song, he wrote, "Ghar laut ja pardesi, tera desh t u j h e pukaare re" (Return home foreigner, your country is calling you). "Adios lost travellers!" he added.

Nearly 500 alleged illegal Bangladeshi infiltrators have been pushed back from Assam to the neighbouring country in recent months. Sarma claimed that the state government was committed to an infiltration-free Assam and each week, at least 35-40 people are being "pushed back". The BSF also intensified its vigil along the 1,88-km India-Bangladesh border in the Northeast since disturbances began in the neighbouring country last year.



# India Tears Into Pak At UN: Jaishankar Calls It 'Epicentre Of Global Terrorism'

Citing the April terror attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, where 26 innocent tourists were killed, Jaishankar emphasised that India acted to protect its citizens and ensured that the perpetrators of the terrorist attack were brought to justice.

#### New Delhi.(Agency)

India again tore into Pakistan over terrorism at the 80th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on Saturday, with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar calling Islamabad the "epicentre of global terrorism." Highlighting India's long-standing fight against cross-border terror, he urged the international community to take firm and united action against state-sponsored terrorism.

"India has confronted this challenge since its independence, having a neighbour that is an epicentre

of global terrorism. For decades now, major international terrorist attacks are traced back to that one country. UN's designated lists of terrorists are replete with its nationals. The most recent example of cross-border barbarism was the murder of innocent tourists in Pahalgam in April this year," Jaishankar said.

Jaishankar said, "Because terrorism is a shared threat, it is essential that there is much deeper international cooperation. When nations openly declare terrorism a

state policy, when terror hubs operate on an industrial scale, and when terrorists are publicly glorified, then such



actions must be unequivocally condemned. The financing of terrorism must be choked even as prominent terrorists are sanctioned. Relentless pressure must be applied on

the entire terrorism ecosystem. Those who condone nations that sponsor terror will find that it comes back to bite them."

Citing the April attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, where 26 innocent tourists were killed, Jaishankar emphasised that India acted to protect its citizens and ensured that the perpetrators of the terrorist attack were brought to justice. "India exercised its right to defend its people against terrorism and brought its organisers and perpetrators to justice," Jaishankar said.

# Bhopal Diary: CM's back-to-back Delhi visits spark buzz

Several others are linking it to possible announcements of chairpersons and vice-chairpersons of independent corporations and boards which have been long overdue.

#### New Delhi.(Agency)

CM Mohan Yadav's back-to-back visits to Delhi this week have set tongues wagging in political circles. While senior state BJP leaders have maintained that the CM's tours are related to important development projects, political pundits in Bhopal are making their own guesses, spanning from something big about to happen to a rejig of the state's council of ministers. Several others are linking it to possible announcements of chairpersons and vice-chairpersons of independent corporations and boards which have been long overdue. What gave momentum to speculations was the BJP national joint general secy (organisation) Shiv Prakash's meeting with

the CM in Bhopal.

#### All's not well between DCM & BJP MLA

All doesn't seem to be well between Deputy CM Rajendra Shukla and first-time BJP MLA Siddharth Tiwari in Rewa district of Vindhya region. The issue has been making news, particularly since Shukla's pictures were found missing from posters of an event in Tiwari's constituency Teonhar, which was graced by CM Mohan Yadav. Importantly, Shukla gave the event a miss after welcoming



the CM at the Rewa Airport, triggering speculation about all not being well between Shukla (most powerful BJP leader of Vindhya) and Tiwari, who is the grandson of Congress stalwart and ex-Vidhan Sabha Speaker Late Shrinivas Tiwari.

# PM Modi Pays Tribute To Lata Mangeshkar, Shaheed Bhagat Singh In 126th 'Mann Ki Baat' Episode

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses the nation in the 126th episode of his monthly radio programme, 'Mann Ki Baat', on Sunday.



#### New Delhi.(Agency)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday paid homage to legendary singer Lata Mangeshkar and freedom fighter Shaheed Bhagat Singh on their birth anniversaries during the 126th episode of his monthly radio programme, 'Mann Ki Baat'. Addressing the 126th episode of his monthly radio programme, Prime Minister Narendra Modi noted the significance of the day, marking the birth anniversaries of two iconic figures of India — Shaheed Bhagat Singh and legendary singer Lata Mangeshkar.

Paying homage to Bhagat Singh, Prime Minister Modi described him as a "source of inspiration" for generations of Indians, particularly the youth, and said that fearlessness was deeply rooted in his character. Prime Minister Modi also fondly remembered Lata Mangeshkar, highlighting her profound bond with Indian culture. Prime Minister Modi remarked that anyone who connects with India's cultural and musical heritage is inevitably moved by her voice. Her songs, Prime Minister Modi said, evoke every human emotion, and her patriotic renditions greatly motivated people.

# Corruption has doubled, contractors' association tells CM Siddaramaiah

#### Bengaluru.(Agency)

Karnataka State Contractors' Association (KSCA) has alleged that the rate of corruption under the Congress-ruled state government has almost doubled compared to the previous BJP regime. The association, in a hard-hitting letter dated September 25, addressed to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, said that KSCA fought against corruption and that it was also instrumental in helping the Congress to come to power. KSCA President R Manjunath and General Secretary GM Ravindra, who signed the letter, alleged that the government has failed to clear the long-pending

dues of contractors for nearly two years.

The charges in the letter could come as a setback and major embarrassment to the state government, as the Congress ran an aggressive campaign against then BJP government with its 'PayCM' and '40 per cent commission sarkara' campaigns, which dented the BJP's chances of retaining power in the state assembly elections in 2023.

"When you (Siddaramaiah) were the leader of the opposition, you had said that no commission would be asked to



clear bills if your (Congress) party comes to power. However, we regret to inform you that compared to the previous government, the commission has doubled in eight departments that

execute projects," Majunath said in the letter.

#### Ashoka terms K'taka govt as 'ATM Sarkara'

KSCA President Manjunath alleged that the followers of elected representatives and the Congress workers were bagging projects from institutions like Nirmi Kendra and Karnataka Rural Infrastructure Development Limited, and then, in turn, were 'sub-contracted' to 'senior contractors' in exchange for a cut. He said that, in doing so, it was difficult for the contractors to maintain the quality.

# On Wangchuk's arrest, AAP calls Rahul 'BJP agent', Congress links Kejriwal with RSS

#### The picture

#### posted by AAP

#### showed Rahul

#### Gandhi hugging

#### Prime Minister

#### Modi on the floor

#### of Lok Sabha in

#### July 2018, when

#### he walked up to

#### the other side after

#### finishing his speech.

In a post on X, the AAP said India's renowned social worker and scientist Sonam Wangchuk has been imprisoned



Minister Modi on the floor of Lok Sabha in July 2018, when he walked up to the other side after finishing his speech.

In a post on X, the AAP said India's renowned social worker and scientist Sonam Wangchuk has been imprisoned

by Modi's "dictatorial" government on the "false" charge of sedition, and questioned the country's "so-called opposition leader" for maintaining silence on the issue. "Rahul Gandhi also maintained silence on the BJP's decision to hold an India-Pakistan cricket match," the AAP said, adding, "Now it has become evident to the world that Rahul Gandhi opposes the BJP only on a few issues for the cameras, but on issues where a wave against the BJP is sweeping the entire country, he disappears. Hitting back, Congress social media head Supriya Shrinivas said in a post on X, "Arvind Kejriwal ji, your party is on the verge of collapse. Do you know why? Because the foundation of your party is

## News box

**'I am not at home: Burglars break into Mary Kom's Faridabad house; thieves loot taps, inverter battery, and other valuables**

**Gurgaon.(Agency)**

Burglars broke into the locked home of Olympic medalist and six-time world boxing champion Mary Kom in Surajkund's Sector 46 earlier this week, police said on Saturday. The gang allegedly accessed the house through a vacant plot beside it and entered after breaking a glass window on the terrace on the intervening night of Sept 24-25. Neighbours had first spotted a ladder placed in the backyard and alerted Kom's manager, who then informed the cops. On Saturday, a team from Sector 46 police post reached the house but could not enter as it was locked. Later, Kom's manager arrived with the keys, following which officers confirmed the burglary.

Though the exact items missing from the house are not yet known, police said gold items, taps, an inverter battery, and other valuables were found missing.

Sub-inspector Yashpal told TOI that a case had not yet been registered, as the police were awaiting a formal complaint from the boxing champion, who is currently in Meghalaya attending the 4th Sohra International Half Marathon. "The burglars appear to have climbed onto the terrace from an adjoining empty plot and broke in after damaging a window. We are awaiting a detailed assessment of the loss," said Surajkund SHO inspector Pahlaj. Mary Kom, a Padma Vibhushan awardee, Olympic bronze medalist, and six-time world champion, has not yet issued a statement on the incident. But she told news agency ANI, "I am not at home. I will know exactly when I reach home. In the CCTV footage, they (thieves) are seen taking away the TV and other items. My neighbours told me that it happened on September 24. It happened at my Faridabad home... I have informed the police."

**Waste management tender sparks a row after firm alleges 'favouritism' by Palwal civic body**

**Gurgaon.(Agency)**

The Palwal municipal council is faced with allegations of favouritism and tendering violations after disqualifying multiple bidders in a waste management tender.

A private firm accused the council of disqualifying three bidders, including itself, to favour another firm, potentially costing taxpayers an additional Rs 13 crore over five years. The complainant firm, previously involved with Ecogreen, whose contract was terminated, demanded a review of the tendering process. Officials said they had not finalised the agency for the work. The estimated cost of the tender is Rs 28.5 crore. The company has demanded that the Directorate of Urban Local Bodies (DULB) intervene, review the tendering process, and restore fairness to protect public money.

However, the MC Palwal officials told TOI that the complainant firm is the sub-vendor of the city's previous solid waste management concessionaire, Ecogreen, whose contract was terminated by the MCG and state govt, which led to the firm's disqualification. The officials also said that they are re-examining the matter and have not yet finalised the agency for the work. "According to the tender conditions, the bidders are allowed to show their experience of working for private entities, for which I submitted all my relevant documents. As per the norms of the Haryana govt, the reason for disqualification has to be communicated to an agency explicitly in a meeting with the vendor. No such thing was done. Moreover, the agency which got the tender in MC Hisar for doorstep waste collection work was disqualified here, and the agency which was disqualified there became the L1. Moreover, one of the other shortlisted agencies has been blacklisted in Panchkula," alleged complainant Gaurav Joshi of Greentooth Technologies.

**Drones will keep an eye on overhead rapid rail cables**

**Ghaziabad. (Agency)**

NCRTC has launched a drone-based monitoring system for the Namo Bharat corridor.

Equipped with high-resolution cameras, thermal sensors, and AI analytics, drones will conduct non-intrusive inspections of overhead equipment. The system will detect issues like loose fittings or insulation faults early, ensuring safer, more efficient train operations.

"This data-driven approach strengthens asset health management, enhances operational efficiency, and helps ensure uninterrupted service for the commuters, while removing the need for live-line contact and reducing dependency on manual checks," said an NCRTC official. Manual overhead equipment inspections are time-consuming, require manpower, and often need temporary shutdowns. "The drone-enabled inspections will be managed by DB RRTS Operations India Pvt. Ltd., the operations and maintenance partner for the corridor, as part of its maintenance framework," said the official.

# Gurgaon civic body to crack down on waste burning

**Ghaziabad.(Agency)**

Four months after a balcony collapse left two dead in Tulsi Niketan, Ghaziabad Development Authority (GDA) has decided to take National Buildings Construction Corporation (NBCC) on board to redevelop the dilapidated colony in the city's Bhopura area. The development authority on Friday met NBCC officials and sought a redevelopment plan from them. "Tulsi Niketan is on the city's 'unsafe colony' list. In the meeting, NBCC was asked to draw up a pre-feasibility report for the revamp project and submit it within a week," GDA secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh said. "NBCC will subsequently prepare a detailed report of the project and may even redevelop the township." Officials said the redevelopment work is likely to be carried out on a PPP model

where the developer would undertake the construction and redevelopment in exchange for a share in the saleable commercial and residential areas to recover costs. GDA is likely to act as a facilitator by allocating land and providing regulatory support.

The Tulsi Niketan scheme was developed by the GDA in 1989-90 and spans over 7.8 hectares. Over the years, poor maintenance, ageing construction and encroachment have rendered many of the buildings—2,004 EWS, 288 LIG flats and 60 shops—structurally unsafe. The condition of the colony came back to the spotlight on May 14, when a five-year-old boy, Laddu, and his 25-year-old uncle, Akash Kumar, were crushed to death after a portion of a first-floor balcony collapsed on them. Officials said



in Feb 2019, the engineering department of Jamia Millia Islamia, hired to carry out a safety audit of Tulsi Niketan flats, recommended the immediate demolition of most of the flats. The Jamia engineers carried out three-level tests, including a structural audit, to ascertain the buildings' safety and found that 90% of

flats were in a dilapidated state, while the rest were somewhat exteriorly "maintained but still not fit to live in."

Attempts to redevelop the township, however, failed to cut ice with residents repeatedly. GDA officials said they had earlier invited expressions of interest, but no developer apart from NBCC came forward. At the time, the authority had pegged the project's total saleable area at 58,500 sqm, with combined land and FAR costs of Rs 84.2 crore. The builder was required to pay GDA a minimum premium of Rs 25 crore. Officials added that the financial assessment valued GH-1, commercial, and dispensary land for GDA at Rs 24.2 crore, translating to Rs 78,100 per sqm (Rs 7,260 per sq ft).

## Surajkund to host Diwali mela from Oct 2-7 with over 500 stalls, cultural shows

**Gurgaon.(Agency)**

Nearly two months after the murder of Delhi property dealer Rohit Shokeen, a father-son duo were arrested from Sonipat for their alleged role in orchestrating and executing the crime. The accused, Kuldeep (45), and his son Kamal (20) are believed to have accepted Rs 3 lakh to plan the murder and arrange a shooter. According to investigators, the duo acted on the request of a friend, planning the attack and recruiting a shooter to carry out the killing. Both men have a history of criminal activity in Sonipat. Kuldeep faces charges under the Arms Act and for obstructing a govt servant, while Kamal has had FIRs against him for issuing death threats, assault, and attempted murder. Their arrest brings the total number of accused in custody to six, with two more currently hospitalised and awaiting formal arrest once they are discharged.

As Shokeen's friend stepped away to buy cigarettes, two masked motorcyclists—one wearing a helmet, the other using a muffler to conceal his face—approached him. Seizing the opportunity, the assailants opened fire, striking Shokeen with around 15 bullets. The brutality of the attack left Shokeen with multiple entry and exit wounds, and three bullets were later recovered during autopsy. Police believe the shooters had been trailing Shokeen's car and waited for the precise moment when he was alone to launch their assault. In the aftermath of the murder, Deepak Nandal and Sunil Sardhania—alleged members of the Himanshu Bhau gang—claimed responsibility for the killing in a social media post. Kuldeep and Kamal were presented in court and remanded in judicial custody. Police spokesperson Sandeep Kumar said an investigation had been initiated.



The fatal attack took place on Aug 4 near Palm Hills society in Sector 77. Shokeen, who was known for his connections in the property business and his friendship with rapper Fazilpuria, was traveling to Noida in a car borrowed from his elder brother. He was accompanied by a friend from Delhi, who survived the ordeal.

## Only 1 eligible bidder, Gurgaon's sewage station project to be delayed

**Ghaziabad . (Agency)**

The plan to upgrade a sewage pumping station in Sector 9A has faced setback as GMDA recalled the tender after only one eligible bidder was found.

The project aims to build a 665.5 MLD capacity station to address sewage backflow issues. Residents have complained about sewage overflow and foul odour. The project, estimated at Rs 97.6 crore, has been re-tendered. Under the project, GMDA plans to construct a 665.5 million litres per day (MLD) capacity main pumping station. The facility is intended to address the persistent problem of sewage backflow in residential areas, which causes flooding of internal roads, foul odour, and health hazards for nearby residents. The first tender was floated in

May, but with only one agency qualifying during the technical evaluation stage, officials decided to reinitiate the process. "We want to ensure more agencies participate so that the project is executed efficiently," said a GMDA official. Currently, the Dhanwarpur sewage network, which serves sectors 1 to 23, sectors 33 to 37, and several adjoining villages, is handling over 215 MLD, operating close to its maximum capacity of 218 MLD. The existing pumping station, which supports the 68 MLD and 100 MLD sewage treatment plants constructed in 2000 and 2015, has suffered deterioration over time. Frequent pump failures have been reported, resulting in sewage overflow and backflow into nearby colonies. In addition, a separate 50 MLD

STP commissioned by the municipal corporation in 2019 also depends on the same pumping station, adding to the system's load. Residents in the surrounding areas have repeatedly complained of overflowing sewage during monsoons and a persistent foul smell that affects daily life. The new pumping station will include six coarse screens, four mechanical and two manual, three sewage sumps, an odour control unit, an operating gallery for valves and transformers, and diesel generator sets. Once completed, the new 665.5 MLD facility will not only resolve backflow and overflow issues but also provide sufficient capacity to meet the city's growing sewage treatment needs in the coming years, the official said.



with these instructions shall invite strict administrative action," the order states, underscoring that the ultimate goal of the MCG is to ensure a clean, sustainable, and pollution-free Gurgaon. Joint commissioners have also been directed to maintain strict records of challans issued, locations of violations, and penalties collected, with weekly reports to be submitted to the MCG headquarters. To reinforce accountability, the order warns that if repeated violations are reported from any zone, concerned field officers will be held personally responsible and disciplinary action may be initiated against them.

