

What about Waqf land? CM Yogi counters SP, Congress on Ram temple theft criticism

Taking on the opposition parties over their criticism of Ram Temple donation theft, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath questioned their silence on alleged Waqf land encroachments.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday accused the Samajwadi Party and Congress of double standards over the Ram Temple donation theft case, questioning their silence on Waqf land issues while attacking them for raising questions over an incident in Ayodhya.

donation theft case, Adityanath asked why the opposition had never raised similar concerns over land transactions carried out in the name of Waqf.

"I want to ask the Samajwadi Party and



Congress: over the theft in Ayodhya, which you are using to play with Hindu faith, have you ever spoken even once about the thousands of hectares of land sold in the name of Waqf?" he said.

could have been allotted to poor and weaker sections had instead been grabbed and sold by a few individuals."That land belonged to the poor and the weak. It could have been given to them. Instead, it was occupied and sold in the name of Waqf, benefiting a select few.

Defending the handling of the Ram Temple donation theft case, Adityanath said action had been taken once the matter came to light."The Ram Jannabhoomi Trust itself sought an SIT investigation. I had said the truth would come out. An FIR was registered on the basis of the SIT probe and action was taken against those against whom evidence was found," he said.

"But when it comes to Waqf, why do the Samajwadi Party and Congress suddenly fall silent? Why do they put a lock on their mouths over theft in the name of Waqf?" he asked.

The Chief Minister also accused the opposition of reviving divisive issues ahead of elections.

Jammu now identified with peace, development after Article 370 abrogation: BJP chief Nitin Nabin

Nitin Nabin said the BJP would discharge its responsibilities both as a political organisation and as the principal opposition in Jammu and Kashmir by consistently raising public issues.

Jammu and Kashmir .(Agency)

Claiming that Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed a transformative shift since the abrogation of Article 370, BJP president Nitin Nabin on Tuesday said the Union Territory is now identified with development, peace and its rich cultural heritage rather than conflict.

He said the BJP would discharge its responsibilities both as a political organisation and as the principal opposition in Jammu and Kashmir by consistently raising public issues.

"We know that after considerable effort and struggle, we succeeded in freeing Jammu and Kashmir from Article 370 (in August 2019), which has become a major catalyst for change in the lives of the people here," the BJP president told reporters in Jammu.

"We can say that until a few years ago, Jammu and Kashmir was projected before the world in a very different light. Today, after the historic decisions taken by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Jammu and Kashmir is seen as an integral part of India and as a region moving on the path of development, identified with peace and its rich cultural heritage," he said.

Nabin said the Modi government has been consistently working to revive the region's rich heritage and culture and present it before the world."



Karnataka Cong, NDA continue to trade fire over SIR: CM Shivakumar declines govt interference

BENGALURU.(Agency)

KARNATAKA Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Monday dismissed the BJP-JDS allegations that the state government is interfering in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. This is a process of the Election Commission, and there is no government interference in it, but it is a conspiracy by the opposition parties to snatch away the voting rights of the poor and minorities, he told media persons in Bengaluru.

Shivakumar said that although they oppose the SIR process, the state government is creating awareness among the people to protect their voting rights. "We have our own disagreement on the SIR. We presented our argument in court, and the court has given its verdict. We are unhappy about the timeline of this process, and we will approach the court against that as well. Our government has joined hands with the Election Commission because we must protect everyone's right to vote. No other state has given this kind of cooperation the way we have. By telling people that their right to vote is their right to live, the government is creating awareness," the CM said.

He was responding to a question on a complaint filed by Union Ministers HD Kumaraswamy and Pralhad Joshi with the Chief Election Commission regarding the SIR process in the state.

1 dead in major Wayanad landslide, minister calls it man-made disaster

New Delhi.(Agency)

One person died and eight were injured after a massive landslide struck near a tunnel construction site in Kerala's Wayanad, reviving memories of the 2024 disaster that left over 300 dead. At least seven workers are still missing in the incident, which comes amid incessant rainfall in Wayanad over the past few days.

The incident occurred near Meenakshi Bridge, where work on the Anakkampoyil-Kalladi-Meppadi twin tunnel project is under way. The project, once completed, will connect Malappuram and Wayanad districts. The area is near Mundakkai, which was the worst hit in the 2024 landslides.

A government official said those feared trapped under the debris were engineers and security staff. "If work was going on there, it would have been a bigger tragedy," she said.

'NOT NATURAL, BUT MAN-MADE LANDSLIDE'

According to the Kerala State Disaster Management Authority (KSDMA), the area received around 265 mm of rainfall in the last 24 hours - the highest rainfall recorded this season. A red alert for heavy rain was issued for Wayanad earlier this week.

Videos on social media from the site showed thick slush barreling down the hillside, uprooting trees on its way.

The site also has a few houses and homestays, raising concerns that more people could be trapped. Initially, local residents stepped in and pulled people to safety. Later, fire and rescue personnel from nearby Kalpetta were rushed to the spot. Several teams of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) were also pressed into rescue operations.

EVMs, Astra missiles, BrahMos: What's on PM Modi's Indonesia agenda

Prime Minister Narendra Modi held talks with Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto in Jakarta during his three-day Indonesia visit. The visit is expected to advance cooperation in defence, electoral technology, minerals and maritime connectivity.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's three-day visit to Indonesia, which began on July 6, is expected to deliver significant outcomes across defence, technology, critical minerals and strategic connectivity, according to sources. The visit is aimed at deepening the comprehensive strategic partnership between the two countries while expanding cooperation in key sectors.

INDIA TO SUPPORT INDONESIA-SPECIFIC EVMs

In a major endorsement of India's election management model, India will support the



development of Indonesia-specific Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), marking a significant step in electoral technology cooperation between the two nations.

INDONESIA TO IMPORT ASTRA MISSILES

On the defence front, Indonesia has decided to import India's indigenous Astra air-to-air missiles following the demonstrated effectiveness of India's missile capabilities during Operation Sindoor. The move is expected to further strengthen defence cooperation between New Delhi and Jakarta.

BRAHMOS COOPERATION TO EXPAND

Indonesia is also set to expand its BrahMos missile inventory, with India expected to provide additional coastal defence batteries, enhancing Jakarta's maritime security capabilities in the Indo-Pacific region.

AAP wrests Nangal MC top posts as Congress, BJP boycott poll citing 'raids, intimidation'

The Sikh Times

Ropar: AAP today wrested control of the politically significant Nangal Municipal Council, electing Kiran Bala as president, Ramesh Masha as senior vice-president and Jaspreet Kaur as vice-president after the Congress and the BJP boycotted the process, alleging that the Punjab Government had used official agencies to influence the outcome. The election, held amid heavy police deployment, was preceded by high political drama as Congress leaders accused the ruling party of intimidating its elected councillors through raids by government agencies on the eve of voting. Punjab Education and Local Government Minister Harjot Singh Bains, who is also the local MLA, was present at the Municipal Council office during the election. Earlier in the day, Congress workers, led by former Punjab Assembly Speaker KP Rana, gheraoed the Nangal police station, alleging misuse of state machinery to put pressure on

Congress councillors ahead of the election. The protesters raised slogans against the Punjab Government and demanded an impar-



tial inquiry. Addressing the dharna, KP Rana alleged that teams of the GST Department, the State Vigilance Bureau and the Punjab Police had carried out raids at the residences of Congress councillors on Monday night, barely hours before the election. Calling the action a "blatant abuse of power", he alleged that near-

ly all Congress councillors had been targeted to force them to switch sides. "The timing of these raids clearly indicates an attempt to influence the election. Democratic institutions are being undermined through the misuse of government machinery," he alleged. Congress leaders claimed that the ruling party lacked the numbers to secure the presidency on its own and had therefore resorted to pressure tactics. The elections assumed political significance because of the fractured verdict in the 19-member Municipal Council. The Congress had emerged as the single largest party with eight councillors, while the AAP had seven. The BJP had three councillors and one seat was held by an Independent. The Independent candidate joined AAP this morning and extended support to the party, taking their numbers to eight in the House. Rejecting allegations of the Congress, Harjot Singh Bains said Congress councillors claiming harassment were free to approach him.

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After Ram Temple Trust accepts resignations, Kejriwal seeks 'strict punishment' for accused

New Delhi.(Agency)

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convenor Arvind Kejriwal on Monday called for "strict punishment" in the Ayodhya Ram Temple donation embezzlement case, calling the resignation of the Trust's General Secretary Champat Rai and Trustee Anil Mishra an attempt to save them.

The Shri Ram Jannabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust accepted the resignation of Champat Rai and Anil Mishra following a high-level meeting on Monday, Ram Temple Trust Treasurer Swami Govind Dev Giri Maharaj said.

In an X post, Kejriwal wrote, "Hindus and Sanatanis don't need resignation; they deserve strict punishment. Don't try to save them by asking for their resignation."

In addition to Champat Rai and Anil Mishra, the Trust decided to remove Gopal Nagarkote from the list of special invitee members. The Trust has appointed trustee Krishna Mohan to discharge the responsibilities of General Secretary until a new appointment is made.

It also constituted a three-member committee comprising retired Justice Pramod Kohli, retired Lieutenant General Vishnukant Chaturvedi and Suresh Havde to recommend candidates for the post of Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

According to a press release issued by the Trust, out of the total Rs 3,264 crore received through the fund dedication campaign and corpus donations, Rs 2,370 crore has been spent on construction and capital expenditure.

As of March 31, the temple had received Rs 582 crore in offerings, of which Rs 391 crore had been utilised for operational expenses, while the remaining amount is held in bank accounts. The Trust further stated that 2,126 physical offerings have been registered and are physically verified annually by an independent chartered accountant firm. It added that silver offerings have been melted into bricks at the India Government Mint, with proper documentation..

Rape-murder, lynching, Mamata 'confined': Why Baruipur case is BJP's 1st test

New Delhi.(Agency)

The horrific rape and murder of a minor girl in West Bengal's Baruipur, around 30 km from Kolkata, a lynching, allegations of a local BJP leader helping the accused, and Mamata Banerjee's claims of being put under house arrest have posed the first major challenge for the Suwendu Adhikar-led BJP government. The challenge for Suwendu is twofold - ensure steadfast justice in the case amid allegations by locals of delayed police response, and contain 'street fighter' Mamata.

Last week, the small town of Baruipur erupted after the body of the 12-year-old, who went missing hours ago, was found in a pond, stuffed inside a gunny bag. What added to the outrage was the brutality of the

crime. The preliminary autopsy revealed that the girl was sexually abused and tortured before being thrown into the pond when she was still alive. Much of the anger was against the administration, with the minor's family alleging that the police did not promptly initiate an investigation to find the missing girl.

MAMATA BANERJEE ON OFFENSIVE

The incident has provided Mamata her first major opportunity to mount a political attack on the BJP government since its historic May election win. Suwendu understands it very well, having been one of her trusted aides for years.

Despite a split in the Trinamool and the party being the weakest since its inception,



Mamata remains single-handedly capable of galvanising the streets and setting the political narrative in the state. It was seen on Monday, as the feisty TMC supremo led a candlelight rally despite cops putting up guardrails around her Kalighat residence. The BJP knows very well that the sight of Mamata hitting the streets does not augur

well for it. Mamata's fearless image of a street fighter has been the bedrock of her political career.

On Sunday, there was a heavy deployment of police and central forces outside Mamata's residence. Barricades were installed, and at least 10 police vehicles were stationed in the narrow lane. The TMC alleged that it was aimed at preventing Mamata from visiting the family of the victim.

In a post, Mamata alleged that she was put under "house arrest". "I don't know why they are not letting me go out. I don't know why I am such a threat?" Mamata said.

The BJP, however, called it a routine security arrangement for a Z-plus category protectee, and accused the TMC of trying to "manufacture a controversy".

## News box

## Man collapses in farmhouse pool at friend's birthday party

Noida.(Agency)

A 26-year-old man died after he suddenly collapsed while swimming during a friend's birthday party at a farmhouse in Sector 135. While preliminary investigation suggested a possible cardiac event, the exact cause of death remained unclear.

According to police, Lucky Sanvou Damya, a native of Manipur, worked at a private company in Noida. On Saturday, Lucky attended a birthday party at a farmhouse with a swimming pool in Sector 135. After the cake-cutting, as guests ate and celebrated, he entered the pool, police said. "After spending some time in the water, he suddenly felt unwell and collapsed inside the pool," said ACP Rakesh Pratap Singh. Friends pulled him out and rushed him to a nearby private hospital, where doctors declared him dead on arrival. Police said the autopsy report, received Monday, did not establish the exact cause of death. Doctors have since preserved the viscera for forensic analysis, and police said the cause of death will be confirmed only after those findings arrive.

Police said they were reviewing CCTV footage from the farmhouse and questioning attendees to reconstruct events. No complaint has been filed by the family so far, but officials said appropriate action will follow if the probe finds negligence or safety violations.

Investigators are also examining whether the farmhouse had the required permissions and adequate safety measures, including lifeguards and emergency medical arrangements. Cops said the farmhouse operator's phone was switched off, and they were trying to trace him.

## IMD warns of heavy rain in Haryana till July 9



Gurgaon.(Agency)

Rainfall activity is expected to intensify across Haryana over the next three days, with the India Meteorological Department (IMD) forecasting light to moderate rain at many places and isolated heavy showers between July 7 and July 9. Forecast maps indicate southern districts, including Gurgaon, are likely to witness widespread rainfall during the period. The IMD has forecast heavy rainfall of 7cm or more at isolated locations across northern and southern Haryana during the spell. The department warned that intense showers could lead to waterlogging in low-lying areas, traffic congestion, disruptions to municipal projects and damage to harvested crops left in the open.

Meanwhile, the city remained significantly cooler than usual on Monday. The minimum temperature was recorded at 25°C, two degrees below normal, while the maximum temperature settled at 31°C, a sharp 7°C below normal. The district observatory recorded 3.5mm rainfall between 8.30am and 5.30pm, while no rain had been recorded during the preceding 24-hour period till Monday morning. NorthCap University's automatic weather station logged 34.5mm rainfall during the 24 hours ending at 8.30am, reflecting highly localised showers across the city. During the past 24 hours, Haryana received light to moderate rain at isolated places. Among the highest rainfall totals were 5mm at Dhauj in Faridabad district, 4mm at Sohna in Gurgaon district, and 3mm each at Bawal, Panipat and Jhajjar.

