

# Nation First The Core Policy

12 Vishwas ke, Vikas ke, Jan-Kalyan ke

Dream of a Naxal-free India becomes a reality, with a strong crackdown on terrorism

Freedom from the colonial mindset – Rajpath becomes Kartavya Path, and a new Naval Ensign in honour of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj

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## Loyalty test flop? Only 3 of 9 Sena UBT MPs attend meet amid buzz of switch

Only three of Shiv Sena (UBT)'s nine Lok Sabha MPs attended a crucial Delhi meeting. The absence of six MPs intensified talk of a fresh split and appeared to match rebel claims of two-thirds support.

**Maharashtra (Agency)**  
A rebellion brewing within the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT) appeared to move decisively into the open on Thursday after only three of the party's nine Lok Sabha MPs attended a crucial meeting in Delhi, despite a three-line whip directing the lawmakers to be present. The high-stakes meeting in Delhi, convened amid escalating speculation that Uddhav Sena rebel MPs were preparing to switch to Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's Shiv Sena, got underway with only three Lok Sabha MPs in attendance — Arvind Sawant, Anil Desai and Rajbhau Waje. Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Raut was also present. The absence of six MPs has further fuelled speculation that the Uddhav camp is on the

verge of suffering another major split, four years after Shinde's rebellion fractured the undivided Shiv Sena. The legislators who did



not attend the meeting were Sanjay Deshmukh (Yavatmal), Sanjay Jadhav (Parbhani), Nagesh Patil-Ashtikar (Hingoli), Bhausaheb Wakchoure (Shirdi), Omraje Nimbalkar

(Dharashiv) and Sanjay Dina Patil (Mumbai North East).

Before the meeting began, attendance sheets were prepared to formally record the presence of MPs who complied with the party whip.

Arriving at Parliament, Raut launched a blistering attack on the absent lawmakers, declaring, "Those who attend are ours. Those who don't are traitors and dishonest." The Rajya Sabha MP also issued a defiant warning to those allegedly attempting to engineer a split. "They think they've done it once. I'll tell them, prove it... Are you making a mockery of democracy? Do you have a lot of money? Who are you threatening with the ED and CBI? Us? We've been to jail before and are ready to go again. But I'll only go to jail after teaching you a lesson," he said.

## BJP Leader Among 3 Burnt Alive After Car Set On Fire Over Mining Dispute In Chhattisgarh

Koriya (Chhattisgarh) (Agency)

What began as a long-running dispute over sand mining turned into a night of horror in Chhattisgarh's Koriya district, when a Fortuner SUV was allegedly trapped between trucks, doused with petrol and set on fire. By the time the flames died down, three people were dead, including BJP leader and former Janpad Panchayat President Bharat Singh, popularly known as Lalla Singh. The incident took place late Tuesday night in Naugain village under the Sonhat police station limits. According to the victim's family, Bharat Singh had gone to negotiate a settlement in a dispute linked to sand quarry operations. Instead, they allege, he walked into a trap.



Police have so far arrested four accused — Akshat Tripathi, Vishal Tripathi, Satyaprakash Tripathi and Mannu Tripathi — while a search is underway for others. A case has been registered against nine named accused under serious charges, including murder and attempted murder. The violence has sent shockwaves through Koriya, where tensions remain high and a heavy police force has been deployed. According to initial reports, the sand quarry contract in the area had been awarded to the family of Bharat Singh. What followed, locals claim, was a bitter battle for control over sand transportation and "illegal" collections linked to mining operations across Sonhat, Kailashpur, Telimuda, Belya and Chhingura. The dispute had allegedly been simmering for months between Bharat Singh's faction and the family of BJP leader Manoj Tripathi.

## Mamata loyalist asks bank to freeze TMC account changes amid leadership row

**NEW DELHI (Agency)**  
The All India Trinamool Congress (TMC) has plunged into a severe crisis as a major internal revolt has now spilled over into a dispute over the party's finances. In a significant development, former Sports Minister Aroop Biswas, a loyalist of TMC chief Mamata Banerjee and the party's former treasurer, wrote to HDFC Bank seeking an immediate halt to debit transactions and any operational changes in the party's accounts. Biswas had resigned as sports minister last year following the Lionel Messi event controversy. In the letter, Biswas cited a "serious dispute" over who legitimately controls the organisation. The letter, officially received and stamped on June 16, 2026, has intensified the political turmoil within the party. With a large section of its lawmakers in open rebellion, the TMC leadership is facing one of its biggest organisational challenges in recent years. Meanwhile, the TMC has clarified that Aroop Biswas is no longer the party's treasurer. Subhashish Chakraborty was appointed treasurer on June 5, when Mamata Banerjee announced a sweeping organisational reshuffle after dissolving all party units as part of a restructuring exercise. The development follows a dramatic rebellion within the TMC legislature party.

## Tamil anthem sung 1st in Assembly, reversing order that sparked Vijay oath row

At Thursday's Assembly session, the Tamil anthem was rendered first before proceedings commenced, while the National Anthem was played later in accordance with the convention followed in the state for decades.

**Chennai (Agency)**  
The Tamil Nadu Assembly on Thursday followed the state's long-established protocol by beginning proceedings with the rendition of the Tamil anthem, 'Tamil Thaa Vaazhthu' and concluding with the National Anthem. This comes just over a month after a major political controversy erupted over the order of songs at Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay's swearing-in ceremony on May 10. At Thursday's Assembly session, the Tamil anthem was rendered first before proceedings commenced, while the National Anthem was played later in accordance with the convention followed in the state for decades. Traditionally, government functions in Tamil Nadu begin with

Tamil Thaa Vaazhthu — the invocation song in praise of Mother Tamil — while the National Anthem is played at the end of the



programme. The departure from this practice immediately triggered objections from opposition parties as well as several allies supporting the TVK. The controversy was further amplified because the full six-stanza version of Vande

Mataram was played during the swearing-in ceremony in line with a January 2026 directive issued by the Union Home Ministry.

Several allies whose support helped Vijay secure a majority in the 234-member Assembly questioned the decision. CPI state secretary M Veerapandian argued that Tamil Thaa Vaazhthu had always occupied the foremost position in official state functions and sought an explanation from the government. While VCK chief Thol Thirumavalavan also criticised the sequence, PMK founder S. Ramadoss urged the government to ensure that the Tamil invocation song continued to receive due prominence at official events.

## Ram Temple donation case: SIT finds CCTV tampering clues, security staff under probe

The SIT has found clues of possible CCTV tampering in the Ram Mandir donation theft probe. According to documents examined by the SIT, nearly Rs 10 crore was spent on security arrangements at the temple complex over the past 11 months.



**Ayodhya (Agency)**  
The Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the alleged theft of cash and jewellery from donation boxes at the Ram Mandir has uncovered clues suggesting possible tampering with CCTV footage, a development that has significantly widened the scope of the investigation. The breakthrough came during the third day of intensive inquiries inside the temple complex, where investigators closely examined surveillance systems, recorded footage and security management protocols. Sources said the indications of CCTV

tampering had prompted the SIT to focus on personnel linked to monitoring, maintaining and overseeing the camera network. As part of the probe, Ramshankar Yadav alias Tinnu Yadav was questioned for several hours. Investigators are also examining the roles of employees associated with CCTV surveillance, gate-checking operations and overall security arrangements at the temple. According to documents reviewed by the SIT, nearly Rs 10 crore was spent on security arrangements at the temple complex over the past 11 months.

## "Transparency Essential": Ex-Rajya Sabha MP Questions RSS Funding Sources

**NEW DELHI (Agency)**  
Senior Congress leader and former Rajya Sabha MP Husain Dalwai has strongly backed Karnataka Minister Priyank Kharge's recent demand seeking greater transparency from the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), including disclosure of its legal status, funding sources, and financial operations. Reacting to Kharge's letter to RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat, Dalwai said the Karnataka minister had raised "important and long-pending questions" regarding the organisation's registration, finances, and accountability. "Congress has repeatedly expressed concerns about the functioning and funding of the RSS. These questions should have been raised much earlier, but Priyank Kharge has shown courage in bringing them into public discourse," Dalwai said. He called for a comprehensive and independent inquiry into the sources of funds received by the RSS and the manner in which those funds are utilised.

## Court setback for Mamata Banerjee, Ritabrata Banerjee to stay on as LoP for now

For now, Ritabrata Banerjee will continue as the Leader of the Opposition, and Speaker Rathin Basu's decision remains in force. The court did not interfere with the Speaker's decision.

**Bengaluru (Agency)**  
In a setback to Trinamool Congress (TMC) chief Mamata Banerjee, the Calcutta High Court on Thursday refused to pass any interim stay on the Speaker's decision of accepting rebel TMC MLA Ritabrata Banerjee as the Leader of Opposition in the Bengal Assembly.



For now, Ritabrata Banerjee will continue as the Leader of the Opposition, and Speaker Rathin Basu's decision remains in force. The court did not interfere with the Speaker's decision. Justice Krishna Rao said that the next hearing in the matter will be held on July 28. He directed all parties to file their

affidavits before the next date of hearing. Following the Trinamool Congress's rout in the Assembly elections, a split emerged

within its legislative party. Most of the party's MLAs turned "rebels." The party leadership had proposed senior leader Shovande Chatteropadhyay as the leader of the legislative party. However, defying the party's decision, Ritabrata secured the support of 58 MLAs and became the Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly. Earlier, on June 1, the Trinamool leadership had decided to expel Ritabrata from the party on charges of "anti-party activities." The petitioner, TMC MLA and Mamata Banerjee loyalist Shovande Chatteropadhyay, had approached the Calcutta High Court seeking an interim stay on the Speaker's decision. The plea was rejected by the court on Thursday.

## Shashi Tharoor's driver salary analogy to counter Andhra CM's delimitation pitch

**New Delhi (Agency)**  
Congress MP Shashi Tharoor on Wednesday pushed back against Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu's defence of the Centre's proposed delimitation framework with a 'thought experiment', arguing that a uniform increase in Lok Sabha seats across states would still shift political influence toward larger states. Tharoor responded after Naidu criticised the opposition for blocking the Constitution amendment bill in Parliament and maintained that concerns over delimitation were misplaced. The Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026, introduced during a special session of Parliament in April, proposed

expanding Lok Sabha strength from 543 to 850 seats and linking delimitation to the 2021 Census. It also proposed increasing the number of Lok Sabha



seats proportionately by 50% for all states. The bill failed to secure the required two-thirds majority. Of 528 members who voted, 298 supported the

bill while 230 opposed it. At least 352 votes were required for passage.

Sharing a newspaper clipping carrying the headline "Delimitation Bill to return with 50% seat increase clause, says Naidu", Tharoor posted on X, "Naidu ji, let's try a thought experiment. Say your salary is 2 lakhs and your driver's is 20,000. You announce a 50% increase for everybody. Your salary is now 3 lakhs and your driver's is 30,000. The percentage or proportional increase is the same — but aren't you much better off than your driver, than you used to be?" Tharoor argued that this is the concern raised by southern chief ministers — that even if seat increases remain proportionate, the political balance changes significantly.

The Congress MP hit back at N Chandrababu Naidu over his criticism of the opposition after the Constitution amendment bill was defeated in Parliament. He said southern chief ministers were worried about losing political weight.

## Rahul Gandhi lives in delusion, that's why he keeps losing: Chirag Paswan

**New Delhi (Agency)**  
Union Minister and Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) chief Chirag Paswan launched a sharp attack on Rahul Gandhi, accusing him of "living in delusion" and claiming that the Congress leader's failure to learn from electoral setbacks is helping the NDA continue its winning streak. Addressing an event in Bihar's Jamui while highlighting Prime Minister Narendra Modi's governance and development initiatives during his record 12-year tenure, Paswan took aim at Rahul Gandhi's recent remark that he had not lost the 2024 Lok Sabha election and had already "won" the 2029 contest. "Rahul Gandhi lives in delusion. He keeps believing in his own mind. What's the harm in

believing in your own mind? Suppose you become the President of the US, suppose you become the Secretary General of the United States. Believe whatever you want, believe it. Who is stopping you from believing?" the Union Minister said.

He further argued that such a mindset prevents introspection and correction of mistakes. "Rahul Gandhi lives in delusion. A person living in delusion does not work hard, which is why mistakes remain uncorrected," he said. Paswan said the opposition's repeated electoral defeats stem from its inability to identify and address its shortcomings. "If you do not improve your shortcomings, do not learn from them and move forward, we will continue to win," he said. The Union Minister

Chirag Paswan attacked Rahul Gandhi in Jamui over his remarks on the 2024 and 2029 elections. He said the Opposition's failure to learn from defeats and its internal divisions are helping the NDA keep winning.



contrasted the NDA's electoral success with what he described as the opposition's internal divisions.

## News box

## Man injured in roadways bus crash dies, trainee driver still on run



### Gurgaon.(Agency)

A 36-year-old man who was injured in the Haryana Roadways bus accident last week succumbed to his injuries on Wednesday morning. The accident took place on Friday afternoon after a trainee driver took the bus for a ride without informing his instructor and hit several people near Sector 10. The trainee is still on the run. A 56-year-old factory worker from Madhya Pradesh died on the spot, while Kishun Dev Singh, a Bihar native, suffered grave injuries. He died during treatment on Wednesday morning, police said. The trainee driver fled the spot after the accident.

A case has been registered against him. According to the probe, the instructors were on lunch break when the trainee snuck off with the bus without informing them. Teams have been formed to nab the accused, an officer said.

## Irked by honking, three open fire at car on GT Road

### Gurgaon.(Agency)

Police arrested three men on Wednesday in connection with a firing incident on GT Road earlier this week and seized a large cache of illegal firearms and ammunition. Angered by constant honking, the accused told cops they had opened fire at another car to scare them off.

According to ADCP (central Noida) Swatantra Kumar Singh, police received information on Monday via Dial 112 that several men in a Toyota Glanza car opened fire at another car on GT Road while travelling from Bulandshahr towards Dadri.

A case was registered at Badalpur police station and multiple teams were formed. On Wednesday, acting on confidential inputs and manual intelligence, police arrested Rahul (34), Neetu alias Kuldeep (38) and Manoj alias Guddu (36). They also seized two pistols, four country-made firearms, 32 live cartridges, 127 spent cartridges, two firearm barrels and the Toyota Glanza car allegedly used in the crime. Two other accomplices managed to flee and efforts are underway to apprehend them, police added. Rahul told cops that he had borrowed the car from his neighbour's uncle. On Monday, the group was driving towards Delhi when another car began constantly honking at them. Angered, they fired two rounds with the intention of intimidating the other driver before fleeing the scene. They also admitted to carrying weapons and ammunition in public, cops said.

An FIR has been registered under BNS sections 3(5) (common intentions), 125 (act endangering life or personal safety of others), 281 (rash driving or riding on a public way), 109 (attempt to murder) and 351(3) (criminal intimidation), and sections 3, 25, 27 of the Arms Act. Police also said that Neetu has a criminal history and was previously named in several serious cases, including attempted murder, murder, extortion, rioting and violations under the Arms Act and Gangsters Act. Investigation is underway and cops are tracing the absconding accused.

## TajSATS opens in-flight kitchen at Noida Airport



### Noida.(Agency)

TajSATS, an airline catering company and subsidiary of Indian Hotels Company, has opened an in-flight kitchen at Noida International Airport.

The kitchen will cater to both domestic and international carriers. Spanning 45,000 sq ft, the facility is equipped to produce over 20,000 meals per day with the possibility of scaling up the operation.

Chief executive officer of TajSATS Manish Gupta said the facility marks a significant addition to the company's network, strengthening its presence in Delhi-NCR. It is a strategic step in aligning the company's capabilities with the next phase of aviation growth in India. "As airport infrastructure develops, this facility in a high-growth corridor allows us to partner with airlines while also enabling the growth of other institutional catering segments in the region."

A dedicated tasting room, 'The Atelier', provides a collaborative platform for chefs and airline partners to conceptualise and present curated gourmet offerings. The facility integrates culinary and safety technologies, goods scanners and other modern operational equipment. It also houses expansive bonded and airline storage spaces to support client partnerships. TajSATS has 60% market share and serves over 1,50,000 passengers daily. It runs aviation kitchens at airports in Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai, Kolkata, Dabolim and Mopa (Goa), and Amritsar.