## Santiniketan, Bishnupur, Ray: Bengal's icons inspire Gurgaon's Durga Pujas this year

**Gurgaon.(Agency)**

As we prepare to welcome Ma Durga into our hearts, homes and communities, there's much to look forward to in the city over the next five days. Especially on Dwarka Expressway, a newbie to the Puja experience but certainly not lacking in ambition or emotion. In its 27th year, Sarbojanin Puja & Sanskritik Samiti is moving from its Palam Vihar abode to Gurgaon Kali Bari in Sector 109, off Dwarka Expressway. "Initially, the decision to shift the venue brought with it a dilemma—will we be able to organise everything smoothly in the new premises? But with the wholehearted involvement, dedication, and enthusiasm of all our committee members and volunteers, the arrangements are taking shape beautifully," Pradeep Debnath, general secretary, Sarbojanin Puja & Sanskritik Samiti, told TOI. To add to the auspicious occasion is the realisation of a "long-cherished dream", of the pandal being designed and directed entirely by artisans from West

Bengal. While this Samiti has seen many autumns come and go, the Dwarka Expressway Sarbojanin Puja Samiti (DESPOS) is only in its second year, but as eager to make it a week to remember at Shri Shyam Farm (Dhankot Chowk, Sector 102). The organisers will also host a dandiya night, Embracing 'Prabashir Aponjon' ('home away from home') as its theme, DESPOS promises a cultural amalgam of the time-honoured and the modern day—one that embodies the city that Gurgaon has become, a magnet for migrants seeking new vistas and a fulfilling future. "DESPOS is where tradition meets tomorrow, and we're building a platform where every community feels at home," says Mridul Munshi, president, DESPOS. The organisers expect in excess of 15,000 visitors to the pandal, the majority from the more than 35 societies along the expressway and in new Gurgaon. And with over 40 curated food and flea stalls for regional cuisines and crafts, the festivities will also boost small businesses and the local

economy. Across the city, there are anniversaries. South City 1 has been celebrating Sharodotsav since 2000, which makes the current edition, its silver jubilee, a special one. And marking 35 years is Maruti Vihar Sarbojanin Durgotsav, whose theme this year is 'Anyo Hirak Deshe', a nod to Satyajit Ray's comedy/fantasy 'Hirak Rajar Deshe' (his sequel to 'Gopibhagavata'). Through this theme, we are attempting to highlight the importance of learning by honouring Udayan Pandit's philosophy that a child's holistic development is impossible without proper education," says Susmita Ray, joint secretary, Maruti Vihar Sarbojanin Durgotsav, referencing the schoolteacher in 'Hirak Rajar Deshe', played by Soumitra Chatterjee. "Moreover, through the word 'anyo' (other), we are trying to create a unique effect by juxtaposing the 'dark celebration' of greed, oppression and ruthlessness by Hirak Raja with our joyous celebration of Ma Durga's

homecoming." Bangiya Parishad in Sector 56 ushers in its second decade, its theme a depiction of a journey that began back in 2006. The mandap here takes inspiration from Upasana Griha, the prayer house at Santiniketan, an exquisite space conceived and built by Debendranath Tagore in 1863 using multi-coloured Belgian glass. "It serves as a non-denominational place of worship and quiet contemplation within the Visva-Bharati campus, embodying the universal spiritual ethos of Shantiniketan, founded by his son Rabindranath," explains Malay Nandy, president, Bangiya Parishad. The sacred, however, is incomplete without respect for the ecology, a truism no pandal can afford to ignore in these times. Tulip Violet, for example, uses 'Daaker Saaj' as adornments for the goddess, such as silver sequins (from daak, the Bangla word for post, evoking a time when foils, sheets and wires were imported). These are now made from shola pith—a plant that grows in the marshes of Bengal

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# Delhi Jal Board to waive 100% late payment surcharge on water bills

## The Sikh Times

New Delhi: The Delhi Jal Board (DJB) on Friday approved a comprehensive scheme waiving late payment surcharge (LPSC) on pending water bills. The move will not only offer huge relief to lakhs of households, but also strengthen the financial health of the Board. The decision was taken at a Board meeting chaired by Water Minister Parvesh Verma. The waiver scheme will come into effect next month and remain open until March

## 5 killed after speeding Thar collides with divider on Delhi-Gurugram expressway

Gurugram: Five people, including three women, were killed and one person was critically injured after the vehicle they were travelling in crashed into a divider of exit 9 of the early Saturday morning. According to police, the victims were in a Mahindra Thar that lost control and collided with the divider at high speed. All five people, including three women and two men, died on the spot. The lone survivor, a man was taken to a private hospital and is currently undergoing treatment. Preliminary investigation reveals that all six occupants of the Thar had come from Uttar Pradesh.

### NAME CHANGE

It is for general information that I, Aas Mohammad S/o Aashique Ali R/o 127-GALI NO 4, B-BLOCK BRIPURI, DELHI -110094, declare that the name of my father has been wrongly written as ASIF ALI in my Passport No. A344009. The actual name of my father is Aashique Ali, which may be amended accordingly.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, Prateek Jain S/o Arun Jain R/o 22/11, Third Floor, Ashok Nagar, Tihar-II, Ashok Nagar, PO: Tihar Nagar, Dist: West Delhi-110018, declare that name of my minor son has been wrongly written as Ronit A Jain aged 15 years in his school record. The actual name of my minor son is RONIT JAIN, which may be amended accordingly.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

General Public is hereby informed that my Client Sh Surinder Singh Rana S/o Sarjiv Singh Rana and Smt. Rama Rana W/o Surinder Singh Rana Both are resident of U-202 Subhash Park Uttam Nagar West Delhi 110059 have discovered and debarred their son, namely Arun Rana from their movable and immovable properties and have also discard all kinds of relationship with them because they have become disobedient and are not under their control. My Client shall not be liable for any kind of civil or criminal loss, damage and consequences, if any suffers while dealing with him and he shall do as their own risk cost and consequences.

### YAMINI SHARMA, Advocate

OFFICE AT: WZ-32 BAL UDHYANA ROAD UTTAM NAGAR NEW DELHI-110059 Mob: 8860082703

### NAME CHANGE

I, INTEZAR KHAN S/o sharafat residing mohsin azam colony rampur have changed my name to AFSAR KHAN so/azakat for all future purpose.

### NAME CHANGE

I, NAEEM BANO W/O intezar KHAN residing at mohsin azam colony rampur i have changed my name to NOOR BANO W/O AFSAR for all future purpose.

### NAME CHANGE

I, IQRA KHAN D/O AFSAR KHAN residing at KH NO 24/6 FRONT LEFT PORTION 4TH FLOOR STREET NO 4 AND 5 SANGAM VIHAR BURARI DELHI-110084 have changed my name to IQRA KHAN for all future purpose.

### NAME CHANGE

I, Inder Singh Yadav S/o Shri Giriraj Prasad Yadav R/o 4/20, Rajpur Road, Civil Lines, Delhi, North Delhi, Delhi-110054 have changed the name of my minor son Yam Singh aged 12 years and he shall hereafter be known as Mayank Yadav.

### NAME CHANGE

I hitherto known as Urmila W/o Ram Datt R/o Sultapur Gurgaon, 347, Near Chopal, Gudar Pur, Gurgaon, South Delhi, Delhi-110030 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Suman.

### NAME CHANGE

I hitherto known as Nancy D/o Jagvir Singh R/o C-704, Plot No. 24, Sector 4, Dwarka, New Delhi, S.I.T Dwarka, Del. Canttoment, South West Delhi, Delhi-110078 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Nancy Singh.

### NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as Sishu Pal Prasad S/o Shyam Pyare Prasad R/o B-368 A Budh Nagar, Indrapuri, Central Delhi, Delhi-110012 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Shishupal Prasad.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I Sujit Kumar S/o Koushal Thakur, R/O HOUSE NO. 32, DHARM COLONY, TYAGI VIHAR, Nangol, West Delhi, Delhi-110041 declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as Sujit Kumar in my minor daughter namely Shikha Kumar aged 14 years in her school records. The actual name of mine and my wife are SUDHIR SAXENA AND SANDHYA SAXENA, which may be amended accordingly.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Prashant Chauhan S/o: Yashpal, R/O 224-A, Gal-2, New Lohar Colony, Shastri Nagar, Gandhi Nagar, East Delhi, Delhi-110031, have changed the name of my minor son Dhanjay alias Paras Chauhan aged 7 years and he shall hereafter be known as PAVR CHAUHAN.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Prashant Chauhan S/o: Yashpal, R/O 224-A, Gal-2, New Lohar Colony, Shastri Nagar, Gandhi Nagar, East Delhi, Delhi-110031, have changed the name of my minor son Dhanjay alias Paras Chauhan aged 7 years and he shall hereafter be known as PAVR CHAUHAN.

31, 2026. Out of the total outstanding dues of Rs 87,589 crore, as much as Rs 80,463 crore — nearly 91 per cent — comprises LPSC accumulated over years of compounding interest at 5 per cent per billing cycle. Under the new scheme, domestic and government consumers will be eligible for 100 per cent surcharge waiver in the first phase, running until January 31, 2026. The waiver applies only to the surcharge component, not the principal amount. Verma said consumers had long been receiving infla-

ted bills, sometimes in lakhs, not because of actual consumption but due to heavy compounding charges. "By reducing the compounding rate from 5 per cent to 2 per cent and waiving up to 100 per cent surcharge, we are ensuring fairness, transparency and genuine relief. This is the first and final waiver scheme, and we urge citizens to take full advantage of it," he said. Earlier, a bill of Rs 100 would escalate to Rs 178 under 5 per cent compounding. With the revised rate of 2 per cent, the same bill will now rise

only to Rs 130, significantly reducing consumer burden. To ensure maximum participation, the Board

mandatory at the time of property registration, ensuring accountability and preventing dues from

1,000, reduced from Rs 26,000, while non-domestic connections will be regularised for Rs 5,000 instead

tions, the DJB plans to expand its network of licensed plumbers to over 1,000 professionals, speeding up new connections and preventing annual revenue losses of around Rs 51 crore. The reforms also aim to bring financial discipline and transparency. Currently, the DJB spends Rs 101 per litre on cleaning and supplying water in Delhi. Officials said improving collection efficiency and reducing reliance on surcharge-heavy billing would help stabilise finances. "This is about giving citizens a clean slate while ensuring the DJB runs sustainably," Verma said. "We are turning the Jal Board into a financially sound institu-

tions, the DJB plans to service without passing the burden of inefficiency onto consumers," he said. The scheme is expected to relieve lakhs of households of inflated arrears, encourage regularization of illegal connections, improve revenue collection, and reduce disputes between DJB and consumers. Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva described the move as a "Diwali gift" for Delhiites. He said the BJP-led government under Chief Minister Rekha Gupta has acted decisively to resolve long-standing disputes over water bills, contrasting it with the previous administration.



will organise awareness and facilitation camps across colonies to help residents calculate their dues, understand the waiver process and settle pending bills. Singh emphasised that after March 31, 2026, no similar scheme will be offered. The Delhi Government has also made water bill clearance

being indefinitely carried forward. The Board also approved measures to regularise lakhs of unauthorised water connections. Domestic connections will now require a fee of Rs

1,000, reduced from Rs 26,000, while non-domestic connections will be regularised for Rs 5,000 instead

tions, the DJB plans to

### NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as Manorama Bharti alias Manorama D/o Mohan Singh W/o Sanjay Kumar, R/o 2/62 Ground Floor, Old Rajender Nagar, Rajender Nagar, Central Delhi, Delhi-110060 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as MANORAMA BHARTI

### PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, ASHOK KUMAR DESWAL S/o ASHARAM DESWAL R/o House No-36, Model Town Metro Station, Malik Pur, North West Delhi, Delhi-110017, declare that name of my minor daughter has been wrongly written as HIMANCY QUEEN in my minor daughter HIMANSHI DESHWAL AL aged 14 years in her school records. The actual name of my minor daughter has been changed my name and shall hereafter be known as HIMANSHI QUEEN.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, Javed Qureshi, S/o Haji Freed Qureshi, R/o 6408, Quresh Nagar Sadar Bazar, Delhi G.P.O. Dist: North Delhi, Delhi-110006. Declare that name of my minor daughter has been wrongly written as Maryam Javed Qureshi in my minor daughter Namrata Maryam Qureshi aged 15 years in her OBC Certificate no. 9050000184010, the actual name of my minor daughter is Maryam Qureshi.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, Mantosh Kumar Singh, S/o Bhagwan Singh, A-93, Khasra No. 39/14, Gali No-10, Budh Bazar, Agar Nagar, Prem Nagar-3, Kirari Suleman Nagar, Po: Sultarpur C Block, Dist: North West Delhi, Delhi-110086, declare that the name of mine and my father has been wrongly written as Mantosh Kr Singh And Bhagwan Pd Singh in my driving license DL04 2002188576. The actual name of mine and my father is Mantosh Kumar Singh And Bhagwan Singh.

### NAME CHANGE

It is for general information that I, SANTOSH KUMAR MISHRA S/o ASHOK KUMAR residing at 77 B, D.D.A Flats Mata Sundri Road, Darya Ganj, Central Delhi, Delhi-110002, to have undisputed ownership. Now my intent is to sell the property in which Piramal Finance Limited will provide the financial assistance if any person(s) has/have any objection(s) or claim(s) with respect to the right, title or interest in the said property may, please contact us within Seven days from the date of this notice on the number & address mentioned herein below, failing which my client(s) shall not be held responsible in any manner whatsoever.

### NAME CHANGE

I, PARTAP NARAIN S/o CHOTE LAL, R/o H. No. D-816/36, Kh-65, 1st Floor, Street No. 9, Block-D, Mukundpur-Phase-1, New Delhi, Badli, North West, Delhi, Delhi-110042, have changed the name of my minor daughter SHIKHSHA aged 06 years and she shall hereafter be known as SHIVI.

### NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as KANTA W/o DEVI DASS R/o T-44, New F-Block, Raghbir Nagar, Delhi-110027, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as BISHAN DEVI, for all future purposes.

### NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as SHYAMAL S/o SIYARAM, R/o NA-191, Shishu Garden, PO: Tilak Nagar, Dist: West Delhi, Delhi-110018, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SANTOSH, for all future purposes.

### NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as SHYAMAL S/o SIYARAM, R/o NA-191, Shishu Garden, PO: Tilak Nagar, Dist: West Delhi, Delhi-110018, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SANTOSH, for all future purposes.

### NAME CHANGE

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### NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as SHYAMAL S/o SIYARAM, R/o NA-191, Shishu Garden, PO: Til

## NEWS BOX

### 3 Dead, Many Injured As Gunman On Boat Fires At US Restaurant

**North Carolina. (Agency)**

An active shooter opened fire from a boat at a restaurant in North Carolina, killing at least three people and leaving several others injured before fleeing the scene, authorities confirmed. The shooting occurred around 9:30 p.m. on Saturday (local time) at the American Fish Company, a popular pub and restaurant located at 150 Yacht Basin Drive in the Southport Yacht Basin area, about 20 miles south of Wilmington. The other victims were transported to local hospitals, though officials have not yet released details about their conditions. City Manager Noah Saldo confirmed that a boat pulled up to the restaurant and began firing into the crowd before speeding away.

"Several people were taken to the hospital," he said, adding that the figures may change as emergency crews continue their response. The city administration urged residents to stay away from the area, remain indoors, and immediately report any suspicious activity to 911. A public statement reiterated that while injuries had been confirmed, the exact number remained uncertain. "Avoid the area and remain in your homes. Please report any suspicious activity immediately to 911," the statement read. The Brunswick County Sheriff's Office confirmed they were assisting the Southport Police Department in handling the unfolding situation. "The Brunswick County Sheriff's Office is assisting the City of Southport Police Department, along with multiple law enforcement agencies throughout the county. Please keep all those affected, as well as our first responders, in your thoughts and prayers," the sheriff's office stated. Chatter over emergency scanners suggested multiple fatalities beyond the confirmed toll, though officials have not verified those claims. The situation, which unfolded near the American Fish Company, remains under investigation, with authorities continuing to search for the suspect.

### Economic Ties With India Not Under Threat Due To Tariffs: Russian Minister

**New York. (Agency)**

At the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), Russian Foreign Minister Sergey asserted that the economic partnership between India and Russia is "not under threat" amid the US tariffs on India for buying Russian oil.