The IMD has advised residents to avoid waterlogged areas, stay away from weak structures and trees during thunderstorms, and drive cautiously as slippery roads and poor visibility could increase travel time. Farmers have been advised not to keep harvested crops in the open and to defer fertiliser and pesticide application during the rain spell.

## Under-construction sumpwell caves in after rain in Palam Vihar, raises safety concerns

Gurgaon.(Agency)

An under-construction sumpwell in Palam Vihar caved in after heavy rain on Sunday, triggering concerns over the structural safety of the project and prompting an inspection by MCG and the police. The collapse created a large crater around the construction site in Block E, with muddy water filling the pit and parts of the concrete structure caving in.

The cavity was filled with soil on Sunday night to prevent further erosion and reduce immediate risk to houses around it. The incident has raised questions over the execution of such infrastructure projects during the monsoon and whether adequate precautions were taken to secure the excavation before heavy rainfall. "The incident occurred due to a lack of supervision. MCG shouldn't have started this right before the monsoon. The site poses a threat to residents living in the vicinity. Since the entire site had loose soil, proper measures should have been taken to prevent erosion," said Rakesh Dubey, a resident of E Block. An engineer and former president of Palam Vihar, Sunil Yadav, said, "This incident is only one of many examples of the city's crumbling infrastructure. The need of the hour is to include residents with technical expertise in ward committees so they can supervise and monitor civic projects and help prevent such mishaps."

While MCG officials maintained that no injuries or damage to nearby buildings were reported, residents expressed concern over the proximity of the excavation to residential houses and the potential consequences had the collapse been more severe. The sumpwell is part of the city's stormwater drainage infrastructure intended to collect and pump out rainwater from low-lying areas to reduce flooding during the monsoon. Its construction has now been put on hold until the end of the rainy season. "The sumpwell was under construction and the shuttering had not yet been removed. Rainwater weakened the site, leading to the collapse. The affected pocket has been filled with soil as a precaution, and construction of the sumpwell will resume after the monsoon," MCG chief engineer Vijay Dhaka said.

## NGT seeks explanation from panel for 2-month lag on Yamuna illegal mining inspection

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

National Green Tribunal has sought an explanation from a joint committee set up by it to probe illegal sand mining on Yamuna riverbed in west UP for allegedly missing a three-week deadline and delaying a site inspection by over two months, a lapse that allowed a private quarrying firm to secure environmental clearance, consent to operate and a mining lease before the panel could visit the site.

In its March 23 order, the tribunal had directed the panel, headed by the Shamli district magistrate, to complete the inspection within three weeks and submit its status report immediately after, effectively setting the deadline on April 13. It had also asked local authorities to ensure no illegal mining took place in the interim. The directions came from a bench headed by tribunal chairperson justice Prakash Srivastava, with expert members A Senthil Vel and Afroz Ahmad, while hearing a plea filed by Amit Kumar. He alleged that the



firm, Yamuna Mines, was mining well beyond its permitted lease area in Manglaura and Nai Nangla villages without mandatory clearances. At a hearing on July 3, Kumar told the tribunal the joint panel had effectively extended an "administrative shield" to the firm by

pushing the inspection to June 15. In the intervening period, Yamuna Mines obtained environmental clearance from the State Level Environment Impact Assessment Authority on May 8, consent to operate from the UP Pollution Control Board on May 27, and a mining lease deed

from the district magistrate on June 6.

Kumar alleged that when the inspection finally took place, the committee restricted its verification to the lease perimeter in Nai Nangla, overlooking surrounding stretches of the riverbed in Manglaura and Nai Nangla that he said had been extensively excavated and pitted by the company.

Contesting the panel's findings, Kumar cited geotagged photographs and videos submitted on June 23 and 29 that he said showed nighttime mining with heavy machinery in areas of active river flow. He alleged the committee, which also includes a Central Pollution Control Board member secretary and the MoEF&CC's regional officer in Lucknow, had suppressed this evidence, which was part of his original application. Kumar told TOI a separate plea he had filed earlier, seeking an interim stay on the firm's mining operations, was heard on July 1 and clubbed with the current case. Both matters, he said, will now be heard together on Sept 16.

## 6 years of 'acidity' turns out to be 2k gallstones

Noida.(Agency)

Around 2,000 gallstones were removed from the gallbladder of an 83-year-old Bulandshahr resident during a rare laparoscopic surgery at a private hospital in Indirapuram, ending six years of persistent abdominal pain. The stones, weighing 150-200 grams in total, had completely packed the gallbladder, making the procedure longer than usual and technically challenging. The doctors said Deep Chand Gupta, an advocate by profession, had ignored pain in his upper abdomen for nearly six years. He had been experiencing recurrent bouts of pain along with some discomfort in his chest for nearly six years. The pain would often radiate to his back as well, but he ignored it, assuming it was an acidity problem. He was admitted to Yashoda Medicity on June 15 with acute abdominal pain. After an investigation, doctors found his gallbladder was completely packed with stones and its wall had thickened because of long-standing

inflammation, a condition known as calculous cholecystitis. The next day, doctors removed nearly 2,000 gallstones of varying sizes — from tiny mustard seed-like particles to chickpea-sized stones — through a laparoscopic cholecystectomy. The stones weighed around 150-200 grams. Surgeons said that finding such a large number of gallstones in a single patient is uncommon. Patients generally have a single to a dozen such stones. "To reach a count of nearly 2,000 stones, the disease process has likely been active for 10 to 15 years," the vice chairman and head of the Institute of minimal access, robotic and bariatric surgery of the hospital, Dr Pradeep K. Dewan, said. "The gallbladder has a remarkable ability to stretch and accommodate these stones silently. By the time the patient experiences the severe pain, we are looking at least a decade's worth of crystal formation." The surgery lasted around 90 minutes, considerably longer than a routine laparoscopic procedure

because the gallbladder was densely packed with stones and chronic inflammation had made dissection difficult. "The patient's biggest mistake was ignoring persistent symptoms for several years. Had treatment been delayed further, he could have developed complications such as jaundice, pancreatitis or severe infection. In rare cases, prolonged gallbladder disease is also associated with an increased risk of gallbladder cancer," the doctor said. The doctors said the patient also had hypertension and serum electrolyte imbalance. "Such patients require careful pre-operative optimisation because surgery carries a higher risk," he said. "While genetics play a role, one's daily habits are one's best defence. The most effective precaution is maintaining a stable, healthy weight. I strongly warn patients against 'crash' diets or rapid weight loss, which actually spikes cholesterol in the bile and triggers rapid stone formation. actively contracting and flushing.

## Refund made, but forum asks Amazon to pay Rs 6k to buyer

Gurgaon.(Agency)

The district consumer commission has ordered e-commerce major Amazon Seller Services to pay Rs 5,000 for mental harassment and Rs 1,000 as litigation costs to a consumer, holding the company liable for deficiency in service for failing to deliver a gas stove after receiving payment. However, Amazon refunded Rs 3,069 when cancelling the product delivery.

Commission chairperson Anil Kumar Pundir and member Anju Sharma on Thursday noted that the decision was based on the principle that failure to deliver purchased goods on time and thereafter refunding the amount causes mental agony to customers and constitutes a deficiency in service.

On April 5, 2025, Noida residents Abhishek Bharadwaj and Akshay filed a complaint against Amazon over a Rs 3,069 Milton three-burner stove bought on March 29. They sought compensation for mental harassment, risk to life, and inconvenience due to deficient service and false commitments, plus a formal apology.

Amazon's confirmation email promised one-day delivery, but the order was not delivered within that time frame. From March 30 to April 1, the complainant repeatedly called both Amazon customer care and the delivery agent to follow up, but despite a call from the agent to confirm the address, it was never delivered. Amazon later marked the order as "undelivered," citing "customer unreachable." Bharadwaj claimed that Amazon promised one-day delivery but failed to deliver. Despite repeated calls to customer care and the delivery agent between March 30 and April 1, the order never arrived, and Amazon marked it "undelivered," blaming "customer unreachable." "On April 1, a caller from Amazon's Greater Noida delivery station again confirmed the product would be delivered and said the delivery person would ask for an OTP to complete delivery, but the same evening.

## Noida Authority reverses plan, opts for individual allotment of 19 kiosks near GIP



Noida.(Agency)

Nearly a year after a failed attempt to lease an entire street market to a single private operator, 19 kiosks there between Botanical Garden Metro Station and GIP Mall are set to be allotted to individual applicants by the Noida Authority. "A request for proposal was issued last year. Many bidders failed to

meet the eligibility criteria. The authority has now decided to relax the requirements and allot the kiosks individually. Bidding is scheduled to commence in two weeks," said the officer on special duty, Noida Authority, Indu Prakash Singh. Developed along DSC Road at a cost of around Rs 3 crore, the street market has

seating areas and roadside parking for more than 100 vehicles. With Sector 18 market and Atta Market in close proximity, the area is set to witness substantial footfall.

In Oct last year, the Authority invited bids from private firms to operate all 19 kiosks under a single lease agreement for an initial seven-year term, extendable to 10 years. The tender required an earnest money deposit of Rs 12 lakh, while the annual lease rental was fixed at Rs 1.28 crore, working out to nearly Rs 56,000 per kiosk every month. The high rental proved to be a deterrent. Under the revised plan, the kiosks will be leased for five years, with a provision for extension, and the monthly rent for each kiosk is expected to be between Rs 40,000 and Rs 50,000. While no business category has been specified, officials said the kiosks may be used to sell food and beverages, gift items, clothing, electronics and similar items in retail outlets.

## Lalit Modi questions Ghaziabad stadium delay, location near Hindon air base

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

Former IPL commissioner Lalit Modi has triggered a fresh debate over the proposed international cricket stadium in the city, questioning the project's prolonged delay, the utilisation of funds released by BCCI, and the change in the proposed site.

In a series of posts on X, Modi sought public accountability over the project, alleging inconsistencies in land selection and asking whether an independent audit and inquiry had ever been carried out. UP Cricket Association (UPCA) and Ghaziabad Development Authority (GDA), however, rejected the allegations, insisting that the project is progressing within the legal framework after initial planning hurdles.

Modi questioned why BCCI released Rs 22.6 crore to UPCA in 2016 and asked why no time-bound progress report or public audit of the expenditure had been placed before cricket followers. He also alleged that while the original proposal was for a stadium at Gram Bhanera in Loni, the project was later shifted to Morti, which he described as a low-lying, flood-prone site near the Hindon and unsuitable because of its proximity to the Hindon civil terminal.



The proposed stadium is around 300 metres from the Hindon river and 11km from the Hindon Air Force Station, which also operates civilian flights.

In separate questions directed at UP govt, Modi asked why there had been no transparent clarification regarding the land acquired for the project, why no independent inquiry had been ordered, and who should be held accountable for the

delay and any possible misuse of public money or land.

When contacted by TOI, BCCI vice-president Rajeev Shukla declined to comment on the allegations. "Everyone knows that I, for BCCI, don't respond to Lalit Modi," he said, referring further queries to UPCA. UPCA vice-president Rakesh Mishra dismissed the allegations as baseless, saying GDA had only

facilitated the acquisition of 31 acres for the stadium.

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11-year-old abducted from footpath, raped and killed in South Delhi; cab driver arrested

New Delhi: An 11-year-old girl was allegedly kidnapped while sleeping beside her family on a pavement, raped and murdered in south Delhi's Mehrauli area, an official said on Tuesday.

ed within six hours of the incident, police said. The incident came to light after the family, who lived on a footpath in the area, couldn't find the girl in the early hours of Monday.

in his early 30s and a native of Bihar, abducted the girl around 5 am when she was asleep with her family. A case of kidnapping was registered immediately, and a large-scale search operation was launched.

the crime, the accused was returning to the same location, but fled after watching police teams nearby. Teams tracked his movements, and he was arrested within six hours after the crime." Police said technical surveillance and CCTV analysis played a crucial role in solving the case swiftly.

the body from the spot late Monday and sent it for a postmortem to determine the exact cause of death and gather medico-legal evidence. Forensic experts examined both the place from where the girl was abducted and the location where her body was dumped.

AAP wrests Nangal MC top posts as Congress, BJP boycott poll citing 'raids, intimidation'

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"If any government official is found to have pressured elected representatives, strict action would be taken," he said, dismissing the Opposition's charge of political intimidation. With the Congress and the BJP staying away from the proceedings, AAP candidates were elected to all three top posts.

and Haryana High Court against the move. The BJP councillor did not attend the House proceedings today just to ensure that the government did not use official machinery to circumvent rules of electing AAP candidate, he said.

It is for general information that 1. ANJALI MEENA D/O YOGESH KUMAR MEENA, R/O H.No.1036, P-109, Kalyan Pana, Tikri Kalan, PO: Tikri Kalan, DIST. West Delhi, Delhi-110041, declare that name of my father and my mother have been wrongly written as YOGESH MEENA and POOLJA MEENA in my all education documents.

NAME CHANGE I, SHIVANI SINGH CHAUHAN / SHIVANI SINGH W/O HARPREET SINGH GAMBHIR R/O, 1531, TOWER-D, 10th AVENUE, GAUR CITY-2, SECTOR-16 C, GREATER NOIDA, GAUTAM BUD-DHA NAGAR, UTTAR PRADESH-201306, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SHIVANI CHAUHAN FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES

NAME CHANGE I, MOHD TAQI S/O MOHD SADIQ R/O HOUSE NO. 1476 BASTI CHOTAY RAM KALAN MAHAL DARYA GANJ NEW DELHI - 110002, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME FROM MOHD TAQI TO RESHMA FOR ALL PURPOSES.

NAME CHANGE I, KULDEEP SINGH S/O GURVINDER SINGH ANAND, R/O B-5/109 Paschim vihar, Delhi-110063 has changed my name to Kunwarpreet Singh Anand for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE I, KAMNA DARGAN W/O VIJAY KUMAR R/O J-69 NEAR VARDHMAN MARKET, VIKAS PURI DELHI- 110018 have changed my name to KAMNA Permanently for all Future purpose

NAME CHANGE I hitherto known as ALAUDIN S/O SAYEED ALI R/O H.No-35/041, Indira Gandhi Camp 1, Taimoor Nagar, Dist-South Delhi, Delhi-110065 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as MOHD ALAUDDIN.