# STF arrests gangster's wife after extradition from Russia

### Gurgaon.(Agency)

Haryana's special task force (STF) has struck a blow to foreign-based gang operations with the arrest of Mamta Rani, wife of Russia-based gangster Sachin, marking the first time the agency has extradited a woman accused of being part of an organised crime syndicate. Sachin is associated with gangsters Kartik Sharma, Monu Gurjar and Noni Rana alias Surya Pratap — key associates of gangster Lawrence Bishnoi. Mamta (26), originally from Karnal, was arrested at IGI Airport on Tuesday after being extradited from Russia, where she had fled to evade arrest in a case involving a conspiracy to murder a Yamunanagar businessman. The case stems from an FIR registered on March 15 at Chhapar police station in Yamunanagar under sections of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita relating to organised crime, along with Section 25(6) of the Arms Amendment

Act, 2019. Mamta fled India on March 16. The FIR was registered after STF Ambala busted a criminal conspiracy and arrested several gang members along with a large cache of illegal weapons. During the investigation, officers uncovered a plot to murder a car sales businessman. STF DSP Aman Kumar said the conspiracy was thwarted before it could be executed and several shooters involved in the plot were arrested. The probe subsequently revealed the involvement of Mamta, Sachin and Mamta's brother. "They arranged logistics for the shooters, including providing a motorcycle and a safe location to conceal weapons meant to be used in the planned murder," an officer said. Investigators said Mamta handled finances and logistics for the gang headed by her husband, who has been operating from Russia for several years while maintaining links with gangsters in Haryana, Punjab and Delhi.

She had previously stayed with Sachin in Russia before returning to India and residing in Kurukshetra, until she left the country again in March this year. Police said Mamta and Sachin first met while studying at a college in Ladwa, Kurukshetra, and married four years ago. Sources said investigators tracked her location in Russia and coordinated with authorities there, also flagging that her visa was nearing expiry. She was eventually extradited after sustained follow-ups. Sachin, investigators said, is an important overseas facilitator for a criminal network linked to some of north India's most wanted gangsters. He fled India around three years ago after being booked in a criminal case, and his criminal profile expanded significantly during his time in Russia. Noni has helped Lawrence execute several hit jobs, and his extradition proceedings are currently

under way. Sachin's importance within the network grew after Noni and Bhanu Rana were detained in the US last year. "Noni Rana is involved in major criminal cases across Haryana, Punjab and Delhi. After his detention, Sachin emerged as one of the key figures handling logistics and operational coordination for gang members while residing outside India," an investigator said. Officials described Mamta's arrest as a significant breakthrough in the STF's ongoing crackdown on foreign-based gangsters and their support systems, underlining the agency's strategy of targeting not just gang leaders but also financiers, facilitators, family members and associates who help organised crime syndicates function from abroad. The STF is now examining financial transactions, communication records and other evidence to identify additional network members and.

## 20-foot sewer pit in Gurgaon turns Dwarka away link into accident hotspot

### Gurgaon.(Agency)

MCG's engineering wing, by its alleged negligence, has turned a crucial link road connecting Dwarka Expressway to Sarai Alawardi into an accident hotspot, culminating in a serious crash on Sunday. Residents are demanding accountability after the crash that left a motorist hospitalised. At the centre of the controversy is a 20-foot-deep pit dug for the connection of sewer infrastructure linking wards 34 and 6 to the 20 MLD Jahajgarh sewage treatment plant (STP). Residents said that after laying a 600mm main sewer line along the route, officials failed to construct the required main chamber (manhole), forcing the site to be dug up again and leaving critical work incomplete for months. However, MCG officials claimed that the work is nearing completion and will be over this week.

The result is a gaping, life-threatening excavation sitting alongside a busy road with virtually no barricading, warning signs, reflectors or safety measures. RWA president of New Colony (Sarai Alawardi) Balwan Singh said, "This 20 ft deep pit has been dug up for the last four months and there is no safety barricading and the work is being done at a slow pace. This work of connecting the STP network of wards 34



and 6 to Jahajgarh started in June-July last year. However, it's still incomplete. It has become a death trap for the residents." The lack of streetlights on the road makes the situation worse, leaving the residents to navigate this road with only the vehicle's light, Singh added. "There are no barricades, no warning lights and no safety arrangements. Anyone unfamiliar with the road can fall straight into the pit," said Sunil Yadav, another resident.

When questioned about the lack of barricading at the site, MCG executive engineer Sunder Sheoran said, "We are

going to issue a notice to the contractor seeking explanation on why no safety measures, including barricading, are implemented at the site. The contractor will be asked to submit a report and barricade the area. The work to connect wards 34 and 6 with Jahajgarh STP is complete. However, a colony's (A 85 colony) connection was left, which is currently being done. This work will be completed in a week's time."

At the site to connect the sewerage network, multiple pits have been dug up at a distance of a few metres. There are currently earthmovers deployed, along with other machinery, at the site. But barricading has not been done. Residents said that neither proper barricading nor reflective warning systems have been installed around the deep excavation. Motorists, pedestrians, cyclists and even animals are being forced to navigate the hazardous stretch at their own risk. Residents also said the constant dust generated by the project has become a public health concern. With excavation work continuing for months and loose soil lying uncovered along the stretch, commuters and nearby residents said they are forced to breathe dust every day, particularly during peak traffic hours when passing vehicles kick up large clouds of

## NIA cargo terminal brings airfreight gateway closer to industrial clusters

### Noida.(Agency)

Cargo flight operations at Noida International Airport are expected to reshape the logistics landscape of not only Noida and Greater Noida but also western Uttar Pradesh by providing exporters and manufacturers with a dedicated airfreight gateway closer to industrial clusters. Sectors such as electronics, mobile manufacturing, automotive components, garments, pharmaceuticals, perishables and e-commerce are likely to benefit from reduced transportation time and lower logistics costs. Industry stakeholders believe Noida's cargo hub will offer significant advantages over Delhi's IGI

Airport by reducing transportation delays, logistics costs and cargo processing time. Unlike Delhi, where trucks face no-entry restrictions for 10 hours daily and cargo movement is often affected by heavy traffic congestion, Noida offers smoother connectivity to major industrial clusters. Businesses also expect faster customs clearance and lower warehousing costs. UP also has an ambitious ODOP scheme in which each district has one unique product. They will also get a boost in exports. While IGI Airport handled over 11 lakh tonnes of cargo last year, the huge flow of cargo often leads to delays in customs clearance and delivery of goods. In comparison, Noida International Airport has no such cargo

flow and it has an initial cargo handling capacity of 2.5 lakh tonnes per year, which is roughly one-fourth of IGI's current cargo throughput. Manoj Kumar Jain, managing director of a logistics firm, Deep Blue Xpress, said that Noida will fare better as compared to Delhi in terms of cargo transport. "Due to heavy volume of traffic on Delhi roads, there is no entry of trucks in Delhi during peak hours, 7 am-11 am and then 5 pm-11 pm. That means for 10 hours trucks can't ply in Delhi and they are stranded at different locations. But there are no such restrictions for Noida. Normally, the logistics cost is 12% of the product and the govt is trying to reduce it to 7%-8%."

## Probe reveals Bangladeshi illegals hired for work at construction sites

### Gurgaon.(Agency)

A police investigation has uncovered the alleged employment of Bangladeshi nationals living illegally in the city for high-risk, labour-intensive construction work, including installing scaffolding at dizzying heights. The probe began after 13 Bangladeshi nationals were detained during a recent crackdown on illegal immigrants, with police now shifting focus to the labour contractors suspected of recruiting and deploying them at sites across the city.

Investigators found that contractors allegedly preferred Bangladeshi workers for such jobs because labourers from states like UP, Bihar and West Bengal were reluctant to take up the dangerous work. The probe also pointed to a financial motive: Bangladeshi labourers could be hired for lower wages, helping contractors cut construction costs. Police are now examining the network through which the labourers were recruited, housed and employed, gathering details of contractors and subcontractors who may have knowingly hired undocumented workers. Documents related to labour deployment, contractor records and employment arrangements are being scrutinised as part of the ongoing probe. "We want to ensure that no one stays in our country illegally, as



it may concern national security too. This crackdown will continue," a police officer said. The action comes amid heightened verification drives targeting illegal immigrants in the city. Police are also trying to ascertain how long the detained men have been residing in Gurgaon and whether similar labour networks are operating at other construction sites.

According to police, the 13 men entered India illegally through the Kaliaganj border in West Bengal with the help of agents, before travelling to Gurgaon in search of work. They were picked up from construction sites and settlements in

sectors 69, 70 and 104 during a special verification drive, and are currently undergoing legal procedures that will see them handed over to Bangladeshi authorities through the Border Security Force (BSF). The detainees were identified as Arif, Sumon Ali, Sabir Hussain, Rubal, Sakib, Robiul, Gulzar Hussain, Naem, Mehboob, Hamidur Islam, Atiyar Rahman and Mohammad Hesam. Most are in the 20-30 age group and were working as labourers at different construction sites.

The operation was carried out by the Sector 39 crime branch under the supervision of DCP (crime) Hitesh Yadav, after specific

## Design flaws, lack of lifts: What leaves Gurgaon's Mahavir Chowk skywalk largely empty

### Gurgaon.(Agency)

Nearly a year after the elevated skywalk at Mahavir Chowk was made operational, the structure remains largely deserted. Hundreds of commuters continue to weave through moving traffic at road level, risking their lives and disrupting vehicular flow at one of Gurgaon's busiest intersections. A TOI visit found pedestrians routinely crossing the carriageway despite the 230-metre skywalk overhead. The structure showed signs of neglect — broken liquor bottles scattered across the pavement, uncleaned stretches of the walkway and destitute people occupying parts of the staircases.

The design itself discourages use. To cross via the skywalk, pedestrians must climb 30-40 steps, walk over 200 metres along the elevated corridor, then descend another 30-40 steps on the other side. For commuters carrying luggage from the nearby Haryana Roadways bus stand, or travelling with children, the route is simply too cumbersome. Planned lifts could not be installed due to non-availability of land, leaving staircases as the only means of access.

Mahavir Chowk is a critical traffic node where roads leading to NH-8, Old Delhi-Gurgaon Road and Mehrauli-Gurgaon Road converge, with heavy pedestrian movement generated by the bus stand, auto-rickshaw stands, markets and vending zones. Yet commuters overwhelmingly choose the shortest route. "It is much easier to cross directly than climb so many stairs and walk that distance. Travelling with children or bags makes it impossible," said Mohd Tasleem, a commuter near the auto stand.

Urban transport experts say the behaviour is predictable. Sewa Ram, dean (research) and professor of transport planning at School of Planning and Architecture, Delhi, says skywalks succeed only when they align with how people actually move. "Skywalks work best when they provide direct connections between destinations that naturally generate pedestrian movement

intelligence inputs about suspected illegal migrants. Teams conducted searches over the past two days at labour colonies, slum clusters and construction sites.

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## NEWS BOX

## Will Bangladesh see bloody street protests? Jamaat warns govt over July Charter

EVIAN-LES-BAINS. (Agency)

Bangladesh's largest opposition party, Jamaat-e-Islami, has threatened street agitations over the July Charter, a reform package introduced by the interim Muhammad Yunus administration whose implementation, he said, has stalled under the BNP-led government. Jamaat chief Shafiqur Rahman warned the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) government of PM Tarique Rahman that if it failed to implement the Charter, "there will be no option but to take to the streets," reported The Daily Star on June 15. Alongside its threat of street protests, Jamaat is also seeking international backing for the July Charter, with Shafiqur Rahman meeting diplomats from countries including the UK, Denmark and the US, and issuing statements highlighting discussions on the implementation of the reform blueprint. The Jamaat chief's remarks came following a meeting held between leaders of the Opposition alliance in Sylhet. Rahman, on Tuesday, doubled down on his warnings, saying that if the issue of the July Charter's implementation was "not resolved in Parliament, it will be resolved on the streets". The July Charter is a wide-ranging package of constitutional, electoral, judicial and administrative reforms that was spearheaded by Muhammad Yunus following the 2024 protests that toppled the Sheikh Hasina government. At its core, the Charter is Yunus' 84-point roadmap for overhauling Bangladesh's political and institutional system. Nearly half its proposals require constitutional amendments. Key points include a bicameral parliament, limits on prime ministerial power, judicial and electoral reforms, the restoration of the caretaker government system, and expanded constitutional protections aimed at reshaping governance and curbing executive dominance.

## Pak plans to deploy submarines in Bay of Bengal, a first since 1971 bloody nose

world. (Agency)

The name Hangor evokes history. In 1971, Pakistani submarine PNS Hangor sank India's INS Khukri during the India-Pakistan war. That was the first instance where an Indian Navy warship sank in wartime since Independence and one of the Pakistan Navy's most celebrated naval strikes. However, the sinking of INS Khukri did little to alter the 1971 war's outcome. Pakistan suffered a crushing defeat, as Indian forces on land, air and sea crushed the Pakistanis and helped secure Bangladesh's liberation. Fifty-five years after the 1971 bloody nose, which wiped out the Pakistani presence in the Bay of Bengal, another Pakistani Hangor is making headlines. Pakistan's first Hangor-class submarine, after being commissioned in China in April, arrived in Karachi last week. And, senior Pakistani naval officers are already talking about a role far beyond Pakistan's naval front yard, the Arabian Sea. According to a senior Pakistan Navy officer, the submarine could give Islamabad the ability to maintain a presence in the Bay of Bengal, a region far from home, where Pakistan's naval footprint has been negligible since the 1971 war, when Islamabad lost half its territory. The revelation of this Pakistani ambition by the senior Pakistan Navy officer comes amid improving civilian and military ties between Pakistan and Bangladesh and a wider naval competition unfolding across Indian Ocean states, including India. **NEW HANGOR SUBMARINE WILL HELP PAK MAINTAIN BAY OF BENGAL PRESENCE** Since Pakistani forces, including its Navy, were defeated by the Indian military in 1971, the Pakistani naval presence was largely restricted to the northern Arabian Sea.

## "Skipped Charlie's memorial despite being invited": Candace Owens accuses Blake Neff of proving Charlie Kirk 'was betrayed' in explosive feud

World (Agency)

The public feud surrounding the late Charlie Kirk has taken another dramatic turn, with conservative commentator Candace Owens openly challenging former Turning Point USA speechwriter Blake Neff to a livestream debate. Their latest exchange has intensified an already heated discussion over Kirk's legacy and the disagreements that have surfaced following his death. What began as criticism on social media quickly evolved into a direct invitation. Owens argued that a live conversation would reflect the kind of open debate she believes Charlie Kirk supported, while Neff fired back with accusations of his own. Candace Owens calls for livestream debate over Charlie Kirk case Owens publicly invited Neff to debate the controversy, writing: "Very easy for us to set up a livestream and to debate the Charlie Kirk case. I'd be happy to do it @BlakeNeff. Candace Show vs. Charlie's Truman Show would be the sort of debate Charlie believed in." — i (@i) Her post came after Buckley Carlson criticized Neff while referencing Owens. Carlson wrote: "Execration" seems your expertise. @BlakeNeff. And few could be more hyper-focused on @RealCandaceO... rather than on the absurd lies & actions of "our" FBI. It's your "job," after all. Can you meet this reasonable standard @LionelMedia proposes? No "preconceived hatreds" Owens followed with another post that directly challenged Neff's portrayal of Charlie Kirk. "Ah yes. Charlie was known to instead obsessively tweet about and watch every minute of content from "bad faith actors" while continuing to dodge any discussion with them.

# Senior US officials dictate memorandum with Iran to journalists

WASHINGTON. (Agency)

Senior U.S. officials dictated the memorandum of understanding with Iran to journalists Wednesday after days of secrecy, and Iran suggested that its deal with the United States to end the war could be signed by Presidents Donald Trump and Masoud Pezeshkian. Such a signing ceremony would represent a major step for the two countries, which saw diplomatic relations break off in 1980 over the U.S. Embassy hostage crisis in Tehran. The U.S. officials spoke on condition of anonymity to read the draft, which Iran has not released, ahead of formal signing ceremony set for Friday. According to the officials, the draft agreement includes a new "minimum" standard for downblending of highly enriched Iranian uranium and has provisions to ensure the "territorial integrity" of Lebanon after Israel's latest attacks against Hezbollah in Lebanese territory. In return, the U.S. will move to waive, but not eliminate, some wide-ranging sanctions against Iran once the deal is signed. The U.S. draft of the

agreement also secures toll-free passage of the Strait of Hormuz for only 60 days, and it does not preclude fees in future, the officials said. Meanwhile in Iran, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei was quoted by Iranian state television talking about the potential for the two presidents to sign the pact. Pezeshkian became president on a promise of seeking better relations with the West. However, he's been sidelined for months after Iran's mass killing of protesters in January and in the war as hard-liners have taken over the levers of the country's theocracy. Trump casts uncertainty on signing plans Trump cast some uncertainty on whether the signing would happen as planned. Asked how confident he was that the ceremony would take place, Trump remarked on the unpredictability of deals. "You never know with deals, do you? But you're going to find out pretty soon," he said. The U.S. and Israel went to war on Feb. 28 in part to prevent Iran from ever getting a nuclear weapon, although Trump's goals in the conflict have repeatedly shifted. The

interim deal stops the war before that aim is secured. Instead, it opens a two-month period for nuclear negotiations and appears to offer Iran several benefits up front while



extracting little in return.

The U.S. agreement to immediately allow Iran to sell its oil freely and the offer to eventually lift all sanctions, for instance, represent major concessions that go beyond the terms of Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers. Trump withdrew America from that pact in his first term, declaring it the "worst deal ever."