Responding to a question by ANI on secondary sanctions imposed on India by the US for importing Russian oil, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said, "(The economic partnership between India and Russia) is not under threat... The Indian Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs have made it clear that India chooses its own partners. If the US has proposals on how to enrich bilateral trade between the US and India, they are prepared to discuss the terms for that, whatever terms the US might put forth. But when it comes to trade, investment, economic, military, technological, and other relations between India and third states, it is something that India will discuss only with those states in question."

On India buying Russian oil and India-Russia relations, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said, "...We have full respect for the national interests of India, full respect for the foreign policy that Narendra Modi is carrying out to promote these national interests. We hold regular contacts at the highest level..."

Sergey Lavrov underlined the strategic relationship between India and Russia and said they have "utmost respect" for the foreign policy of the Indian government to pursue its "national interests" under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

These situations that might arise between India and the United States or India and any other country, I can't consider them a criterion for relations between India and the Russian Federation. We have a strategic partnership, as we call it, for a long time, strategic partnership relations. At a certain point, our Indian friends proposed supplementing that term and we now call it a privileged strategic partnership and a little bit later, our Indian friends proposed another clarification now, we call it a particularly privileged strategic partnership. We have the utmost respect for India's national interests and the foreign policy that Narendra Modi is implementing to promote these interests. We hold regular contacts at the highest level.

### Vietnam to evacuate 250,000 from coast ahead of Typhoon Bualoi

**HANOI. (Agency)**

Vietnam plans to evacuate more than 250,000 residents from coastal areas on Sunday ahead of the arrival of Typhoon Bualoi, which is expected to lash the country's steel-producing central belt.

The storm -- the 10th to affect Vietnam this year -- is currently at sea generating winds of 130 kilometres per hour (80 miles per hour) and is expected to make landfall at 7:00 pm (1200 GMT), according to the meteorology agency. Central Vietnam's largest city Danang plans evacuate more than 210,000 residents, state media reported, while more than 32,000 residents of Hue living near coastal areas are also set to be moved to safer areas. More than 15,000 residents in Ha Tinh -- known as a key steel production hub -- have been slated for evacuation to schools and medical centres converted into temporary shelters, authorities said. Nearly 117,000 military personnel have been mobilised. Four domestic airports were shut and all fishing boats in the typhoon's path have been called back to harbour. "I feel a bit anxious but still hopeful that everything will be fine in the aftermath. We were all safe after the recent typhoon Kajiki. I hope this one will be the same or less severe," Nguyen Cuong, 29, a resident of Ha Tinh City, told AFP.

# India-Russia ties stand independent of US relations: Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov

**The Russian Minister said that the bilateral relationship stands on its own merit, irrespective of US pressure over issues like oil imports.**

**WASHINGTON. (Agency)**

Russia fully respects India's independent foreign policy and national interests, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said, asserting that New Delhi's relations with Washington or any other country are not a benchmark for India-Russia ties.

Addressing a press conference on the sidelines of the 78th UN General Assembly, Lavrov stressed the strength of the "particularly privileged strategic partnership" between India and Russia. He said that the bilateral relationship stands on its own merit, irrespective of US pressure over issues like oil imports. "These situations that might arise between India and the United States or any other country cannot be criteria for India-Russia relations," Lavrov said, responding to a



question on India's continued purchase of Russian oil despite US objections.

He praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's foreign policy approach, saying, "We have full respect for the national interests of India and the foreign policy that PM Modi is pursuing to promote those interests."

Lavrov noted ongoing high-level engagement between the two nations,

referencing the recent Modi-Putin meeting at the SCO summit in China, and confirmed that President Putin is expected to visit India in December. Lavrov said, "There is no threat to this relationship. If someone does attempt to pressure India, both the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister have made it clear, India chooses its own partners." He also praised External Affairs

Minister S. Jaishankar's firm stance on energy trade, referencing Jaishankar's earlier comments, "If the US wants to sell oil to us, we're open to discussions. But what we buy from others, including Russia, is our sovereign decision." "That is a very worthy response," Lavrov said, adding that India, like Turkiye, conducts itself with "self-respect." Lavrov and Jaishankar held bilateral talks on the sidelines of the UNGA, also participating in the BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting, with India as the incoming Chair for 2026.

Following the meeting, Jaishankar posted on X: "Good conversation with FM Sergey Lavrov of Russia on the sidelines of #UNGA80. Useful discussion on bilateral ties, the Ukraine conflict and developments in the Middle East."

Despite increasing US tariffs, reportedly up to 50 per cent on India, including penalties for Russian oil imports, New Delhi has consistently maintained that its energy policy is guided by national interest and market dynamics

### Airstrikes and gunfire kill at least 59 people in Gaza as pressure grows for ceasefire, hostage deal

**DEIR AL-BALAH. (Agency)**

Israeli strikes and gunfire killed at least 59 people across Gaza, health officials said Saturday, as international pressure grows for a ceasefire and hostage return deal while Israel's leader remained defiant about continuing the war. Among the dead were those hit by two strikes in the Nuseirat refugee camp, nine from the same family in a house and, later, 15 in the same camp, including women and children, according to staff at al-Awda Hospital, where the bodies were brought.

Five others were killed when a strike hit a tent for the displaced, according to Nasser Hospital, which received the dead. Israel's army said it was not aware of anyone being killed by gunfire Saturday in southern Gaza, nor of a strike in the Nuseirat area during the time and at the location provided by the hospital. The director of Shifa Hospital in Gaza City told The Associated Press that medical teams there were concerned about Israeli tanks approaching the vicinity of the hospital, "restricting access to the facility where 159 patients are being treated." The bombardment has not

stopped for a single moment," Dr. Mohamed Abu Selmiya said. He added that 14 premature babies were treated in incubators in Helou Hospital, though the head of neonatal intensive care there, Dr. Nasser Bulbul, has said that facility's main gate was closed



because of drones flying over the building. Netanyahu and Trump scheduled to meet as pressure grows. The attacks came after a defiant Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told fellow world leaders at the U.N. General Assembly on Friday that his nation "must finish the job" against Hamas in Gaza. Forty-eight hostages are still held captive there, around 20

of them believed by Israel to be alive. Netanyahu's words began after dozens of delegates from multiple nations walked out of the U.N. General Assembly hall en masse Friday morning as he began speaking.

"You were like the last of the lepers, Netanyahu, we promise you that if you don't bring a comprehensive agreement and end the war, you will forever be a leper," said Itzik Horn, the father of Eitan Horn, one of the hostages held in Gaza since the Hamas attack that started the war. He was referencing the U.N. speech and Israel's isolation. "My son Eitan sleeps sick and starving on the floor of a tunnel in Gaza or, worse, is used as a human shield against IDF fighters. What will you save him with?" Horn added Saturday evening. International pressure on Israel to end the war is increasing, with a growing list of countries deciding recently to recognize Palestinian statehood, which Israel rejects. Countries have been lobbying U.S. President Donald Trump to press Israel for a ceasefire. Trump and Netanyahu are scheduled to meet Monday.



### What to know about Iran's nuclear program as UN reimposes 'snapback' sanctions

**DUBAI. (Agency)**

United Nations sanctions on Iran over its nuclear program were reimposed Sunday, putting Tehran under new pressure as tensions remain high in the wider Mideast over the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza.

At the U.N. General Assembly this week in New York, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi tried a last-minute diplomatic push to stop the sanctions. However, Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei boxed in their efforts by describing diplomacy with the United States as a "sheer dead end." Meanwhile, efforts by China and Russia to halt the sanctions failed Friday. A 30-day clock for the sanctions started when France, Germany and the United Kingdom on Aug. 28 declared Iran wasn't complying with its 2015 nuclear deal with world powers. Tehran has argued without success that the deal was voided by the United States' unilateral withdrawal from the accord in 2018 under President Donald Trump's first administration. Since then, Iran has severely restricted required inspections by the U.N. nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency, particularly after the 12-day war Israel launched on Iran in June. That war saw both the U.S. and Israel bomb key Iranian nuclear sites.

"We don't think it can impact the people of Iran, especially the people of Iran's determination to defend their rights," Araghchi said Friday in New York about the sanctions, despite the pressure already on the country's economy. "The question is, what it impacts is diplomacy. It closed the way of diplomacy."

Here's what to know about Iran's nuclear sites, "snapback" sanctions and other issues raising tensions between Iran and the West. What is 'snapback' and how does it work? The "snapback" process, as it is called by the diplomats who negotiated it into Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, was designed to be veto-proof at the U.N. Security Council and took effect 30 days after parties to the deal told the Security Council that Iran was not complying. It again froze Iranian assets abroad, halted arms deals with Tehran and penalized any development of Iran's ballistic missile program, among other measures. The power to impose "snapback" would have expired Oct. 18, which likely prompted the European countries to use it before they lost the measure. After that, any sanctions effort would have faced a veto from U.N. Security Council members China and Russia, nations that have provided support to Iran in the past. China has remained a major buyer of Iranian crude oil, something that could be affected if "snapback" happens, while Russia has relied on Iranian drones in its war on Ukraine.

### How 'Clog The Toilet' Trolls Hit Indian H-1B Visa Holders Rushing To US

**world. (Agency)**

Vacationing in India, engineer Amrutha Tamanam rushed to return to the United States after Donald Trump abruptly announced a \$100,000 fee for the visa she holds. As she scrambled to get back to the country she's called home for a decade, racially motivated far-right trolls launched coordinated efforts to disrupt flight bookings from India, calling their campaign "clog the toilet." The White House would later clarify that the new H-1B fee was a one-time payment not applicable to current holders. But leading US companies had already advised their employees abroad to swiftly return to avoid the fee or risk being stranded overseas. Tamanam, an Austin-based software engineer, began searching for a flight from the city of Vijayawada, as users on the far-right message board 4chan moved to overwhelm

reservation systems, in a bid to block Indian visa holders from booking tickets. One 4chan thread encouraged users to find India-US flights, "initiate the checkout process" but "don't checkout," thereby clogging the system and preventing the visa holders from reaching the United States before the announcement took effect. The campaign may have had a direct impact on Tamanam, who encountered repeated crashes on airline websites. The checkout page, which typically allows users a window of a few minutes, timed out much faster. After multiple attempts, she eventually managed to rebook a one-way ticket to Dallas on Qatar Airways, spending around \$2,000 -- more than double the cost of her original round-trip fare. "It was hard for me to book a ticket and I paid a huge fare for the panic travel," Tamanam told AFP.

Keep them in India! The 4chan thread -- which also circulated among far-right Trump supporters on Telegram and other fringe forums -- read: "Indians are just waking up after the H1B news. Want to keep them in India? Clog the flight reservation system!"

Responding posts, many riddled with racist slurs, advised users to hold seats for popular India-US routes on airline websites and booking platforms -- without completing the purchase. The stated goal was to block availability on high-demand flights, making it harder to find available seats and inflating prices.

Illustrating the scale of the operation, one 4chan user posted a screenshot of their browser and claimed: "I got 100 seats locked."

"Currently clogging the last available seat on this Delhi to Newark flight," another wrote.

### Moldovans cast ballots in a tense election plagued by Russian interference claims

**CHISINAU. (Agency)**

Moldovans are heading to the polls to cast ballots in a tense parliamentary election plagued by claims of Russian interference, a vote seen as a choice between integration with the European Union or a drift back into Moscow's fold. Sunday's pivotal vote will elect a new 101-seat parliament, after which Moldova's president nominates a prime minister, generally from the leading party or bloc, which can then try to form a new government. A proposed government then needs parliamentary approval.

The tense race pits the governing pro-Western Party of Action and Solidarity, or PAS, which has held a strong parliamentary majority since 2021 but risks losing it, against several Russia-friendly opponents but no viable pro-European partners, leaving uncertainty over potential outcomes and the geopolitical course the country will take. Moldova is landlocked between Ukraine and European Union member Romania. The country of about 2.5 million people has spent recent years on a westward path and gained candidate status to the EU in 2022, though it has not yet joined.

shortly after Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Days before Sunday's vote, Moldovan Prime Minister Dorin Recean warned that Russia is spending "hundreds of millions" of euros as part of an alleged "hybrid war" to try to seize power, which he described as "the final battle for our country's future."

"I call on every Moldovan at home and across Europe: We cannot change what Russia does, but we can change what we do as a people," he said. "Turn worry into mobilization and thoughtful action ... Help stop their schemes." The alleged Russian strategies include a large-scale vote-buying operation, cyberattacks on critical government infrastructure, a plan to incite mass riots around the election, and a sprawling disinformation campaign online to diminish support for the pro-European ruling party and sway voters towards Moscow-friendly ones.

Russia has repeatedly denied meddling in Moldova and dismissed the allegations last week as "anti-Russian" and "unsubstantiated."

Authorities have warned that Moldova's

election day could be targeted by false bomb threats, cyberattacks, temporary power outages, and street violence by trained individuals. In a crackdown before



the vote, law enforcement officers have carried out hundreds of raids, in which scores have been detained.

Moldova's large diaspora is expected to play a decisive role in Sunday's outcome. In last year's presidential run-off -- which was also viewed as a choice between East and West -- a record number of 327,000 voters cast ballots abroad, more than 82% of whom favored pro-Western President Maia Sandu, and ultimately secured her

reelection. A key opponent of PAS in Sunday's election is the pro-Russian Patriotic Electoral Bloc, a group of political parties that wants "friendship with Russia" and "permanent neutrality." Others include the populist Our Party, which wants "balanced foreign policy" between East and West, and the Alternativa Bloc, which claims to be pro-European, but critics say would seek closer ties to Moscow.

In recent years, as the country has lurched from crisis to crisis, Moldovans have faced rampant inflation, increasing costs of living and high poverty rates, which may have diminished support for the pro-European ruling party, which Sandu founded in 2016.

Most local polls indicate that PAS will win the most votes, but they don't include Moldova's large diaspora, and about a third of voters remain undecided. In the 2021 parliamentary election, turnout was just over 48%. Julian Groza, executive director of the Institute for European Policies and Reforms think tank, says the higher the turnout, the more likely it is that PAS can secure a majority.

## Swachh Shehar Jodi: Ahmedabad, Surat, Vadodara & Gandhinagar selected as Mentor Cities

### Vadodara .(Agency)

As part of the Swachh Shehar Jodi (SSJ) of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) – a structured mentorship and collaborative action programme involving 72 mentor cities and around 200 mentee cities across the country – Ahmedabad, Surat, Vadodara and Gandhinagar have been selected as Mentor Cities to guide 20 towns in achieving visible cleanliness by sharing 100-days strategy.

A simultaneous programme of signing the MoUs with mentee cities was held in Vadodara Municipal Corporation (VMC), Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC), Surat Municipal Corporation (SMC) and Gandhinagar Municipal Corporation (GMC). The programme aims to “strengthen sanitation standards under the nationwide rollout of the Swachh Sheher Jodi initiative of Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0”.

VMC Commissioner Arun Mahesh Babu and Deputy Mayor Chirag Barot signed MoUs with newly created Surendranagar Municipal Corporation as well as four Municipalities of Savli, Sihor, Jamraval and Limbdi for mentorship while AMC signed the MoUs with the Municipalities of Sanand, Wankaner, Salaya, Mundra and Ranavav.

SMC also inked the MoUs with the Municipalities of Mandvi, Palitana, Vallabhipur, Chalala and Savarkundla as its mentees while GMC will mentor the Municipalities of Vadnagar, Jamjodhpur, Maliya, Kutiyana and Sikka.

### Ambassadors of 11 countries visit Amul, Ray nano fertilizer firm in Anand district

### Vadodara .(Agency)

Ambassadors of 11 countries from Latin America and North Africa were in Anand district on Saturday to visit the Amul plant as well as Ray Nano Science & Research Centre, a Nano Fertilizer company, which also boasts of a distinct patented technology in the field, at its Mogar plant.

The Ambassadors of the 11 countries expressed interest in the industrial visits to Anand during their visit to Gujarat to participate in the three-day Ayush Expo India at Ahmedabad's Vigyan Bhavan from September 26 to 28.

The Ambassadors included Mariano Agustin Caucino of Argentina, Dr Albdenor Khelfi of Algeria, Arlette Gabriela Bustamante Garcia of Bolivia, Juan Angulo of Chile, Juan Carlos Marsán of Cuba, Echeverri Jaramillo of Colombia, Fernando Xavier Bucheli Vargas of Ecuador, Fleming Raul Duarte Ramos of Paraguay, Arunkoemar Hardien of Suriname, Alberto Guani of Uruguay, and Capaya Rodriguez Gonzalez of Venezuela.

BJP Anand Lok Sabha MP Mitesh Patel said that the ambassadors had keen interest in visiting the nano fertiliser company to understand the technology. Patel said, “We had organised their visit to the Amul plant in Anand and the nano-fertiliser plant in Mogar as a few of these countries have keen interest in the technology of nano fertilisers. Their visit is significant for Anand district.”

Ray Nano Science, which is recognised for its breakthrough innovations in sustainable agriculture, showcased its advanced manufacturing and R&D ecosystem to the visiting dignitaries, the company said.