NAME CHANGE I, JAVED ANSARI S/O ISMAIL ANSARI, R/O Plot No-3, A-15, 2-Floor, Palam Madhu Vihar, Uttam Nagar, Po-D.K Mohan Garden, Dist-West Delhi, Delhi-110059 have changed the name of my minor daughter JAINAB ANABIA aged 06 years and She shall hereafter be known as ZAINAB ANSARI.

NAME CHANGE I hitherto known as SHAMEENA W/O HAMID HASAN R/O B-360, Gali No-2, Indira Vihar, Gokul Pur, North East Delhi, Delhi-110094 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SHAMEEMA.

NAME CHANGE I hitherto known as NAZNEEN KHATOON W/O MOHAMMAD WASEEM R/OOC-37-A, Ground Floor, Okhla Vihar, Jamia Nagar, New Friends Colony, South Delhi, Delhi-110025 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as NAZNEEN PRAVEEN.

NAME CHANGE I Manju R/O H.No.331, Near Sai Baba Mandir, Lodhi Complex, Lodhi Road, Central Delhi-03 declare that my husband Army Rank No.10316452H Hav Vikas in service documents my name is Manju Devi is wrongly mentioned. According to my other documents Manju which is correct. So you are requested to change my name in my Husband Army Service record from Manju Devi to Manju.

NAME CHANGE I, hitherto known as RIZWAN MALIK S/O SHARIF AHMED R/O House No-856, Gali No. 9, Old Mustafabad, Near 25 Fata Road, Mustafabad, North East Delhi, Delhi-110094 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as IRFAN KAMAAL.

DATE OF BIRTH CHANGE I, SONALI DAS mother of No. 15680526F Rank-CQMH Name-KOUSTAV DAS residing at PANAGARH RAILPARK SARADAPALLI, PO-PANAGARH BAZAR, PS-KANKSA, DIST-PASCHIM BARDHAMAN, WEST BENGAL-713148, in my son's service record my date of birth wrongly published as 01/07/1963 instead of my correct date of birth as 01/01/1962 vide Affidavit dated 23/06/2026 before Notary Public, DURGAPUR, PASCHIM BARDHAMAN, WEST BENGAL.

Public Notice It is for general information that my Clientess Sushma Devi W/O Late Om Prakash Singh R/O Village Sabalpur (Dulhapur), Post Tanda Afzal, Tehsil Thakurdwara, Distt. Meerutabad (U.P.), has debarred, disown and break down all the relationship from her elder son namely Gaurav Kumar and his wife namely Vandana, from their all moveable and Immoveable properties either self acquired or ancestral, situated all over India due to their misconduct, disobedience and misbehavior attitude. My client will not be responsible in future for their acts which is done by them.

Public Notice That, Mrs. Saroj Bala W/o Mr. Satish Kumar seeking a loan from M/s Can Fin Homes Ltd. for the House No. 228 (New) and House No. 199 (Old), Bearing Property ID No. 1CWG8YB0, Area measuring 67 Sq. Yds., Gali No. 3, Comprised in Khazra No. 11233/146-6302-5/147, 3234/148, 3232/143, 144-1/8, Situated at Waka Siwana Mauja Gurgaon, in the colony known as Ashok Garden Near Swarop Garden, within municipal corporation limits, Tehsil and District Gurgaon (HR); hereinafter referred to as 'said property'; That Mrs. Saroj Bala W/o Mr. Satish Kumar has made us understand that previous owner i.e. Mr. Satish Kumar has lost or misplaced the following document i.e. Sale Deed Vastika No. 316 Dated 09.04.2001 in favour of Mr. Satish Kumar S/O Mr. Raghunath Singh vide LR no. 132270992600379 somewhere, which are not traceable or cannot be found. If anybody or any person got or having any claim against on the said above documents by way of legal heirs, Mortgage, Gift, Lease, Inheritance, Lien or otherwise or any objection with said above documents is hereby required to make the same known to the undersigned in writing in Delhi office address given below within 7 days from the date of publication these above documents should be declared null & void to such claims & the same if any shall be considered as waved and failing which, it will proceed to complete the sale transaction with the above owners as if there are no third party claims/objections/disputes in respect of the said property and thereafter no claims/objections/disputes will be entertained.

Public Notice This is to inform you that Mr. Vishal intends to purchase the built-up third floor with roof rights of Property Bearing No.137, admeasuring 50 sq. yds., forming part of Khazra No.7/22, situated in the Village Matiala, Abadi known as Om Vihar Extension, Block-E, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi-110059, from Mrs. Alka Dhawan. The initial owner of the property was Mr. Sis Ram, who sold the property to Mr. Mange Ram Bhardwaj through a registered Sale Deed dated 29.11.1980. Thereafter, the title of the property devolved in the following sequence: Mr. Mange Ram Bhardwaj transferred the property to Mrs. Gayatri Devi; Mrs. Gayatri Devi transferred the property to Mr. Santokh Singh Sodhi; Mr. Santokh Singh Sodhi transferred the property to Mr. Sushil Kumar, Mr. Sushil Kumar transferred the property to Mr. Vijay, and Mr. Vijay transferred the property to Mrs. Saroj Mahajan. Mrs. Saroj Mahajan expired on 26.01.2015, and her husband, Mr. Puran Chand, had predeceased her on 23.06.2007. They were survived by the following legal heirs: (1) Mr. Mukesh Mahajan (Son), (2) Mrs. Neetu Sahni (Daughter), (3) Mrs. Ruchi (Daughter), and (4) Mr. Vinod Mahajan (Son). Subsequently, Mr. Mukesh Mahajan, Mrs. Neetu Sahni, and Mrs. Ruchi relinquished their respective shares in favour of Mr. Vinod Mahajan through a registered Relinquishment Deed dated 19.03.2018. Thereafter, Mr. Vinod Mahajan executed a registered Will dated 03.05.2018 in favour of his wife, Mrs. Alka Dhawan. Unfortunately, Mr. Vinod Mahajan subsequently expired, and by virtue of the said Will, Mrs. Alka Dhawan became the owner of the property. The property is free from all encumbrances, liens, charges, mortgages, and other third-party claims. The physical possession of the property is presently with Mrs. Alka Dhawan. The proposed purchase of the aforesaid property is to be financed by Aditya Birla Housing Finance Limited, Branch: H-17, 2nd Floor, Vijaya Building, Barakhamba Road, Connaught Place, New Delhi. If any person(s) objection & regarding subject property, then kindly may submit his/her objection within 7 days from the date of the Notice in writing. The said objection may be kindly sent to the undersigned by way of the Registered Post on the address given below and by E-mail, failing which, the claim as per aforesaid shall be treated as null and void in respect of the subject property.

Public Notice I, Sunil Panjwani, S/O Hira Nand, R/O 31 Raj Nagar, Pitampura, Delhi-110034 have changed my name to Sunil Kumar Panjwani for all future purposes.

Public Notice I, Kavita Kumari Gogia, W/O Vinod Kumar, R/O MU-22 1st Floor, Pitampura, North West Delhi, Delhi-110034 have changed my name to Kavita Gogia for all future purposes.

Public Notice I, Kamlesh Balkrishna Jha S/O Balkrishna Jha R/O House No. 39, Bhagya Niwas, 1st Floor, Sushant Lok 2, Block C, Huda, Sector 55, PO: Gurgaon Sector 56, DIST: Gurgaon, Haryana - 122011, I have Changed My Name To Kamlesh Jha

NAME CHANGE I, SARITA wife of No-14683177X, Rank-HAV, Name-RAJEEV KUMAR MISHRA residing at 14, VILL-MADHOPUR, MORO, DARBHANGA, BIHAR-847106, have changed my name from SARITA to KUMARI SARITA for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 07/07/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE I, NARAIN DAS S/O NOUBAT RAM R/O House No: 264/27, GALI NO: 5, MADAN PURI, GURGAON - 122001, Haryana, have my name from NARAIN DAS to NARAIN DASS for all intents and purposes.

NAME CHANGE I, BABAL KAWATRA W/O SUSHIL KUMAR R/O House No: 76/24, PARTAP NAGAR, NEAR BHUTANI HOSPITAL, ROHTAK - 124001, Haryana, have changed my name from BABAL KAWATRA to BABAL KWATRA for all intents and purposes.

NAME CHANGE I, SHYAM SINGH / SHYAM SUNDER S/O BANSI LAL R/O House No: 1032/23, DLF COLONY, ROHTAK - 124001, Haryana, have changed my name from SHYAM SINGH / SHYAM SUNDER to SHYAM SUNDER SACHDEVA for all intents and purposes.

DATE OF BIRTH CHANGE I SHARADA SHRAVAN CHAUDHARI legally mother of Army no - 2806251N Rank - NK, Name - CHOUDHARI KIRAN SHRAVAN, Presently Residing At - DORHALE Post- KORHALE, Teh - RAHATA, Dist - AHILYANAGAR, Pin - 423 107, State- MAHARASHTRA have changed my name from, in my son's service records my date of birth wrongly mentioned as 09/09/1959 instead of my correct date of birth as 01/01/1972 vide Affidavit dated 07/07/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE I, SHIVAM S/O KULDEEP SINGH R/O House No: 62/L MODEL TOWN, ROHTAK - 124001, Haryana, have changed my name from SHIVAM to SHIVAM HOODA for all intents and purposes.

NAME CHANGE I, MOHD ARIF S/O Mohd Azimuddin R/o 57, Janta Flats, Sarai Khalil, Sadar Bazar, Delhi-110006, have changed my name to MOHD ARIF ANSARI permanently.

NAME CHANGE I, SHIVANI SINGH CHAUHAN / SHIVANI SINGH W/O HARPREET SINGH GAMBHIR R/O, 1531, TOWER-D, 10th AVENUE, GAUR CITY-2, SECTOR-16 C, GREATER NOIDA, GAUTAM BUD-DHA NAGAR, UTTAR PRADESH-201306, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SHIVANI CHAUHAN FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES

NAME CHANGE I, SHIVAM S/O KULDEEP SINGH R/O House No: 62/L MODEL TOWN, ROHTAK - 124001, Haryana, have changed my name from SHIVAM to SHIVAM HOODA for all intents and purposes.

NAME CHANGE I, MOHD ARIF S/O Mohd Azimuddin R/o 57, Janta Flats, Sarai Khalil, Sadar Bazar, Delhi-110006, have changed my name to MOHD ARIF ANSARI permanently.

NAME CHANGE I, KULDEEP / KULDEEP HOODA S/O Bhim Singh- R/O House No: 62/L MODEL TOWN, ROHTAK - 124001, Haryana, have changed my name from KULDEEP / KULDEEP HOODA to KULDEEP SINGH for all intents and purposes.

NAME AND DATE OF BIRTH CHANGE I, LEELAVATI KUSHWAHA mother of NO - 15723636M, Rank - LNK, Name - K KUSHWAHA residing at VILL-GERUARI-169, PO-PADARIYA, TEHLSI-GURJUR, DIST-REWVA, MADHYA PRADESH-486123, has changed my name from LEELAVATI KUSHWAHA to LILAVATEES KUSHWAHA for all future purposes, in my son's service record my date of birth wrongly mentioned as 18/06/1971 instead of my correct date of birth as 01/01/1972 vide Affidavit dated 07/07/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

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## NEWS BOX

## Bangladesh landslides kill eight Rohingya refugees, including five children

DHAKA.(Agency)

Landslides triggered by heavy monsoon rains in eastern Bangladesh killed at least eight Rohingya refugees, including five children, officials said Tuesday. Dollar Tripura, a Fire Service and Civil Defense official in Cox's Bazar district, told The Associated Press that rescuers recovered seven bodies while an eighth body was found by refugees after several hills collapsed from late Sunday to Monday morning. He said another two children were found with injuries. Officials said continuous rain and hillside torrents loosened soil on slopes, causing makeshift houses to collapse. Tripura said the landslides affected at least four locations across the camps, burying shelters under mud and debris while residents were asleep. "All the bodies have been handed over to the families through local refugee leaders and police," he said. Authorities said they were relocating the refugees from at-risk hill areas, and some 1,000 people have already been relocated. The weather office in the capital, Dhaka, has forecast more rain in the coming days. According to the UNHCR, 36 refugees died and at least 86 were injured in similar landslides at refugee camps between 2021 and 2026. More than 1 million refugees who fled neighboring Myanmar live in camps in Bangladesh. Renewed fighting in Myanmar's Rakhine state between the military government and the Arakan Army has raised concern of a fresh influx of Rohingya refugees across the border.

## Landslide in China's Gansu province leaves 33 buried, half rescued

BEIJING.(Agency)

A landslide at a village in northwestern China buried 33 people on Tuesday, state media reported. About half of them have been rescued. Local authorities said the landslide occurred in the Nanhe township of Longnan city in Gansu province shortly before 7 a.m., according to China's official Xinhua News Agency. State broadcaster CCTV said 17 people were already rescued, but it did not elaborate on their condition. While rescue



operations were underway, authorities relocated affected residents.

## Rights group calls for immediate release of Gaza doctor amid torture allegations

TEHRAN.(Agency)

Amnesty International said on Monday that Israeli authorities must immediately release Dr Hussam Abu Safiya, a Palestinian paediatrician and the director of Kamal Adwan Hospital, saying he is being held arbitrarily. The organization's call comes after a lawyer who recently visited Dr Abu Safiya reported that his life is in immediate danger due to torture and other forms of ill treatment he has allegedly suffered while in Israeli custody. Dr Hussam Abu Safiya has been held in Israeli custody without charge or trial since 27 December 2024. He was arrested while working at his hospital in Gaza City and has now been detained for more than 18 months.