The accord likely will draw intense opposition in Washington, and it appears to be a major setback for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who has come under criticism at home from the media, his opponents and even some allies as details emerge. The deal will stop the fighting and start more negotiations

Much of the agreement would restore the status quo before the war, including ending hostilities, restarting negotiations between the U.S. and Iran over Tehran's nuclear program, and reopening the strait, which is a crucial passage for the world's oil and natural gas and whose closure created a historic energy crisis. The deal includes an end to the fighting in Lebanon between Israel and the Iranian-backed militia Hezbollah. That is one of the most delicate parts of the agreement because Israel has maintained it will continue to defend itself and to occupy vast swaths of Lebanon. Iran has said Israel must withdraw under the deal, although the leaked versions make no mention of withdrawal.

## Initial US-Iran deal takes immediate effect after both sides sign, says Pakistan PM; nuclear talks to continue

WILMINGTON. (Agency)

President Donald Trump signed an agreement with Iran Wednesday that calls for Tehran to dilute its stockpile of highly enriched uranium and waives US-backed sanctions on the country, immediately allowing Iran to sell its oil freely in a major concession from Washington, according to details released by both countries. The initial deal to end the war takes "immediate effect" after leaders from both countries signed it, Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who helped mediate the agreement, said in a post on X. The agreement calls for a permanent end to hostilities and starts a 60-day negotiating clock to reach a final deal on the future of Iran's nuclear program, though Trump left the door open to resume attacks. It appears to offer Iran several benefits up front while extracting little in return.

The deal has been shrouded in secrecy and confusion for days. U.S. officials refused to disclose the terms even after saying Trump and Vice President JD Vance digitally signed it over the weekend. Trump signed a physical copy

on Wednesday while dining with French President Emmanuel Macron at Versailles, the palace where many historic agreements have been signed over the centuries, ending wars or



territorial disputes. The White House had planned a signing ceremony on Friday in Switzerland, but its fate is now uncertain, with conflicting information from the U.S., Iran and Pakistan.

"It's signed," Trump said as he left the dinner at Versailles, which followed his trip to the Group of Seven summit in France. In a video posted online by a White House aide, Trump was seen seated at a table next to Macron signing a paper copy of the agreement. Trump then handed the document and pen to

Secretary of State Marco Rubio as people in the room applauded.

"This was not easy," Trump said right before he signed it, according to a video posted to social media by Macron. In Tehran, a stone-faced President Masoud Pezeshkian signed the deal on behalf of Iran, according to the state-run IRNA news agency, which posted images of him holding up the deal with his signature and Trump's.

Text of the agreement still has not been formally released. U.S. officials dictated draft language to journalists after days of secrecy, speaking on condition of anonymity. Iranian state TV later released text that largely tracked what the U.S. put out. The deal will stop the fighting and start more negotiations

Much of the agreement would restore the status quo before the war, including ending hostilities, restarting talks between the U.S. and Iran over Tehran's nuclear program, and reopening the Strait of Hormuz, the crucial passage for the world's oil and natural gas whose closure created a historic energy crisis.

## A Versailles deal in 2026 and US's total surrender

WARSAW. (Agency)

On June 28, 1919, the Treaty of Versailles ended World War I and cemented the victors' terms on Germany. At the centre of the negotiations stood US President Woodrow Wilson.

Wilson was one of the principal decision-makers in the Big Four Council -- France, Great Britain, Italy and the United States -- that shaped the terms of peace. Six months before the treaty was signed, Wilson, addressing the Paris Peace Conference at Versailles, declared: "At last, the world knows America as the saviour of the world." But more than a century later, just 10 days before the anniversary of the World War I peace treaty, US President Donald Trump sat in the same palace and signed a 14-point agreement with Iran to bring the Gulf crisis to an end. The symbolism is striking. Wilson's famous Fourteen Points formed the basis of his 1918 vision for ending World War I. Now, in a twist of history, another American

president has signed a 14-point accord at Versailles. But this time, the tables appear to have turned. A closer look at the US-Iran pact suggests that it is Trump, not Tehran, who has made the



larger concessions.

In a video shared by French President Emmanuel Macron, Trump pauses for a moment before signing the agreement and tells other guests, "This was not easy, I can tell you." As he left Versailles on Wednesday after signing the deal during a dinner marking the 250th anniversary of American independence,

a crowd of reporters gathered around Trump and shouted, "Did you sign the deal? Did you sign the MOU?"

"It's signed, yeah," Trump shouted back, cupping his hands around his mouth, before adding, "I signed it in Versailles."

Trump followed it up by mimicking a signature in the air and pointing towards the palace. On social media, several users struggled to reconcile the irony of Trump signing the deal at the same palace where Germany was made to capitulate at Versailles in 1919.

He signed an unconditional surrender at Versailles?" historian Kevin Kruse quipped. Reacting with disbelief, David Horowitz, founding editor of The Times of Israel, penned an article titled: "Trump's deal is a catastrophic capitulation to Iran's aggressors, leaves Israel vulnerable and constrained."

# Indian teen killed after startled horse bolts, overturns carriage in New York

## An 18-year-old Indian tourist died after being thrown from a runaway horse-drawn carriage in Central Park. The crash has revived scrutiny of the carriage trade after another horse died in the park days earlier.

World (Agency)

An 18-year-old tourist from India died after being thrown from a horse-drawn carriage in New York City's Central Park when the horse suddenly bolted, triggering a chaotic accident that has renewed calls for a ban on the historic carriage industry. The victim, identified by US media reports as Romanch Mahajan, was riding in the carriage with

three other passengers shortly before 3 pm on Wednesday when the horse ran off. Mahajan was thrown from the carriage and suffered a severe head injury after hitting the ground. He was taken to hospital in critical condition but later died. The other passengers declined medical treatment. According to the Transport Workers Union (TWU), which represents carriage industry employees, the horse had been working in the park for only six weeks. Union officials said the driver had stepped away from the carriage to take a photograph of the passengers when the horse suddenly bolted. The seven-year-old horse, named Sampson, was not injured and remained in stable condition, according to police and union officials. "This is unacceptable. A driver is not supposed to leave the carriage to take photos — ever. We support a full investigation," TWU Local 100 Administrative Vice President

Alexander Kemp said. He added that the union was devastated by the teenager's death and extended condolences to his family. Kemp said the carriage owner had indefinitely suspended the driver and that



Sampson would be retired from the carriage business. He also raised broader safety concerns in Central Park, saying

improvements were needed for all vehicles operating in the park, including e-bikes, delivery vehicles, pedicabs and horse-drawn carriages. The accident has intensified scrutiny of Central Park's horse-drawn carriage industry, which has faced growing opposition from animal welfare activists and public safety advocates. It came less than a week after another carriage horse collapsed and died while working in the park. The Central Park Conservancy said it was "absolutely devastated" by Mahajan's death and renewed its call for New York City to ban horse-drawn carriages. The organisation said the tragedy underscored the public safety risks posed by what it described as an outdated industry operating in one of the country's busiest public spaces.

## Short news

**Rape Case Filed Against Matrimonial Fraud Accused In Gujarat**

Ahmedabad.(Agency)

The Ahmedabad Crime Branch has registered a second case against Karim Rafik Sipai, a resident of Mehsana's Kadi, who was recently arrested for operating a massive matrimonial fraud ring.

Sipai allegedly used the fictitious Hindu name, Aditya Patel, to target and exploit vulnerable Hindu women. He primarily targeted widows and divorcees across various online matchmaking platforms.

The latest criminal complaint was filed after another victim stepped forward, accusing the suspect of rape under the false pretext of marriage, followed by blackmail and extortion attempts.

The second case against Karim includes serious legal provisions for rape, creation of forged or counterfeit documents and extortion. To ensure the protection and privacy of the victim's identity, the police have officially classified this specific case file as sensitive. This categorisation restricts general access to the official case documentation while the multi-layered investigation continues.

Investigations by the crime branch revealed that the accused utilised a highly sophisticated modus operandi to deceive his victims. Sipai created authentic-looking profiles backed by forged official documents, including counterfeit identification cards, PAN cards, passports and fake GST registration certificates.

According to police officials, a digital forensic examination conducted on the suspect's seized laptop and mobile phone uncovered personal records, along with thousands of objectionable photographs and videos, belonging to more than one hundred women.

**CBI carries out raids in 14 places over Rs 7 crore basic education 'scam'**

Lucknow.(Agency)

The CBI on Wednesday conducted searches across 14 locations in Uttar Pradesh after registering a case of alleged embezzlement of Rs 4 crore by officials of the Basic Education Department, in Amethi's Gauriganj, the agency said.

The search operation was spread across 14 locations in Lucknow, Ayodhya, Kushinagar, Pratapgarh and Amethi, the agency said.

The action came nearly 10 days after the CBI registered a case on June 8 on the directives of the Allahabad High Court.

It was alleged that the junior accounts clerk had entered into a criminal conspiracy with the co-accused and unidentified others to illegally divert Rs 4 crore (approx) from the Government Treasury to various bank accounts, the spokesperson said.

The CBI had booked five persons, including the then junior accounts clerk, basic education department, Gauriganj; block quality coordinator; block MIS coordinator; headmaster, primary school, Bechugarh, Jagdishpur; and assistant teacher, primary school, Pure Shivdas Gudur, Gauriganj.

The case was filed at Gauriganj in March 2025 on a complaint lodged by the local finance and accounts officer, Basic Education Department.

**Woman killed, elderly couple injured as electric car runs amok in Vile Parle**

Mumbai.(Agency)

A 41-year-old woman was killed and an elderly couple was seriously injured after an electric car allegedly went out of control and ploughed into pedestrians near Mogibai Market in Vile Parle (East) on Tuesday evening.

The accident occurred between 4.45 pm and 5 pm on Railway Station Road near the VS Khandekar Road junction. Police said the electric car (MH-01-DX-9125), driven by Vilas Shridhar Gavhankar (44), allegedly hit a woman buying vegetables at a roadside stall before hitting a senior citizen couple walking towards the railway foot overbridge.

Kinjhal Hireen Shah (41), a homemaker, sustained severe head injuries and was declared dead after being rushed to Babasaheb Gawade Charitable Hospital, about 200 metres from the accident spot. The injured couple, Premji Dongiya (67) and his wife Nirmala, were later shifted to Cooper Hospital, where they are undergoing treatment.

According to police, Gavhankar, a professional driver residing in Wadala, had limited experience driving electric vehicles. On Tuesday, he was allegedly asked to drive the electric car after its regular driver was unavailable. "The driver apparently got confused while operating the electric car and hit the accelerator instead of the brake," an officer said.

The 75-year-old mother of the car's owner was seated in the rear seat at the time of the accident. She was not injured. Police have registered a case against Gavhankar under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the Motor Vehicles Act. He has been arrested.

**19-Year-Old NEET Aspirant Dies By Suicide In Tamil Nadu's Coimbatore****The student was identified as Anunkeerthana, who had already appeared for NEET twice and was preparing to take the examination again.**

Chennai.(Agency)

A 19-year-old NEET aspirant died by suicide in Tamil Nadu's Coimbatore district, triggering fresh protests against the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) and reigniting the state's long-standing demand for exemption from the medical entrance examination.

Police identified the student as Anunkeerthana, who had already appeared for NEET twice and was preparing to take the examination again. Investigators said she was distressed over having to reappear for the test following the recent NEET question paper leak, which led to a re-test for affected candidates.

"The frustration of yet another test seems to have driven her," a senior police officer told. Police said no suicide note was recovered from the scene. An investigation is underway to determine the circumstances leading to her death.

The incident sparked protests in Coimbatore, with demonstrators demanding that NEET be scrapped. The ruling DMK has also announced

a statewide protest reiterating its demand for a NEET exemption for Tamil Nadu.

Tamil Nadu has consistently opposed NEET since its introduction, arguing that the examination disproportionately benefits



students from affluent backgrounds who can afford expensive private coaching. The state government has maintained that the test places students from poor and rural families at a disadvantage despite strong performance in Class XII board examinations.

For nearly a decade before NEET was introduced, Tamil Nadu admitted medical students solely on the basis of Class XII marks, without any entrance examination. Supporters of the earlier system argue it improved access to medical education for students from government schools and rural areas.

The Tamil Nadu Assembly had passed a bill seeking exemption from NEET, but it did not receive presidential assent, leaving the national entrance examination in force in the state.

The latest tragedy has once again brought the emotional toll of the highly competitive examination into focus. According to activists and political parties opposing NEET, more than 20 aspirants in Tamil Nadu have died by suicide since the examination was introduced. If you experience suicidal thoughts or emotional distress, please seek help from a qualified mental health professional, counsellor, or a trusted support network immediately.

**CAPF deployment, digital sweep & social media watch: Government ramps up security for NEET retest**

Ahmedabad.(Agency)

THE GUJARAT Police are on high alert ahead of the re-NEET examination scheduled for June 21 across the country. The state has a total of 211 examination centres for the National Eligibility-and-Entrance Test Undergraduate (NEET-UG) 2026, and has 79,411 candidates registered to appear for the same. The Indian Express has learnt that one police personnel would be deployed for every 80 candidates at the examination centres. This is more than the ratio of police personnel deployed for the Lok Rakshak Dal (LRD) exams, where the ratio was 75:1. However, the total number of personnel has not been disclosed. Sources said the local police deployment is apart from the traffic police

that will be deployed to manage the routes to them, making sure candidates are able to reach on time. An undisclosed large number of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) personnel will be deployed in the districts with

examination centres. A statement issued by the Home Department on Wednesday said, "Gujarat DGP G S Malik chaired a statewide



video conference on Tuesday to review preparations for NEET-UG scheduled on June 21. Detailed deployment guidelines were issued, with police personnel to be stationed at examination centres based on the number of

candidates. Authorities were directed to maintain strict surveillance on photocopy and xerox centres located near examination venues and ensure full compliance with National Testing Agency (NTA) guidelines."

On Wednesday, The Indian Express spoke to IGP (Law and Order) Makrand Chauhan, who is the State Nodal Officer for NEET-UG on behalf of the Gujarat Police. Asked about special initiatives in light of a paper leak that led to the NEET-UG exam getting cancelled in May this year, IG Chauhan said, "Between June 19 and 21, there will be night patrolling at all exam centres so that electronic devices cannot be planted near them. Further, we are keeping an eye on messaging apps. Social media surveillance is also underway to detect rumour-mongering regarding the examination."

**Chandigarh chemist murder accused open fire during escape bid, shot at****The accused were arrested from the Jammu region Wednesday in connection with the June 13 murder of a cashier at a chemist shop in Chandigarh.**

Chandigarh.(Agency)

Two accused arrested in connection with the murder of a cashier at a chemist shop in Chandigarh last week were injured in a police encounter early Thursday after they allegedly attempted to escape from custody and opened fire at a police team while being brought to the city from Jammu.

The accused, Sunny Mehra and Aryan Sharma, sustained gunshot injuries to their legs and were admitted to Government Multi-Speciality Hospital (GMSH), Sector 16. Their condition is stated to be stable. According to police sources, the incident occurred around 6 am behind the Panjab University forest area when the accused were being taken to the Crime Branch office in Sector 11 following their arrest Wednesday.

Sources said the SUV carrying the accused and police personnel met with

an accident and crashed into a tree. The impact of the collision was such that a constable seated in the rear of the vehicle was thrown out after the vehicle came to a halt. A commotion and shootings



Taking advantage of the confusion, the two accused allegedly got hold of a service pistol that had fallen inside the vehicle following the accident. They then attempted to flee from the spot and allegedly fired two rounds at the police

team while escaping, sources said.

A police team led by Inspector Harinder Singh Sekhon, Operations Cell, and Inspector Narinder Patial, Crime Branch, retaliated by opening fire. Sources said the team fired four rounds during the exchange.

Mehra reportedly sustained two bullet injuries in his leg and Sharma suffered a bullet injury in his leg. Both were overpowered and taken into custody before being shifted to GMSH-16 for treatment. They had been arrested from the Jammu region Wednesday in connection with the June 13 murder of Janki Das, 45, a cashier at Shri Kumar Medicos in Sector 11. Das, a native of Himachal Pradesh, was shot multiple times inside the chemist shop by masked assailants posing as customers and later succumbed to his injuries at PGIMER.

**'Bullied', tenants from UP vacate Ahmedabad house; man held**

Ahmedabad.(Agency)

A Muslim family from Etawah in Uttar Pradesh, living on rent in Krishnanagar area of Ahmedabad, vacated their house earlier this week allegedly after being bullied by a "Bajrang Dal member", police said. After a purported video of the bullying went viral on social media, police detained the Bajrang Dal man, identified as Ganesh Vanzara, who was seen approaching a man seeking an ID from him.

PSI DJ Solanki, the Investigation Officer (IO) in the case, said Vanzara was seen in the video calling the man "Ali Khamenei's (late Iranian leader) nephew and mentioning about 'love jihad'". He said that the family had since vacated the rented house.