Siddhartha Doshi, Chief Executive Officer of Ray Nano Science, who delivered a presentation on the company's unique green technology and the transformative benefits of Nano Fertilizers, also gave the delegation a guided tour of the cutting-edge plant and research facilities, allowing the dignitaries to “witness first-hand how India's pioneering nano fertilizer innovation is shaping the future of agriculture worldwide.” Doshi said, “Offering higher nutrient-use efficiency, reduced subsidies, and lower environmental impact, nano fertilizers have emerged as a vital tool in sustainable agriculture.

# ‘Archiving’ Mumbai: CSMVS plans a ‘digital library’ on Mumbai’s built heritage

### Mumbai .(Agency)

How does one preserve the memory of the rich heritage of a city, fast succumbing to rapid redevelopment and construction? For the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS), the answer has come in the way of ‘archiving’ Mumbai.

Come 2026, the CSMVS will launch a ‘Digital Library’ on Mumbai’s built heritage, which will enable the public to walk through significant markers of the city’s urban history and dive into a variety of digital resources spanning from maps, postcards, lithographs to sculptures and oral histories for free. An idea first germinated in 2017, the digital library project was kicked off with the need to preserve Mumbai’s architectural legacy, fill in the existing gap pertaining to the city’s fragmented knowledge and foster civic engagement. “We are one city which has been reshaped again and again and that takes away from what once existed. This library seeks to act as a bulwark against the erosion of urban

memory and aims to foster greater awareness towards the city’s very rich and varied built heritage,” said Prof Mustansir Dalvi, architectural historian who has been closely working to develop the library.

The digital library will archive the city’s built heritage by documenting, scanning and curating a rich base of data and uploading it on a site, which will be accessible for all from academicians, historians to the layman with an enthusiasm for heritage.

The engagement will unravel in a two-fold manner. In the first step, the interface will connect users directly to a heritage or iconic building of the city along with details pertaining to its history and significance. Next, the site will be linked to a repository of archival “assets” which will enable users to access original photographs, postcards, artefacts, maps, drawings, models, videos as well as other data on demand. These digital resources will be uploaded in a variety of formats akin to PDF, JPEGs, MOV files and

other appropriate formats. In its pilot project, the library will curate a catalogue called ‘Mumbai in 100 Buildings’, which will look at canonical buildings and neighbours across the city, and eventually expand to include



1,000 sites. Categorised in parameters ranging from religious, civic, residential, commercial, forts amongst others, the pilot project will compile data on structures like BMC building, Town Hall, Crawford market, Kanheri, Bhikha Behram Well, Prongs Lighthouse amongst others.

However, Dalvi maintains that the library is still a “work in progress”. “These are very early days and it will take some more time to come up. We are aiming to make the library live for the public by 2026,” he said.

While the pilot project seeks to document the city’s iconic buildings onto a digital library, the project will eventually delve deeper by mapping all the wards, grouping the tangible and intangibles as well as curate catalogues from time to time such as narratives on the lost buildings of Bombay. In a bid to source digital assets and implement the project — which eventually seeks to branch out across the larger Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) — the CSMVS is eyeing to collaborate with several institutions ranging from BMC, Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA), University of Mumbai, National Archives of India, Maharashtra State Archives, Art Deco Mumbai, IIT Bombay, TISS, Urban Design Research Institute (UDRI) amongst others.

## RSS holds three simultaneous marches in Nagpur as part of centenary celebrations

**Earlier on Saturday morning, Bhagwat launched an audio-video album of the Sangh Prarthana at Maharsi Vyas Sabhagriha, Dr Hedgewar Smruti Bhawan, Reshimbag, Nagpur**

### Nagpur .(Agency)

The RSS on Saturday organised three simultaneous marches — ‘pathasanchalans’ — for the first time as part of its centenary celebrations. The RSS was officially founded on Vijayadashami (September 27, 1925) at the ancestral home of Dr Keshav Baliram Hedgewar.

The marches began at around 7 pm from three different points in the city: Kasturchand Park, Yashwant Stadium and the Indian Hockey Ground on Amravati Road. At around 8 pm, all three converged at Variety Square, Sitabuldi, where RSS chief Dr Mohan Bhagwat witnessed the parade. RSS Sahasanghchalak for Vidarbha region Shridhar Gadge and Nagpur Mahanagar Sanghachalak Rajesh Loya were also present. According to RSS members, the event saw participation of over 21,000 swayamsevaks from across Nagpur.

Earlier on Saturday morning, Bhagwat launched an audio-video album of the Sangh Prarthana at Maharsi Vyas Sabhagriha, Dr Hedgewar



Smruti Bhawan, Reshimbag, Nagpur.

Speaking on the occasion, Bhagwat said the Sangh’s daily prayer is the collective resolve of swayamsevaks, symbolising devotion, love

and surrender to Bharat Mata. Recited since 1939, the prayer has “attained the strength of a mantra” and continues to instil discipline and conviction among volunteers, he noted.

## CBI nabs two including govt officer for bribery in Navi Mumbai, Rs 26 lakh seized

### Mumbai .(Agency)

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Saturday arrested two persons including a government officer attached with the Petroleum and Explosives and Safety Organisation (PESO) for allegedly demanding and accepting bribes. The agency seized a total of Rs 26 lakh in cash including bribes and unaccounted money.

The accused have been identified as Rajendra Rawat, a joint chief controller of explosives attached with the Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organization (PESO), West Circle Office, Navi Mumbai, and a private person, Rahul Bachate. Both were produced in the court and remanded in custody till October 1.

The agency registered a case on the basis of information received about large-scale corrupt practices allegedly committed by the joint chief controller of explosives, in collusion with private consultants and agents.



of Rs 9 lakh at Rawat’s place and the amount was given to his wife. Based on the confession, the agency raided Rawat’s residence and allegedly recovered the amount. The agency also seized an extra

unaccounted cash of Rs 7.5 lakh. When the family members and Rawat were questioned, they could not provide the source of both the cash and so both amounts were seized, said a CBI official.

The officials then carried out searches at Rawat’s office, where another agent was found sitting, who confessed to having brought Rs 8 lakh for delivery as illegal gratification. The agency seized the cash from the agent’s vehicle which was parked nearby. One more person, an architect by profession, was also found in the office and when questioned, he too confessed that he allegedly brought Rs 1.5 lakh as a bribe for another public servant. This amount was also seized, the release said.

The agency seized a total of Rs 26 lakh including the delivered bribe and unaccounted cash from the accused and their premises. This apart, several incriminating documents, chats and lists of PESO applications have also been seized, said the official.

According to a description on the YouTube channel of Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, the Operation Sindo Garba is “a powerful musical tribute to the valor of the Indian Army under the decisive leadership of Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. Sung by the renowned artist Parthiv Gohil, this garba celebrates the spirit of Maa Shakti and pays homage to the courage of our brave soldiers in Operation Sindo.

happiness and safety are the blessings of Maa Amba as well as the valour and prowess of our brave soldiers standing on the borders. Navratri is the festival of worship of power and our soldiers are the true symbol of power and victory,” the minister said. Sanghavi requested all the garba organisers, and DJs to play ‘Operation Sindo’ garba at the scheduled time and inspire the revellers to dance to it with pride.

“succeeded in demonstrating that even if the respondents are entitled to raise demand notices and water charges bills on bulk water tariff orders of the year 2018 and 2022, such charges cannot be levied on the basis that the entire water lifted by the petitioner was utilized as raw material for its end product.”

The HC said authorities failed to undertake exercise to ascertain extent to which the water consumption by the petitioner’s unit was towards raw material and extent to which it was utilised for other purposes including washing and cooling during manufacturing process.

The court then ordered fresh exercise and said authorities shall undertake appropriate enquiry by the petitioner’s manufacturing unit, consider material and principles of natural justice shall be followed.

## HC quashes over Rs 400 crore demand notices to United Spirits against water charges to Marathwada distillery, seeks fresh review

**The court clarified that if an excess amount is paid by the petitioner, it shall be adjusted towards future water charge bills**

### Mumbai .(Agency)

In a setback to Maharashtra government, the Aurangabad bench of the Bombay High Court has quashed and set aside demand notices of alleged outstanding dues of over Rs 400 crore issued by Water Resources department to the United Spirits Limited related to charges for lifting water from Godavari river for manufacturing of Indian-made foreign liquor (IMFL).

The court asked the state government to conduct a fresh assessment of water usage at the company’s Dharmabad distillery in Nanded district of Marathwada region.

The court directed the Executive Engineer of Water Resources (Irrigation) department to undertake within three months a “fresh exercise for issuing water charges bills to petitioner company for the period from November 2018 onwards, by applying rates prescribed by water tariff orders of 2018 and 2022 issued by Maharashtra Water Resources Regulatory Authority (MWRRRA) to the water lifted by the petitioner, in light of

the (court) observations and issue appropriate fresh water charges bills for the entire period.”

The United Spirits had challenged the demand notices issued by the authorities of the Water Resources department between 2018 and 2022 terming them “arbitrary and illegal”. It said the basis of arriving at such “astronomical charges” was “unsustainable” and revised rate of Rs 240 per cubic metre was arbitrary.

Senior advocate Zal Andhyarujina for the petitioner argued that while it was utilising only 2% of the water lifted from the river as raw material for end product of IMFL and other products, the authorities issued demand notices by concluding that entire water lifted by the company was used as raw material.

The government through advocates Uday Warunjikar and V B Tapkik justified the demand notices and sought dismissal of the company’s plea. The authorities said while demand notices challenged were of Rs 240

crore in September 2022 and the petitioner was enjoying interim order (protection from coercive action) after depositing only nearly Rs 10 crore, the current outstanding demand has reached a “huge figure” of about Rs 450 crore.

“In the absence of an appropriate enquiry and exercise to ascertain the nature and extent of utilization of the water lifted by the petitioner, the act on the part of the respondents Sub-Divisional Engineer and Executive Engineer, in issuing the demand notices and impugned water charges bills is found to be arbitrary and unsustainable,” a bench of Justices Manish M Pitale and Y G Khobragade noted.

The court also observed that the authorities “wrongly placed reliance” on a report prepared by the National Environmental

Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) on the extent of water being treated as raw material in the petitioner’s manufacturing



unit. The NEERI report recorded that “final product of liquor industry utilises about 7% of the total water consumption.”

The HC observed that the petitioner

## The trouble with nailing unproven offences to a name

Protests by students at Kolkata's National University of Juridical Sciences, against their Vice-Chancellor Nirmal Kanti Chakrabarti, recently took the novel form of standing during lectures, for over five hours a day. The protestors allege years of silence, frustration and disappointment at "lack of financial transparency, systematic patterns of administrative failures, persistent apathy and growing disconnect between the administration and its students and faculty members".

These are grave charges, but they should not deflect attention from the extraordinary perturbing observations made by the Supreme Court while dismissing the appeal of a faculty member who had brought charges of sexual harassment against the same vice-chancellor. On September 12, the court noted that the appellant's original complaint, made in December 2023—more than six months after incidents occurring up to April that year—was time-barred and therefore could not be heard or investigated. Nevertheless, they directed that although "the wrong committed against the appellant may not be investigated on technical grounds, it must not be forgotten", and that it should be allowed to "haunt the wrongdoer forever" by being mandatorily included in his résumé. What is most surprising about this judgement, quite apart from its Shakespearean, even Biblical, invocation of being 'haunted' by a historical crime, is the use of the term 'wrongdoer'. Under the rigid provisions of the POSH Act, 2013, any complaint of sexual harassment must be made within three months of the latest incident, extensible by another three months. Since the original complaint against Chakrabarti was made nearly eight months after the last reported incident of sexual harassment, it was time-barred and never investigated, though the complainant alleged further intimidation and persecution through removal from an administrative post on August 29, 2023.

The Supreme Court concurred with the opinion of the local complaint committee as well as a division bench of the Calcutta High Court that the original complaint was belated and therefore could not be examined on merit, and that the removal of the appellant from a post was not an independent action solely on the vice-chancellor's part. If the case has never been heard on merit, how is the Supreme Court justified in using the term 'wrongdoer' and directing that the complaint be forever attached to his résumé? Surely it was the responsibility of the highest court of the land, especially when it was so anxious to adhere strictly to the provisions of the POSH Act, to establish guilt before using a term that really has only one meaning? This is not justice, nor does it help women in their struggle for workplace rights, and a safe and healthy working environment. As Jhuma Sen, faculty at NUJS, points out in a recent article, the issue here is twofold. On the one hand, there is the extremely disquieting order to include the complainant in the accused person's dossier in perpetuity, though it was never investigated. On the other hand, it is clear that the principal reason for this failure lies in the stringent provisions of the POSH Act, stipulating a window of only 3-6 months within which a complaint must be lodged. As everyone associated in any capacity with struggles for gender justice knows, survivors often face grave difficulties in bringing cases to light, and sometimes years go by before they are able to speak out against their harassers. This was the rationale behind a Bill introduced in the Rajya Sabha on February 2, 2024 by Sasmit Patra, urging reform of the POSH Act by fixing the basic period for filing complaint reform.

## THE GREAT GAME: Manna for poll-bound state is in contrast to PM's parsimonious Punjab flood relief announcement

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi's transfer of Rs 10,000 each to 75 lakh women in Bihar comes on the day a special session of the Punjab Assembly demanded a special package of Rs 20,000 crore from the BJP-ruled Centre, to alleviate the costs that will be needed to help the flood-affected people in the state. The PM's one-time generous transfer to Bihar's women amounts to Rs 7,500 crore. Contrast this with the Rs 1,600 crore relief package the PM promised Punjab when he came here about three weeks ago. BJP sources say this is just the first tranche and that Punjab needs to do its homework before more can be sent, but no such questions are being asked for the Bihar package. In fact, no questions are being asked why the PM is sending such a generous sum to Bihar's extraordinary women in the first place. So here are some: Has there been a flood in Bihar that has damaged a standing paddy crop on around four lakh acres? Have a few hundred animals, both cows and buffaloes, the backbone of the state dairy cooperative as well as of families in the predominantly agrarian state, gone missing? Have homes been washed away, schools damaged beyond recognition, fields silted over with mud and clay which are now being cleared by tractors and JCBs? Has the fencing on the international border—Bihar has one with Nepal, but it's an open one, which means there's no fence—that divides India from Pakistan been swept away? The reason for his focus on Bihar's 6.3 crore women—one eligible woman from every family may apply to start an employment of her choice, and if her application is approved, then the amount may go up to Rs 2 lakh—is also clear. The PM is hoping that Bihar's mahilas, its 'M' constituency, will vote for the BJP with both their hands, cutting across caste and creed, just as the rest of the country has started doing.

Clearly, there's something special about Bihar. Moreover, samajhne vaalon ko ishaara kaafi hai, they say, that smart people only need a signal to understand. Although the BJP is trying really hard to help the flood-affected in Punjab—and is working on new initiatives to help with loans for missing milch animals, especially in the six districts that border Pakistan, as well as in the dairy cooperative sector across the state—the party also knows it will take much more to overcome the Punjabi's accumulating resentments against the Centre. In many ways, this is a make-or-break moment for Punjab. If you are helping out in small or big ways, then you will be counted. If you aren't, you won't. That's why the Congress better watch out. Before the floods, the aam aadmi on the streets would tell you that they were fed up with the ruling AAP and would teach it a lesson in the 2027 elections, just as they taught the Congress a lesson in 2022 and swept in 92 AAP MLAs. In fact, people used



to say that if elections were held today in Punjab, the odds would be on the warring Congress—there are at least five chief ministerial candidates in the state party. After the floods, it's a whole different story. Some AAP MLAs, like Kuldeep Dhaliwal from Ajnala, have been astonishing in the manner in which they have helped their fellow Punjabis. Some other AAP MLAs have barely stirred a leaf. The Congress has been staggeringly lax, even though Rahul Gandhi came across for a few hours, rode a tractor over silt-soaked fields and cuddled a little boy who had lost his cycle in the floods. (The party bought the boy a bike.) It is in this light that PM Modi's parsimonious Punjab flood relief announcement and the clear lack of trust between the state and the Centre should be seen. Compare this with the manna for Bihar.

The unkind would say the PM's Bihar blessing is coming just ahead of the announcement of the state poll, and therefore, before the model code of conduct kicks in. Some others would add that he and the BJP are leaving no stone unturned—Chief Minister and BJP ally Nitish Kumar is unwell, won't be CM again and so the BJP magic has to work. That Prashant Kishor of Jan Surya may be the joker in Bihar's political pack, but his attack on BJP Deputy CM Samrat Choudhary is nothing short of lethal. Be that as it may. The fact is that Modi has succeeded in transforming the traditional poll dynamic that has these past many decades rested on caste—he has literally forged a "women constituency" by shaping schemes like Ujjwala Yojana and Lakhpati Didi Yojana. The BJP has unabashedly tempted women voters with sops in states going to the polls—Lado Lakshmi in

Haryana, Ladki Bahin in Maharashtra, Ladli Behna in Madhya Pradesh, Mahila Samridhi Yojana in Delhi and Mahtari Vandana in Chhattisgarh. In the 2019 General Election, for the first time ever, women edged out men in voter turnout, 67.18% vs 67.02%—in the first poll in 1952, 63% men and 47% women had voted—and an AxisMyIndia poll survey showed that 46% women compared to 44% men voted for Modi.