Concerns about his worsening condition emerged after



a lawyer from Physicians for Human Rights Israel (PHRI), Nasser Odeh, visited him on 2 July 2026. According to the lawyer, since being transferred to the underground Rakevet detention facility, Dr Abu Safiya has been subjected to daily beatings, threats, and other forms of abuse. Attorney Nasser Odeh reported observing fresh bruises and torture marks on Dr Hussam Abu Safiya's head and across his body, leaving him barely recognizable. He also said that Dr Hussam Abu Safiya arrived at their meeting with his hands and feet shackled. In his chilling account, Nasser Odeh described him as weak and on the verge of losing consciousness. He further reported that Dr Hussam Abu Safiya told him: "This is the last time you'll see me... they brought me here to kill me." "The lawyer's testimony must serve as an urgent wake-up call for states around the world, particularly Israel's allies. It is utterly reprehensible that a doctor who refused to abandon his patients, and who became one of the most prominent voices denouncing the devastation of Gaza's healthcare system, remains arbitrarily and unlawfully detained under Israel's baseless designation as an 'unlawful combatant'. He continues to be deprived of his most fundamental rights, including the right to be protected against torture and other ill-treatment, and his rights to a fair trial and due process," said Erika Guevara Rosas, Senior Director for Research, Advocacy, Policy and Campaigns at Amnesty International. Meanwhile, according to Arab News, the son of detained Gaza hospital director said.

## Macron arrives in Syria, becomes first major Western leader to visit war-torn country under new leadership

**Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy visited in April but Macron is the first leader from western Europe or North America to do so.**

DAMASCUS.(Agency)

French President Emmanuel Macron arrived Monday in Syria, making him the first major Western leader to visit the war-torn country since the ouster of Bashar al-Assad in 2024. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy visited in April but Macron is the first leader from western Europe or North America to do so. The French president's visit comes during a period of relative calm in the Middle East after the monthlong war in Iran and Lebanon. He will travel next to Ankara, Turkey, for the NATO summit, where Syrian President Ahmad al-Sharaa is also expected to attend and meet with U.S. President Donald Trump.

Syria's state-run SANA news agency said Macron would visit with a business delegation to discuss regional security as well as business and investment opportunities. The French president was greeted at Damascus airport by Syrian Foreign Minister Asaad al-Shibani.

"I have come to express France's commitment to the Syrian people. For a sovereign Syria, united in its diversity and at peace with its neighbors," Macron said in a post on X. "Together, let us open a new chapter of stability and peace."

France supports all those who can "contribute to build a new Syria" in line with the aspirations expressed since the 2011 Arab Spring, Macron's office said, referring to a period of widespread uprisings across the Middle East that called for political change and reform. Macron will meet with al-Sharaa at the presidential palace and "engage directly with diverse

Syrian people," his office said. The French president's meetings are scheduled throughout Tuesday, beginning with members of Syrian civil society, his office said, though no details were disclosed.



Macron will then meet with al-Sharaa, before holding economic talks and signing memorandums of understanding. The two leaders will hold a joint news conference

afterward. Macron hosted al-Sharaa in Paris in May 2025, where he urged European and U.S. leaders to lift longstanding sanctions on Damascus. Most of those sanctions had since been lifted. Paris supported Syria's

new leadership even at a time where others were skeptical of al-Sharaa's Islamist-led rule and former role as the head of the Hayat Tahrir al-Sham militant group, previously linked to al-Qaida. Western governments were especially concerned about the treatment and inclusion of women and minorities, and whether Syria's new government would transition into a more democratic rule. Syria has managed to sidestep the region's recent conflicts, but the country is still battered from 13 years of war that left much of it in ruins, drove millions into poverty, and will cost hundreds of billions of dollars to rebuild. While Syria has signed memorandums of understanding with states and large companies for large investment projects, they have not yet come to fruition.

## Thousands without power in US Pacific islands after Super typhoon Bavi

**Worst hit was the small island of Rota when it was struck early Monday by Super Typhoon Bavi with winds up to 180 miles (290 kilometres) per hour, bringing down trees and power lines and knocking out water supplies.**

damage, with countless roofs completely torn off... Across the island, there is no electricity, no running water, and no mobile network



UNITED STATES.(Agency)

Tens of thousands of people were without power Tuesday on Guam and the Northern Marianas after a super typhoon tore through the US Pacific territories, with no casualties reported.

Worst hit was the small island of Rota when it was struck early Monday by Super Typhoon Bavi with winds up to 180 miles (290 kilometres) per hour, bringing down trees and power lines and knocking out water supplies.

"Many homes have suffered severe

service," said local resident Masum Dhali, 24. "Numerous water pipelines have been broken, and many power poles have fallen, leaving the entire island without essential services," Dhali told AFP via Facebook. "As of right now, still no water and electricity," Lou Rosari, a spokeswoman for the Municipal

Municipal Operations Center on Rota, confirmed on Tuesday morning.

"Fortunately, we haven't received any reports of any injuries or casualties,"

Rota senator Donald M. Manglona said late Monday in a video posted by the Marianas Press. "Our first responders and road crew are still out on the road trying to get access for our response vehicles to pull out and answer any distress calls. He still don't have any running water nor power." Saipan and Tinian, the two main islands of the Northern Marianas, were also without power as were parts of nearby Guam, a separate US territory home to major US military bases, authorities said.

On those islands though the damage was less severe than after Sinkalu, a previous super typhoon that swept through the region several thousand kilometres west of the mainland in April.

## 15 dead, hundreds injured as storms and floods batter China; Xi orders all-out rescue efforts

BEIJING.(Agency)

Thunderstorms and strong winds have killed at least 15 people, injured 275 and left nine others missing in central China, state media reported on Tuesday, while heavy rain and flooding claimed two more lives in the south.

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Tuesday called for "all-out" rescue operations after storms and flooding in central and southern China left at least 15 people dead and forced tens of thousands to evacuate. Xi stressed "the need to go all out in organising emergency rescue operations, treating the injured, resettling affected residents, and carrying out disaster prevention and relief work effectively", state broadcaster CCTV reported. Several areas in Hubei province were hit by "severe convective weather" on Monday, according to CCTV.

"Thunderstorms and strong winds swept through" cities including

Huangshi and Huanggang, killing eight people, it said. Tornadoes were reported in some areas, and one person remains missing. The severe weather injured 275 people in Huanggang's Huangzhou



district as of Tuesday morning, state news agency Xinhua reported, without providing details on the severity of their injuries. Authorities also evacuated 408 residents to safer areas, it added.

"Rescue and relief efforts are under way," Xinhua said. Meanwhile, heavy rain and severe flooding triggered by Typhoon Maysak

killed at least two people in the southern Guangxi region and forced the evacuation of at least 48,000 people by Monday evening. Officials in Nanning, the capital of Guangxi, raised the flood-control emergency response to its highest level after torrential rain caused dams to overflow. The rain caused part of a reservoir dam to collapse. Dramatic footage aired by CCTV showed torrents of muddy water surging through the breached concrete structure.

Elsewhere in the region, homes and cars were partially submerged by floodwaters. Rescue workers wearing life jackets and helmets were seen using inflatable boats to search for stranded residents. Scientists warn that the intensity and frequency of extreme weather events will continue to increase as the planet warms due to greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuels. China is the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases. However, it is also a global leader in renewable energy and has pledged to make its economy carbon-neutral by 2060.



ships around the disputed islands, prompting dangerous maritime standoffs with its Japanese counterpart. China has also sent boats to other disputed waters in the East China Sea, which is believed to hold possible deposits of energy reserves, despite repeated protests by Japan to stop. Takaichi said in November that Tokyo could intervene militarily in any attack on self-ruled Taiwan, which China views as its territory and has not ruled out taking by force. Beijing condemned her comments, and has since urged its citizens against travelling to Japan as well as tightened trade restrictions on some Japanese firms.

## Prince Harry's privacy battle against daily mail reaches final verdict in UK Court

**A London High Court judge will rule on Prince Harry's privacy lawsuit against the Daily Mail publisher, concluding his legal battle over alleged unlawful snooping.**

LONDON.(Agency)

Prince Harry's longtime battle with the British tabloids reaches its climax Tuesday. A judge in London's High Court will rule on the Duke of Sussex's privacy invasion lawsuit against the publisher of the Daily Mail, ending a trio of lawsuits that accused the news media of unlawfully snooping on his life. Harry and six others are seeking substantial damages in the celebrity-studded lawsuit where the legal costs for the 11-week trial have been estimated at about 40 million

pounds (\$53.5 million). Harry, singer Elton John and actors Elizabeth Hurley and Sadie Frost are among those who accused Associated Newspapers Ltd. of tapping their phones, intercepting voicemails and obtaining personal information through deception. The newspapers denied the allegations as "preposterous," insisting the roughly 50 articles at issue were based on lawful sources including friends, royal aides and publicists who offered information to reporters. The verdict coincides with Harry's visit home to the U.K., but the court case has been overshadowed by the question of whether he will bring his wife, Meghan, Duchess of Sussex, and their two children, Prince Archie and Princess Lilibet, for a rare visit to their grandfather, King Charles III.

Harry has long criticized the news business Harry's self-proclaimed mission to reform

the press for creating what he called a toxic environment is much deeper than headlines that documented his party boy youth and romantic ups and downs. His emotional testimony in February drove that point



home. The prince has blamed the press for the death of his mother, Princess Diana, who was killed in a car crash in 1997 while being pursued by paparazzi in Paris, and for

attacks on his wife that led the couple to leave royal life and move to the United States in 2020. "They continue to come after me, they have made my wife's life an absolute misery," he said as he choked back tears in the witness box. The phone hacking scandal that began in the 1990s and continued for more than a decade gave Harry the opportunity to break with royal family tradition and take his case to court. Three years ago, he became the first senior royal to testify in court in over a century.

Harry won a judgment in 2023 that condemned the publishers of the Daily Mirror for "widespread and habitual" phone hacking. Last year, Rupert Murdoch's flagship U.K. tabloid, The Sun, made an unprecedented apology for intruding on his life for years, and agreed to pay substantial damages to settle his privacy invasion lawsuit.

## Short news

### Caught on dashcam: Men swarm car, attack family on Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway

**Bengaluru.(Agency)**

A family travelling in a car on the Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway was allegedly attacked after a group of men intercepted their vehicle and physically assaulted them. The incident, captured on the dashcam of a vehicle travelling behind, has since gone viral on social media. The family comprised a man, his wife, their children and an elderly woman, all travelling in a Maruti Suzuki Alto.

The 52-second video begins with vehicles moving along the expressway before the Alto comes to a halt. Moments later, a group of men rushes towards the family's car. The men are seen shouting at the driver before forcefully opening the driver's door and physically assaulting him.

As the attack escalates, an occupant of another vehicle steps out in an apparent attempt to intervene. Despite this, the assailants drag the driver out of the car, while a woman from the Alto also steps out, seemingly trying to stop the assault. Police are yet to issue an official statement or confirm whether any arrests have been made. Action in the case is awaited.

### TVK MLA poaching case: High Court transfers Senthil Balaji's brother's bail plea



**Kaithal.(Agency)**

The Madras High Court on Monday transferred the anticipatory bail plea of RV Ashok Kumar, brother of former Tamil Nadu minister V Senthil Balaji, in the alleged TVK MLA horse-trading case to the special bench that hears matters involving MPs and MLAs.

Ashok Kumar has moved the High Court seeking protection from arrest in the case. In his petition, he argued that the FIR does not accuse him of contacting the TVK legislator, offering any bribe, or issuing threats. He claimed he had been falsely implicated because of his relationship with Senthil Balaji and alleged that the case was politically motivated.

During the hearing, the state sought additional time to file its counter affidavit and submitted that the matter should be heard by the designated MP-MLA bench since it concerns allegations involving a sitting legislator.

Accepting the request, Justice C Kumarappan directed the Registry to place the petition before the appropriate bench and adjourned the matter to July 8. The anticipatory bail plea will now come up before Justice GK Ilanthiraiyan, who presides over cases involving Members of Parliament and Members of the Legislative Assembly.

### 2008 Ahmedabad serial blasts case: Gujarat high court upholds death for 38, life term for 11

**AHMEDABAD.(Agency)**

The Gujarat high court on Tuesday upheld a special court verdict condemning 38 persons to death sentence and awarding life imprisonment to 11 others in connection with the 2008 serial blasts case in which 56 persons were killed and 246 others sustained injuries.

HC ordered the state government to pay compensation for victims - Rs 10 lakh for death, Rs 5 lakh for grievous injuries, and Rs 1 lakh for simple injuries. The payment is ordered to be paid till March 31, 2027.

Several blasts took place across the city of Ahmedabad on July 26, 2008 and bombs were found two days later in Surat. The city crime branch investigation named over 100 persons accused of the crime, and 78 persons were put on a trial. In February 2022, a special court found 49 persons guilty and acquitted 28 others.

Among those acquitted were Mubin Shaikh and Mansur Pirbhoy, who were accused of hatching conspiracy and of sending threat mails and claiming responsibility for the terror strike. The trial court had pardoned one approver, whereas four other approvers, who later retracted their statements, were convicted. The 2008 blasts were the first strike on hospitals, and e-mails sent by the accused claimed that they were part of their revenge for the 2002 post-Godhra violence in Gujarat.

The bench of Justice AY Kogje and Justice SJ Dave heard the appeals against the special court's February 8, 2022 order running into 7,015 pages. HC also heard the state government's petition for confirmation of death sentence for 38 convicts.

The trial had been conducted after merging 35 different cases, 20 FIRs lodged in Ahmedabad for the blasts, and 15 in Surat, where bombs did not go off. Those convicted in the case got harsh punishment under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) and IPC, Explosive Substances Act etc.

## IIT Bombay researchers develop faster method to convert organic compounds into complex molecules

*The research, led by Prof Debabrata Maiti of IIT Bombay, has been published in prestigious Nature journal.*

**New Delhi.(Agency)**

Scientists at IIT Bombay have found a novel and efficient way to convert simple, abundantly-available, straight-chain carbon compounds into complex ring-shaped molecules that can be building blocks for medicinal or other valuable chemicals. Their new method solves a long-standing problem in synthetic chemistry. Right now, conversion of long, straight-chain carbon molecules to ring-shaped molecules involves a multi-step process that is time consuming and expensive.

The research, led by Prof Debabrata Maiti of IIT Bombay, has been published in prestigious Nature journal. Straight-chain carbon compounds like fatty acids are some of the most commonly available chemicals in nature. Many of the biologically-relevant organic compounds, including several drugs, on the other hand, have ring-shaped molecular structures. Scientists often go through a multi-step process to convert the easily-available fatty acids into more useful molecules used in a variety of applications.