"The family included the man seen in the video, his wife and brother. They were living in that house peacefully and were in the painting business. We took statements from neighbours who all attested to the fact that they were living peacefully," Solanki said.

Inspector V H Joshi of Krishnanagar police station, said, "The incident took place about a week ago. We haven't received an official complaint but Ganesh Vanzara was placed under preventive detention under BNS 170."

**Karnataka govt aims to up Bengaluru economy to \$390 billion by 2037****The chief secretary reviewed the comprehensive roadmap presented by the Institute for Sustainability, Employment and Growth Foundation**

BENGALURU.(Agency)

By implementing the developmental roadmap, the Bengaluru Metropolitan Region (BMR) could boost its economy by \$390 billion to \$420 billion by 2037 and create an additional 2.5 to 3 million jobs. BMR's economy is now valued at \$149 billion, contributing over 43% to Karnataka's Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP). This was discussed at a high-level committee meeting on Tuesday, chaired by Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh.

The region's economic indicators outperform both state and national averages, with BMR's per capita GDP at approximately \$9,700 (Rs 9.15 lakh), nearly 1.9 times Karnataka's average of \$5,000 (Rs 4.7 lakh) and about four times India's national average of \$2,500 (Rs 2.35 lakh). The meeting decided to elevate BMR into a premier global hub for innovation, technology, Artificial Intelligence, advanced manufacturing and sustainable



urban development.

The chief secretary reviewed the comprehensive roadmap presented by the Institute for Sustainability, Employment and Growth Foundation (ISEG Foundation). The state

government signed a statement of intent with ISEG on May 5. It was mentioned that during 2015-25, BMR recorded a Real Gross Value Added Compound Annual Growth Rate of 9.7%, outpacing Karnataka's growth rate of 8.5% and Hyderabad's growth rate of 7.5%.

The region currently supports nearly 38 lakh jobs, accounting for about 16% of the total employment in the state. It houses over 20 lakh tech professionals, more than 1,000 Global Capability Centres, and over 13,000 startups. "The formulation of the Economic Master Plan is progressing on schedule. To ensure balanced urbanisation and relieve pressure on Bengaluru's core areas, the government is planning new 'Growth Centres' both within and outside the city. These hubs will integrate industries, IT/BT, research, manufacturing, logistics, residential and commercial activities, spreading economic wealth to surrounding regions," a press release said.

**Gauhati Court Overturns Death Sentence, Acquits Man In 2018 Rape-Murder Case**

Gauhati.(Agency)

In a significant judicial intervention that underscores the fragile nature of capital punishment verdicts, the Gauhati High Court has acquitted a man who spent nearly eight years on death row for the alleged rape and murder of an 11-year-old girl in Assam's Nagaon district, completely dismantling the September 2018 trial court judgment that had condemned him to the gallows.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Ashutosh Kumar and Justice Arun Dev Choudhury meticulously dismantled the prosecution's case against Nagaon resident Zakir Hussain, overturning his conviction and directing his immediate release from custody unless required in any other legal proceedings.

The case originated from a harrowing incident in March 2018 in Batadrava, Nagaon district, where a young girl was allegedly assaulted and set ablaze—a crime that ignited widespread public fury across Assam and galvanized mass protests demanding stricter punitive measures against sexual offenders.

Hussain, recorded as 19 years old at the time of the incident in police records, had been handed the death penalty by the Nagaon District and Sessions Court in September 2018 for murder, alongside a life sentence for rape under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. According to the initial complaint lodged by the victim's family at Batadrava Police Station, three individuals had allegedly committed the crimes, all of whom were subsequently apprehended. However, defense counsel Anan Kumar Bhuiyan revealed that two of the accused were juveniles and processed separately under the Juvenile Justice Act.

On Wednesday, The Indian Express spoke to IGP (Law and Order) Makrand Chauhan, who is the State Nodal Officer for NEET-UG on behalf of the Gujarat Police. Asked about special initiatives in light of a paper leak that led to the NEET-UG exam getting cancelled in May this year, IG Chauhan said, "Between June 19 and 21, there will be night patrolling at all exam centres so that electronic devices cannot be planted near them. Further, we are keeping an eye on messaging apps. Social media surveillance is also underway to detect rumour-mongering regarding the examination."

## Infantino's Fifa scores own goals

Renuka Narayanan

Welcome to the greatest show on Earth! Here the incredible acceleration of Brazil's Vinicius Junior destroys the backline of Morocco, there the US marquee man Christian Pulisic takes on Paraguay. The football World Cup is indeed one of the most beloved cultural phenomena of mankind.

But behind the joyous scenes and roars "goooooal", a different tournament comes into view. In anno 2026, the chief World Cup host drags one into the darkness of Donald Trump's inhumane policies and Fifa's deceit—the selling of football's soul. This, then, is the MAGA World Cup, lorded over by Fifa president Gianni Infantino. This is a tournament entirely of his making, because the 2018 and 2022 editions in Russia and Qatar had been awarded under his predecessor Sepp Blatter. Modest as he is, Infantino has lauded this tournament already as "the greatest event in the history of humanity". His sales slogan—"Football unites the World"—excludes of course Somali referee Omar Artan, Iran's members of staff and the countless supporters who have been priced out.

A day before the World Cup kicked off, at a press conference in Mexico City—his first in three years—Infantino didn't stand up for Artan and doubled down on ticket prices. He pointedly advised the world press to "Just, you know, chill, relax." It's as if he feels tasked with a divine mission to provide 'happiness to humanity' by delivering the greatest show on Earth. Hence, the fury of raised eyebrows and a seething inside because of the media coverage he has received. At least he did not repeat his rambling speech from Qatar when he felt "like a migrant worker".

In Qatar, Fifa showed terrible contempt for the lives of the countless migrant workers who transformed the Gulf nation to stage West Asia's first World Cup. They toiled under the notorious kafala system of forced labour that ties a worker to an employer. After the tournament, human rights groups demanded that Fifa and Qatar create a compensation fund of \$440 million, the equivalent of the prize money, to reimburse the workers and their families. Fifa's own subcommittee for human rights and social responsibility accepted the recommendation of an independent report by advisory firm Human Level that migrant workers should be compensated. Infantino ignored the recommendation. Instead, he worked on the bidding process for the 2034 World Cup and awarded the host rights to Saudi Arabia, another regime that exploits migrant workers. Under Infantino, good governance at Fifa has nosedived. He got himself elected on a ticket of reform. He even took a flight on a low-cost airline to signal that his Fifa would be different—transparent and accountable. In reality, Infantino worked relentlessly to centralise and consolidate his power. He ousted the head of governance Miguel Maduro, engineered the removal of Confederation of African Football president Ahmad Ahmad in favour of South African billionaire Patrice Motsepe, and covertly backed the European Super League. Now, to top it off, Fifa has on-boarded a highly questionable prediction market partner, ADI PredictStreet. As for the supporters, they are simply priced out. The 2026 World Cup applies a dynamic ticket pricing system that results in, for instance, the nauseating amount of \$33,000 for the World Cup final on July 19 in New Jersey.

Perhaps most egregiously, Infantino awarded Trump with Fifa's inaugural Peace Prize. Article 15 of the Fifa Code of Ethics stipulates a duty of political neutrality for football officials. It prevents football leadership from endorsing political candidates or using Fifa's platform to sway state politics.

## Rahul Gandhi's resistance needs a plan

The Gandhi family scion hasn't shown any signs that he has a strategy to win over the vast middle class

Aunindyo Chakravarty

WHEN I read Rahul Gandhi's latest speech to Opposition leaders, I was reminded of Karl Marx. The revolutionary socialist wrote: "Don Quixote long ago paid the penalty for wrongly imagining that knight errantry was compatible with all economic forms of society." Rahul appears to have the same problem when it comes to his politics. This is because the bulk of what Rahul Gandhi said harks back to the political practices of the Gandhian Congress during the Raj, when India was ruled by an extractive and alien colonial state. Rahul Gandhi seems to think that there is a parallel today in the nature of the Indian state, because it is no longer neutral. According to him, all its institutions have been subverted to keep the BJP in power. So, it follows that if the INDIA partners—the Samajwadi Party, All India Trinamool Congress, Rashtriya Janata Dal and others—believe that the old "political instruments" can work any longer, they are living in a "dreamland". Rahul seems to be suggesting that the standard methods of parliamentary democracy—legislative debates, floor management and electoral campaigns—are worthless now, because the BJP "even controls the Election Commission," and "100% the elections are being stolen."

So, what is Rahul Gandhi's solution to this problem? The answer, he says, is resistance. "Resistance works... You don't need political architecture... You need the act of resistance." Apparently, this is what worked for the Congress 100 years ago—"We were a political organisation before 1927. The day Gandhiji said we want independence, we became a resistance movement." Forget about the historical inaccuracy here—Gandhi was actually greatly miffed when Nehru and Bose piloted the call for 'purna swaraj' in the 1927 Madras Congress, calling it "hastily conceived and thoughtlessly passed." The bigger point is that Gandhian resistance was not some spontaneous personal act; it was carefully planned and executed by the party's organisation. What organised action does Rahul have to offer? In his speech, he pointed to the protests against the mishandling of NEET and CBSE exams, the Great Nicobar campaign and his own Bharat Jodo Yatra. In the exam scandal, Rahul did stand next to the key faces of the protest, but it was the Cockroach Janta Party that

got most of the attention. Now, the Congress has announced a series of student conventions to take up the NEET and CBSE issues. In the Great Nicobar case, we saw a two-minute video of Rahul Gandhi's visit, a couple of Op-Eds, and speeches in Parliament. All of these are standard old-school "political instruments" that Rahul Gandhi claimed don't work anymore.

The Bharat Jodo Yatra is the only concrete example of a sustained campaign of connecting to voters that operated outside the traditional modes of political organisation. But that too ended in early 2023. We saw nothing like that ahead of the recent Assembly elections.

There are several important state elections coming up over the next year—Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Uttarakhand. Yet there are no concrete plans outlined for how the Congress intends to convince people to vote for

that none of these organisational issues really matter. As he told his INDIA allies, "the next election is already won." Senior journalist Aadesh Rawal has posted on X that Rahul has reportedly told party general secretaries and state presidents that the Congress is the only party moving ahead rapidly, and they can sit back and enjoy.

Can a party really come to power in this manner? The Indian National Congress of yore definitely did not leave things to providence. Rahul Gandhi's great grandfather spearheaded the party's mass contact programme, while Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel managed the organisational structure. This was a strategic choice Gandhi made to organise the 'resistance movement' effectively—with Nehru as the popular face and Patel as the man who held the party's structure together.

Most importantly, the Congress leadership of that time recognised that there could be no resistance without funds. Even the austere Gandhi, for all his opposition to industrialisation, had an overt alliance with India's entrepreneurs of that time. These entrepreneurs, in turn, ensured the Congress got enough money to sustain its campaigns. The most famous of these was GD Birla. Gandhi acknowledged his friendship with Birla, and even stayed at various Birla Houses when he was in Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay or Pune. Another industrialist very close to Gandhi was Jammalal Bajaj. The Tatas maintained an arm's-length distance, but were seen to be sympathetic to the national movement. Rahul Gandhi, on the other hand, has no clear programme to reach out to India Inc, even when there is significant disquiet among them about the state of India's economy. Until now, India's big business houses have been wary of Rahul because of the public positions he has taken against monopoly capital and neoliberal economic policies. His slogans, like 'Suit-Boot ki Sarkar', have painted the government as pro-big business and, in turn, marked him as anti-business. And his recent Gandhian image-making will not help matters much. Winning elections anywhere in the world requires tactical alliances between the powerful and the disempowered. The BJP has done that by simultaneously catering to the ultrarich and the poorest Indians. There is a vast middle class, ranging from lower-middle to upper-middle-income voters, waiting to be tapped. Rahul Gandhi hasn't shown any signs that he has a strategy to win them over.



it, or its allies. In fact, the AAP government in Punjab has indicated that it might bring the elections forward to this winter. The Congress is widely perceived to have got off on the wrong foot here. Instead of trusting the local leadership, the party has appointed three 'outsiders'—Ajay Maken, Meenakshi Natarajan and Bhajan Lal Jatav—as observers to assess the state's political situation. Some are unhappy with what they see as feelers sent to Capt Amarinder Singh by the Gandhis to return to the Congress. Even former Amarinder loyalists are uncomfortable about the mixed messages emanating from New Delhi. It is possible that Rahul Gandhi feels

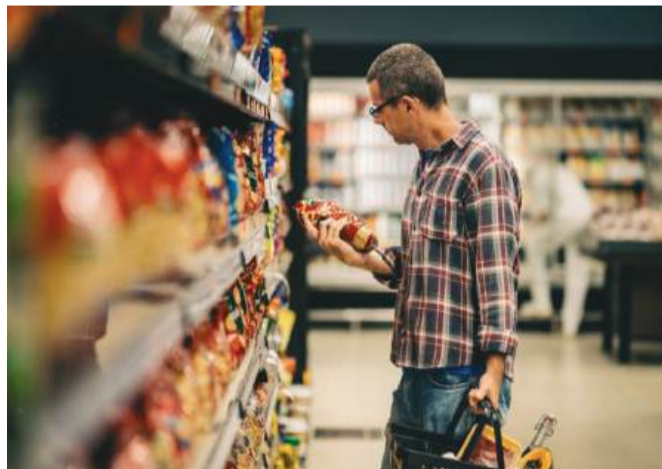
## Label truth : For the vulnerable, accurate labelling saves lives

An informed consumer is often the best line of defence against deceptive marketing

THE Food Safety and Standards Authority of India's (FSSAI) decision to issue notices to several food companies over allegedly misleading trade names and health claims is a welcome intervention. It recognises an uncomfortable reality: in a crowded marketplace, attractive labels often shape consumer choices more powerfully than nutritional facts. However, regulatory vigilance cannot end with occasional notices that generate headlines before fading from public memory. Consumer protection must evolve into a sustained national mission centred on transparency, accountability and awareness.

For millions of Indians, food labelling is a matter of health. People living with coeliac disease, for instance, depend on accurate disclosure of ingredients to avoid gluten exposure, which can trigger serious intestinal damage and long-term complications. Vague descriptions, incomplete ingredient lists or loosely used terms such as

"healthy", "natural" and "zero" can mislead consumers and undermine informed decision-making. Those with allergies, diabetes and other dietary restrictions face



similar challenges.

India's growing market for packaged foods demands a stronger regulatory framework. Front-of-pack information should be easy to understand, while manufacturers must be held accountable for claims that imply health benefits without adequate substantiation. Periodic audits, random testing and meaningful penalties for repeat violations are essential. Consumer education campaigns should become a permanent feature of public health policy. Schools, healthcare institutions and the media must help people understand how to interpret nutrition labels, identify misleading claims and make healthier choices. An informed consumer is often the best line of defence against deceptive marketing. Food businesses, too, have a responsibility that extends beyond legal compliance. The goal should be to foster a culture in which honesty in food labelling becomes non-negotiable. Consumer safety cannot be treated as a periodic exercise in enforcement.

## US-Iran deal marks a strategic reset

Tehran will forcefully protect its core interests, including its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes

KC Singh

JUNE 14, coincidentally US President Donald Trump's birthday, marked the announcement of the US-Iran peace deal. Trump posted on social media about the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz and the lifting of the US blockade. Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced that the deal-signing ceremony would be held in Switzerland on June 19. Interestingly, Sharif thanked Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye, omitting the UAE. He said mediators would facilitate "pre-implementation discussions", which would lay the foundation for the "technical talks". Iran, on the other hand, published the 14-clause Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The clauses include \$300 billion in reconstruction commitments from the US and allies; unfreezing of \$24-billion funds, half before negotiations; lifting of the blockade within 30 days and the withdrawal of US forces from around Iran. The reopening of Hormuz is under Iranian purview; its management stays with Iran. Clause 9 notes the Iranian commitment to not produce nuclear weapons, without mentioning any cap on enrichment. Under Clause 14, the missile programme and support for proxy groups stand removed from the agenda.

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi called it a "total victory". The Iranian security council claimed that the deal included an immediate end to fighting in Lebanon. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu disagreed with this assertion. The bulk of Iranian claims would be subject to negotiations after the MoU is signed. Will the world now transition towards pre-2025 normalcy? Global disruption began with the tariffs unleashed by Trump on April 2 last year, christened "Liberation Day". Repeatedly, the US threatened to annex Canada and Greenland, using force,

if necessary. In June 2025 came the joint attack by the US and Israel on Iran, a 12-day war and the claim that the Iranian nuclear programme stood dismantled.

On February 28, 2026, there was a second and more serious military onslaught on Iran, starting with the assassination of the Iranian Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei. It was based on the simplistic assumption—which also formed the basis of Russian President Vladimir Putin's attack on Ukraine in February 2022—that a popular uprising and instant regime change would occur. Perhaps the US success in rapidly replacing Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro in January 2026 encouraged it to attack Iran. It is generally accepted that Trump has unravelled the post-1945 rules-based order. He has replaced traditional multilateralism with brazen unilateralism, besides adopting unilateral trade policies and arbitrary tariffs. Multilateral institutions stand eroded, exemplified by the US withdrawal from the World Health Organisation. The US has even targeted fellow NATO members, starting with Canada and then Denmark, which controls Greenland.