For tradition-bound politicians, the news has only become worse. First, AxisMyIndia found in Uttar Pradesh (2022) and Madhya Pradesh (2023) polls that more women voted for the BJP than for other political parties. Second, while 73% women said they voted in favour in BJP-aligned homes, astonishingly, even in Congress-aligned homes, 25% women reported aligning themselves in favour.

PM Modi was the first to see this hurricane coming, although it is a moot question what he's doing with the wealth of data coming in—there are only seven women out of 72 in his Council of Ministers, and only two in the Cabinet, Nirmala Sitharaman and Annpurna Devi. (The current Lok Sabha only has 74 women MPs, four short of the previous one.) It is now said that the 2023 law giving 33% quota for women in Parliament will be implemented in the 2029 election, but after a full delimitation exercise which is likely to expand the number of constituencies in the country. Back to Bihar. The state is astir with the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) poll exercise. Political parties are putting their best foot forward. And PM Modi has launched his Brahmastra. Suffice to say that as the rest of the nation watches, Punjab will be watching even more closely.

## Insurance platform needs simpler rules, data care to succeed

Although IRDAI has pitched Bima Sugam as the 'UPI moment' for insurance, there are significant challenges to mind

After years of handwringing, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority has finally rolled out a critical reform—Bima Sugam. It's claimed to be the world's first platform bringing insurers, agents, brokers, banks, and aggregators together, making buying, renewing, and claiming all policies easier. Touted as the game-changer, it offers a unique, lifetime digital insurance ID, Bima Pehchaan, which links individuals' various policies under a secure, consent-based framework, eliminating complex paperwork and facilitating claim settlements. The digital platform, backed by the regulator, aims to empower and protect policyholders, and increase reach and affordability to achieve the vision of insurance for all by 2047. Though India was the world's 10th largest insurance market in 2021, and is on course to be the sixth largest by 2032, insurance penetration—at 3.7 percent in 2023-24—remains well below the global average of 6-7 percent.

Although IRDAI has pitched Bima Sugam as the 'UPI moment' for insurance, there are significant challenges to mind. While consumers have the option of comparing and buying policies online even now, a major stumbling block



is the confusion caused by intricate clauses and jargon. Policyholders often do not completely understand the coverage terms, ending up with messy claim settlements. This is why consumers rely on agents to assist them through the entire settlement process. The downside, though, is that agents often push specific products based

on commission or personal preference. They pocket an estimated 15-40 percent of the first-year premium as commission, depending on the product and insurer, which inflates premiums in the long term. While buying online eliminates this cost and prevents misselling, not all customers are comfortable or satisfied with claim settlement without agents' assistance. It will be interesting to see how Bima Sugam fills the void, particularly in rural areas, where users may need more handholding.

Given India's low premiums-to-GDP ratio, Bima Sugam comes through as a serious reform intended to democratise insurance, empower policyholders, and simplify processes. However, IRDAI must first ensure strict data-sharing protocols and end-to-end protection of sensitive financial data across the entire value chain. The regulator should also place a strong emphasis on protecting privacy and maintaining the integrity of personal information at every stage, whether while collecting, storing, or sharing personally identifiable data. The reform needs trust to make it work.

## Trainspotting in Bharat's hinterland

Amrit Bharat Express trains are enabling a demographic transition by offering low-cost, high-speed travel for job-seeking migrants from the poorer eastern states to the richer ones in south and west. They account for most new non-AC coaches being rolled out



with some frills added to suggest a hint of extra comfort. Their speed, design and choice of routes offer a mix of simplicity and luxury to migrant workers seeking fortunes in other parts of the country. For these passengers from West Bengal, Bihar and Odisha, the states that beckon are Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Punjab, where employment opportunities are more abundant. The Amrit Bharat Express officially recognises this by connecting dots on the map that confirm paths of migration connecting high-growth zones with laggard ones. A humble-yet-superfast passport to prosperity. These trains were commercially launched on New Year's Day 2024. Typically intended to cover journeys of 800 km or more, the Amrit Bharat Express, as the name suggests, is heavenly nectar for

seekers. A 4,000-km sleeper coach journey on it may cost as low as ₹1,500, enabling migrants to reach workplaces and travel back home for festivals at a fraction of a month's salary. With promised speeds of 110-130 km per hour, the train can be a catalytic boon featuring LED lights, CCTVs, and access for the disabled.

It is socially symbolic of how this revolution has gone largely unnoticed that the Wikipedia page for the Amrit Bharat Express offers bare minimum of information compared to its Vande Bharat counterpart, which links the train's story to railway history going back decades and lists its more than 75 routes. Official data reveals a lot more about the Amrit Bharat Express's revolutionary character. The government said a few weeks ago that 14 of the 100 approved Amrit Bharat trains are operational

and as many as 17,000 non-AC coaches are planned to be inducted into the railways over the next five years, the lion's share of which will go to seat Amrit Bharat passengers. The total number of passengers travelling by general and unreserved coaches across India more than doubled from 275 crore in 2021-22, when the Covid pandemic was in its last throes, to 651 crore in 2024-25, a two-year surge partly powered up by the Amrit Bharat Express. Overall occupancy during the past two years has been near-full, indicating a strong supply-demand match. The train's destinations tell their own story. The first Amrit Bharat train was between East Delhi's Anand Vihar terminal and Darbhanga in Bihar. Earlier this month, he flagged off one connecting Jhansi on Bihar-Nepal border with Erode near the bustling textile town of Tirupur in Tamil Nadu, and Saharsa with Chhota Bazaar in Amritsar, close to Punjab's wheatfields that routinely employ Bihar migrants. Malda in West Bengal and Gomti Nagar in Uttar Pradesh are among the other destinations otherwise dominated by Bihar's Gaya, Motihari and Sitamarhi. Mumbai, Bengaluru, Erode, Amritsar, and suburban Delhi stand at the other end, indicating the pattern of jobs-driven migration. Intermediate stations like Nagpur complete the picture. The routes remind me of migrant Siberian cranes seeking agreeable winter habitats in India.

In terms of rail networks, India ranks fourth in the world after the US, China, and Russia. But in passenger travel, India understandably and undeniably holds the top spot. The Amrit Bharat Express may not match the famous 9,289-km trans-Siberian train route, captured in Doctor Zhivago, Boris Pasternak's novel made into an Oscar-winning film by David Lean. But as an enabler of the world's most populous nation's demographic transition, Amrit Bharat is the kind of travel that would fascinate historians of the future.

# Lack of proper vents leading to vandalism, say psychologists

Visalakshi Sridhar, a psychologist, highlighted broader societal pressures contributing to aggression.

#### Bengaluru .(Agency)

Bengaluru has seen a surge in vandalism of vehicles in recent weeks, raising concerns over social and psychological factors behind such destructive behaviour. These acts may reflect deeper issues rather than being random or purely criminal, experts said.

Ann Treesa Rafi, counselling psychologist and Certified Cognitive Analytic Therapy Practitioner, explained that such behaviour often stems from complex mental and emotional dynamics. "From a medical model, acts like vandalism can be linked to personality or impulse-control disorders. Psychotherapeutically, these behaviours may serve as coping mechanisms for long-standing feelings of inferiority, powerlessness or emotional distress. Some individuals may feel a sense of control or power by damaging property, especially when they have limited avenues to express emotions safely. Group dynamics, peer pressure and media

portrayals of anti-social behaviour can also influence individuals. Rather than relying solely on punitive measures, careful assessment and targeted mental health interventions are crucial to address these



behaviours effectively," she said. Visalakshi Sridhar, a psychologist, highlighted broader societal pressures contributing to aggression. "People often lack constructive outlets for their frustration, which can manifest in

physical acts such as damaging cars — a visible symbol of status. Socioeconomic challenges, unemployment and increasingly sedentary lifestyles compounded by excessive screen time could all contribute to rising aggression in the city. When individuals do not learn healthy ways to cope with stress and anger, they may express their frustration destructively, sometimes targeting property," she explained.

Both experts emphasised the need for greater awareness around mental health and providing healthier coping mechanisms. They also stressed the role of citizens and media in modelling responsible behaviour, noting that glorifying destructive acts in films or online content can unintentionally encourage such actions. Raising public understanding of mental health and offering constructive alternatives for managing frustration could help curb the recurrence of such incidents in Bengaluru, they said.

## From Jamtara to Dubai — the web of cyber fraudsters spreads fast

#### Chandigarh .(Agency)

The Cyber Crime Unit of Chandigarh Police has learnt that the web of cyber criminals which initially started in Jamtara, Jharkhand, has now reached Dubai and Cambodia, along with several states across India.

DSP (Cyber Crime), Chandigarh Police, A Venkatesh said that during investigations of multiple cases, it has been learnt that earlier around five years ago, most of the cybercrime cases of "phishing" originated from Jamtara, but now the web of the cyber criminals has spread to South East Asia, including countries like Cambodia and Dubai. There have been several withdrawals of money involved in cyber fraud in Dubai, Cambodia, said the DSP. As per the Chandigarh Police Cyber Crime unit, recently a transnational cybercrime syndicate networking from Southeast Asia was traced.

DSP Venkatesh said that the syndicate was operating "digital arrest" scams across India with roots traced to Southeast Asian countries, including Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Hong Kong, and financial links stretching to hubs like Dubai.

Police investigations during a cyber fraud case involving a loss of Rs 1.01 crore had revealed that the syndicate operates using SIM box technology, primarily devices manufactured by Dinstar. These allow fraudsters to route internet-based international calls into India, disguising them as local numbers. Each SIM box can generate over 200,000 IVR (interactive voice response) calls daily, enabling mass-scale fraud attempts.

Many of these SIM box operations were remotely managed from Southeast Asia, with handlers located in Cambodia, Malaysia, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. Financial flows were also routed through intermediaries in Dubai, a common transit point for laundering illicit money, said the DSP.

## Man sees daughter and male friend at eatery in UP's Azamgarh, shoots her dead: Police

#### Lucknow .(Agency)

A MAN has been arrested for allegedly shooting his 16-year-old daughter dead and critically injuring her male friend after losing his temper upon seeing them together at an eatery in the Devgaon area of Azamgarh district on Friday.

According to police, before the man shot them with his licensed pistol, he allegedly beat up his daughter and her 20-year-old male friend while they ran for refuge. Police said, while the girl died on the way to the hospital, the 20-year-old is undergoing treatment at BHU Hospital in Varanasi.

Superintendent of Police (SP), Azamgarh, Anil Kumar told The Indian Express that the man carried out the attack in a fit of anger.

On Friday after school, police said, the girl and her male friend, who is her distant relative, came to a roadside eatery. They were sitting there when the girl's mother arrived and objected to them meeting. "Suddenly, the girl's father entered the eatery and started beating them up," SP Kumar said.

"The gunfire triggered panic inside the eatery, with people rushing outside," the SP said.

Local residents told police that while the man fled the scene the girl's mother and passersby took the two injured victims to a nearby government hospital. As both had suffered critical bullet injuries, the hospital arranged an ambulance and took them to BHU in Varanasi for further treatment.

SP Kumar said the girl was declared dead on arrival at the Varanasi hospital. But the condition of the 20-year-old is stable. He said the man ran a 'Grahan Sewa Kendra' which provides banking-related services to residents.

#### Chennai .(Agency)

The Madras High Court has temporarily restrained the HR&CE department from continuing with the constructions on the premises of the Tiruvannamalai Arunachaleswarar temple and its outer periphery. The bench said such constructions would affect the heritage features of the temple. A special division bench of justices R Suresh Kumar and S Sounthar issued the interim injunction against the authorities from constructing a queue complex and providing basic amenities for devotees while hearing the petitions filed against such constructions. Referring to photographs produced by one of the petitioners, TR Ramesh, a temple activist, the bench said it finds that some "pucca" constructions with concrete pillars and beams are being made adjacent to the compound wall of the temple; and the distance between the wall and the construction area is very minimal.

#### Allahabad HC directs I-T department to pay Rs 94.65 lakh to petitioner after seized jewellery 'lost' in bank's custody

**Lucknow.** The Allahabad High Court has ordered the Income Tax authorities to compensate a petitioner after jewellery seized during tax proceedings went missing while in the custody of a respondent bank. The judge directed the department to verify the petitioner's valuation and make payment within four weeks, warning that failure to comply would attract penal interest.

The order came while hearing a petition by Sanjay Kumar Jain, who sought payment of Rs 9,464,844 along with interest at 9 percent per annum from July 30, 2025, and additional damages for the mental agony, harassment and financial distress he said he suffered because of what he described as negligence and malafide conduct by the authorities and the bank. The court noted that the jewellery had been seized by the Income Tax authorities and later lost

by the respondent bank. The bench observed that the recovery and return process had been inexplicably delayed. "It is clear from the facts that the Income Tax authorities are delaying the entire process," the court said in its order, adding that the money should have been returned in 2023 when the petitioner had agreed to a settled amount of Rs 41,52,146.

The court said that the petitioner's concern is receipt of compensation, not the technical question of which agency, the bank or the tax department, ultimately pays.

While disposing of the petition, the court directed the Income Tax authorities to examine the valuation submitted by the petitioner on July 30, 2025 (pages 72-75 of the writ petition) and, after verification, pay the assessed amount within four weeks from the date of the order.

<img alt="A small image showing a person in a suit

# Hotel-hopping, fake PMO link: How molestation-accused Delhi baba evaded cops

**According to Delhi Police sources, the molestation-accused spiritual leader changed locations more than 15 times in an effort to avoid arrest. He strategically checked into hotels near prominent religious sites, knowing these areas attract less scrutiny and would allow him to blend in.**

## Hashim gang member arrested at Amritsar airport

**Agency New Delhi.** The Delhi Police's special cell has arrested an alleged member of the Hashim gang from Amritsar airport in Punjab, officials said on Saturday. According to the police officials, the accused has been identified as Rubal Sardar and is being questioned in connection with the murder case of a gym co-owner, Nadir Shah.

Nadir Shah (35), a gym co-owner, was shot dead by two motorcycle-borne assailants in the Greater Kailash area on September 12, 2024. Police had suspected the involvement of associates of jailed gangsters Lawrence Bishnoi and Hashim Baba in the murder.

A police source stated that a lookout circular (LOC) had been issued against Sardar and he was being actively tracked by police teams. Police investigations had revealed that Shah's murder was carried out on the instructions of Sameer Baba, a close aide of Hashim Baba. Shah was known to be linked with gangster Rohit Chaudhary, a rival of the Lawrence Bishnoi gang.

## Government plans 100 automated parking facilities in city, says CM Rekha Gupta

**Agency New Delhi.** Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Saturday inaugurated a multi-level shuttle-type parking facility at GK and said her government plans to install around 100 such automated systems across the capital to provide a "permanent solution" to the city's parking issues. The fully automated facility, built at a cost of Rs 63.74 crore by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), can accommodate 399 vehicles, aiming to reduce congestion in one of south Delhi's busiest markets.

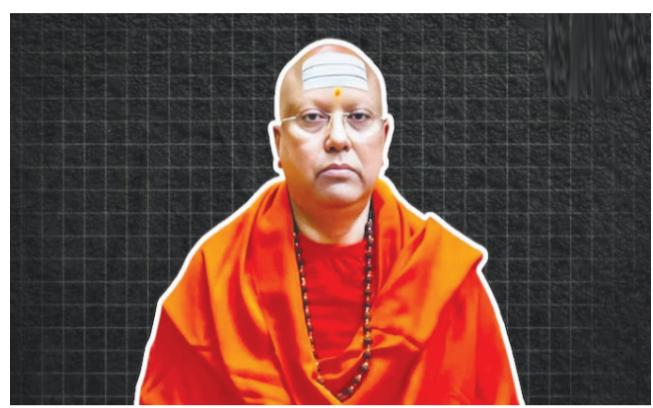
Speaking at the inauguration, Gupta said, "Parking is a major issue in Delhi. It causes traffic jams and disputes among people. Our government is working to resolve this problem through technology-driven solutions."

Our target is to set up around 100 automated parking systems in different parts of the city." The chief minister assured that there will be no shortage of funds for civic amenities and public infrastructure, and projects such as shuttle and puzzle parking facilities will help ease long-standing challenges faced by residents. The event was attended by Delhi Urban Development Minister Ashish Sood, Mayor Raja Iqbal Singh, MP Bansuri Swaraj, MLA Shikha Roy, MCD Commissioner Ashwani Kumar, and other dignitaries. The parking complex, spread over 2,245 sq. metres, includes a basement, ground floor, and seven floors with a capacity of 57 cars per level. It is equipped with five car lifts, a 1.5 lakh litre underground water tank, and fire safety systems. Officials said the project cost also covers 10 years of operation and maintenance. Calling the project a "shining example of urban infrastructure," Sood said the system will provide safe and organised parking for citizens. Mayor Singh said the BJP-led Delhi government is delivering in days what previous governments failed to do in years.