In simple fatty acids, several carbon atoms are linked to each other in a long straight chain. Many of these carbon atoms are indistinguishable from each other. This makes it extremely difficult to chemically target any



specific carbon atom in the chain from where the sequence leading to ring formation could be initiated. Usually, multiple sites in the chain could be affected. Because of this the conversion could be achieved only through a long process involving multiple steps.

The research team at IIT Bombay, which included Maiti's students Tanay Pal, Md

Saimuddin Sk, Animesh Ghosh and Yazhinimuthu CM, was able to make a breakthrough with the development of a new chemical compound which proved to be crucial in the selective targeting of the desired carbon atom in the long chain. The use of this new chemical entity achieved the conversion in fewer steps, with much greater efficiency and significantly reduced chemical wastage. Somnath Kar from Bhabha Atomic Research Centre collaborated on the research.

Maiti told The Indian Express that the significance of the breakthrough lay in the fact that the method was not limited to conversion of any specific single molecule into a desired compound, but was a general process applicable to a wide array of organic compounds. "The method acts as a platform that can quickly convert simple saturated fatty acids into many different bioactive molecules. This could help scientists study and improve compounds used in traditional medicine systems such as Ayurveda, and speed up their development into modern drugs," he said.

## Dalit labourer beaten for drinking water from pot, accused say he polluted vessel

**A Dalit labourer was allegedly beaten and abused after drinking water outside a clinic in Bhadohi. The case has renewed focus on caste violence as police arrest two men and investigate.**

**Mumbai.(Agency)**

A Dalit labourer was beaten, racially abused and threatened with death after drinking water from a vessel kept outside a private clinic in Uttar Pradesh's Bhadohi district, with the accused claiming the container had been "polluted" because it had been used by a Dalit.

The incident occurred on June 23 when Bhola Gautam was returning home after finishing painting work with fellow labourer Om Prakash Vishwakarma. Suffering from a headache, Gautam stopped at a clinic to seek medicine.

According to the FIR, when Gautam asked for water to take the medicine, he was told to fetch it from a vessel placed outside the clinic.

As he drank the water, a nearby shopkeeper, identified as Subhash Bind, began verbally



abusing him and questioned how a person from a "lower caste" could use the vessel. Police said Bind then allegedly struck Gautam with a stick, causing injuries. The

complaint further alleges that Bind declared that the vessel had been "polluted" because a Dalit had drunk from it, and also assaulted Gautam before allegedly threatening to kill him. According to Additional Superintendent of Police Shubham Agrawal, Gautam was rescued by his co-worker and other bystanders.

He sustained injuries to his head, abdomen, back and legs and was first taken to the district hospital before being referred to a hospital in Varanasi, where he underwent treatment for 12 days.

After being discharged, Gautam approached the police on July 5 and lodged a complaint. Based on his statement, an FIR was registered late on Monday.

Police said two, including Bind, have been arrested.

## 13 ULBs in Telangana to turn garbage hills into usable land

**The Commissioner and Director of Municipal Administration has launched a bio-mining initiative to scientifically process about 78,000 tonnes of legacy waste and recover land for future public use.**

**HYDERABAD.(Agency)**

After years of accumulating municipal waste, 13 urban local bodies (ULBs) across the state are set to reclaim their dumpsites. The Commissioner and Director of Municipal Administration (CDMA) has launched a bio-mining initiative to scientifically process about 78,000 tonnes of legacy waste and recover land for future public use.

The project aims to remediate and reclaim old municipal dumpsites in accordance with the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016. Through bio-mining, accumulated waste will be scientifically excavated, segregated, processed and disposed of, while recyclable and reusable materials will be recovered and the reclaimed land returned to the respective ULBs.



The selected ULBs are Moinabad and Chevella in Rangareddy district; Jinnaram, Indresham, Kohir, Isnapur, Gummadidala and Gaddapotharam in Sangareddy district; Aswaraopeta in

Bhadradri Kothagudem district; Edulapuram and Kalluru in Khammam district; Kesamudram in Mahbubabad district; and Bichkunda in Kamareddy district.

The project will be implemented under the Design, Build, Finance, Operate and Transfer (DBFOT) model through agencies selected in two packages. It is scheduled for completion within four months, including one month for setting up bio-mining facilities and three months for processing the accumulated waste.

Selected agencies will establish processing plants at the dumpsites and carry out excavation, segregation, sieving and scientific treatment of the waste.

Recovered materials will be recycled, reused, marketed or disposed of in accordance with applicable regulations, while the reclaimed land will be handed back to the concerned ULBs.

## After revamp, Amma canteens see higher footfall; 1.04 lakh benefit daily

**CHENNAI.(Agency)**

The footfall at Amma Unavagam across the city increased significantly in June, with around an average of 1.04 lakh people benefiting from 383 Amma Unavagam per day. The officials have attributed the increase to repairs made to the canteens and ensuring consistency in quality.

The data also shows the daily average footfall stayed consistently below the 1 lakh mark, ranging between 84,452 and 67,164, in the first five months of this year. However, June saw the highest footfall as well as revenue generation, as 31,233 lakh people benefited with the outlets making a sales of Rs 1.36 crore.

This translates to an average daily footfall of 1.04 lakh beneficiaries and average daily sales of Rs 4.53 lakh in June. Speaking to Greater Chennai Corporation Commissioner GS Sameeran said, "A total of Rs 17.6 crore has been spent on major repairs and refurbishments of Amma Unavagam across the city. Over the last two months, interventions such as procuring cooking equipment, carrying out plumbing works, and other maintenance activities have also been undertaken. Inspections by senior officers were intensified following the Chief Minister's directions. All of this has resulted in increased footfall and greater public patronage," he said.

## With heavy rain, dams start filling up across Karnataka

**Inflows into the Almatti dam across the Krishna finally started on Monday after heavy rain in the Western Ghats, with the inflows recorded at 1,239 cusecs.**

**VIJAYAPURA.(Agency)**

There has been some relief across the state as rain, delayed by over one-and-a-half months after the onset of monsoon, lashed many parts of the state over the last few days and water started flowing into major reservoirs.

Inflows into the Almatti dam across the Krishna finally started on Monday after heavy rain in the Western Ghats, with the inflows recorded at 1,239 cusecs.

The dam's capacity is 519.60 metre with a storage of 123 tmcft. The rain in Malnad areas also boosted inflows into major reservoirs in Shivamogga on Monday. The Bhadra dam received 4,135 cusecs, while



the level stood at 139.6 ft against its capacity of 186 ft. The Linganamakki Reservoir recorded 1,751.60 ft at 8 am, an increase of 1.75 ft

metre, close to its capacity of 588.24 metre. The reservoir recorded inflows of 21,747 cusecs and outflows of 23,784 cusecs.

Inflows into the Hemavathi reservoir in Gorur near Hassan increased slightly because of the incessant rainfall in catchment areas over the last two days. The water level in the reservoir stood at 2,894.6 ft against the capacity of 2,922 ft. The inflow on Monday was 6,924 cusecs.

Inflows into the Harangi Reservoir too picked up as catchment areas of Harangi and Cauvery river received good rainfall. The dam level rose to 2835.92 ft against the capacity of 2852.34 ft.

## Horror in Bengaluru daycare exposes gaps in workplace childcare

**BENGALURU.(Agency)**

The revelation of the alleged horrific atrocities committed on children at the daycare facility at tech giant CapGemini's office in Brookefield has sent shockwaves across Bengaluru, and the consequent arrest of the whistleblower has only fuelled public anger towards what is being deemed at misplaced priorities at best during this critical time. The ongoing investigation into the case has done little to alleviate the anxiety of single or nuclear working parents across the city, whose hopes are all but quelled by a resounding silence on the part of most of the parents whose children had to suffer.

CapGemini's statement following the fiasco levies the blame on Little Scholars, a third-party service provider to which the facility's responsibilities were outsourced. Although it states that the company will "Provide support to affected families, including access to a helpline facility, dedicated counselling through our Employee Assistance Program, and flexible work from home options (sic)," the team could not be reached by TNIE to obtain details.

According to the labour laws in Karnataka - specifically the Karnataka Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Rules of 2019 - any entity employing more than 50 workers is legally required to have a crèche facility for its employees' children, provided they are six years or below of age. In an independent investigation, TNIE found CapGemini to actually be in the minority in terms of having an on-site daycare facility, albeit one whose responsibilities are outsourced. According to internal sources who have requested anonymity, many companies - including industry behemoths like Infosys, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Wipro - do not have any daycare facilities on-site at most of their campuses, if not all, leaving parents to resort to third-party daycares.

## The Wild Pays for Our Convenience

There's a joke amongst environmentalists: when you are searching for wildlife, look at garbage dumps and places where food is thrown.

Birds and mammals, big and small, are likely to be at such places, foraging on the things we have left behind. In Guwahati, you are much more likely to see towering Greater adjutant storks 'fishing' at a garbage dump—places steaming with disembodied non-vegetarian waste—than at the adjoining Deepor beel wetland (where the bird can find real, whole fish). For long dumps were considered the domain of the carnivorous or scavenging animals—jackals at garbage heaps at dusk, migratory eagles at landfills in winter. Yet increasingly one is seeing more herbivorous animals at the places we callously leave our waste. A recent video shows an elephant picking at a huge rubbish heap near Karnataka's Male Mahadeshwara Hills (MM Hills). The animal is in a sea of plastic, a heart-breaking sight. In earlier instances, elephants have died in tiger reserves after eating plastic thrown around temples. Many more animals may be dying in this manner—elephant carcasses are more prominent (and sometimes found in waterbodies, where the animal goes to suffer its agonising death).

The irony here is that badly disposed garbage is a human problem too, leaching into groundwater, contaminating soil and causing disease. And if municipalities—as well as communities and individuals—won't solve the problem for the sake of us, they are unlikely to do so for elephants. Yet precisely for these reasons—for their far-reaching, visible and invisible impacts—garbage is a problem that has to be solved immediately. The scale for re-use and recycling needs to be made larger, plastic needs to be reduced, and segregation needs to be made



more accessible (and fashionable). This has to be done nationally, even as the global plastic treaty has fallen through. Growing up, there was always one area—usually stony, dry, and perhaps with a depression—that people designated as the local garbage spot. Everyone went there to throw garbage, municipal dumps be damned. It was as if the majority had decided that that particular spot needed to be publicly condemned. Of course, designated municipal dumps themselves are at fault too—often made close to wetlands, ecologically sensitive areas, and hills.

Garbage does not 'go away' after we have thrown it away. Like horrible secrets, garbage will re-emerge at the worst of times and places.

Several times, on visits to forests, I have witnessed remnants of our modern civilisation: a plastic bag, strung up a tall tree, hanging like a dirty lantern, there for posterity, or till an unfortunate bird gets tangled in it. And after inundations by rivers, riversides and their vegetation get covered by plastic and other waste—the river's way of returning all that is thrown in the water, and ultimately into the sea. There is an old story of a fish's stomach revealing a mythical ring. Today, the fish's stomach will likely reveal microplastics. Each year, I watch mynas—Brahminy mynas, Common mynas—build nests in summer. The nests are made with twigs and leaves, but often also with bits of plastic. It's hard to blame the birds, when single-use plastic is so omnipotent that it feels like a norm. One day, the nest will be all plastic. In the mean time, it is time to clean up.

## Punjab needs a statesman with the capacity to absorb public hatred

The AAP government has wasted its historic mandate, made mistakes, not by accident but out of political compulsion

It's true that the economic bequest to the AAP government was not good. The state's outstanding debt was Rs 2.85 lakh crore on March 31, 2022. Since then, this government has wasted its historic mandate, made mistakes, not by accident but out of political compulsion, writes Ajay Vir Jakhar, Chairperson, Bharat Krishak Samaj, in his Edit article Punjab must face inconvenient truths. Leave apart debt repayment, Punjab spends more on interest payments (Rs 28,775 crore) than it does on education and health combined. Controlling a state's budget will alienate powerful organised blocs like government staff and farmers, he avers. The task will require a rare political commodity: a statesman with the sheer capacity to absorb public hatred. For Punjab to reverse the trajectory of decline, whoever wins the 2027 election, will need the cooperation of the Union Government—otherwise, the state will sink further into a disaster of its own making, he writes. In 1993, Punjab ranked third among Indian states in per capita income. Today, at least 15 states have overtaken it. A government that cannot fund a school or a road on its own income is not governing a state; it is managing a slow bankruptcy with a smile, say BJP national spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla & Geojuristoday Research Foundation director Rudraksh Aneja in the Op-Ed article Warning bells for Punjab's future. The bulk of the state's revenue receipts is consumed by salaries, pensions, interest and subsidies. There is little left to build anything. Punjab's most serious challenge today is the absence of a shared political vision, writes former Punjab Parliamentary Affairs Minister Brahm Mohindra in his Op-Ed article Punjab needs vision beyond politics. It needs all its political leaders to together draft a common charter. We need to focus on finding answers to questions like: What should be Punjab's new economic model that can reduce the state's debt burden? What industries should be prioritised? How can quality jobs be created on a meaningful scale? How can the state retain its youth and get it to participate both in politics and governance? The Akal Takht Jathedar summoned members of the elected legislature to the Amritsar durbar and asked them to explain why they had passed the Jaagat Jot Sri Guru Granth Sahib Satkar (Amendment) Act. The AAP is damned if it implements the Akal Takht Jathedar's list of amendments and damned if it does not, writes senior journalist Nirmal Sandhu in his Op-Ed article Politics takes a religious turn. Sukhbir Badal controls the SGPC that picks and drops Akal Takht Jathedars at will without following any due process. His calculated strategy was to put Mann on the spot. And he has succeeded, he writes. Had the Chief Minister taken the SGPC on board



and not gone to town congratulating himself for the achievement, his zealous opponents might not have taken so unkindly to it, he thinks.