However, the Iranians resiliently handled the blitz of airstrikes. The attackers also miscalculated Iranian preparedness. After the June 2025 onslaught, Iran modified its defence strategy by embedding drones and missiles in tunnels deep inside mountains. Iran has two massive mountain ranges and thus unlimited space for its new strategy. Thus, a war supposed to end quickly, seeking regime change and destruction of Iran's nuclear programme, turned into a stalemate.

The US had to declare a ceasefire on April 8 as Iran continued to retaliate, targeting US military facilities in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and Iraq, besides penetrating Israel's defensive Iron Dome.

Consequently, the GCC nations and Israel found their stock of interceptor missiles depleting rapidly. Iran additionally shut down shipping through the crucial Strait of Hormuz. Normally, 18 million barrels per day (mbd) of oil transit through it daily. Post-disruption, the



global energy prices escalated. Iran had discovered a weapon with global deterrence value. Until the US blockaded the Strait on April 8, 1.9 mbd were still transiting through it, but this fell to 1.2 mbd by June 1. Having failed to achieve their principal objectives, the US and Israel now face a new reality. Iran has demonstrated that it can bear pain to protect its core interests. The regime, having survived the assassinations of top civilian and military leaders, today fully controls governance, society and foreign policy in Iran. During the negotiations after the June 19 signing, Iran will forcefully protect its core interests, including its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes and support for its proxies—Hezbollah, Hamas and the Houthis. Trump now denies ever seeking Iranian regime change,

shifting the focus to Iran committing to never acquiring nuclear weapons. Ironically, this was already the declared policy approved by then Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei. Seemingly, the MoU was delayed due to the disagreement on the sequencing of these elements. The 60-day period is to finalise a give-and-take on each side's key demands. As Trump has repeatedly criticised the release of funds by then US President Barack Obama before the 2015 JCPOA (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action) agreement, the US may use GCC countries to hand back frozen funds to Iran rather than getting directly involved. The deal will have regional and global implications. Firstly, Israel is dismayed by it, even attempting to sabotage it by launching attacks on Beirut on June 14. Reportedly, it has demanded Lebanon's exclusion from the deal, thereby retaining the right to target Hezbollah.

Secondly, Iran's survival without a surrender has damaged America's image as the master of global compellence. In 2020, during President Trump's first term, the Abraham Accords were conceived to align GCC and Arab countries with Israel to isolate Iran. The GCC is divided today, with Saudi Arabia and Qatar having helped Pakistan in finalising the deal. Thus, Accords signatories Bahrain and the UAE are isolated from the combine comprising Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and Qatar. As India is perceived as tilting towards the Israel-US-UAE axis, its diplomatic options are constrained. A diplomatically ascendant Pakistan with a strengthened foothold in the Gulf region and a hotline to the US and China can no longer be ignored or deterred. The broader question arises: would the setback faced by the US in the Gulf impact the existing alliance of far-right governments in democracies in the Americas, West Asia and South Asia.

# Bihar man beaten to death after collecting Rs 2 lakh, highway blocked in protest

**A man was allegedly beaten to death in Bihar's Samastipur's Harpur Bhindi village on Wednesday. The killing sparked an NH-28 blockade as residents demanded swift arrests and a thorough probe.**

**Samastipur. (Agency)** Tension prevailed in Bihar's Samastipur district after a man was allegedly beaten to death by miscreants in Harpur Bhindi village under Tajpur police station limits on Wednesday. The incident triggered massive protests, with angry residents blocking National Highway-28 and demanding the immediate arrest of those responsible. The deceased was identified as Kusheshwar Rai, a resident of Harpur Bhindi village. According to family members, Rai had recently sold a piece of land and was returning home with Rs 2 lakh, which he had received as part of the pending payment for the transaction. Family members alleged that some unidentified persons intercepted him on his way home and assaulted him. Rai died at the spot due to the injuries sustained in the attack. Relatives who reached the scene claimed that the bag containing the cash was missing. They suspected that Rai was first

assaulted and may have later been forced to consume a poisonous substance, though the exact cause of death is yet to be established. Enraged by the incident, villagers



staged a protest with the body and blocked the Samastipur-Patna-Muzaffarpur route on NH-28. Protesters also burned tyres on the road, causing severe traffic congestion and long queues of vehicles on both sides of the highway.

The demonstrators demanded the immediate arrest of the killers and a thorough investigation into the incident. Police personnel reached the spot and attempted to persuade the protesters to clear the road, but they remained firm on their demands.

The blockade was lifted only after senior police officials assured the protesters that swift action would be taken in the case.

Police have taken the body into custody and sent it to Samastipur Sadar Hospital for post-mortem examination. An investigation is underway, and the motive behind the killing has not yet been established.

## CRS Begins Inspection of Katihar-Kuretha and Katihar-Sonaili Double Line Sections

**The Sikh Times**

Maligaon, 18th June: The Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS), Northeast Frontier Circle, Kolkata, Shri Sumeet Singhal, is carrying out the statutory inspection of the newly constructed Broad Gauge (BG) double line sections between Katihar (1,380 km)-Kuretha (12,440 km) and Katihar (1,327 km)-Sonaili (17,542 km) in Katihar Division of Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR). The inspection programme commenced on 17th June, 2026 and is scheduled to continue till 19th June, 2026. Both these sections form part of the Katihar-Kumedpur and Katihar-Mukuria New Double Line Projects. The Katihar-Kumedpur and Katihar-Mukuria New Double Line Project, spanning a total length of 64.14 km, is a significant infrastructure development initiative aimed at

enhancing rail capacity and operational efficiency in the region. The project includes 2 important

movement of both passenger and freight traffic across the Katihar Division of Northeast Frontier

telecommunication systems, electrical installations, safety arrangements and other associated railway assets of the newly constructed sections. The inspection will also include detailed examination of stations and field installations along the route. As part of the statutory inspection, speed trials are being conducted to assess the operational safety, stability and readiness of the sections prior to their commissioning. The ongoing CRS inspection is a major step towards the commissioning of these newly constructed double-line sections. The completion of the Katihar-Kuretha and Katihar-Sonaili double line sections will mark another important milestone in the modernization and capacity augmentation efforts of Northeast Frontier Railway, contributing to enhanced connectivity and more efficient train operations across the region.



bridges, 27 major bridges and 23 minor bridges, along with extensive track and associated railway infrastructure. Upon completion, the double line corridor will serve 16 railway stations, facilitating improved train operations, increased line capacity, reduced congestion, and more efficient

Railway. The CRS inspection of the Katihar-Kuretha and Katihar-Sonaili sections are an important step forward in the progress of the project. During the ongoing inspection programme, Shri Sumeet Singhal will inspect station infrastructure, track geometry, bridges, signalling and

## 2 Suspended Border Force Jawans Get 42 Years Jail For Gang-Rape, Acid Attack

Two suspended BSF jawans sentenced to 42 years for 2017 gang rape and acid attack in Mizoram.

**Mizoram. (Agency)** Two Border Security Force (BSF) jawans, who are suspended from service, were sentenced to 42 years of rigorous imprisonment for raping a woman and attacking her with acid in 2017 in Mizoram.

A court in Mizoram's Aizawl district on Tuesday pronounced the verdict against the two BSF jawans. Additional District and Sessions Judge Sylvie Zomuanpui Ralte had on June 12 convicted the border guards -- Nilanjan Das and Dinesh Kumar -- in the case under various sections of the IPC and pronounced the quantum of punishment on Tuesday. The court sentenced both convicts to 20 years' rigorous imprisonment for gang rape, 10 years for rape causing grievous bodily harm and 12

years for acid attack, amounting to a total of 42 years' rigorous imprisonment, which will run consecutively. The court also imposed a fine of ₹60,000 each under these three counts, and on default, they will undergo an additional two months of imprisonment under each count.

Das and Kumar, residents of West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh respectively, raped the woman and attacked her with a corrosive substance near the Gaskata River in Silisuri West Village in the Mamit district on July 16, 2017.

BSF sources added that they were suspended from service after the incident when they were arrested, and now that the verdict has come, the official proceedings of their termination of service will also be carried out.



## Indian seafarer's mortal remains reach home eight days after US strike

Shiv Anand Chaurasia's body reached his Deoria village eight days after he was killed in a US military strike. His family held up the funeral rites while seeking compensation, a job, schooling support and martyr status.

**Deoria. (Agency)**

Eight days after Indian seafarer Shiv Anand Chaurasia, a resident of Surauli village in Uttar Pradesh's Deoria district, was killed in a US military strike on the merchant vessel MT Settebello in the Gulf of Oman, his mortal remains reached his ancestral village on Wednesday, drawing hundreds of mourners to his home.

The body was flown to Gorakhpur and later transported to the village by ambulance. However, family members initially refused to allow the body to be taken out of the ambulance, demanding government assistance and recognition for the deceased.

In a memorandum submitted to the District Magistrate by Shiv Anand's father, Ramji Chaurasia, the family sought a government job

for his wife, financial assistance of Rs 1 crore each from the Centre and the Uttar Pradesh government, free education up to Class 12 for his two children, and martyr status for Shiv Anand.



Following the family's protest, District Magistrate Madhusudan Hulgi and the Superintendent of Police reached the spot and assured them that their demands would be forwarded to the state government.

Hulgi said the administration shared had met Shiv Anand's wife and children. He said the family had raised several issues, including financial assistance and employment, and that a written request would be sent to the government for consideration.

## Obstacle to relationship: Man kidnaps, kills lover's 7-year-old son in Meerut

**Meerut. (Agency)**

A seven-year-old boy was allegedly abducted and murdered by his mother's lover in Uttar Pradesh's Meerut district. The police said the accused killed the child because he had become an obstacle to their relationship.

The victim, identified as Angad, went missing on Tuesday morning while playing outside his house. According to police, the accused, Arpit Parashar, allegedly lured the child into his car on the pretext of giving him chocolates, drove away with him, and later killed him before dumping the body in a field near a canal.

After the family reported the boy missing, police launched an investigation and examined CCTV footage and surveillance data. Footage reportedly showed the child being taken away in a car, leading investigators to zero in on the

suspect. Police said Parashar initially attempted to mislead investigators and repeatedly changed his statements. At one point, he allegedly claimed that he had thrown the



boy into a canal, prompting search operations by police and divers. However, no trace of the child was found there. Following sustained interrogation, the accused allegedly confessed to the crime

and led police to the spot where the body had been dumped. The child's body was subsequently recovered from a field near the canal.

According to investigators, Parashar had known the boy's mother for some time and frequently visited her. Police suspect the child had become a hindrance to their relationship, which likely motivated the murder. Meerut Rural Superintendent of Police Abhijeet Kumar Singh said a special police team arrested the accused within 24 hours of the kidnapping complaint. During questioning, he admitted to taking the child away in his car and killing him before disposing of the body. Police are also questioning the boy's mother to determine whether she had any role in the crime. Officials said her role is under scrutiny, though no allegations against her have been established so far.

# Security Operations In Manipur Intensified Amid Protests Over Recent Deaths

Manipur security forces intensify operations amid protests over Kuki patients and civilian death claims.

**Manipur. (Agency)**

In a coordinated security effort, combined security forces have launched extensive cordon and search operations, area domination exercises, and combing operations in the fringe and vulnerable areas of Manipur's Kangpokpi, Churachandpur, and Thoubal districts. According to the official sources, strict security measures have been put in place across the affected regions. Multiple nakas and checkpoints have been established at strategic locations to monitor movement and prevent any untoward incidents.

The operations are being carried out on a large scale amid recent incidents of killings and armed activities between communities. The Director General of Police (DGP) Mukesh Singh is personally overseeing the security operations in areas that have witnessed a surge in violence in recent weeks. Security agencies stated that the

intensified operations aim to maintain law and order, ensure public safety, and prevent further escalation of tensions in the state.

**3 Kuki Patients Shifted From RIMS Following Public Protests, Taken Back To Kuki-Dominated Churachandpur**

In an important development, the three Kuki patients who had been undergoing treatment at the Regional Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS) in Imphal were shifted out of the hospital late Tuesday night following sustained public protests and repeated demands from civil society groups. Earlier, the state government had assured protest representatives that the patients would be transferred from RIMS.

The issue had triggered widespread demonstrations at the hospital premises over the past two days, with protesters demanding the removal of the patients and seeking clarification from the government regarding their identities and alleged affiliations.

Security forces had earlier used tear gas to disperse demonstrators as tensions escalated around the hospital campus.

Meanwhile, conflicting claims have emerged over a June 16 security operation in Manipur's Henglep Sub-Division, with the Assam Rifles maintaining that a suspected militant was killed in an encounter, while Henglep MLA Letzamang Haokip has alleged that the deceased was an unarmed civilian and demanded a judicial probe into the incident.

The controversy intensified after the Police Control Room (PCR) issued a clarification on Wednesday based on information received from the Assam Rifles. According to the PCR, a joint column of the Assam Rifles and the army came under engagement with suspected militants between Molphei and Songkong villages on June 16. The security forces' version stated

that one suspected militant was killed during the encounter. The PCR further said that security personnel recovered one AK-47 rifle, magazines, ammunition, explosives



and other incriminating items from the site. A criminal case has been registered, and further investigation is underway, police said.

However, the official account has been strongly contested by Henglep MLA

Letzamang Haokip, who issued a statement condemning what he described as the killing of a civilian identified as Lenmingsang, son of Lenkhogin Haokip, at North Songkong village.

Calling the incident "shocking" and "deeply disturbing", the legislator alleged that a civilian had lost his life at the hands of those entrusted with public protection. He argued that the incident had raised serious questions about accountability and public trust in security operations.

Adding to the controversy, Haokip cited allegations made by eyewitnesses who claimed that after the victim was shot, his clothes were removed and his body was taken away by the joint security forces. The MLA further referred to allegations that attempts were subsequently made to portray the death as an encounter involving a militant.

# 2 Lawrence Bishnoi Gang Members Arrested In Guru Randhawa Gym Firing Case

## Two men linked to Lawrence Bishnoi gang arrested for firing outside Guru Randhawa's gym in Delhi.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Two alleged associates of the Lawrence Bishnoi gang have been arrested for allegedly opening fire outside a gym linked to Punjabi singer Guru Randhawa in Paschim Vihar, police said on Wednesday. One of the arrested men had returned from

Russia less than two weeks before the incident. Police said the accused, Arman (19) and Tushar alias Tashu alias Pinku (21), both residents of Sonapat district in Haryana, were apprehended in Bahadurgarh after a manhunt.

According to police, the duo are alleged shooters linked to gangster Anil Pandit, a member of the Lawrence Bishnoi gang who is believed to be operating from the United States.

Police said two motorcycle-borne assailants allegedly opened fire outside a gym on Outer Ring Road in Paschim Vihar around 4 am on June 11 and fled the scene; no one was injured, and seven empty cartridges were recovered.

Police said a case was registered at Paschim Vihar East police station in outer Delhi. The incident drew attention after a social media post allegedly made by Anil Pandit went

viral, claiming responsibility for the attack on behalf of the Lawrence Bishnoi gang, police said. Pandit allegedly claimed that the firing at the gym was carried out by those associated with Guru Randhawa and referred to the singer's purported proximity to Bollywood actor Salman Khan, whom the gang considers an adversary.

Recognising the possible organised crime angle, the Crime Branch took over the investigation. Police said investigators reconstructed the assailants' escape route, examined technical evidence and tracked their movements across nearly 100



During interrogation, both allegedly admitted to their involvement in the firing, police said. According to investigators, Arman is a cousin of the other two suspected shooters, Sahil and Sagar, who are absconding. Police said Tushar had recently returned to India from Russia, where he had been working after travelling on a study visa, and he allegedly contacted Sahil and Sagar shortly before the firing incident and became involved in the conspiracy.

Police said both accused have been remanded to police custody and are being questioned to unravel the broader network behind the attack. Police said efforts are underway to arrest the remaining accused and recover the weapon used in the crime.

## Accused not identified in 55% cases: Data on crimes against North-East Indians in Delhi

New Delhi.(Agency)

More than half of the accused persons in the FIRs registered in Delhi over the past 12 years for crimes against people from the North-East have remained "untraced", according to Delhi Police data accessed by The Indian Express, underscoring persistent gaps in investigations despite the creation of a specialised police unit intended to address such cases.