### Agency New Delhi.

Ending the week-long manhunt, Swami Chaitanyaanda Saraswati, the self-styled godman and former director of the Sri Sharada Institute of Indian Management-Research, was arrested by Delhi Police at 3:30 am on Sunday from a hotel in Agra. The arrest followed days of calculated evasion involving multiple hotel changes, false claims of government links, and a deliberate attempt to disappear into religious communities. According to Delhi Police sources, the 62-year-old spiritual leader changed locations more than 15 times in an effort to avoid arrest. He strategically checked into hotels near prominent religious sites, knowing these areas attract less scrutiny and would allow him to blend in. Sources also told India Today that Chaitanyaanda and his aides falsely claimed connections with the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) to assert legitimacy and deter suspicion. Sources said that his associates made calls to

people, implying Swamiji was linked to the PMO, which helped him secure cooperation from some hotel operators and aides while on



the run. Swami Chaitanyaanda, also known as Parthasarathy, had been on the run after over 17 women students, most of them from the Economically Weaker Section (EWS) scholarship programme, accused him of sexual

harassment, including sending obscene messages and unwanted physical contact. The students were enrolled in the institute he headed, and an FIR had been registered detailing several instances of abuse, including being summoned to his quarters at night.

He was also facing serious financial misconduct allegations. A preliminary audit by the Sringeri Math in December 2024 revealed that he had misappropriated around Rs 20 crore by diverting funds and property from the Peetham into a parallel trust he fraudulently set up in 2010. Furthermore, following the registration of a case for financial irregularities, Parthasarathy allegedly withdrew Rs 55 lakh and absconded with the funds, even managing to procure a forged passport under a false identity. In light of these findings, the Math administration had not only dismissed him from his directorship but also approached the police. A Look-Out Notice was issued to prevent his escape from the country.

## DJB to turn controversial bungalow built by former CEO into training centre

### Agency New Delhi.

A controversial bungalow, constructed by former Delhi Jal Board (DJB) CEO Udit Prakash Rai by razing a 15th century monument at the site in South East Delhi's Jal Vihar near Lajpat Nagar, is set to be turned into a "human resource-cum-engineering training centre". The DJB gave an in-principle nod to a proposal regarding this at its 174th meeting held on Friday, said officials.

"Now, a proper plan and details will be worked out," a senior DJB official said, adding, "The house has been lying vacant for over two years now. It is a huge property and if left unused for a long time, it will get dilapidated." The official said, "The land is with the DJB... the autonomous body is planning to convert the property and use it as a training centre for our engineers and officers. It will also be used for administrative purposes as a human resource centre."

Officials said different types of training sessions are held at the DJB — from sessions for engineers and employees when a new technology or a project is implemented to the ones held for new recruits by their section heads.

A controversy related to the land broke out in 2023 as the Delhi government's Vigilance department issued a show cause notice to the former CEO (Rai) for allegedly razing down a 15th century arched monument — a "Pathan period" Mahal dating back to 1418 when the Sayyid dynasty ruled Delhi to construct a house for himself.

The monument at the center of the row finds a mention in the Archaeological Survey of India's List of Muhammadan and Hindu Monuments, Vol. IV and is referred to as a "Mahal". The notice by the Vigilance department stated that Rai was "responsible for the demolition of part of the entire structure..." and that he was "well aware of the fact that there exists a historical monument" at the site.

## Three of family held with 3,500 kg illegal firecrackers

### Agency New Delhi.

The Delhi Police has arrested three members of a family for allegedly stocking and repackaging illegal firecrackers for sale ahead of the festive season. Over 3,500 kg of illegal firecrackers were seized in west Delhi's Rajouri Garden, officials said on Saturday.

The accused have been identified as Sushil Kakkar (53), his wife, Upasana Kakkar (50), and their son, Shivam Kakkar (28), all residents of Vishal Enclave in Rajouri Garden. "The family was misusing the residential house as a godown, storing crackers in every nook and corner, including the kitchen. They were caught red-handed while repacking crackers for supply. The crackers were procured from Meerut, Gurugram, and Ghaziabad for high-profit sale in Delhi despite the Supreme Court ban," a police official said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (West) Darade Sharad Bhaskar said, "With the upcoming festive season, it was instructed to check violations of the firecracker ban and trace bulk suppliers and storage points. After receiving a tip-off in the early hours of Thursday, a raid was conducted. The team identified and raided a residential premise at Vishal Enclave, Rajouri Garden, where a huge quantity of firecrackers was found stored all around the house. The family members were caught while repacking the crackers into smaller consignments for sale."

Police said the family runs a snacks and eatables shop in Moti Nagar but had been illegally procuring firecrackers from Meerut, Gurugram, and Ghaziabad for profiteering. Earlier, on September 16, in a major crackdown against illegal firecracker stocking, police recovered over 200 kg of firecrackers from the Badarpur area and arrested one Dharamvir Singh, a resident of Badarpur. The recovery was made from the rooftop room of a building in Molaband. Singh revealed that he had procured the consignment from Palwal in Haryana two days earlier, intending to sell it during the festive season. He failed to produce any valid license or authorization for storage or sale.

## CM Shri schools entrance test challenged in Supreme Court

### Agency New Delhi.

An eleven-year-old student has approached the SC questioning the Government's admission policy for CM SHRI Schools, which requires students to take an entrance test for admission into Classes 6, 7, and 8.

The writ petition, filed under Article 32 of the Constitution, argues that the mandatory entrance tests violate Article 21-A, which guarantees the right to free and compulsory education, as well as Section 13 of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, which prohibits the use of any "screening procedure" in school admissions. The petitioner, Janmesh Sagar, a Class VI student at Government Sarvodaya Bal Vidyalaya, applied for admission to a CM SHRI school for the 2025-26 academic year. Following a government circular issued on July



23, 2025, he appeared for an entrance test on September 13, 2025, as mandated. The petition contends that such tests are unlawful and discriminatory, emphasising that CM SHRI schools are part of the "specified category" under Section 2(p) of the RTE Act and are not exempt from Section 13's provisions. It also points out that previous interpretations by the High Court, which excluded specified category schools from the RTE Act, contradict the constitutional mandate of Article 21-A and Section 13.

Janmesh seeks a declaration from the Supreme Court confirming that Section 13 of the RTE Act applies to CM SHRI schools, nullifying the July 23 circular, and directing that admissions be conducted through a lottery system rather than entrance tests. The petitioner had earlier approached the Delhi High Court under Article 226 of the Constitution but has now directly moved the Supreme Court because the Delhi High Court had already taken a view that provisions of the RTE do not apply to admissions in specific categories of schools. It was on July 23, 2025, that the Delhi government had issued a circular whereby guidelines were given for admission tests for Classes VI, VII, and VIII in CM SHRI schools for the session 2025-26. The circular had also mentioned that the government has established 75 CM SHRI schools which have been declared.

## 'Ek darr sa lagta hai': A year after family of five was found dead in South Delhi flat, unease lingers in locality

### Agency New Delhi.

For several minutes, neighbours knocked repeatedly on the door of flat C-4 in Chauhan Mohalla. No one answered. Flies swarmed around the entrance, and a strong, foul smell lingered near the main door.

It was around 9 am on September 28 last year — a Saturday morning like any other in Rangpuri village, in Southwest Delhi's Vasant Kunj. But inside C-4, something was amiss.

In the flat lived Heerlal Sharma (46) and his four daughters. They were tenants, renting the modest two-room space on the third floor of a residential building in the narrow lanes of Rangpuri. The flat was tucked

into a corner of the third floor in a four-storey building. There were seven units on each floor. All were



rented, except for one on the ground floor where the caretaker lived with his family. Most residents worked as drivers, factory workers, and shop assistants; some also worked at the Delhi Airport around 8 km

away. Concerned over the strong stench, neighbours knocked a few more times on the door of C4 before alerting the caretaker. He contacted the building's owner, who lived nearby. Soon, the police were called. With the door locked from the inside, police had to break it open — and made a grim discovery. Heerlal and his four physically challenged daughters — Neetu (26), Nikki (24), Neeri (23), and Nidhi (20) — were found dead in two separate rooms. There were no signs of struggle. The four women were lying on the same bed. Heerlal was found in another room, seemingly asleep at the time of death. Their bodies.

## Principal accuses another of getting salary, benefits a year after termination

**The complainant alleges that Surya Prakash Mishra has continued to receive salary, allowances, and benefits like LTC, medical reimbursement, and children's education allowance since June 2023, despite being terminated in March 2024.**

### Agency New Delhi.

A complaint has been raised within the Delhi's education department after a government school principal accused another principal of continuing to draw salary and benefits despite a termination order issued in March 2024.

In a letter addressed to the Lieutenant Governor, the complainant has alleged that the official in question, identified as Surya Prakash Mishra, has been receiving salary, allowances, and other emoluments such as LTC, medical reimbursement, and children's education allowance since June 2023, despite being terminated from service in March 2024. According to the complainant, the termination order, dated March 4, 2024, cited gross misconduct, including allegations of fraud and forgery in

securing the post.

The complainant further claims that the salary payments, estimated at around Rs 2 lakh per month, continue to be disbursed illegally from government accounts in collusion with certain officials. The letter alleges that documents and personal information submitted by Mishra were fraudulent or manipulated, and that he did not undergo the usual selection process conducted by the UPSC. It is also alleged that the official has already drawn over Rs 5 crore in public funds since June 2023, money that the complainant argues represents "the hard-earned money of taxpayers." However, the letter notes that recovery of the



amount may prove difficult, as the accused does not reportedly have financial assets in the capital. The complaint also raises questions about possible collusion of departmental staff and external influences, suggesting that irregular payments could not have been

processed without internal support. The complainant has urged authorities to investigate the matter, stop the alleged disbursal of salary, and take action to recover funds already released. No response has yet been made public by the education department or the Lieutenant Governor office in this regard.

### Fraudulent documents submitted: Letter to L-G

The complainant letter to L-G alleges that documents and personal information submitted by Mishra (the official in question) were fraudulent or manipulated, and that he did not undergo the usual selection process conducted by the UPSC.

## NEWS BOX

Arundhati Reddy returns with spirited spell vs New Zealand after freak injury

New Delhi. (Agency)

Arundhati Reddy made a strong comeback with a brilliant spell against New Zealand, easing India's concerns ahead of the Women's World Cup. In India's second warm-up match on Saturday, September 27, at the BCCI Centre of Excellence Ground in Bengaluru, the speedster returned figures of 9-0-42-2. Her performance came just days after a freak accident in the opening practice game against England. While following through, Reddy instinctively reached out to grab a sharp return catch from Heather Knight. The attempt threw her off balance, and she landed awkwardly on her left leg before collapsing on the turf. Medical staff rushed in immediately, first trying to help her walk off. But with Reddy unable to put weight on the injured leg, a wheelchair was called in to escort her off the field for treatment. There were doubts over whether she would recover in time for the multi-nation event, but Reddy not only regained



fitness, she bowled with intent against the White Ferns. Her effort helped India bounce back from a 153-run loss to England and secure a four-wicket (DLS) win over New Zealand, providing vital momentum before the World Cup.

**Arundhati Reddy impresses**

On Saturday, Arundhati Reddy struck first by dismissing Isabella Gaze, who had recently scored a century against India A, although in a losing cause. Reddy beat the batter with sharp movement, and Richa Ghosh did the rest with a swift stumping. She later bowled Jess Kerr to wrap up a spirited spell. Reddy's effort helped India restrict New Zealand to 232 for eight in a rain-curtailed 42-over contest. In reply, India chased down the target in 40.2 overs, powered by skipper Harmanpreet Kaur's 69 and Harleen Deol's fluent 74. India will now open their World Cup campaign against Chamari Athapaththu's Sri Lanka on September 30 at the Barsapara Stadium in Guwahati.

**Son's brace fuels LAFC as Messi frustrated in Miami draw**

MONTREAL. (Agency)

Son Heung-min scored two goals and Denis Bouanga added another as Los Angeles FC beat St. Louis City 3-0 on Saturday for a fourth straight Major League Soccer victory. Bouanga's 23rd goal of the season puts him one behind Inter Miami's Argentine superstar Lionel Messi atop the MLS scoring charts. Messi has 24 goals in 23 games, but he came up empty as Miami were held to a 1-1 draw with Toronto.

South Korea star Son, the former Tottenham captain who signed with LAFC in August for a reported MLS record \$26 million, has eight goals in eight MLS games, quickly settling in with Bouanga to build a formidable attack. Gabon international Bouanga seized upon a St. Louis miscue and buried a shot



from outside the area to give LAFC a 1-0 lead in the 15th minute, marking his fifth straight game with at least one goal.

Son made it 2-0 in first-half stoppage time, collecting a pass from Artem Smoliakov and motoring into the box to rifle a right-footed shot past St. Louis keeper Roman Burki.

Son added another in the 60th minute, firing through traffic from the center of the area after Smoliakov threaded a pass back to him. Bouanga and Son became the first duo in MLS history to score 17 consecutive goals for a club in a single regular season.

They have 18 goals between them in their eight matches together and LAFC, already qualified for the MLS Cup playoffs, strengthened their grip on fourth place in the Western Conference. Messi had gone into Saturday's game in Toronto in blistering form, bagging five goals in his previous three appearances for Miami. But though the 38-year-old carved out a string of promising openings, a superb performance from Toronto goalkeeper Sean Johnson prevented him from extending his recent spree.

They booked their postseason berth, appeared on course for all three points at BMO Field after Tadeo Allende headed home a Jordi Alba cross in first-half stoppage time for a 1-0 lead.

# Women's World Cup: Can Fatima Sana put Pakistan on the global map

**Women's World Cup: Pakistan enter the tournament aiming more for experience than titles, relying on key performers like Fatima Sana, Sidra Amin, and their spin duo Nashra Sandhu and Sadia Iqbal to challenge stronger sides.**

New Delhi. (Agency)

For Pakistan, the Women's World Cup is less about titles and more about experience. Historically, the side has struggled to make a mark, exiting three of their previous editions without a single win and crashing out in the last tournament after six losses in seven games. Yet, this year offers a glimmer of hope. Pakistan stormed through the World

Cup Qualifiers in Lahore, winning all five matches and proving they can compete with determination and skill. On Indian soil, they will still face an uphill battle against heavyweights like England, India, and Australia. Match-winners exist, but the spotlight will fall on Fatima Sana, whose performances could tip the scales. Even a solitary victory would be a statement, signalling that Pakistan is not just participating—they are learning, evolving, and quietly staking their claim. Beyond wins and losses, this campaign could lay the foundation for a more competitive Pakistan in the years to come.

**Mainstay Sidra Amin key for Pakistan**

If Pakistan are to pull off an upset or two in the Women's World Cup, Sidra Amin will need to lead the charge. With 2,271 runs and six hundreds in 77 ODIs, Sidra is among Pakistan's elite batters. Her career average of 32.91 is the highest in the nation's Women's ODI history, underlining her consistency and class. Women's World Cup 2025 Full Coverage She was in scintillating form in the recent home ODI series against South Africa, amassing 293 runs with back-to-back



hundreds, finishing as the series' top scorer despite Pakistan losing.

Alongside Sidra, left-hander Muneeba Ali brings her flair and experience, being one of only two Pakistani batters with multiple T20I hundreds. Omaima Sohail will also play a pivotal role, having delivered crucial contributions—including a fifty against South Africa in the previous World Cup.

With these key players in form, Pakistan can hope to challenge the heavyweights and make their mark on the global stage.

**Fatima Sana: The Rock of Pakistan**

Fatima Sana is expected to play a vital role as Pakistan captain. Courtesy: PCB

When Fatima Sana first took over the

## Sanju Samson can topple Dhoni and Pant in Asia Cup final despite limited chances

MADRID. (Agency)

India wicketkeeper-batter Sanju Samson is gearing up for a chance to make T20I history, and the Asia Cup final against Pakistan is the perfect stage. Despite limited opportunities this tournament, India's wicketkeeper-batter could surpass the legends MS Dhoni and Rishabh Pant to set a record for the best performance by an Indian keeper-batter in a multi-nation T20I event. While India's top order has been firing, and has already boasted superiority over Pakistan twice in this tournament, Samson's contributions, though crucial, have flown under the radar.

So far in the Asia Cup, Samson has made the most of his chances. In three innings, he has scored 108 runs at an average of 36.00 and a strike rate of 127.05. Just 64 more runs, and he'll overtake Pant, who racked up 171 runs in eight innings during India's ICC T20 World Cup 2024 campaign, averaging 24.42 with a strike rate of 127.61 and a top score of 42. Then there's the benchmark: Dhoni. During India's title-winning ICC



T20 World Cup 2007 campaign, he scored 154 runs in six innings at 30.80, striking at 128.33, with a crucial 36 in the semifinals

against Australia. What makes Samson's potential record even more exciting is that he hasn't opened in this tournament, the spot he revived his T20I career from last year. With the return of Shubman Gill in the T20I side, it has been him and Abhishek Sharma at the top in this tournament, leaving Samson as low as at No. 5, where he has delivered standout knocks of 56 against Oman, 13, and 39 in other innings.