The statement that the passport was only a travel document and not a proof of citizenship, conveyed a legal truth but left a public bruise. It is evident that voter deletion unplugs the citizen from the State, writes Supreme Court senior advocate Sanjay Hegde in his Edit piece The kill switch of citizenship. The real machinery is not in the passport office. It is in the electoral rolls. We have already seen it work in West Bengal. The Special Intensive Revision struck off 63 lakh names from the rolls, then they will be wiped out from ration cards, then the non-renewal of passport—so the deletion is the kill switch of citizenship. A citizen's name on the rolls ought not to be struck off on proof demanded from him, but only on proof brought against him. The videos showing caretakers at a Bengaluru daycare centre shocked the nation. We are talking about allegations of systematic cruelty against toddlers—children allegedly locked inside bathrooms, placed inside washing machines, sprayed with toilet jets because they cried. When something like this happens, it doesn't merely traumatise parents. It sends a chilling message to thousands of women contemplating a return to work: perhaps it simply isn't worth the risk, writes author Meghna Pant in her Op-Ed article A daycare crisis, a workforce crisis. It's no longer just about one daycare. It is about whether modern India truly supports working families. Women's empowerment does not begin in the boardroom. Sometimes, it begins in the

daycare facility, she writes.

Israel has a tough conscription policy under which every 18-year-old must devote 32 months to military service. Kasol in Kullu's Parvati valley, which is a hotspot for Israeli rave parties, was recently in news when a court order was passed against senior police officers for negligence in controlling the ravages of Kasol's rave culture. The place plays its therapeutic role after their conscription with the help of DJs, loud electronic music, strobe lights, alcohol and drugs. If an imaginary invoice is sent to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, he might appreciate that Kasol therapy restores his youth's capacity to be recalled for battle, writes former NCERT director Krishna Kumar in his Edit piece An invoice for Netanyahu. Having successfully weathared an unprecedented energy crisis, India should quickly take advantage of softer energy prices and plentiful supplies to rebuild its strategic petroleum reserves and start working on similar reserves for LNG. Diversification of oil supplies is an essential hedge for a heavily import-dependent country like India, but it doesn't trump the reality that the Gulf is Delhi's most proximate source of oil & gas, writes former Ambassador to Egypt and UAE Navdeep Suri in his Edit piece Gulf anchors India's energy security. The UAE's decision to quit the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) amid the crisis was an indication that it planned to raise its crude oil output from 3.2 million to almost 5 million barrels per day over the next year or so. It could end up supplying a larger share to the Indian market in the coming years, he writes.

## Manholes & potholes : Safe roads and drains require accountability

Civic negligence and poor engineering continue to endanger lives every rainy season

THE monsoon has once again exposed the dangerous state of India's public infrastructure. The death of a Mumbai resident after he fell into an uncovered manhole hidden beneath rainwater and the cave-in on the newly built Delhi-Dehradun Expressway are not isolated mishaps. They are grim reminders that civic negligence and poor engineering continue to endanger lives every rainy season. The Mumbai tragedy was preventable. An open manhole left unsecured during maintenance became an invisible death trap when heavy rain flooded the area. The suspension of civic officials and blacklisting of the contractor are necessary steps, but they come only after a life has been lost. Barricades, warning signs and temporary covers are basic safety measures that should never be optional. Last year, a woman and her three-year-old son in Delhi were swept into a flooded drain after their scooter skidded during heavy rain, underscoring the lethal consequences of poorly secured drainage infrastructure. The expressway cave-



in points to a different but equally troubling problem. Roads do not collapse overnight. Poor drainage, inadequate soil stabilisation and compromised construction quality allow water to erode the ground

beneath the surface until the pavement gives way. Similar concerns arose after a spate of bridge collapses in Bihar in 2024, while Bengaluru and Mumbai continue to witness pothole-ridden roads causing injuries and traffic chaos every monsoon. These incidents share a common denominator: failure to anticipate predictable risks. India experiences a monsoon every year, yet authorities continue to treat its consequences as unforeseen emergencies. Contractors face little accountability, inspections are often perfunctory and maintenance remains reactive rather than preventive.

The answer lies in institutionalising rigorous pre-monsoon safety audits, enforcing engineering standards, conducting independent quality checks and making contractors legally accountable. Until prevention replaces damage control, every spell of rain will continue to expose the deep cracks in public governance.

## Touchstones: Lessons for the pampered

This is no time to say, 'We told you so,' but all careless actions have punishing consequences

From time to time, I revisit my old columns to make sure that I am not repeating myself and to find something fresh to write about. This time, I discovered that two past columns, written years ago, could happily be lifted and they would still be relevant. Obviously, the more things change, the more they remain the same, as a wise man once remarked. The columns I am referring to were on the mayhem that was created when Russia and then America decided to abandon Afghanistan and run back after having destroyed a country that had defeated them. They left the devastated country in the hands of the very Taliban they had vowed to exterminate and what was worse, they left behind a huge cache of weapons that fell into the very hands they did not want to inherit them. Few will forget the pathetic sight of desperate Afghans trying to board the planes that were going to ferry the goras back to safety, some even tossing little babies for soldiers to take with them.

Now tell me, how different from the above is what the same goras have done to the Middle East? Far from getting rid of the mullahs and Hezbollah, they are now desperately seeking some kind of face-saving deal with the Iranians, who hold all the Trump cards (forgive the bad pun). What is worse, they have plunged the entire world (including their own UN allies) into an economic crisis that shows no sign of easing. The 'Muddle East' and the locked Strait of Hormuz are going to be their nemesis in almost the same way that Afghanistan was/is. European nations are helplessly battling the double whammy of the unprecedented heatwave and their failing economies by blaming what they have always done: it's all because of illegal immigrants. The UK has seen six PMs in the past decade and all they can do is watch their once prosperous country slide into



a deeper mess than ever imagined. Their economy, their once-famous National Health Service (NHS) and their young have devolved into total anarchy. Their young people, pampered by the Welfare State, are not interested in higher education or hard work. The family and the Church—that kept people sane and civil—are no longer the institutions they once were and their idyllic countryside has more immigrants from East Europe and Asia than they can handle. I am convinced that their prosperous post-war society was built and sustained by the loot that all the ex-imperial powers had brought back from their erstwhile colonies. Now that they have run out of that resource, there is nothing left. Brexit was the last nail in their coffin that permanently estranged them

from the rest of Europe. The high-minded lectures that are given to us by France, Belgium, Portugal, Spain and England about the abuse of human rights in Africa and Asia sound so hollow now when their own countries are attacking those of another colour or nationality. If India was blamed for being casteist, can we now ask whether they were not divided by class and feudalism? And if we look deep enough, what the British did to destroy religious harmony in the subcontinent by partitioning it into areas of Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist faiths is in no small measure responsible for the harvest of hatred we have to now reap. Let us come now to the dreadful heatwave sweeping over this once temperate zone. For years, climate guardians had been warning the

developed nations about their profligate overuse of the earth's resources. Their response was to point to the developing world and place unfair restrictions on the use of coal as it was polluting the world. Today, we all know who is suffering the most as the hot winds from the Sahara, coupled with the El Nino hovering over the Pacific, are singeing their own lands. This is no time to say, 'We told you so,' but all careless actions have punishing consequences. To read and see on our TV screens people in countries such as Switzerland now frantically buying air-conditioners to cool their homes, is a bizarre sight. There have actually been days when New Delhi has had lower day temperatures than London, Barcelona or Basel! What is worse, the poor dears don't know how to deal with such heat.

Their homes are designed to keep heat in and have low ceilings, double-glazed windows and no provision for cross-ventilation. The power consumption has reached levels that can no longer be supplied so schools and offices have to be shut down. The tar on the roads is melting, railway tracks are coming apart... literally a meltdown. Finally, a word on the ongoing FIFA World Cup mania. Look at all the teams and what do you see? Barring Messi and one or two others, most of the brilliant players are from Africa or the Caribbean. Even that unheard-of little Cape Verde (I'm not sure where it is on the world's map) has humbled mighty opponents. England managed to just about defeat Congo, while Scotland quietly bowed out of the tournament. Reflect on these gutsy coloured players—many of them probably did not even have proper gear or the kind of high-protein diet that the pampered European teams get. A lesson there? I think so. Will it be learnt? I don't think so.

## Short news

## 2 children drown after falling into ditch linked to water scheme

Agartala. (Agency)

Two children, aged over four and three, drowned after falling into a water-filled ditch near their house in a tribal village of Gujarat's Chhota Udepur district on Monday. The ditch turned into a deep pond due to the leakage from a pipeline of the Kuppa Water Supply Scheme, the residents alleged, and demanded action against the officials concerned for keeping the ditch uncovered.

The incident occurred around noon in Moti Jaduli village of Kawant taluka, where the daughters of Budhariya Bhill were playing close to their residence. They allegedly slipped into the pit and drowned before help could reach them. Gujarat tribal village waits for a road nearly 2 years later

Family members and villagers rushed to the spot after learning about the incident and pulled the children out of the water before taking them to the hospital. Doctors at the local health centre declared both girls dead on arrival. The deceased were identified as four-and-a-half-year-old Nirumati and three-and-a-half-year-old Meenakshi Bhill. The incident sparked criticism from residents and elected representatives, who alleged that the water-filled ditch was linked to works under the Kuppa Water Supply Scheme and had been left uncovered and unsecured.

## Manipur Police arrest sexual assault accused, militants; recover IED and ammunition

Imphal (Agency)

Manipur Police and security forces carried out a series of operations across the state on July 5 and 6, arresting a sexual assault accused, several active militant cadres, and recovering explosives, ammunition and other incriminating items, police said on Tuesday.

On July 5, acting on a complaint of sexual assault on a minor girl registered at Women Police Station, Senapati, Manipur Police arrested the accused, K. Luckyson Pundi of Maram Bazar under Maram Police Station, Senapati district, from his residence.

In a separate operation on Monday, security forces apprehended two juvenile active cadres of KNF (MC) from the Mobile Vehicle Check Post (MVCP) at P. Geljang in Churachandpur district. A total of 77 rounds of 5.56 mm live ammunition were recovered from their possession.

During area domination and foot patrolling at Chiru village in the Phayeng area under Kangchup Police Station, Kangpokpi district, on Monday, Manipur Police personnel recovered a suspected improvised explosive device (IED) along with four locally made mortar shells.

On the same day, Manipur Police arrested an active cadre of UNLF (P) from the Porompat Police Station area. Police seized a licensed Thompson repeater single-barrel gun along with its licence and two Baofeng handheld communication sets with chargers from his possession.

Earlier, on July 5, security forces arrested an active cadre of NRFM, from Luwangsangbam Makha Leikai under Heingang Police Station in Imphal East district. Police said the accused was involved in a recent firing incident at a residential house in Pangei, Imphal East, allegedly to intimidate residents and extort money.

## Pune-Mumbai Expressway missing link reopens partially after landslide

Mumbai. (Agency)

Two Mumbai-bound lanes on the Mumbai-Pune Expressway's Missing Link are open after a landslide, but one lane remains blocked due to water flow from a collapsed channel.

The Missing Link was partially reopened late Monday night, nearly 19 hours after a landslide forced its closure, officials said.

Traffic from Mumbai to Pune resumed at 10:10 pm on July 6 following debris clearance and safety inspections near Tunnel 2 in the Lonavala section, the Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation (MSRDC) said.

The official also said that the Rs 7,000-crore Missing Link tunnel remains structurally safe despite damage to its entrance following heavy rainfall.

The Pune-to-Mumbai carriageway, however, remains shut. Vehicles heading to Mumbai are being diverted via the old NH-48, police said. A landslide triggered by heavy overnight rain hit the entry of Tunnel 2 around 3 am. MSRDC said teams worked for 14 hours to clear debris. The reopening was delayed due to rain, poor visibility and technical assessments. "No loose rocks or unstable material were found during inspections of Tunnel 2 and the adjoining slope," an MSRDC statement said. The agency termed the incident an "act of God" and rejected claims of construction flaws. It added that safety barriers helped reduce damage.

MSRDC said a fresh geological survey will be conducted post-monsoon, and the feasibility of additional protective netting will be examined. The 13.3-km Missing Link, inaugurated on May 1, reduces travel time between Mumbai and Pune by 25-30 minutes.

## Bhagwant Mann video row: Gurugram police yet to question Punjab officers despite proof

Sources say investigators have CCTV footage, hotel records and an alleged money trail linking two senior officers to the case

Chandigarh. (Agency)

The Gurugram police, which registered a case against two persons, Arun and Ankit, on charges of allegedly creating a fabricated forensic report pertaining to controversial videos allegedly featuring Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, has apparently developed cold feet in the investigation.

According to sources, the Gurugram police is yet to question two senior Punjab Police officers — a Deputy Inspector General (DIG) and a Superintendent of Police (SP) — one of whom was allegedly referred to as "Bade Sahib".

Highly placed sources told The Indian Express that despite having substantial evidence, including CCTV footage from the hotel where the two officers allegedly held multiple meetings with

the complainant, Jaspreet Singh, hotel stay records showing they stayed at the same hotel, food and beverage bills, vehicle registration details and CCTV footage of the vehicles arriving at the hotel in Gurugram, the police has not yet questioned either officer.

The two accused in the case, Ankit and Arun, were arrested on June 23 and subsequently produced before a Gurugram court. They were interrogated in police custody for eight days before being sent to judicial custody on July 2.

In the FIR, Jaspreet Singh alleged that he reached the hotel at around 10 pm on June 15, where he "met the individual who had identified himself as a senior officer of the Government of Punjab. Another highly senior officer was also present with him, whom the people

present at the venue were addressing as 'Bade Sahib'. If the said officer is produced before me or shown to me during the course of the investigation, I



can identify him. During the said meeting, I was informed that a controversial video purportedly relating to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Punjab was being circulated on social media. I

was further told that reports were required to be prepared stating that the video was AI-generated, manipulated, fabricated, or otherwise unreliable, and that the person appearing in the video was not the Hon'ble Chief Minister."

According to the Gurugram police's preliminary investigation, the two Punjab Police officers also allegedly paid Rs 10 lakh to the accused. The Gurugram police has reportedly established the alleged money trail.

Sources said the Punjab Police top brass got in touch with their counterparts in Haryana before and after the FIR was registered. The two Punjab Police officers who allegedly figure in the CCTV footage obtained by the Gurugram police continue to hold their present posts in Punjab.