"Untraced" here refers to accused whom the police could not identify, locate or apprehend despite conducting probes. For more than a decade, the Delhi Police has registered thousands of complaints involving crimes against people from India's North-East. But in most of those cases, data now reveals, investigators have not identified those responsible. Of the 2,656 FIRs filed between 2014 and April 30, 2026, 1,465 — nearly 55% — were classified as untraced. Only 33 cases resulted in conviction, producing a conviction rate of 1.82 per cent. Sources said that senior police officers have recently directed the ACP Headquarters to review cases in which investigations have remained pending for more than two years. Accused not identified in 55% cases: Data on crimes against North-East Indians in Delhi

Data also shows that another 771 cases remain pending trial, while 74 are still under investigation. The concentration of cases is uneven across 15 police districts in Delhi.

South West district recorded 982 FIRs — roughly 37 per cent of all complaints during the period — and also reported the largest number of untraced cases, at 583. South district registered 412 FIRs, including 219 untraced cases. South East district and Dwarka recorded 226 and 223 FIRs respectively. Combined, the four districts account for nearly 70% of all FIRs involving members of the North-East community. Outcomes varied sharply across districts.

Outer North recorded the highest conviction rate at 11.7%, followed by Rohini at 11.1%, West district at 7.69% and Dwarka at 7.14%. But those districts accounted for comparatively few cases.

## DMRC to conduct study to reduce traffic bottlenecks in Central Vista area

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) plans to conduct a study to explore construction of tunnels and underpasses in the Central Vista area to tackle traffic congestion and to meet future transport requirements projected up to 2060, officials said on Wednesday.

According to officials, DMRC has floated a tender to appoint a consultant for a comprehensive feasibility study which will cover traffic-prone stretches including C-Hexagon, Man Singh Marg, Rafi Ahmad Kidwai Marg and Teen Murti Marg.

According to the official document, the consultant will assess existing traffic conditions, undertake future traffic forecasting, conduct traffic surveys and micro-simulation modelling, and prepare proposals for grade-separated infrastructure aimed at easing congestion at critical junctions.

The study is expected to examine strategic tunnels and underpasses that can reduce traffic bottlenecks without affecting the architectural, visual and ecological significance of the Central Vista precinct. DMRC has said the proposed interventions should be technically feasible, economically viable and environmentally sustainable.

The document notes that the exercise is intended to provide a "holistic, data-driven feasibility assessment" of infrastructure solutions that can decongest the area, accommodate projected traffic growth and maintain acceptable traffic service levels over the coming decades. It also emphasises the need to ensure seamless ceremonial and VIP movement while minimising disruption to the heritage character and aesthetic integrity of the area.

Apart from assessing structural feasibility and preparing broad cost estimates, the consultant will also evaluate environmental considerations and examine how the proposed infrastructure can be integrated with existing and planned transport systems, including Delhi Metro corridors serving the Central Vista region. The consultancy assignment is to be completed within six months, with the tender carrying a money deposit of Rs 4.14 lakh, officials said.

## Lab tests, use of bottled water: Contamination ordeal in Delhi's Hauz Khas still not over

New Delhi.(Agency)

Despite the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) having undertaken repair work and assuring that the water contamination woes will be resolved soon, residents of Hauz Khas in South Delhi on Wednesday continued to raise concerns over the quality of tap water — with some households even sending samples for lab tests.

The latest complaints have added to the water woes being faced by the Capital in various parts this summer. reported on June 15 that several upscale colonies in South Delhi have been reeling under severe water-related issues, including contamination and shortage. Ageing pipelines, leakages and operational stress on the city's water network have emerged as key reasons behind recent

such incidents reported in areas including Gulmohar Park and Sarvodaya Enclave.

Last week, at Hauz Khas, DJB officials said the water contamination



concerns are being addressed on priority and will be fixed in a few days. Fresh complaints have now emerged from parts of Z Block of Hauz Khas and adjoining areas, where residents claimed "muddy", "cloudy" and

"foul-looking" water continued to flow through taps over the past week. While some have switched entirely to bottled water, others are awaiting lab test reports before resuming use of tap water supply.

Veronica Francis, a resident of Hauz Khas, said the quality of water fluctuated over the past several days. "For the last six to seven days water supply in the morning has been streaked with swirls of black, which eventually dissolve in water. Before that it was cloudy, then clear for a couple of days, and then dirty again," she said. Francis said she had sent samples from both her main water tank and the drinking water outlet in her kitchen for testing and would continue using mineral water until the results confirm the water is safe.

## Rehabilitation for most slum dwellers, in-situ relocation focus of new policy for Delhi

New Delhi.(Agency)

Nearly all slum dwellers in the Capital eligible for rehabilitation and priority to relocating them close to the existing slum clusters — these are the highlights of the Delhi Slum and JJ Cluster Rehabilitation and Relocation Policy, 2026, which is set to be notified.

A day after Union Home Minister Amit Shah chaired a key meeting and said that the new policy, which replaces Delhi Slum Rehabilitation and Relocation Policy 2015, is ready, Delhi Urban Development Minister Ashish Sood on Wednesday told The Indian Express that the government has extended the cut-off date for slum dwellers eligible for rehabilitation by 10 years, virtually making most slum dwellers in the national capital eligible to get a pucca house. Now, all slum dwellers who live in slums, which existed as on January 1, 2025, will be eligible for rehabilitation under the new policy. The government said the policy will

benefit four lakh families, or almost 20 lakh people. "We are also working on a new provision under which even family members living on the first or second floor of the slum unit will be eligible for rehabilitation by giving an additional charge," Sood said. According to officials, the new policy



is expected to make the relocation process smoother. "Earlier, we used to see that half the families in a slum were eligible, while the other half were not, which used to lead to resistance and court cases. The new policy will make everyone eligible, so people will cooperate more," an official said.

Tenders will be issued for slum parcels in Mayur Vihar in East Delhi, Seelampur in Northeast, Sultanpuri in Northwest, Lajpat Nagar in Southeast and Pitampura in Central North districts, as per Shah's directions to issue tender for rehabilitation of 5 slum clusters under public private partnership (PPP) mode. "Extending the rehabilitation eligibility cut till 2025 is a revolutionary move that will give all slum dwellers in Delhi a pucca house, so that every GenZ in all slums of Delhi can think of a better future. We have also stuck to our promise of Jaha Jhuggi Wahan Makan," Sood said. Similar to the current policy, he added, slum dwellers will have to pay a sum ranging between Rs 1.12 lakh to Rs 1.41 lakh to get a house. The Indian Express had reported in March that the Delhi government is working on a new slum policy which will extend the eligibility cut-off date from the present January 1, 2015 to January 1, 2025.

## Rs 80,000 debt, a family destroyed: Delhi revenge plot goes horribly wrong

What started as a plot against one man ended in a horrific fire that wiped out four members of a family in Tughlakabad. Here is how the Delhi Police cracked the case.

New Delhi.(Agency)

It was 2.15 am on June 13. A family of five was asleep in their two-room flat on the fourth floor of a five-storey residential building in Southeast Delhi's Tughlakabad. By dawn, they were all in the hospital. Three days later, only one of them was alive. Pankaj Kumar Pandey (28), a mobile phone shop owner, had moved into the flat just two years ago. He had purchased it from a builder who had converted the property into a multi-storey residential complex. He lived there with his mother Guddi (50), his sisters Soni (24) and Mani (21), and their maternal grandmother

Sushila Devi (70). The purchase, relatives said, was meant to secure a better future for the family after the death of their father, Subhash Chand Pandey, a driver, who succumbed to a kidney-related illness two years earlier. That night, a fire broke out in the building's ground-floor parking area, where about eight two-wheelers were parked. Within minutes, the flames tore through the structure, trapping residents on the upper floors. Ten people were rescued. Eight were injured including Pankaj and his family. They were rushed to hospital with severe burns and smoke inhalation. By

morning, Pankaj, Sushila and Soni were dead. Two days later, on June 15, Guddi



died while undergoing treatment at Safdarjung Hospital. Mani, the youngest, remains in the ICU.

"She doesn't know yet," said Vivek Jha, a cousin who grew up with the sisters. "Her entire family is gone. We don't know how to tell her when she regains consciousness." Vivek said he had been staying with the family until May. "If I had been there, maybe I could have done something," he said, breaking down. Mani, he added, is pursuing a BA degree through the School of Open Learning at the University of Delhi. Another cousin, Anand, said Mani is now the only surviving member of the immediate family. "I don't know where she will go after she is discharged," he said.

## NEWS BOX

## World Cup: Luis Diaz sparks Colombia to commanding 3-1 win over debutants Uzbekistan

New Delhi, (Agency)

Luis Diaz produced a dazzling display as Colombia marked their return to the FIFA World Cup with a commanding 3-1 victory over tournament debutants Uzbekistan in their Group K opener at a vibrant Azteca Stadium on Wednesday. After missing out on qualification for the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, Colombia arrived in Mexico determined to make an immediate impact. They were handed an added incentive before kick-off when fellow Group K contenders Portugal were held to a surprise 1-1 draw by DR Congo, opening the door for Nestor Lorenzo's side to seize early control of the group. While Colombia were overwhelming favourites against an Uzbekistan side playing their first World Cup match, the South Americans initially found it difficult to turn their dominance into goals. They controlled possession and spent long spells camped inside the opposition half, but Uzbekistan remained disciplined and organised in defense. The breakthrough finally arrived four minutes before the interval, and it



was crafted by Colombia's brightest star. Diaz, who tormented the Uzbek defence throughout the evening, delivered a superb ball into the penalty area and Daniel Munoz ghosted in behind his marker before producing an instinctive hooked finish that flew past the goalkeeper. The goal capped a first half in which Colombia had largely dictated proceedings. Uzbekistan rarely threatened and struggled to venture into Colombia's half, but they emerged from the break with renewed belief and gradually grew into the contest. The result sends Colombia to the top of Group K with three points after Portugal and DR Congo shared the spoils earlier in the day. Colombia will now travel to Guadalajara to face DR Congo on June 23, knowing another victory could secure their place in the knockout rounds. Uzbekistan, meanwhile, continue their maiden World Cup journey against Portugal in Houston, still searching for the first points in their World Cup history but encouraged by a spirited performance against one of South America's strongest sides.

## Hamilton reborn, Mercedes exposed: 5 key takeaways from Monaco and Spain

New Delhi, (Agency)

At the start of 2026, Formula 1 looked destined for a predictable story: a dominant Mercedes, a runaway championship and a season that risked getting decided far too early. After a frenetic last couple of races, that certainty has evaporated. Monaco and Barcelona have reshuffled the narrative, revived old contenders and exposed new vulnerabilities. Most importantly, they have given us something many feared 2026 lacked: a genuine title fight. Here are my five big takeaways from a fascinating double-header. TAKE A BOW, SIR LEWIS

From his painfully evident struggles in the car during the ground-effect era, it was easy and often tempting to believe that the best days of



Sir Lewis Hamilton were behind him, and the agony of Abu Dhabi 2021 was the last time he would come close to clinching that record-breaking eighth world title. A shocking first season at Ferrari last year gave the distinct feeling that 2026 was a make-or-break season for Hamilton. Another tepid year, and we would probably see the last of the legend in December.

Well, among the biggest headlines from the season so far is that retirement is no longer an option for the sport's greatest driver ever, at least statistically. The rule reset turned out to be a blessing for Hamilton, along with a car that has had his input in its development, and a support team that is aligned to his preferences. The outcome was his first-ever Ferrari podium in only the second race of the season in Shanghai, followed by back-to-back second places in Canada and Monaco, before Barcelona saw his 106th career race win, and his first in red. This sensational run of form has put him second in the championship standings, with a real shot at clinching the title.

# Lionel Messi 3-0 Cristiano Ronaldo after World Cup Day 1: Did we not see it coming?

**FIFA World Cup 2026: Lionel Messi arrived at the World Cup carrying a legacy and somehow made it bigger. Cristiano Ronaldo arrived chasing history, but after Round 1, the tournament feels less like a race between rivals and more like a tale of two timelines.**

New Delhi, (Agency)

There are few rivalries in sport that can survive the passage of time quite like Lionel Messi versus Cristiano Ronaldo. For nearly two decades, football fans have measured one against the other. Goals, trophies, Ballon d'Ors, records and influence have all been turned into chapters of a debate that refuses to fade away, even as both men approach the twilight of their careers. And after the opening round of matches at the FIFA World Cup 2026, the scoreboard reads rather emphatically: Messi 3, Ronaldo 0. On the surface, it looks brutal. Messi produced a

stunning hat-trick against Algeria, becoming the oldest player to score a World Cup hat-trick and drawing level with Miroslav Klose's record of 16 World Cup goals. Ronaldo, meanwhile, walked away from Portugal's 1-1 draw against DR Congo without a goal, without a shot on target and without the slice of history he had hoped to claim.

Yet for all the attention the contrasting performances have generated, was any of this really surprising?

**MESSI CONTINUES TO DEFY LOGIC** If there was one genuine surprise from the opening round, it was Messi. Not because he is incapable of brilliance — at this stage, doubting Messi feels like tempting fate — but because of the sheer scale of what he produced. At 38 years old and just days away from turning 39, Messi was expected to guide Argentina through the tournament with intelligence, experience and moments of quality. Instead, he delivered one of the performances of the competition, scoring all three goals in Argentina's victory and once again becoming the centre of football's biggest conversation. The remarkable thing about Messi's World Cup journey is that it was supposed to have reached its perfect ending four years ago in Qatar. He had lifted the

trophy, won the Golden Ball and completed the one achievement that had eluded him throughout his career. Yet here he is again, not merely participating but dominating. Even by Messi's standards, a World Cup hat-trick at



this age felt extraordinary. Four years after leading Argentina to glory, he continues to add new pages to a legacy many believed was already complete.

**RONALDO'S STRUGGLES WERE NOT A SURPRISE**

Ronaldo's struggles, on the other hand, did not arrive out of nowhere. The Portuguese captain entered the tournament without a goal at Euro 2024 and had also drawn blanks in Portugal's pre-World Cup friendlies against Chile and Nigeria. Long before the opening whistle

## India's Women's T20 World Cup honeymoon ends, the real test begins right now

**India have made a strong start to their Women's T20 World Cup campaign with wins over Pakistan and the Netherlands, going top of Group A on net run rate, but tougher challenges now await against South Africa and Australia.**

Philadelphia, (Agency)

India have made a dream start to their Women's T20 World Cup campaign, showing little wrong so far. They opened with a commanding win over Pakistan before easing past the Netherlands, and in the process, climbed to the top of Group A, edging past Australia on net run rate. But despite two wins from two, India are still a fair distance from sealing a semifinal berth. Three group-stage matches remain, and the road ahead gets significantly tougher. India next face South Africa before rounding off their league phase against Australia in what could prove to be a

decisive fixture. With India, Australia and South Africa widely viewed as the strongest contenders for the top four, every remaining result in Group A carries added weight. From India's perspective, maintaining their edge over Australia on net run rate could prove crucial as the qualification picture



begins to take shape.

**INDIA NEED TO BE WARY**

India will be brimming with confidence after sitting atop the points table, but they cannot afford even a moment of complacency. Their next challenge comes against South Africa on June 20.

It was only two months ago that Laura Wolvaardt and her side handed India a 4-1 defeat in a bilateral series at home, exposing key gaps in their game. What will worry India further is that South Africa were not at

full strength then, with the likes of Marizanne Kapp, Dane van Niekerk, and Shabnim Ismail missing. Their return only makes the upcoming contest even more formidable. Interestingly, India and South Africa are yet to face each other in the Women's T20 World Cup, adding an extra layer of intrigue to this encounter. The two sides did share a gripping rivalry in last year's ODI World Cup, where Nadine de Klerk starred in the league stage before India hit back with a win in the final.

With both teams eager to assert dominance, there will be no shortage of intensity. India know that one off day could quickly undo all the momentum built from wins over Pakistan and the Netherlands.

**THE SHREYANKA CONUNDRUM**

Going into the clash against South Africa, India have been dealt a significant setback. Shreyanka Patil, who has been in excellent form since the T20I series against Australia where she was named Player of the Series in the decider, may be unavailable for the remainder of the tournament.

Against the Netherlands, Shreyanka suffered a freak foot injury that required her to be stretchered off the field. The severity of the injury has raised serious doubts over her availability in the coming matches, with a longer layoff also a possibility.

## Cristiano Ronaldo's selfishness hurt Portugal: Thierry Henry's verdict on DR Congo draw

**FIFA World Cup 2026: Thierry Henry criticised Cristiano Ronaldo after Portugal's 1-1 draw with DR Congo in Houston. His remarks sharpened the debate over Ronaldo's individual pursuit and Portugal's team balance.**

New Delhi, (Agency)

Cristiano Ronaldo's frustrating World Cup opener has come under the spotlight after Thierry Henry accused the Portugal captain of putting personal ambition ahead of the team's needs. The former Arsenal and France striker delivered a blunt assessment following Portugal's 1-1 draw against DR Congo in Houston. The result left Portugal



with work to do in Group K, and speaking on Fox's post-match coverage, Henry pointed to a specific moment that he believes summed up Ronaldo's performance and Portugal's wider attacking problems.