Adding another milestone to the chase, Samson is just 31 runs shy of 1,000 T20I career runs. In 48 matches, he has 969 runs at an average of 26.18, a strike rate above 149, three fifties, three centuries, and a top score of 111. As India gears up for the high-stakes final against Pakistan, all eyes will be on Samson, not just for his milestone chase but also for his potential match-winning impact in the middle order if the top-order batters struggle against Pakistan's pace duo, Shaheen Shah Afridi and Haris Rauf.

captaincy last year, expectations were modest. Yet, she quickly showed that leadership isn't just about strategy—it's about heart. Even as Pakistan exited before the T20 World Cup semifinals, Fatima demonstrated remarkable mental strength, returning to the field after the passing of her father mid-tournament. She bowled with tenacity and contributed valuable cameos with the bat, hinting at the all-round talent she possesses. At just 23, Fatima is already second on Pakistan's all-time ODI wicket-takers list among pacers. She has also made her mark with the bat, scoring three fifties and a career-best unbeaten 90, cementing her status as one of Pakistan's most promising all-rounders—and one of the rising stars in world cricket. As Pakistan gear up for the Women's World Cup, their hopes will largely rest on their skipper, who must lead from the front and inspire her team against some of the toughest sides in the game.

**Spinners crucial for Pakistan**

For Pakistan to make an impact in the Women's World Cup, the spin duo of Nashra Sandhu and Sadia Iqbal will be crucial in keeping opponents in check.

## Dinesh Karthik, Mithali Raj in star-studded commentary panel for Women's World Cup

New Delhi. (Agency)

The ICC has announced a star-studded, female-led commentary lineup for the 2025 Women's World Cup, promising fans a blend of expert insights and captivating analysis throughout the tournament. Legendary former captains Mithali Raj, Sana Mir, and Anjum Chopra will share their tactical knowledge, alongside World Cup champions Mel Jones, Isa Guha, Stacy-Ann King, and Julia Price, offering a rich mix of experience and perspective. Enhancing the panel further, ICC men's trophy winners Dinesh Karthik, Aaron Finch, and Carlos Brathwaite will add their expertise, joined by former international stars Katey Martin, Ian Bishop, Natasha Farrant, Mpumelelo Mbawana, and Russell Arnold. Women's World Cup 2025 Full Coverage

"To witness the Women's World Cup being staged across India and Sri Lanka is deeply gratifying. It's not only about celebrating the best in the world, but also about inspiring a new

## Asia Cup Final: Can Pakistan ride on law of averages to ruffle high-flying India

New Delhi. (Agency)

As the Asia Cup final approaches, the cricketing world is once again drawn into the magnetic pull of the India-Pakistan rivalry. Every encounter between these two giants carries an air of unpredictability, where form often bows to history and nerves are tested under the brightest lights. India enter the final on the back of a flawless campaign, having won all six of their matches, brimming with confidence and momentum. Pakistan, meanwhile, have only lost to India. While they have defeated other teams, they carry the weight of expectation—and the whisper of the law of averages: can a team that has faced setbacks rise at just the right moment to challenge the high-flyers? Beyond tactics and talent, this clash is a psychological duel—who can handle the pressure, who will seize the moment, and who will rewrite recent narratives? With pride, passion, and legacy on the line, this is more than just a final; it is a stage where anything can happen. Stay updated on Asia Cup 2025 with India Today! Get match schedules, team squads,

live score, and the latest Asia Cup points table.

**Can Pakistan end their losing streak?**

India's dominance over Pakistan in cricket has become almost a storyline in itself.



Seven consecutive wins across formats now separate the two sides, with Pakistan's last victory dating back to the Asia Cup 2022 in Dubai. Since then, India have crafted a tale of supremacy: a commanding 228-run triumph in the 2023 Asia Cup Super Four, a nerve-wracking 6-run victory in the 2024 T20 World Cup, and a clinical 6-wicket win in the 2025 Champions Trophy, 2017?

Pakistan can take a cue from their remarkable turnaround in the 2017 Champions Trophy in England. After a crushing 124-run defeat to India in the group stage, they stunned the cricketing world by orchestrating a sensational 180-run victory over their arch-rivals, proving that comebacks are very much in their DNA. Yet, as former Indian great Sunil Gavaskar points out,

highlighted by Virat Kohli's 51st ODI century. Back-to-back defeats to India in the ongoing Asia Cup, both relatively one-sided, have compounded Pakistan's woes. Yet cricket has a way of balancing its scales. Pakistan are determined to end a three-year losing streak against their arch-rivals, aware that it will require a near-Herculean effort. India, with Abhishek Sharma in form and contributions from key players across the lineup, aim to extend their supremacy. The stage is set for another enthralling chapter in this storied rivalry.

Can Pakistan do a Champions Trophy 2017?

Pakistan can take a cue from their remarkable turnaround in the 2017 Champions Trophy in England. After a crushing 124-run defeat to India in the group stage, they stunned the cricketing world by orchestrating a sensational 180-run victory over their arch-rivals, proving that comebacks are very much in their DNA. Yet, as former Indian great Sunil Gavaskar points out.

India looking for maiden ICC title

India are eyeing their maiden Women's World Cup title, aiming to end a long-standing wait for global glory. Historically, India have competed in 12 editions of the tournament since 1978 but have yet to lift the trophy.



generation of girls who dream of playing cricket. Having been part of this journey as a player, I'm excited to now share insights from the commentary box and shine a light on the players who will shape the future of our sport," Mithali Raj said.

Rounding out the commentary lineup are seasoned broadcasters Natalie Germanos, Alan Wilkins, and Kass Naidoo, alongside rising talents Raunak Kapoor and Jatin Sapru.

This dynamic mix of veteran expertise, on-field experience, and fresh voices promises fans engaging, insightful, and lively coverage throughout the tournament, set to run from September 30 to November 2.

IND vs PAK: After 'no rivalry' claim, pressure on Suryakumar to deliver in final

## IND vs PAK: After 'no rivalry' claim, pressure on Suryakumar to deliver in final

New Delhi. (Agency)

India captain Suryakumar Yadav has hogged the limelight against Pakistan in the ongoing Asia Cup 2025, both on and off the field. The India skipper made a bold statement by refusing to shake hands with his Pakistan counterpart Salman Agha at the toss during the group stage clash, later guiding his team home with a match-winning 47\* off 37 balls. In the second fixture, despite a three-ball duck, the India captain managed to get under the skin of Pakistan fans by dismissing the rivalry between the two teams, terming it a 'one-sided' contest. As India prepare to face their arch-rivals for the third time in the tournament, captain Suryakumar will once again face the task of proving his words. While the India captain wasn't wrong in dismissing the rivalry claims—given that the Men in Blue have won their last seven successive clashes against Pakistan—he has created a deep hole for himself with this statement, one into which he might be pushed if the result does not go in their

favour. Stay updated on Asia Cup 2025 with India Today! Get match schedules, team squads, live score, and the latest Asia Cup points table. Over the past ten years, India have not allowed the enormity of the occasion to overwhelm their skills when facing Pakistan, having won 15 out of 19 matches played between the two teams and losing only three. The current squad also advocates treating it as 'just another game' and focusing on giving their best on the field. Suryakumar's Pakistan horror

However, come Sunday, the Men in Blue will know that it is far from 'just another game' given the border escalations between the two countries and the controversies surrounding the last two fixtures. Moreover, the verbal battles between the Indian opening pair and Pakistan's new-ball bowlers have only added spice to the contest, with both sets of players eager for another showdown. Amid all the drama that is bound to take centre stage when the two teams collide again, the captains from both sides



will carry the heavy burden of expectation on their shoulders. While Suryakumar has had a phenomenal run as India's T20I skipper—the team yet to drop a series under his leadership—his batting numbers have not soared quite like his sixes over fine leg. Ever since being appointed full-time captain of the T20I side, India's own Mr 360 has been on a 180-degree journey back and forth to the pavilion, with below-par scores to his name. In the 19 innings played since 27 July 2024,

Suryakumar has accumulated 329 runs at an average of 19.35, with just two fifty-plus scores to his credit. Moreover, his numbers against Pakistan paint a worrying picture. The India captain has only 111 runs from seven innings at an average of 18.50, with a highest score of 47\* scored earlier in the tournament. With just 71 runs from five innings in the ongoing Asia Cup, Suryakumar has only added to his woes as he heads into the most important match of his captaincy career so far.

Can Suryakumar walk the talk in the Asia Cup Final? Poor form, big talk, and bold on-field actions will only add to the pressure as Suryakumar walks out to marshal his troops in pursuit of his first major title as captain. Ahead of the summit clash, legendary India batter Sunil Gavaskar has advised Suryakumar to take some time at the crease to settle before unleashing his natural game on the opposition. "He's undoubtedly a class player."

## Jindal Steel becomes India's first diversified major enterprise recognised as 'Awarding Body' by NCVET

RAIPUR, (Agency)

Jindal Steel has become the first large and diversified enterprise to receive momentous recognition as an 'Awarding Body' by the National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET).

NCVET, the apex regulatory authority for the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector, works to ensure quality, standardisation, and credibility across vocational learning in India.

By signing an agreement with NCVET, Jindal Steel has been granted PAN-India jurisdiction as an Awarding Body under the Large Indian Enterprise/Multi-National Company category. Company officials said the recognition positions Jindal Steel to play a pivotal role in advancing vocational education and skilling standards nationwide.

This status will enable Jindal Steel to design and implement industry-aligned standards, introduce structured skilling programmes, and drive the accelerated development of India's future workforce. Importantly, the agreement ensures that all training standards and qualifications developed under this framework will be recognised for credit under the National Credit Framework, a key pillar of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

The move is seen as a significant step in bridging the gap between education and employment by fostering practical, outcome-based skilling across multiple sectors. Being recognised as an Awarding Body by NCVET is a responsibility we accept with seriousness and purpose. It allows us to bring industry standards directly into education and skilling, so that young Indians gain the knowledge and discipline needed to succeed in the workplace and contribute to building a stronger nation," said Naveen Jindal, Chairman of Jindal Steel.

## World Seafood Congress: Chennai to host in 2026, a first in India

NEW DELHI, (Agency)

India will host the World Seafood Congress (WSC) for the first time in 2026, marking a milestone for the world's sixth-largest seafood supplier as global trade in aquatic products continues to expand. The biennial event, scheduled to be held in Chennai, will bring together industry leaders, policymakers and researchers from around the world. Since 1999, the congress has been held in countries such as Canada, the Netherlands, Australia and Iceland, but never in Asia's second-largest fish producer.

"It is a matter of great pride for India to host the World Seafood Congress for the first time," said Pradeep Devaiah, Chairman of PDA Ventures, the event's host organisation. "This is a landmark opportunity to showcase India's seafood sector to the world," he said in a statement. The congress comes as global seafood trade reaches new heights. The Food and Agriculture Organisation forecasts world trade in aquatic animal products will rise 1.7 per cent to USD 183.8 billion in 2025, while algae exports are expected to reach USD 15 billion. India exported 1.78 million tonnes of marine products worth USD 7.38 billion in 2023-24, according to government data. The country's total fish production has grown to 18.40 million tonnes.

The Department of Fisheries and the International Association of Fish Inspectors (IAFI) are co-organising the event, which will include technical presentations, workshops and a trade fair showcasing processing equipment and supply chain innovations. "The World Seafood Congress has always been a bridge between science, industry and policy," IAFI President Dr Ian Goulding.

## 'Maruti moment': India aims Rs 70,000 crore package for domestic shipbuilding; reduce reliance on foreign vessels

New Delhi, (Agency)

India is aiming for a "Maruti moment" in shipbuilding, seeking to replicate the success of Maruti Suzuki's 1980s automobile revolution. The government announced a Rs 70,000-crore (\$8 billion) package to revitalise domestic shipyards, boost India's maritime ecosystem, and reduce the country's heavy reliance on foreign vessels, which currently handle about 95% of its import-export trade. The plan includes a maritime development fund, a revamped shipbuilding assistance scheme, and incentives for South Korean and Japanese shipbuilders to establish operations in India, either independently or in partnership with local shipyards. The move aims not only to attract global investment but also to reduce India's dependence on foreign ships, and strengthen long-term maritime security.

"With this new package, it's like the Maruti moment for shipbuilding," TK Ramachandran, secretary at the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways told ET. "But we have to create major domestic demand for ships to make these incentives work," Ramachandran added. India currently spends around \$75 billion annually on hiring foreign ships—a figure that could surge to \$400 billion by 2047 if domestic shipbuilding capacity is not expanded. Highlighting the strategic importance of the initiative, M Angamuthu, Chairperson of Mumbai Port Authority, said India's reliance on foreign vessels leaves the nation vulnerable during global disruptions such as pandemics, wars, or sanctions.

**That is because exports to the US — accounting for 20 per cent of the Indian pharmaceuticals market — primarily comprise generic, off-patent medicines which may not come in ambit of these tariffs**

NEW DELHI, (Agency)

The 100 per cent US tariffs on branded and patented pharmaceutical drugs is not a bitter pill for the Indian drug makers, according to analysts.

That is because exports to the US — accounting for 20 per cent of the Indian pharmaceuticals market — primarily comprise generic, off-patent medicines which may not come in ambit of these tariffs. The imposition of 100 per cent tariff by the US on imports of branded and patented pharmaceutical products starting



October 1, 2025 may not significantly

hurt Indian drug makers," said Anuj Sethi, Senior Director, Crisil Ratings. To be sure, some domestic formulation makers have niche presence in the branded and patented drugs space, but the contribution of those drugs to their revenue is modest, he mentioned.

Moreover, given the largely non-

discretionary nature of these products, majority of the tariff cost is likely to be passed through. Some of these domestic companies also have manufacturing facilities in the US, which would make them exempt from the new levies.

"Strong balance sheets further support the credit quality of these companies. That said any imposition of further tariffs,

## Tata Capital IPO 2025: Rs 17,200 Cr Issue, Listing Date & Key Details

New Delhi, (Agency)

Tata Capital has announced one of 2025's biggest public issues, aiming to raise about Rs 17,200 crore via its initial public offering (IPO). According to its Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP), the issue comprises two parts: an offer-for-sale (OFS) of up to 265.79 million shares and a fresh issue of around 210 million shares. Promoter Tata Sons plans to offload up to 230 million shares, and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) will also sell as many as 35.82 million shares. Ahead of the bidding window's opening in early October, here are the essential dates: the IPO subscription period is slated for October 6-8, with share allotments to be finalized by October 9. Refunds and share allocations to successful applicants will be processed on October 10, and the shares are expected to list on the BSE and NSE on

October 13. The book-running lead manager is Kotak Mahindra Capital, and the IPO registrar is MUFG Intime India. Tata Capital operates as a



diversified non-banking financial company (NBFC) under Tata Sons' umbrella. As of March 31, 2025, it has a presence across 1,496 branches in 27 states and Union Territories. In the fiscal year ending March 2025, its total income rose nearly 56 percent to Rs 28,369.87 crore, and profit after tax (PAT) grew over 9 percent to Rs

3,655.02 crore. Its net worth jumped by 38 percent year-over-year, reaching Rs 32,587.82 crore. In its DRHP, Tata Capital also notes its competitive environment: it competes with banks, NBFCs, housing finance firms, small finance banks, digital lenders, and informal/local financiers. Its peers include Bajaj Finance, Shriram Finance, Cholamandalam Investment & Finance, L & T Finance, Sundaram Finance, and HDB Financial Services.

One driving reason for this IPO is regulatory: in 2022, the RBI classified Tata Capital as an "upper-layer NBFC," a category that mandates listing within three years. The company must comply by September 2025. Proceeds from this public issue will bolster Tata Capital's Tier I capital base and support further lending operations.

## Retired with EMI burden Know how to avoid this stress

Kolkata, (Agency)

Ideally, retirement is a time for a carefree life and fund, the freedom to pursue one's hobbies for which one did not have time to do during one's professional life. The one big enemy to post-retirement life could be EMIs (Equated monthly instalments). There are a number of bugs in modern life—rising healthcare costs, less than adequate savings/investment, inflation etc. If EMIs add compounds this situation, it can easily turn into a crisis. Assume a person retires and then finds himself in the midst of a situation when he has to fund his son/daughter's higher education expenses or marriage expenses. All these can heap a loan of debt on his shoulders. The situation is becoming common and there is a new term for it—'EMI Retirement'.

The EMI cult

EMIs have almost become a cult in India. Young people nowadays take loans and march into the embrace of EMIs without batting an eyelid. With the rise in consumption and personal

loans, car loans and housing loans rising fast, borrowings are a part of normal life. There have been multiple surveys that have found more and more households depending more and more on debt to run their families. But EMIs do become a big bother after retirement when cash flow stops from work.