## Two injured in separate lion attacks in Gujarat, says forest dept

**In Bhavnagar, a sub-adult lion attacked a man and a video of the incident surfaced on social media. In the video, the lion is seen sitting on top of the injured man and the latter is trying to break free, while villagers raise an alarm nearby.**

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

AT LEAST two incidents of lion attacks on humans were reported from Bhavnagar and Amreli districts since Sunday night — with victims in both the incidents now undergoing treatment for their injuries in hospitals.

In Bhavnagar, a sub-adult lion attacked a man and a video of the incident surfaced on social media. In the video, the lion is seen sitting on top of the injured man and the latter is trying to break free, while villagers raise an alarm nearby.

The incident was reported from Garajiya village of Palitana tehsil in the district, which falls under Palitana Wildlife Range. Forest department officials identified the injured as Kalubhai Parmar, a resident of Garajiya village. The office of Range Forest Officer, Palitana Range, said in a statement



that on June 5, a "prey was made" by a wild lion near Sonpari village. And then, around 9 am on Monday, the lion reached the revenue hill area in Garajiya village that is part of

it attacked a buffalo belonging to a local resident. The statement added that following this, some villagers harassed the lion, even running after it and trying to confine the big cat. A local resident, Kalubhai Parmar, was injured by the lion when he tried to protect his livestock. The lion then fled into the revenue hill area nearby.

The incident was reported around 9 am on Monday.

Forest Department officials soon reached the village and shifted Parmar first to Palitana Government Hospital and then to Bhavnagar Government Hospital for treatment.

In the statement, the forest department also underlined that the best example of Asiatic lions' coexistence is that the Maldhari (cattle herders) community is aware of its behaviour.

## Lone survivor rescued, search on for six missing fishermen off Visakhapatnam

VISAKHAPATNAM. (Agency)

Search and rescue operations for the six fishermen missing after fishing boat IND-AP-MM-VS-83 went missing off the Visakhapatnam coast continued on Monday, while the lone survivor, Kari Chinna, was brought ashore safely by the Indian Navy.

He was airlifted from the Panama-flagged merchant vessel MV Universe Wealthy to INS Dega at around 7 pm. Officials said he underwent a preliminary medical examination, was found to be in good health, and was later shifted to KIMS ICON Hospital, for further medical evaluation.

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, who is closely monitoring the operation, directed officials to step up the search for the missing fishermen. He instructed authorities to

widen the search around Gangavaram, where the boat capsized, and extend radius. Naval command deploys 2 ships and 2



helicopters for rescue operation. Officials informed the Chief Minister that inclement weather continues to hamper rescue operations. Naidu instructed the administration to make every effort to trace the missing fishermen at the earliest and

ensure all necessary assistance is extended to their families. He also directed officials to keep him informed of developments in the rescue operation on a regular basis.

Kari Chinna, who owns the missing fishing boat, was rescued by MV Universe Wealthy on Sunday after the boat went missing at sea. Officials said rough sea conditions had initially prevented his transfer to another vessel or evacuation by helicopter. The rescue was carried out after weather conditions improved sufficiently to allow the airlift. The Coast Guard, Indian Navy and Visakhapatnam Port authorities coordinated the operation. According to the Coastal Security Police, information about the missing fishing boat was received from the fishing community at around 11 pm on July 4.

## UP man kills lover in sleep, chops up body after fight over her mobile chats

**Police said a man in Uttar Pradesh's Jaunpur allegedly killed a woman in her sleep after an argument over mobile phone chats, dismembered her body and dumped the remains at different locations. The case unfolded after residents found her torso, with police later arresting the suspect as he allegedly attempted to dispose of the remaining body parts.**

Jaunpur. (Agency)

A 38-year-old married woman was allegedly murdered by her lover, who police say slit her throat while she was asleep after an argument over mobile phone chats, dismembered her body into three pieces and dumped the remains at different locations in Uttar Pradesh's Jaunpur district before being arrested in a police encounter while allegedly trying to dispose of the remaining body parts.

Police identified the accused as Hemal Khakharia alias Dilip, 42, a resident of Gujarat currently living in the Teachers' Colony in the Madiyahu area of Jaunpur. The victim was identified as Reshma Khan alias Sana.

According to police, Khakharia was intercepted late on Sunday night near Ramnagar Block Gate after the police tracked him. Police said he allegedly

opened fire while attempting to flee, prompting retaliatory firing in which he sustained a bullet injury to his right leg before being arrested.

BODY FOUND, PROBE BEGINS  
The case came to light on Sunday morning when local residents spotted a mutilated human torso wrapped in a black polythene sheet in bushes near the Ranipur Bypass in the Madiyahu police station area and alerted police.

The remains were sent for post-mortem examination, while a police team launched an investigation using electronic and other evidence to identify the victim and trace those responsible.

WHAT POLICE SAY HAPPENED  
According to police, Khakharia had brought Reshma from Babatpur in Varanasi to his rented accommodation in Teachers' Colony on July 4.

While at the room, the two allegedly got into an argument after going through chats on a mobile phone. Although the dispute later appeared to subside, police



said the accused remained angry. Investigators allege that after the woman fell asleep, Khakharia slit her throat with a knife, killing her. Police said he then went to a nearby market, bought black

polythene bags and returned to the room, where he used a cleaver to cut the body into three pieces, severing the hands and legs before packing the remains separately. According to police, the torso was dumped near the Ranipur Bypass, while the legs and other body parts were discarded near a culvert close to the Ramnagar Block crossing. ENCOUNTER AND ARREST

Police said the accused became alarmed after learning that one of the body parts had already been recovered and that investigators were working to identify the victim. According to the Circle Officer of Madiyahu, Khakharia allegedly set out late on Sunday night to remove or conceal the remaining body parts. Acting on a tip-off, police laid a cordon near the Ramnagar Block Gate and intercepted him.



Additional Superintendent of Police Arvind Kumar Verma said an inquiry had been ordered into the incident and that police would review CCTV footage from cameras installed at the police station. Action against officers found responsible would be taken based on the inquiry's findings, he said, adding that Shivraj's condition was stable.

Locals protest

Shivraj is a resident of the Merapur locality, which falls under the jurisdiction of the Sadar Kotwali police station in Hamirpur.

The incident sparked anger among local residents, who staged a protest demanding action against the police personnel behind the alleged assault. The protest ended after senior officers assured the demonstrators that the allegations would be thoroughly investigated and strict action would follow if wrongdoing was established.

# You want us to regulate the CM? Supreme Court raps DMK in Karur stampede case

**The Supreme Court refused the DMK's plea to stop Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay and TVK leaders from speaking to Karur stampede victims' families. The bench said it could not become a political forum and later dismissed the applications as withdrawn.**

**New Delhi.(Agency)**

The Supreme Court on Tuesday rejected a plea filed by the DMK seeking to restrain Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay and other TVK leaders from making public statements or interacting with families of those killed in the September 2025 Karur stampede. A bench of Justice KV Viswanathan and Justice Alok Aradhe observed that the apex court should not be turned into a "political forum" and questioned the very basis of the application, noting that it had itself ordered a CBI probe into the case. "How does the Supreme Court, which has itself directed a CBI probe in the matter, accept the plea of a political

rival? You want the Chief Minister's visit to be regulated by the Supreme Court and fix his itinerary?" the bench asked.

In its plea, the former ruling party sought action against remarks allegedly made by TVK minister Aadhav Arjuna, claiming that they could influence witnesses and impede the CBI probe into the Karur stampede, which claimed 41 lives during a party event.

It also urged the court to restrain Vijay from interacting with victims' families during his proposed

July 10 visit to Karur, where he is scheduled to distribute government



benefits, including compassionate appointments and financial assistance.

The CBI investigation is being monitored by a three-member supervisory committee headed by former Supreme Court judge Justice Ajay Rastogi, in accordance with the Court's October 2025 directions. The bench, however, questioned the argument, and said, "Today, hypothetically, if an executive head is going to distribute what is already promised, how will it influence victims?"

When senior advocate Huzefa Ahmadi, appearing for the DMK, argued that the concern was not merely about the executive but that "he

is also the accused", the respondent's counsel clarified that the Chief Minister was not named as an accused in either of the FIRs.

"Please check, the ministers are the accused, not the Chief Minister," the court added. While strongly disapproving of the petition, the bench further cautioned the petitioner against pursuing the application. "We would advise you not to press this application here; we will dismiss it. There are repercussions of this which you have not been talked through." Following the court's observations, the DMK sought permission to withdraw the applications to pursue other legal remedies.

## Two Pak-backed terror modules busted, six nabbed in Delhi

**New Delhi.(Agency)**

Delhi Police has busted two alleged Pakistan-linked terror modules and arrested six operatives who were allegedly being handled by Pakistan-based Shahzad Bhatti, officials said. One module was tasked with carrying out a terror attack targeting a vital installation or police establishment in the capital, while the other was involved in cross-border arms trafficking, officials said on Monday.

"The first module was being handled by Pakistan's intelligence agency ISI handler Rana Hunain, an associate of Bhatti. This module was tasked to carry out an attack on any vital installation or police establishment in Delhi using petrol bombs." Additional Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) Pramod Singh Kushwah said.

Two accused were arrested from Vijay Ghat area along with three petrol bombs and Rs 2000. They have been identified as Danish alias Chand Miya (24) and Salman (20), both residents of Muzaffarnagar in Uttar Pradesh, officials said.

The second module was allegedly involved in cross-border arms trafficking and was being handled by ISI handler Hassan Gujjar, another associate of Bhatti. This module was receiving weapons smuggled from Pakistan through drones, police said.

The funds provided by the handlers were allegedly being used to finance terror and criminal activities in India. Three accused were arrested from Kalindi Kunj area along with three pistols and five live cartridges. A fourth accused was arrested from Amritsar in Punjab, Kushwah stated. In this module, police nabbed Tayyab (27), a resident of Delhi, Jubair Khan (24), Ali Fazal (26), residents of UP, and Malkiat Singh (36), a resident of Punjab.

## L-G Taranjit Singh, CM Rekha Gupta order child panels in remaining 4.5k schools in Delhi

**New Delhi.(Agency)**

Lieutenant Governor Taranjit Singh Sandhu and Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Monday chaired a review meeting at Raj Niwas to assess the implementation of various programmes, campaigns and safety measures being carried out as part of the ongoing Child Protection Month in July.

The education department informed the L-G and the CM that a comprehensive student safety checklist, in accordance with the guidelines of the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights (DCPCR) and the POCSO Act, is being implemented in all 5,633 schools across Delhi.

These include 1,077 Delhi Government schools, 198 government-aided schools, 2,612 MCD, NDMC and Delhi Cantonment Board schools and 1,746 private schools. The child protection committees have already been constituted in all Delhi government schools in accordance with the POCSO Act. The L-G and CM directed that similar committees should be constituted in all 5,633 schools across Delhi by the end of July.

The department is also training teachers, school staff and master trainers under the provisions of the POCSO Act. Special arrangements are being made to ensure safety of children with special needs. Also, educational and vocational counsellors are conducting awareness sessions for students on safe and unsafe touch, gender sensitisation and personal boundaries. Self-defence training is also being provided to students in schools.

Delhi Police said that initiatives are being undertaken for the safety of schoolchildren. To strengthen monitoring of child safety cases, an additional deputy commissioner of police has been designated as the nodal officer in every district and will report to the deputy commissioner of police.

During the review, the L-G and the CM directed that child protection initiatives should not remain limited to the month of July but become a permanent and integral part of the functioning of all institutions.

## Delhi High Court orders unblocking of Cockroach Janata Party's X account

**New Delhi.(Agency)**

The Delhi High Court on Friday directed that the X account of the Cockroach Janata Party be unblocked after a bench of Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma allowed the petition filed by the party's founder, Abhijit Dipke.

The court noted that the Centre's primary concern, which had led to the blocking of the account, was no longer relevant as the NEET examination had already concluded. On that basis, the plea was allowed, reported Live Law. During the hearing, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Union government, said the main concern behind blocking the party's X account was that its posts could create chaos among students and parents during

the NEET exam.

Taking note of this submission, the court observed that since the examination was now over, the issue cited by the Centre stood resolved. It



then ordered that the X account of the Cockroach Janata Party be unblocked.

With this, the High Court allowed Dipke's plea, holding that the concern raised by the Union government in relation to the NEET

examination no longer survived after the exam had ended.

The X account of the satirical online collective was blocked in India on May 21, five days after the group was launched and quickly gathered momentum on social media. Its rise came amid anger over remarks made by about unemployed youth.

The satirical campaign emerged after remarks made by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant Kant during a court hearing triggered a political row and a storm on social media. The judge had said, "There are youngsters, like cockroaches, who don't get any employment or have any place in profession. Some of them become media, some of them become social media, RTI activists and other activists, and they start attacking everyone."

## AAP protests alleged Rs 650 crore health scam in Delhi, BJP hits back

**New Delhi.(Agency)**

The AAP on Monday staged a protest at LNJ Hospital over an alleged Rs 650 crore medicine procurement scam in the Delhi government, questioning Chief Minister Rekha Gupta over the alleged escape of main accused to Germany.

AAP Delhi president Saurabh Bharadwaj alleged that Rajiv Rangeela was not arrested by the Anti-Corruption Branch (ACB) for a month and was allowed to leave the country. "There was a health scam worth Rs 650 crore in the capital. The main accused was not

arrested by the ACB for a month, and he was allowed to flee to Germany," Bharadwaj said.

bypassing senior officials.

AAP MLAs Sanjeev Jha and Kuldeep Kumar joined the protest. Jha alleged that the contractor involved in the case had been allowed to flee, while the ACB had pegged the alleged scam at Rs 650 crore. Responding to the allegations, Delhi BJP spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor said Agrawal had headed three hospitals and a medical body during the previous AAP regime. He said her appointment was based on seniority and that the present Delhi government ordered an ACB probe as soon as the allegations surfaced, leading to her arrest. The ACB is investigating the alleged scam.