**WATCH THE VIDEO HERE:**

"One thing that's important, people, please at home, the team needs to score. Not YOU needs to score." "Because HE wants to score,

he goes in the path of the back pass, you see both players, and it's easier for you to defend. And that's my thing: The team needs to score. Not you." Henry's criticism centred on a second-half attacking sequence involving Joao Cancelo and Bruno Fernandes. The former Barcelona striker argued that Ronaldo's movement towards the ball crowded a dangerous area and ultimately made life easier for the Congolese defence. "So, obviously, we're going to see here Portugal being on the ball, Cancelo is going to receive the ball. Cristiano Ronaldo has been in this situation multiple times." "If you make that run here, you make the defender take a decision to crash the six-yard box. But because he wants to score, he goes into the path of Bruno Fernandes. If he goes into that six-yard box, then it would have been a tap-in for Bruno Fernandes."

## Mexican military shoots down drone near South Korea's training camp in Guadalajara

**Mexican military personnel neutralised an unauthorised drone near South Korea's training base in Guadalajara ahead of the team's Group A clash against hosts Mexico at the FIFA World Cup 2026.**

New Delhi, (Agency)

Mexican military personnel brought down an unauthorised drone near South Korea's training base in Guadalajara ahead of their FIFA World Cup Group A match against Mexico. According to a report by the Associated Press, specialised military equipment detected the drone operating close to the South Korean camp before it was "neutralised". A federal official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not

authorised to discuss the matter publicly, said authorities had intercepted the aircraft near the team's training facility. Authorities have not disclosed who was operating the drone or whether it was being used to gather information on South Korea's preparations before Thursday's fixture. Mexico began their campaign with a win over South Africa, while South Korea defeated Czechia in their opening match. South Korea coach Hong Myung-bo expressed disappointment over the incident but said it did not disrupt the team's plans. "Yesterday, during our training, there was a drone in the sky that we came to know about," Hong said through a translator. "Fortunately, it was right before we practised our tactics, so it did not impact us. But while we were preparing for the match, that was the most important timing, so what happened was unfortunate." The drone was intercepted as part of security arrangements for the World Cup, which is being staged across Mexico, the United States and Canada until July 19. The

federal official said security forces had dealt with several drones in recent days after they



entered restricted areas around stadiums, fan zones and team camps in Mexico City, Guadalajara and Monterrey. No details were provided on when the latest incident occurred or whether any arrests had been made. Mexico launched its World Cup security

programme, known as Plan Kukulkan, in March. The operation involves around 100,000 personnel drawn from military, federal and local police forces. It includes surveillance systems, security checks at stadiums, airports, roads and hotels, along with protection measures for teams, officials and supporters.

Canada has also imposed temporary restrictions on unauthorised drone flights over World Cup venues and selected training sites in Vancouver and Toronto. The measures will remain in place until July 7, when the country's final World Cup match is scheduled to be played. The incident comes less than two years after the drone-spying controversy involving Canada's women's football team at the Paris Olympics. Members of the coaching staff were accused of using a drone to observe a New Zealand training session before the teams met in the tournament.

## Gurnoor Brar credits domestic cricket and India A stint for strong international start

New Delhi, (Agency)

India's newest pace sensation Gurnoor Brar has made an impressive start to his ODI career against Afghanistan, emerging as India's leading wicket-taker in the series with six wickets in two matches. The Punjab fast bowler has impressed with his pace, bounce and ability to execute under pressure in his debut international outing.

His rapid rise reflects the strength of India's domestic cricket structure and the India A pathway that continues to produce ready-made international performers. "I don't think about that (reputation) much. I believe in myself and whatever I am doing, whether it is hard length or fast-paced bowling. I tried to replicate that here as well," he said after India's series-clinching 170-run win. "It was the same for me as when I bowled in Ranji, bowling fast, hitting a hard length and swinging the ball. I tried to replicate the exact same thing in India A and hit the same lines." For Brar, the transition to international cricket has been shaped by repetition, exposure and learning across multiple levels, from the Ranji Trophy to India A and the high-intensity



environment of the IPL. He credited structured domestic pathways and dressing-room exposure alongside senior fast bowlers for helping him refine his game before stepping onto the international stage. "I am thankful to God that I got my chance to show what I can do with India," he adds. "There is a very good atmosphere in Gujarat Titans. There is (Ashish) Nehra bhai, (Kagiso) Rabada, (Mohammed) Siraj bhai, Prasidh (Krishna) bhai and Ishant Sharma, so you get to learn a lot from them. I was also waiting for my chance there, and I kept observing where I could improve."

**WANTS TO GET BETTER**

Despite his strong start, Brar insists he is far from finished with his development, repeatedly stressing that improvement remains the priority over early success.

## Axis Bank, BITS partner for innovation research park in Hyderabad

HYDERABAD.(Agency)

Axis Bank on Wednesday signed an MoU with BITS Pilani to establish the Axis Bank-BITS Industry Research, Technology & Innovation Park at the BITS Pilani Hyderabad campus. According to officials, the collaboration, backed by a Rs 100 crore CSR grant, marks a significant step towards strengthening India's deep-tech and translational research ecosystem by creating an integrated platform for deeper industry-academia collaboration, innovation and entrepreneurship.

With a focus on life sciences, biopharma, healthcare and medical devices, the proposed research park is being developed as a dedicated platform to strengthen India's innovation ecosystem and enable cost-effective healthcare solutions for the public.

Located in Hyderabad, the facility will benefit from Telangana's thriving life sciences corridor anchored by Genome Valley. Under the partnership, BITS Pilani will guide the park's governance and research agenda, while Axis Bank will support infrastructure development. Spread across approximately 1.2 lakh sq ft, the Axis Bank-BITS Industry Research, Technology & Innovation Park will house laboratories, incubation spaces and shared facilities under one roof. It aims to support innovators from academia, startups and MSMEs through structured partnerships, co-design and co-creation of projects. BITS Pilani Chancellor Kumar Mangalam Birla said the partnership reflects the kind of forward-looking collaboration needed to build stronger innovation systems in India.

## Indian IT firms pay premium valuations for AI acquisitions in FY26

CHENNAI.(Agency)

Indian information technology services companies paid premium valuations for acquisitions focused on artificial intelligence and engineering capabilities in FY26, as firms increased spending on specialised talent, intellectual property and platforms. Indian IT firms invested about \$5.5 billion across 19 acquisitions during the year, according to an analysis by UearthInsight. Most transactions were aimed at building capabilities rather than increasing scale through revenue or headcount additions. The shift comes as IT services companies increasingly turn to acquisitions to support growth amid pressure on traditional business models and changing client demand driven by AI adoption. Hexaware's acquisition strategy has also mirrored the shift towards capability-led deals. "We have always done acquisitions not by scale but for capability, and in the last three years, if you look into it, we did a few acquisitions," Hexaware Chief Financial Officer Vikash Jain told TNIE. "Acquisitions for us have always been not to gain scale but primarily to gain access to capabilities which we can take across the breadth of our client sets," he added.

The UearthInsight study found that 12 capability-led transactions worth \$4.7 billion commanded higher revenue multiples, while five scale-driven deals accounted for about \$400 million. Smaller acquisitions such as HCLTech's purchase of Wobby and Persistent's acquisition of Aepona recorded some of the highest valuation multiples. Capability acquisitions replaced scale-driven M&A, "the report said, adding that companies increasingly targeted specialised capabilities, platforms and talent instead of pursuing revenue expansion.

## Nykaa unveils FY30 vision, targets over \$5 billion GMV in beauty and lifestyle business

New Delhi.(Agency)

India's leading omnichannel beauty and lifestyle company Nykaa on Thursday shared its vision for FY30, aiming to build a business with a gross merchandise value (GMV) of more than \$5 billion. The company plans to benefit from the growing demand for premium products in India.

Nykaa currently operates in a lifestyle market valued at over \$100 billion and serves 55 million customers across beauty, fashion, wellness and related categories. Over the last six years, its overall GMV has increased more than sevenfold, while its Beauty business has grown 6 times, Fashion 27 times and House of Nykaa 10 times.

**Focus on profitability, scale and innovation**

By FY30, Nykaa expects its revenue to grow by 2-3 times, while EBITDA is projected to increase by 4-5 times, with margins in the low-to-mid teens. The company also expects its return on capital employed (ROCE) to exceed 40%. Founder and CEO Falguni Nayar said India's economy is expected to grow to \$8-10 trillion by FY36, which would lead to higher spending on beauty, fashion and lifestyle products. She said this would help Nykaa serve 200 million cumulative consumers by FY36. Nayar also identified wellness as the company's next major growth area and said artificial intelligence (AI) would play an important role in improving personalisation and operational efficiency.

**Growth targets across business verticals**

Nykaa Beauty, which closed FY26 at approximately ₹15,000 crore GMV, aims to grow 2-3 times by FY30 while reaching 100 million consumers and expanding its store count to over 600 outlets. Nykaa Fashion, at ₹4,954 crore GMV in FY26, targets 3-3.5 times growth with EBITDA margins moving toward double digits.

**Technology at the core**

Nykaa highlighted its investments in AI-driven features such as Skin Scan and Virtual Closet, alongside being among the first Indian e-commerce platforms to integrate with ChatGPT, as central to its strategy of embedding AI across discovery, personalisation, merchandising and operations in the years ahead.

# Infosys, TCS, HCLTech down: Why are IT stocks falling after the recent rally?

**IT stocks fell at the opening bell. Among the biggest losers were Infosys, which fell 2.31%, Tech Mahindra was down 1.42%, HCLTech slid 1.17%, TCS lost 1.20%, while Persistent Systems and Wipro also lost 1.68% and 0.68% respectively in early trade.**

New Delhi.(Agency)

IT stocks came under pressure on Thursday, with the Nifty IT index falling 1.46%, making it the worst-performing sectoral index on Dalal Street. Among the biggest losers were Infosys, which fell 2.31%, Tech Mahindra was down 1.42%, HCLTech slid 1.17%, TCS lost 1.20%, while Persistent Systems and Wipro also lost 1.68% and 0.68% respectively in early trade. The selling was visible in the benchmark indices as well, with Infosys, Tech Mahindra, HCLTech and TCS

featuring among the top losers on the Sensex. The decline comes after a strong rally in IT stocks over the past few sessions. But investors are now reassessing the outlook after the US Federal Reserve signalled that interest rates could stay higher for longer and may even rise again later this year.

**WHY THE FED MATTERS TO INDIAN IT COMPANIES**

Most large Indian IT companies earn a significant portion of their revenue from the United States. Infosys gets around 60% of its revenue from North America. TCS, HCLTech, Wipro and Tech Mahindra also depend heavily on US clients. This means that what happens in the US economy often has a direct impact on Indian IT companies. The Federal Reserve on Wednesday kept interest rates unchanged, but its commentary was more hawkish than expected. Policymakers indicated that inflation remains a concern and another rate hike could be on the table later this year. Dr VK Vijayakumar of Geojit



Financial Services noted that the Fed's updated projections suggest a possible rate hike in October, while US bond yields climbed to 4.46%.

**HOW HIGHER US RATES HURT IT STOCKS**

For a common investor, the link is quite simple. When interest rates stay high, borrowing becomes expensive for businesses. As a result, many US companies become cautious about spending on technology upgrades, digital transformation projects and IT outsourcing. Since Indian IT firms earn

money by providing these services, any slowdown in corporate technology spending can affect future revenue growth.

Think of it this way: if a US company is paying higher interest on loans and facing economic uncertainty, it may postpone a large software upgrade or cloud migration project. That directly impacts companies like Infosys, TCS and HCLTech.

**HIGHER BOND YIELDS MAKE TECH STOCKS LESS ATTRACTIVE**

There is another reason investors sell technology stocks when rates rise.

Technology companies are valued based on their future earnings. When interest rates and bond yields rise, investors discount those future earnings more heavily.

As a result, the present value of those future profits falls, making technology stocks less attractive. This is why US technology shares also came under pressure overnight, with investors cutting exposure to growth stocks.

## Did China quietly save the world from an oil shock?

**As US-Iran tensions stirred oil fears, China cut imports and leaned on reserves and alternative energy. The move may have eased pressure on global supplies and limited a wider price surge.**

New Delhi.(Agency)

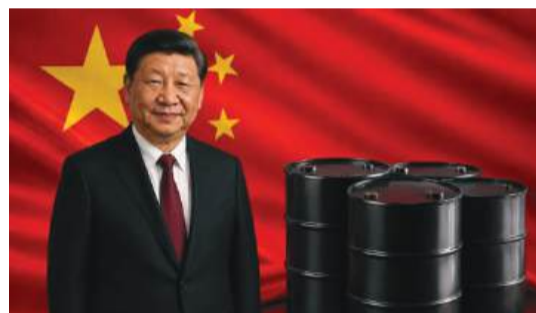
Just a few weeks ago, the world was bracing for another energy crisis.

As tensions between the US, Israel and Iran escalated, investors feared the worst. Analysts warned that any disruption to the Strait of Hormuz — the narrow waterway through which roughly a fifth of the world's oil passes, could send crude prices soaring and high for a long time, reignite inflation and derail economic growth. Oil prices rose, but not nearly as much as many feared. Inflation remained relatively contained. Global stock markets have recovered and now, with US President Donald Trump and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian formally signing a memorandum of understanding (MoU)

to end hostilities between the two countries, one of the biggest geopolitical risks hanging over the oil market has eased considerably.

So what prevented a much bigger crisis? According to Bloomberg energy analyst Javier Blas, the answer may lie in an unexpected place: China.

**THE OIL SHOCK THAT NEVER CAME**



Saudi Arabia has long been known as the world's 'swing producer', a country capable of increasing or reducing oil production to stabilise markets during periods of disruption. Blas argues that during the Iran conflict, China effectively became the world's first

'swing importer' of oil, dramatically reducing its purchases and absorbing much of the global supply shock without causing visible damage to its own economy. The scale of the adjustment was extraordinary. Chinese customs data showed that the country's total oil imports fell to an eight-year low of 7.8 million barrels a day in May. Imports arriving by tanker fell even further, dropping to a 10-year low and more than 45% below their average level in 2025.

In practical terms, China reduced its seaborne oil imports by roughly the same amount as the combined oil consumption of Germany, France and the United Kingdom. Yet there was little evidence of economic distress.

That is what makes the development so significant.

**HOW DID CHINA PULL IT OFF?**

The answer lies in a strategy Beijing has been quietly building for more than two decades. For years, China worried about what former president Hu Jintao called the "Malacca Dilemma" — the country's heavy dependence on oil and commodity imports passing through the narrow Strait of Malacca.

## Rupee falls 21 paise to 94.71 against US dollar in early trade

New Delhi.(Agency)

The rupee depreciated 21 paise to 94.71 against the US dollar in early trade on Thursday on US Federal Reserve's hawkish stance and the broad strength of the American currency in the overseas market. Forex traders said the dollar index rose to 100.23 levels, a 4-month high, due to a hawkish FED. The FED Reserve held interest rates steady as widely anticipated but implied that at least one quarter-point rate hike would come later this year. At the interbank foreign exchange market the rupee opened at 94.66, then touched 94.71, registering a fall of 21 paise from its previous close. On Wednesday, the rupee appreciated 10 paise to close at 94.50 against the US dollar. "Asian currencies had also weakened considerably, taking the rupee lower this morning. Most asset classes had fallen against the dollar keeping it well bid while the asset class

was well offered," said Anil Kumar Bhansali, Head of Treasury and Executive Director, Finrex Treasury Advisors LLP. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading at 0.14 per cent up at 100.23. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading lower by 1.68 per cent at USD 78.21 per barrel in futures trade. On the domestic equity market front, Sensex declined 111.23 points to 77,044.39 in early trade, while the Nifty dipped 26.85 points to 24,058.85. Foreign institutional investors turned net buyers and purchased equities worth Rs 101.59 crore on a net basis on Wednesday, according to exchange data.

According to traders markets had other reasons to stay optimistic as reports indicated that the United States and Iran have electronically signed a

memorandum of understanding aimed at ending hostilities and creating a framework for negotiations on Iran's nuclear programme. Negotiators are expected to meet in Geneva on Friday. "The agreement has improved market sentiment considerably, although President Trump simultaneously warned that military action could resume if Iran fails to comply with the framework," CR Forex Advisors MD Amit Pabari said. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump directed their officials to work towards a balanced, mutually beneficial and commercially meaningful trade agreement at the earliest. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said this on Thursday, a day after the two leaders held wide-ranging talks for the first time in 16 months on the margins of the G7 Summit in an attempt to rebuild the strained bilateral ties.



NSE to proceed with the IPO. The market regulator had previously imposed a penalty on the exchange in 2019 over allegations related to equitable access for trading members. According to the draft offer documents, NSE has since applied to settle the matter and proposed paying a fine of around \$18 million. With draft papers now filed, the IPO process has formally begun. However, the actual public issue is likely to take at least three to four months after receiving the necessary regulatory clearances.

**HOW BIG COULD THE NSE IPO BE?**

The listing could rank among the largest in India's capital market history.