Poor retirement planning

Poor retirement planning is something that most of us walk into, often unknowingly. Many people realise after retirement that the modest EPF and savings that they care to do during their working life is not sufficient after retirement, especially with a running EMI. Savings quickly vanish and post-retirement life become a bed of thorns. Healthcare costs are rising faster than one expects to. Insurance cover falls short on many occasions. This something that one has to care adequately for during the working life. Another big source of worry in inflation, which silently keeps eroding one's savings. Even a few years ago, one would assume that a corpus of Rs

1 crore will be sufficient to take care of one's post-retirement life till the age of 80-85. But that comfort is quickly vanishing. The cost of utilities, groceries, travelling, entertainment— everything is rising faster than we assume. Debt also levies a tax on the brain—it has an emotional cost. Retired life suddenly can become a constant source of concern. Tips to prevent the EMI burden after retirement

There are a few ways to ensure such a situation does not arise. One should start investing from early in life. Capital is multiplied only through the force of compounding over the long-term, which means the longer the tenure to invest, the higher the amount that can be amassed and more easily. For example, if an individual starts investing Rs 10,000 a month and continues it for 30 years, he/she can amass nothing less than Rs 3.53 crore, assuming a 12% return. If one can increase the investment as one's income rises, the amount will be far higher.

## FPIs Offload Rs 16,422 Crore Last Week, Sentiments To Reverse In Near Future: Analysts

New Delhi, (Agency)

Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) offloaded Rs 16,422 crore worth of Indian equities last week, driven by concerns over valuations and new policy measures of US government but the sentiment is set to reverse, analysts said on Sunday. A USD 100,000 fee on new H-1B visa applications and high tariffs on branded drugs have raised concerns among FPIs regarding earnings pressure in India's IT and pharmaceutical sectors. Benchmark indices experienced their steepest weekly decline in seven months due to sustained outflows, with Indian equities lagging behind emerging markets by nearly 26 per cent year-to-date in dollar terms. Persistent FPI selling, global trade tensions, and sector-specific pressures weighed on sentiment, analysts said. Dr VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services, said that foreign portfolio investors have withdrawn USD 21 billion from India in the past year, marking the largest outflow among emerging markets during this timeframe. This FPI outflow also has largely contributed to the



depreciation in INR of 3.5 per cent against the dollar. The elevated valuations in India vis a vis other markets and the tepid earnings growth are the principal reasons behind the FPI pull out," he said. In the first three months of 2025, FPIs were sellers and in the next three months they turned buyers. In July, August and September so far, they have again turned sellers. The depreciation of Indian rupee, in contrast to the appreciation of other emerging market currencies, intensified the pressure, he added. Record automobile bookings, reduced GST rates, and cheap credit are fuelling a recovery in the automotive and white goods sectors, the analyst said. He said that this will lead to superior earnings growth, which the market and FPIs will begin to discount, adding that further rupee depreciation is unlikely. "It is safe to assume we are near the trough of the FPI pullout," said Vijayakumar, adding that earnings growth in India is expected to pick up from Q3 FY26, gathering momentum in Fy27.

## Market Outlook: RBI MPC, India-US Trade Deal, FII Data Likely To Drive Sentiment Next Week

**Market watchers anticipate a 25-basis-point (bps) rate cut in the upcoming policy. Currently, the repo rate stands at 5.5 per cent.**

New Delhi, (Agency)

The coming week will be crucial for Indian equities as investors track the Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting, developments on the India-US trade deal, foreign institutional investor (FII) activity, and global economic cues. The MPC meeting is scheduled from September 29 to October 1, where the central bank is expected to review interest rates. Market watchers anticipate a 25-basis-point (bps) rate cut in the upcoming policy. Currently, the repo rate stands at 5.5 per cent. The RBI had left the policy



rate unchanged in the previous review, but since February 2025, it has lowered the repo rate by nearly one percentage point.

Investor attention will also remain on the India-US trade agreement, which is

progressing in a positive direction. A high-level Indian delegation, led by Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal, recently visited the US and held talks with US Trade Representative

Sergio

Meanwhile, Accenture's weak guidance and job cuts signalled slowing IT spending, which triggered a broad selloff in technology counters.

Amid global uncertainty, investors remain cautious and are focusing on domestic investment and consumption trends in the near term.

# Rashami Desai's

## Mantra In Life Nowadays: 'When In Doubt, Garba It Out'

Rashami Desai is soaking in the festive spirit of Navratri, one of India's most cherished and vibrant festivals. The nine-day festival, dedicated to the nine forms of Goddess Durga, is celebrated with great devotion and grandeur across the country. The actress joined in the festivities by sharing a video of herself performing Garba with her friend.

On Saturday, September 27, Rashami shared the lively video on her Instagram account, capturing her Navratri celebrations. In the clip, she was seen dancing gracefully to the energetic tune of Dholida from Alia Bhatt's film Gangubai Kathiawadi. Rashami looked stunning in a traditional red and white chaniya, choli, paired with a matching dupatta and minimal accessories, as she performed Garba alongside her friend. Her expressions radiated joy and excitement, showing just how much she enjoyed the moment.

The place where Rashami was dancing was beautifully decorated in true Navratri style, adorned with vibrant flowers and other traditional hangings as well as lights. In the caption of her post, Rashami playfully wrote, "When in doubt.. G A R B A it out..."

### Rashami Desai's Fans And Friends Love Her Garba Dance

Fans and fellow industry friends quickly flooded the post with praise, complimenting her graceful moves. Actress Adaa Khan reacted to the video with a smiling face with heart eyes emojis, whereas Bigg Boss 18's Sara Arfeen Khan wrote, "Wowwww. Meanwhile, one of her fans said, "Speechless!! Queen of grace & energy Always mesmerising." "Such an elegant dancer you are.... truly admirable," mentioned another fan.

### When Rashami Desai Impressed Fans With Her Graceful Garba To A Gujarati Song

Just days ago, Rashami posted yet another video of her performing Garba. This time, she was seen in a black chaniya choli paired with a pink dupatta. She was dancing to the Gujarati song Ghor Andhari. And once again, she impressed everyone with her impeccable dance moves. In the caption of the post, she wrote, "Ghor andhari re raataldi... Ne aaaa aavi mari maudi."

### What's Rashami Desai Up To These Days?

The actress, who rose to popularity with Colors TV show Uttaran, was most recently seen on screen in the Gujarati film Mom Tane Nai Samjay. Directed by Dharmesh Mehta, the family drama was released on January 10. She was also seen in the popular show Wagle Ki Duniya: Nayi Peedhi Nayi Kissey as Meenakshi Kapoor, an intelligent and determined woman.



# Shriya Saran

## Soaks Up The Sri Lankan Sun In Bikini With Daughter Radha By Her Side

Shriya Saran is in full holiday mode, enjoying a getaway in Sri Lanka with her husband, Andrei Koscheev, and their daughter, Radha. The actress, who celebrated her birthday on September 11, chose to mark the occasion with a family vacation, and the pictures are nothing short of dreamy.

Taking to Instagram, Shriya shared a series of snapshots from the trip. In the first frame, she is seen lounging in a resort pool, soaking up the sun against a breathtaking tropical backdrop. Dressed in a bright yellow bikini adorned with multi-coloured floral prints, she exuded effortless beachside glamour. A touch of subtle makeup and a chic bun completed her relaxed yet striking look.

### Shriya Saran's Baby Girl Makes Everyone Nostalgic About Their Childhood

In the next frame, Shriya let her hair down as the cool breeze gently tousled her tresses, perfectly capturing her carefree vibe. Her husband, Andrei Koscheev, and their daughter, Radha, soon joined the Drishyam actress in the private pool, making for a heartwarming family moment. But it was little Radha who stole the spotlight. Like any playful toddler, she delighted in splashing the water with one tiny foot, while her mother soaked in the peaceful surroundings.

### Shriya Saran Is Raising The Temperature With Her Vacation Moments

The carousel ended with Saran reading a book while lounging on a chair during sunset. She captioned

the moments as "Thank you, Pickyourtrail, Kotiyagala Luxury Villas, and Srilanka for making my birthday special." Pickyourtrail is an online travel platform that allows users to create customised international holidays and packages. Soon, fans flocked to the comments section, showering the diva with love and admiration for her effortless charm. A user said,



"Wow, nice, you're looking so cute, and beautiful pics." Another added, "Beautiful pics." Someone mentioned, "Awesome experience." Many others dropped emojis like fire, hearts and more to praise the actress' choice of vacationing.

### Shriya Saran's Recent Works

Last year, the actress made her OTT debut with Showtime, a television series created by Sumit Roy. Produced by Dharmatic Entertainment, the show premiered on Disney+Hotstar on March 8, 2024, and offered a behind-the-scenes

Varalaxmi Sarathkumar Turns Director With Saraswathi, Ropes In Prakash Raj And Priyamani



Actor Varalaxmi Sarathkumar is stepping behind the camera for the first time with her upcoming film Saraswathi. In addition to directing, she will also produce the project alongside her sister Pooja Sarathkumar under their new banner, Dosa Diaries. The announcement was shared by Varalaxmi on her social media accounts.

### Star-studded cast and crew

The film will feature a strong ensemble cast, including Prakash Raj, Priyamani, and Naveen Chandra. Thaman has been signed on to compose the music. The technical team comprises A.M. Edwin Sakay for cinematography, Venkat Raajen as editor, and Sudheer Macharla handling art direction. Varalaxmi expressed her excitement about the project, writing, "I'm so excited to be starting my journey as a director. To be producing alongside my sister Pooja is a bigger bonus. Thank you to my actors and technicians for having faith in me. I will do my very best not to let you down. Need all your blessings."

### About Dosa Diaries

The production house Dosa Diaries marks a new beginning for Varalaxmi and her sister. Sharing the news, the actress wrote, "Dosa Diaries – Chapter 1: We are delighted to announce that actress Varalaxmi Sarathkumar and her sister Pooja Sarathkumar are joining hands as producers to launch their maiden production company. This film features a power-packed ensemble of artists and technicians and marks the beginning of an exciting new journey for us in the world of cinema."

### Varalaxmi's Upcoming International Project

Alongside her directorial debut, Varalaxmi is also set to appear in a Hollywood film titled Rizana: A Caged Bird, directed by Chandran Rutnam. Shot in Sri Lanka, the film is inspired by a true story. She will share screen space with Academy Award-winning actor Jeremy Irons, who has also won a Tony, three Primetime Emmys, and two Golden Globes.

## Rani Mukerji Say Her Dad Was Heartbroken When She Didn't Win National Award For Black



Rani Mukerji, who recently celebrated her first-ever National Award win for Mrs Chatterjee vs Norway, has looked back at a moment in her career that left her family deeply emotional.

Nearly two decades ago, her powerful performance in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Black (2005) was widely expected to win her the honour. But when the award didn't come her way, Rani revealed, it left her father, filmmaker Ram Mukerji, "very heartbroken." The actor spoke about this memory at a recent event, recalling not just her own feelings but also how those close to her reacted.

### "I Gave My All in Black"

Rani spoke about the effort she put into the role, calling it one of the most challenging performances of her career. "I gave my all in \*Black, and I was all 25 at that time when I did that film. There was chatter that I would win, and when I didn't win, that's when my blinkers came on. I was like 'even when you do your best work, things might not be in your favour,'" she said.

She added that director Sanjay Leela Bhansali was also upset by the outcome. "So was Sanjay, who was the director of the film," she recalled.

### Ram Mukerji's Reaction

The actor recounted her father's emotional response.

"I've to be honest and tell you that my father was very disappointed. My baba (father) was very heartbroken that I didn't win that year," she said. Despite the setback, Rani added that the overwhelming support she received from audiences softened the disappointment. "But, I guess when things are meant to happen, they happen. The way India and my fans cheered for me, it couldn't have been better than that."

### About Black

Released in 2005, Black was directed, co-written, and co-produced by Sanjay Leela Bhansali. The film starred Amitabh Bachchan, Ayesha Kapur, Shernaz Patel, and Dhritiman Chatterjee alongside Rani.

Inspired by the life and writings of Helen Keller, it told the story of Michelle, a deaf, mute, and blind woman, and her bond with Debraj (Amitabh Bachchan), her mentor who later suffers from Alzheimer's disease. The film went on to win multiple honours at the National Film Awards, including Best Actor, Best Feature Film in Hindi, and Best Costume Design.



# Here's how to create a Positive image at Work

Adopting the right approach towards your work life such as paying attention to your attitude, dressing style and your approach towards work can help attract a number of positive benefits. These can pave the way for building a solid professional life by helping you attract your superiors' attention, maintaining a healthy relationship with your immediate colleagues and coming across as a dependable employee. Here are a few things you should incorporate in your daily work life to create a positive image at your workplace.

## Fit in

Every organisation has a different work culture. When you join a firm, try and understand its work culture and priorities. It is equally important to understand your job profile and what the organisation expects from you. "It is a good idea to be cautious of the conversation that you make with your co-workers. Do not intrude into your colleague's personal space. Compliment your colleagues and team mates for their achievements. Refrain from gossiping at

work, it will most likely back fire someday. Avoid using a commanding tone while you communicate. Instead of commanding while you manage a team, ask your peers for their opinion on a particular subject. This goes a long way in building a strong team," says Sheena Agarwal, Director, Urbanista Image Consulting LLP.

## Dress well

It is essential to pay attention to how you dress at work. Groom yourself and

maintain a neat appearance keeping your job profile in mind. While dressing up casually at work may be acceptable at times, one needs to understand that they cannot dress casually while attending a meeting or presenting to a client. Another thing to keep in mind is that you are comfortable in the clothes you wear. This will help avoid distractions.

"Grooming is important to the extent of being neat, tidy and professional. One doesn't need to wear expensive clothes, perfumes, makeup, etc, to be well groomed.

## Presenting yourself well at the workplace can help you boost your career.

At the same time, one cannot sport an unkempt, dishevelled look or that which is unbecoming of the workplace culture," says Saba Adil, Head, HR, AEGON Life Insurance.

## Pay attention to your body language

While we don't pay attention to our posture at work, it is important to understand that a professional's posture says a lot about his attitude. A professional with a straight posture suggests that they are attentive and enthusiastic about their work. On the other hand, being sloppy or sitting with your hands crossed suggests that you are rigid and are not open to suggestions.

## Value time

Whether it means meeting deadlines or reaching on time at work, being punctual is crucial. Making sure that you meet your deadlines will not only help you develop a stress-free work atmosphere, but also displays your commitment towards your work. Additionally, maintaining a record of

the assignments you have completed will make you look organised.

"Everyone likes employees who complete their assignments on time. Maintaining a punctual work schedule helps the team coordinate better and meet deadlines. Focusing on the projects at hand will also ensure that you don't get involved in office politics and gossips, thus keeping you at bay from a negative work environment," says Arun Bala, COO of Invenio Business Solutions.

## Be open to criticism

Everything that your colleagues say is not always negative or to pull you down. At times, your peers' advice can be beneficial to you. Do not take every critical evaluation personally. Instead, trust that your colleagues have the intent of helping you execute and accomplish your tasks better.

Be respectful, approachable and focused while at work. Bear in mind your organisation's expectations from you and conduct yourself accordingly.

there was the first lesson of the career that honesty works and it works well. Till date after 25 years of my career, that stint remains the most cherished one," he says. If your strategy is to let both your bosses remain in blissful ignorance about the other, you may be charting dangerous territory. It may not be pleasant to turn down a plum opportunity, but if it clashes with a commitment you've already made to your other boss, honesty really would be the best policy.

Being extremely organised is your bet as a shared resource. "It is the toughest position to be in since every manager wants full attention and contribution from the individual. The best thing for the individual to do is to set the objectives and role expectations with every manager they report to. Maintain a list of things to do and follow up whenever required. Let the other managers know if there are any priorities that you are working on, which could potentially delay theirs. It is key that a constant review and discussion is done with all managers to course correct if there are any gaps in their expectations," advises Mukund Menon, director HR and communications, HR and communications, International Paper India.

Salvi warns against showing one boss in bad light to the other in order to gain sympathy, "Being very honest is the most critical part as that would give you credibility. Being solution-oriented would be the next thing as at the end of the day, you are responsible for yourself, so you would need to take that initiative. Third, never ever play one boss against another as remember that they are



your bosses and you never know when they would share notes and also simply, it is not a right thing to do. Fourth, when you can't find a solution pertaining to the bosses, don't be ashamed to approach them and seek their help in finding one."

Of course, the above tips assume that all managers concerned are willing to make allowances for the employee. In some cases, bosses behave as though the other boss doesn't exist at all and all 8.5 hours of the employee are theirs to command. Menon agrees, "Most of the bosses are not empathetic. Everyone has their own priorities and there is competition for attention as people suffer from the 'first service syndrome'. The best thing is to let the other bosses know on a constant basis how you are managing the issues and deliverables and build rapport and trust. It is mutual respect and honesty that brings it together. The key is to manage each person's ego. Additionally, having an informal chat will also help."

A Thiru, president corporate HR, JK Organisation lays the onus of empathy at the bosses' doors, "Bosses are expected to be empathetic in such a situation. If they are not, it is their problem and not that of the shared resource as long as the shared resource does his/her best under the prevailing situation and stays tuned to the purpose (serving the external customer better faster) than responding (wasting time) based on organisational hierarchy."

As Salvi says, continue to work hard and smart for the bosses as you are learning twice as much, compared to others who have a single boss.

## What to do when you have more than one boss

**Sometimes, circumstances conspire to turn you into a 'shared resource' where you have to dance to the tunes of not one, but two or more bosses!**