## Markets open flat after 4-day rally; IT stocks fall on US rate hike concerns

New Delhi.(Agency)

Benchmark indices opened on a muted note on Thursday as weakness in information technology stocks offset the positive impact of sharply lower crude oil prices following the US-Iran peace agreement. The S&P BSE Sensex was down 47.00 points, or 0.06%, at 77,108.62 in early trade, while the NSE Nifty50 managed to stay above the key 24,000 mark, rising 2.05 points to 24,087.75 as of 9:35 am. The cautious opening comes after a strong four-session rally that saw the Sensex gain 4.5% and the Nifty rise 4% on easing geopolitical tensions and falling oil prices. FED'S HAWKISH MESSAGE HITS IT STOCKS

The biggest drag on the market was the IT sector, which came under pressure after the US Federal Reserve kept interest rates unchanged but signalled the possibility of a rate hike later this year. Nifty IT fell 1.58%, making it the worst-performing sector in early trade. Among Sensex stocks, Infosys dropped 2.40%, Tech Mahindra declined 1.58%, HCLTech fell 1.46% and TCS slipped 1.33%. These stocks were among the top losers on the benchmark index. Higher US interest rates can hurt

spending by global clients and reduce the attractiveness of emerging markets such as India, creating concerns for export-oriented IT companies that derive a significant portion of their revenue from the United States. Dr VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Investments Limited, said the market was surprised by the hawkish tone from the new Fed chief. "The hawkish message sent by the new chief of the Fed, Kevin Warsh, was a bit unexpected. The dot plot indicates a rate hike, possibly in October. The US 10-year bond yield rose to 4.46%, leading to a sell-off in US markets towards the close," he said.

**FALLING CRUDE OIL REMAINS A POSITIVE**

Despite the weakness in IT stocks, lower crude oil prices continued to support overall market sentiment. Brent crude fell another 1.72% to \$78.18 per barrel, while WTI crude declined 1.90% to \$75.33. Oil prices have dropped sharply since the United States and Iran signed an interim agreement to end hostilities and restore shipping through the Strait of Hormuz. For India, lower crude prices help ease inflation

concerns, improve the current account balance and support the rupee.

Vijayakumar said Indian markets are likely to remain resilient because of these positive



macro factors. "Brent crude prices at around \$78 level and stability in the rupee are big positives from the market perspective. FII selling has tapered off and yesterday FIIs turned buyers, though in limited quantity," he said. While IT stocks were under pressure, several sectors traded in positive territory. Nifty Pharma gained 0.58%, Nifty Healthcare rose 0.51%, Nifty Realty advanced 0.47%, Nifty Chemicals added 0.44%, and Nifty FMCG climbed 0.36%. Nifty PSU Bank rose 0.30%, while Nifty

Metal gained 0.31%.

Among Sensex gainers, Trent rose 1.13%, BEL gained 1.05%, HDFC Bank advanced 0.72%, Larsen & Toubro added 0.55%, Sun Pharma climbed 0.40% and Adani Ports gained 0.35%. The broader market continued to show strength despite the subdued benchmark performance.

Nifty Smallcap 100 rose 0.52%, Nifty Midcap 100 gained 0.10% and Nifty Midcap 50 added 0.11%.

India VIX, the market's fear gauge, declined 1.13% to 13.04, indicating lower volatility and improving investor confidence. Investors will closely track the US Federal Reserve's policy outlook, movement in bond yields and foreign investor activity over the coming weeks. At the same time, falling crude prices, a stable rupee and signs of easing FII selling are expected to provide support to Indian equities. The progress of the monsoon will also remain an important factor, as any prolonged deficiency in rainfall could raise concerns around food inflation.



# Tamannaah Bhatia

**Was Unsatisfied With 'Kaavaalaa' Song With Rajinikanth: 'Could Have Done Better'**

Actress Tamannaah Bhatia revealed that she was unsatisfied with her performance in the song 'Kaavaalaa' from Rajinikanth's 'Jailer'. As director and choreographer, Farah Khan visited Tamannaah at her beautiful Mumbai home for her YouTube vlogs, the two ladies discussed the various songs the 'Baahubali' actress has been a part of. Tamannaah told Farah that she felt she could have done a better job in the 'Kaavaalaa' track. "I was a little unsatisfied when I shot for 'Kaavaalaa' because I felt like I could have done better," she was heard saying.

Pitching it, Farah remarked, "But you are that type who always feels they could have done better." "But I rehearsed for 'Aaj Ki Raat' for 15 days and I wanted to spend that time. I am not a trained dancer," Tamannaah went on to add.

Composed by Anirudh Ravichander, the lyrics of 'Kaavaalaa' have been penned by Arunraja Kamaraj. The peppy dance number has been performed by Shilpa Rao.

On the work front, Tamannaah has been roped in for "Vvan - Force of the Forrest" in which she will be seen sharing screen space with Sidharth Malhotra for the first time. Touted to explore the cultural folklore genre, the story for the drama has been provided by Arunabh Kumar.

Made under the direction of Deepak Mishra and Arunabh Kumar, the film has been backed by Shobha Kapoor, Ekta R Kapoor, Arunabh Kumar, and Niraj Kothari, while Manu Anand has looked after the camera work. In addition to this, Tamannaah has also been roped in for an upcoming horror film, "Ragini 3". The movie also stars Aamir Khan's son Junaid Khan as the lead. Produced by Ekta Kapoor's Balaji Motion Pictures, a division of Balaji Telefilms Ltd, "Ragini 3" has already managed to create some massive buzz among cinephiles. However, more details regarding the project have been kept under wraps for now.



**Vedang Raina Calls Main Vaapas Aaunga A 'Special And Relevant' Film, Expresses Gratitude: 'I Feel Alive'**



Vedang Raina was recently seen in Imtiaz Ali's film 'Main Vaapas Aaunga' which has been garnering positive reviews from the audience and critics. The partition-era story also stars Sharvari, Naseeruddin Shah and Diljit Dosanjh. Vedang has now shared a heartfelt Instagram post expressing his gratitude to Imtiaz Ali, and stated that the film has changed everything for him.

**Vedang Raina Says Main Vaapas Aaunga Changed Everything For Him**

In his post, Vedang recalled the time when he told his parents about his love for acting. "I came home one day after an audition (I was 19) and told my parents that acting is what makes me feel the most alive. I didn't expect to say that and I was surprised as they were. It's now been 2 and a half years since I came into this industry that's given me everything and my gut feeling was right," he wrote. "Maybe it's too early to say but Main Vaapas Aaunga is a film that's changed everything for me. What I've learned, how I've grown as an artist and more importantly as a human being is not something I can quantify with an Instagram caption. @imtiazofficial thank you for taking me on this journey and letting me be your Keenu. Thanks for letting me collaborate with artists I've always looked up to and gotten to learn so much from @naseeruddin49 @diljitdosanjh @arrahman @irshadkamilofficial @sharvari. This film is special and relevant and so pure and I'm grateful to have been a part of it," he further added.

**Vedang Raina Thanks Audience**

Lastly he thanked the audiences for showering their love and watching the film. "I'm as passionate as ever and I'm driven to keep working and perfecting. I love what I do. I feel alive. Thank you for showering us with so much love. Thank you for your blessings. Main Vaapas Aaunga in cinemas now. And miles to go before I sleep, And miles to go before I sleep," he concluded.

**Priyanka Chopra Pens Birthday Note For Mom Madhu Chopra, Calls Her A 'Queen'**



Global icon Priyanka Chopra Jonas took to her social media account on the morning of Wednesday, to wish her mother Dr. Madhu Chopra on her 73rd birthday on June 17. Priyanka shared a beautiful picture featuring herself along with her mother and wrote, "To the Queen... happy birthday @drmadhuakhourichopra always leading the way."

Priyanka's younger brother Siddharth Chopra also shared a heartfelt birthday post for his mother. Sharing a family photograph from Priyanka's wedding with pop icon Nick Jonas on his social media account, he wrote, "Wishing the Mother a very very happy birthday. Your grace charm and resilience are most admirable. May you shine bright always as the star that you are. Love you maa. Have a great birthday."

For the uninitiated, Madhu Chopra is a physician by profession and has had a well established and successful medical career. She along with and her late husband, Dr. Ashok Chopra, served as doctors in the Indian Army.

Reportedly, she actively looks into managing Priyanka's work and also her production banner, Purple Pebble Pictures.

Priyanka has often spoken about the deep significance and impact her parents have had on her life. During an event in the USA a few months ago, Priyanka along with her husband Nick were clicked at the red carpet.

It was here while interacting with the press, when Priyanka acknowledged the importance of her mother along with Nick's mother while raising her daughter Malti Marie Jonas.

Priyanka had said that it was because the grandmothers were hands on with their little girl which is why both she and Nick could completely focus at work without any worry. Priyanka has often also spoken about the impact her father has had on her life. In a recent post shared by Priyanka on her social media account, she fondly remembered her late father, Dr Ashok Chopra, on his 13th death anniversary and also shared a series of nostalgic pictures from different stages of her life moments spent with him. Priyanka posted a carousel of throwback pictures featuring cherished moments with her father, and along with the pictures, she penned an emotional note that read, "You and me dancing together always."

# Dia Mirza

**Reacts To 'Patriarchy Causes Climate Change' Remark, Says 'I Stand By My Statement'**

Actress and environmental advocate Dia Mirza has responded to online trolling and criticism over her recent remarks linking men and patriarchal systems to climate change.

The controversy erupted after Mirza stated that it is the men who have driven climate change, and they are totally responsible for the chaos. Now, the 'Rehnaa Hai Terre Dil Mein' actress has clarified that her remarks were aimed at highlighting the role of patriarchal power structures in driving environmental degradation, and not at blaming individual men.

Responding to the backlash, Dia wrote on her Instagram, "Since so many of you are debating this, it is timely to explain as simply as one can. I stand by my statement 'Patriarchy caused the climate crises. Climate change is often spoken about as an environmental crisis. But it is also a crisis of inequality. For centuries, patriarchal systems have concentrated power, prioritised extraction over care, and treated both nature and vulnerable communities as resources to be exploited rather than protected.' Much like women and girls are treated in Patriarchal Societies. Forests, rivers, oceans, and ecosystems have been viewed as commodities. Just as women often are. The consequences of this thinking are now impossible to ignore," added Dia Mirza.

Her post further read, "In this episode of 'All About Her', Arati @aratikumarrao and

I even explained how this very extractive, uncaring, and dominating system, entirely controlled by men, has led to economic structures that contribute to Climate Change. It is the very systems of extractive dominance that are also working overtime on discrediting voices that speak up for nature protection and women's rights."

"Women and girls, particularly in vulnerable communities, are often the first



to experience the impacts of climate change — through water scarcity, food insecurity, displacement, and loss of livelihoods. Yet they remain underrepresented in almost all of the spaces where environmental decisions are made. When we talk about climate action, we must also talk about justice. We must question the systems that reward endless extraction and consumption while undervaluing care, cooperation, and stewardship. The climate crisis is not only about carbon. It is about how we choose to relate to each other and to the natural world. Building a sustainable future requires .



## How to stay happy in a

# Job

Not everyday is going to be an outstanding day wherein you tend to perform excellent at the work place. There will be days which give you mixed set of responses in terms of work pressure and also appreciation of work done. There will be days when you are loaded with so much work that it simply unnerves you. However, instead of getting perplexed with problem areas at work, it would be better if one gears up to face the professional rigors in a different way.

### Stay focused:

Staying focused helps a professional concentrate more on day to day tasks. Make a chart of tasks and targets and go on tick marking all those

**Job satisfaction is all about contributing the best of the potential in you apart from enjoying your work.**

finished tasks. Think about meeting your targets and focus on your learning and development calendar. The workaholic in you always recognizes the priorities.

### Take mini breaks:

In between work hours, take short break for not more than five minutes. These breaks will help you relax a bit and get ready for the workload in the coming hours. During the breaks, you can munch fruits, have a sip of coffee or munch some snacks. Do not sit for longer hours at one particular place, i.e. your desk. Walk along the corridors and look at some green trees, flower pots etc which will let you unwind.

### Think positive:

Hum some favourite songs and always begin the day's work on a positive note. Don't get threatened by the magnitude of work. Mentally prepare yourself to come up with solutions for work front problems.

### Be nice with colleagues:

Being nice doesn't take away anything from you. Rather, it adds some warmth to your existing personality and it helps you maintain cordial relationship with other professionals at the work place.



As we grow older, for whatever reasons, we notice our dreams being chipped off and replaced by other almost mundane goals and purposes. It all becomes about paying off your bills and saving enough for the future, responsibilities, family duties and soon you find yourself caught in the vicious web of 9 to 5 work and monotonous activities. There are several reasons as to why we stop dreaming and start following the brutal pattern the world has to offer. We become comfortable, often we take up a job with the hope that we'll



## Why you need to start following your Dreams

move on to bigger, better things, but once the comfort of the place sinks in we tend to get complacent and decide to stick on. We decide that we're getting 'older' and should give up on our whimsical dreams and get serious about life. These and several other reasons, some exclusive to each person's life force us to become bitter versions of ourselves.

There are certain changes you can make in your own life to do away with the dullness and monotony. If you're not happy with your work-leave, its as simple as it sounds, leave and look for something to do that you're absolutely passionate about. Don't let age or family be a barrier. Remind yourself that age is just a number and if your family loves you, your dreams will be supported. Remind yourself once again, of that young teenager who wanted to change the world- then go out and do it.

**Do you remember the young teenager who dreamed about changing the world and harbored several ambitions that knew no end?**

## What kind of a Parent are you?

**We have all heard about helicopter parenting where the parents are always over-protective, but there are other forms of parenting too. Let's take a look at some of them**



### TIGER PARENT

Over-involved parenting style is often called tiger parenting. There is too much external control on the children and the kids become over dependent. Child psychologist Subha Narayan says, "If

parents hover around the kids all the time, there are chances that kids don't develop a mind of their own. They may appear to be successful in the initial years, but they are unable to adapt to the hardships of life." Research shows that these children are poor

in independent decision making and at high risk of anxiety and depression.

### JELLYFISH PARENT

The opposite of tiger is the jellyfish parenting style. These parents have few rules and are overtly lenient. They lack authority. The children of jelly parents may initially seem more confident, but without rules and direction children of jellyfish parents have poorer social and academic performance. Ronita D'Souza, a school teacher says, "We tell parents to always maintain a healthy balance. But what we have noticed in children of overtly lenient parents is that they lack discipline and perform very poorly. They are the ones who are just not willing to follow any rules and are in a risk of taking drugs and alcohol."

### DOLPHIN PARENTS

Dolphin parents are a balance of extreme parenting. It is an ideal form of parenting. Like the dolphins, they are firm, yet flexible. This is the most balanced parenting style. Children are able to follow appropriate rules and guidance and are better able to establish healthy independence. Children of dolphin parents are creative, confident, better in academic performance and have better social skills. They obey rules and grow up to be responsible, balanced and independent individuals.

Parents are always advised to adopt this form and not overdo the parenting part by over scheduling the kids. And at the same time, they need to maintain a healthy balance so that children grow up to be confident and happy individuals.

## 5 easy tips to charm your in-laws

### Gifts for all

It's not just the two people, but their entire families that tie the knot. Hence, it is equally important to charm each and every member of your new family. Gifting is the best way to start a new relationship, but make sure to buy something significant (even if small) for all the members of your new family. This will help you break the ice and start on a good note, as everyone likes to feel 'important'.

### Put forth all your points

Do not leave anything to imagination. Clear out any doubts or questions you have about anything right at the outset — preferably on the first day itself. It could be anything — right from late working hours, social life, habits, etc, so that the family prepares themselves for the change. Remember to tell everything in a casual and preferably, funny way, so that it doesn't sound too heavy to digest.

### Networking with all

A humble handshake, some small talk and a few greetings here and there won't spoil your health. In fact, they will help improve the health of your relationship. Make sure you introduce yourself to each

**If you are planning to get hitched this wedding season, one of the main things bothering you would be is — whether you'll be able to get along with your spouse's relatives? If you want to make the best impression with the first meeting after the vows, here's what you should do to help make a smooth start.**

and every member of the family, from the youngest to the eldest. Communication skills are are pivotal. This will impress your in-

buying a new house, big car, investments and family holidays will impress them a lot, as they would be convinced that you are a visionary. It will portray your ambitious side and will attract a lot of praise from the elder members who will realise that the future of their son/daughter is in safe hands.

### Display your special skills

Try to display at least one special skill on the first day, this will get you a lot of thumbs-ups. Something like a culinary skill or an artistic one, anything out of the box will do good. However, do not try to do something that you are not confident about, as this might be risky. Small things like making a nice cup of coffee or putting up an artistic painting done by you in the house sounds cool.



laws as they will feel you are humble and respect that fact you are into a new family now.

### Talk about future plans

Do not brag! However, you can discuss your future plans with your new family as a part of the first day conversations. Plans of