He alleged that Dr Vatsala Agrawal was appointed as head of the Delhi government's health department despite a vigilance inquiry and by

## Punjab Congress rift deepens ahead of 2027 polls, high command faces key test

**The Congress high command retained Amarinder Singh Raja Warring as Punjab chief while appointing Charanjit Singh Channi to lead the Campaign Committee. The move has failed to calm the dissident camp, turning Baghel's Chandigarh meetings into a test of central authority.**

**New Delhi.(Agency)**

With the 2027 Punjab Assembly elections drawing closer, the Congress finds itself battling an internal political storm that threatens to overshadow its preparations for the crucial electoral contest. What began as a debate over the party's state leadership has now evolved into a full-blown factional battle, presenting the Congress high command with a major organisational challenge in Punjab. Several senior Congress leaders are widely seen as Chief Ministerial aspirants, making the post of Punjab Congress president far more than an organisational responsibility. The position has become the focal point of the party's internal power struggle. The latest confrontation was triggered

after the recent local body elections. While the Congress performed strongly in areas represented by former Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi, the



party's showing in Punjab Congress chief Amarinder Singh Raja Warring's political turf was comparatively underwhelming. Sensing an opportunity, a powerful section within

the party intensified its demand for Warring's replacement.

The Congress leadership, however, decided against making any abrupt changes. According to party sources, the high command held nearly eight rounds of consultations before arriving at a decision. It also considered a detailed assessment by Bhupesh Baghel and recommendations from a committee headed by senior leader Ajay Maken. Eventually, the leadership chose to retain Warring as Punjab Congress president while attempting to balance competing ambitions by distributing key organisational responsibilities among senior leaders.

Channi was appointed chairman of the Campaign Committee, while other prominent leaders were accommodated

as chairpersons and members of various election-related committees. The appointments were also designed to maintain social balance by ensuring representation for Punjab's major communities, including Jat Sikhs, Dalit Sikhs and Hindus. Within the Congress, the Campaign Committee chief is often regarded as the party's unofficial Chief Ministerial face when it is in the Opposition, making Channi's appointment politically significant.

Despite these efforts, the leadership's balancing act appears to have failed to pacify the dissenting camp. Sources say Channi, who was keen to become the state party president, held meetings with his supporters soon after the organisational appointments were announced, signalling that the issue was far from settled.

## NEWS BOX

## Wimbledon order of play: Djokovic, Sinner headline quarter-final action

LONDON. (Agency)

The Wimbledon quarter-finals begin on Tuesday with Novak Djokovic, Jannik Sinner, Coco Gauff and Naomi Osaka among the biggest names in action as the race for the men's and women's singles titles gathers pace.

Djokovic and defending champion Sinner are both in action and could set up a blockbuster semi-final if they come through their respective last-eight matches. In the women's draw, Osaka will look to continue her impressive run after knocking out world No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka, while Gauff and Pegula meet in an all-American quarter-final. Centre Court will also host the conclusion of Alexander Zverev's fourth-round clash with Jiri Lehecka after play was suspended because of Wimbledon's 11 pm curfew on Monday. Zverev leads by two sets, with the third set locked at 3-3.

**DJOKOVIC CONTINUES BID FOR HISTORY**

Djokovic faces third seed Felix Auger-Aliassime in the standout men's quarter-final



on Centre Court. The pair are level at 1-1 in their head-to-head record, with a place in the semi-finals at stake. The 39-year-old Serbian is chasing a record-extending 25th Grand Slam title and an eighth Wimbledon crown, which would draw him level with Roger Federer's record for the most men's singles titles at the All England Club. It would also make Djokovic the oldest men's Grand Slam champion in the Open era. The former world No. 1 admitted recovery has become a bigger priority as he looks to maintain his remarkable longevity. "I think the amount of time I spend recovering nowadays is more than I have ever done. It's just the demands of the body nowadays - more wear and tear," Djokovic said. "Throughout my career, I always try to look what can give me an edge. What's the best recovery, wellness technology out there.

"From hyperbaric chambers, to cryo chambers, to cold immersions, to red light therapy to pulse electromagnetic therapies. There's a lot of things that I have used."

## Shapoor Zadran, former Afghanistan fast bowler, dies at 38 after prolonged illness

New Delhi. (Agency)

Former fast bowler and one of the pioneers of Afghanistan cricket, Shapoor Zadran, died at the age of 38 following a courageous battle with a rare illness. The Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) shared the news on social media on Tuesday, July 7, prompting an outpouring of grief across the cricketing community.

Zadran had been undergoing intensive medical care at a hospital in New Delhi since January. His brother, Ghamai Zadran, along with former national captain Asghar Afghan, had accompanied him to India after the bowler first felt unwell in his home country last October. "With profound grief and deep sorrow, the Afghanistan Cricket Board mourns the passing of former Afghanistan fast bowler Shapoor Zadran," the ACB said in an official statement. "Shapoor Zadran was one of the foundation-laying figures of Afghanistan cricket, whose dedication, passion, and unwavering commitment played a vital role in the rise and development of the game in our country. He was among the proud cricketers who stood at the heart of Afghanistan's early cricket journey and helped build the path that brought Afghan cricket to the international stage."

The robust left-arm pacer had been fighting an advanced form of Hemophagocytic Lymphohistiocytosis (HLH), a rare and life-threatening disorder of immune regulation where overactive white blood cells attack the body's own organs. According to medical details shared by his family, Zadran's condition had been severely compounded by a massive, aggressive infection that ravaged his compromised immune system.

"It was a very serious infection," Ghamai Zadran had told Cricinfo earlier this year.

"His whole body was full of the infection, including TB (tuberculosis). It also spread to his brain."

Despite briefly showing signs of recovery, which allowed him to be discharged to a nearby hotel for a three-week period, the respite proved short-lived. The infection returned aggressively, forcing doctors to readmit him to the intensive care unit (ICU), where he ultimately succumbed to the illness just a day before his 39th birthday.

For cricket purists, Shapoor Zadran will forever be remembered as one of the original heroes of Afghanistan's romantic rise in international sport. Blessed with a towering frame, a ferocious, bounding run-up, and flowing black hair, he personified the raw, untamed passion of Afghan cricket.

# FIFA president condemns racist abuse of Kylian Mbappe after Paraguay row

**FIFA president Gianni Infantino has condemned the racist comments directed at France captain Kylian Mbappe by a Paraguayan senator, saying the football community stands in solidarity with the French star.**

New Delhi. (Agency)

France captain Kylian Mbappe has received the backing of Gianni Infantino after the FIFA president condemned racist comments made by Paraguayan senator Celeste Amarilla, calling for football and society to unite against racism. Infantino broke his silence on Tuesday after Amarilla launched a racist tirade against Mbappe following Paraguay's 1-0 defeat to France in the FIFA World Cup quarter-finals. The France captain scored the decisive penalty in Philadelphia as Didier Deschamps' side booked their place in the last four. "I

unequivocally condemn the racist comments directed towards Kylian Mbappe by Paraguayan senator Celeste Amarilla. All of football and society stand in solidarity with the France captain. We need to fight racism and defeat it all together," Infantino wrote on his Instagram story. The Paraguayan government also distanced itself from Amarilla's remarks, saying they did not reflect the country's values or its official position. In a statement, the foreign ministry said the senator's comments were "contrary to the values and principles that inspire peaceful coexistence and respect for human dignity". It added that Amarilla's remarks were made in her personal capacity and "in no way represent the position of the Government of the Republic of Paraguay or the Paraguayan people." Amarilla, a member of the opposition Liberal Party, described Mbappe as a "colonised Cameroonian" who had "pretended to be French" and made several other racist and insulting remarks on social media. She also claimed Paraguay's players should have slapped the France

captain after the match. Mbappe responded with a strongly worded statement, calling Amarilla "a despicable woman" who was "unworthy" of holding public office. "You do



not represent Paraguay, that country which has sweated passion and honour throughout the competition," Mbappe wrote.

"Through your recklessness and your brazen racism, the entire world has already forgotten the journey and the historic effort that your players accomplished during this World Cup.

"I will never allow people like her the freedom to spread their hatred and racism across the world." The French Football Federation announced it would file a criminal complaint, describing Amarilla's comments as "utterly abhorrent and unacceptable." "These remarks are criminal and reprehensible. They must be prosecuted here as elsewhere," the federation said, adding that the abuse was directed not only at Mbappe but also at France as a nation.

French assistant coach Guy Stephan also condemned the comments, describing them as "disgraceful, vile, outrageous". Support for Mbappe also came from Emmanuel Macron, who praised the forward for standing up to racism. "Another goal for Kylian Mbappe. Against racism this time. All my support. When words smear, our values respond: dignity, respect, fraternity," Macron wrote on X. Meanwhile, Paraguayan Congress president Basilio Nunez rejected Amarilla's comments, saying they did not represent the "genuine values" of the Paraguayan people and insisting that politics and sport should remain separate.

## Sarvesh Kushare, the understated ascent, and the science of mature longevity

**Following his historic 2.31 m national record, understated Indian high jumper Sarvesh Kushare is quietly defying the biological clock, proving that technical mastery and mature longevity can carry him to the cusp of global podium finishes.**

New Delhi. (Agency)

We spend so many of our years watching or trying to walk straight in life that it is a complete paradox that an athlete running in a curve could be so fascinating, a sheer delight to watch. When Sarvesh Anil Kushare cleared the 2.31m bar at the Kalinga in Bhubaneswar, at the Inter-State Championships, he brought this physical and philosophical paradox to life. But what is truly exciting is not just the historic

number on the scoreboard; it is the question of how high this understated athlete can soar. At 31, he has arrived at an age where coaches endlessly debate the trade-offs between biological "ability" and "agility". Kushare,



like a select few before him, may have matured late, but in an event like the high jump where raw strength and velocity do not dictate success in the way they do in sprints, middle-distance runs, or throws, this late maturity may be exactly what carries him to the cusp of big-time global podium

finishes. Yet, Sarvesh has always been profoundly understated. If you did not know him, you simply would not know him; he makes absolutely no effort to be known. Bereft of the theatrical clownery and performative showmanship that defines many of his peers, he acts as a jumper in a hurry as if he needs nothing more than to escape the landing pit. Watch him closely enough on the track near the landing foam, and he seems lonely, alone, almost homeless. At times, it is as though they had to drag him from his home just to place him in the pit. Yet, this quiet, detached focus is precisely what fuels his rise. We humans may strive for straight lines, need a ruler to draw one, and get berated by teachers in school for failing to keep a steady hand. But it is in the mastery of the curve, and the isolation on the top of the bar or the landing mat, that Kushare is redefining the limits of athletic longevity.

## Pochettino refuses to blame Balogun's red card controversy for USA's World Cup exit

New Delhi. (Agency)

United States coach Mauricio Pochettino refused to blame the controversy over Folarin Balogun's availability for his side's 4-1 World Cup defeat to Belgium on Monday, despite admitting he was "disappointed" and "frustrated" by the backlash.

The build-up to the match in Seattle was overshadowed by FIFA's decision to clear Balogun to play despite the striker receiving a red card in the previous round. The ruling came after reports that US President Donald Trump had contacted FIFA, although football's governing body insisted its disciplinary decision was made independently. Belgium challenged the decision before the appeal was dismissed, leaving Pochettino to repeatedly defend Balogun's availability in the days leading up to the knockout clash.

After the defeat, however, the Argentine made it clear that the off-field noise had no

bearing on his team's performance. "We were not good enough today. We don't need to find excuses," Pochettino said. "All that was



happening around was around, but it wasn't a situation that affected us. I think it didn't affect our performance. It's not an excuse, and we cannot put excuses. It wasn't our day." Pochettino admitted he was personally hurt by the criticism that followed FIFA's decision, saying he had simply respected the governing body's ruling.

"I am so frustrated and so disappointed with the people who are supposed to understand this situation," he said, accusing critics of "mixing" politics with FIFA's disciplinary process. But in a personal way, what is the point? To insult or to receive a lot of bad messages or threats, if my position is 'I am the head coach, it's a rule that the player can be available?' My position was to train the team, and if you have available Balogun because the disciplinary committee of FIFA allowed you to have the player, it's not a problem. In a personal way I feel so disappointed with too many people."

**US NOT GOOD ENOUGH AS TEAM'**

On the pitch, the United States failed to reproduce the performances that had taken them through the group stage and into the knockout rounds. Belgium dominated large spells of the contest, with the hosts unable to recover after conceding twice in quick succession.



"I have won three titles for Portugal; before Cristiano Ronaldo, Portugal hadn't won a single title," Ronaldo said. "The biggest title the national team has ever won was in 2016, the European Championship, which, to be honest, is just as significant to me as a World Cup." Ronaldo won the Euro with Portugal in 2016, defeating hosts France 1-0 in the final.

The remarks immediately ignited a fierce debate across social media platforms. While loyal supporters defended the comments as a realistic assessment of the immense difficulty of winning the European Championship, detractors labelled the statement an exercise in damage control, suggesting it was a deliberate attempt to downplay the prestige of the World Cup because he will never win it.

# India hope for Sooryavanshi storm as Shreyas looks to break duck in Nottingham

**England vs India, 3rd T20I preview: With India trailing 1-0 and reeling from a rare three-match losing streak, new skipper Shreyas Iyer faces a trial by fire in Nottingham as he searches for his first win at the helm.**

New Delhi. (Agency)

It has taken exactly three games for the structural fault lines of India's post-World Cup transition to be exposed. Having comfortably lifted the silverware in Ahmedabad just four months ago, the selectors' aggressive desire to fast-track a new generation of T20 talent has hit a severe roadblock on English soil. Following a shock series defeat to Ireland and a heavy routing by England at Old Trafford, new skipper Shreyas Iyer heads to Nottingham desperate to arrest a

rare three-match losing streak. For Iyer, this is more of an uphill rescue act. Having watched India's T20 World Cup triumph entirely from the sidelines, his sudden elevation to leadership over the discarded Suryakumar Yadav remains a high-stakes gamble. Iyer's lack of international T20 cricket over the last two years means he is actively searching for his own rhythm while trying to steady a side that looks tactically scattered under pressure.

Yet, the true point of difference in this line-up rests on younger shoulders. With his milestone international debut now behind him, teenage prodigy Vaibhav Sooryavanshi looks primed to play his natural, destructive game, even as India's rigid tactical transition leaves Sanju Samson out in the cold. While his debut in Manchester yielded a brief, tantalising cameo featuring two clean, towering maximums off the English bowling attack, it was not enough to halt a clinical English march. There will, however,

be no sentimental backtracking from the team management. This aggressive, forward-looking blueprint means the status quo is firmly locked in. The immediate casualty of this relentless tactical reshaping remains



Sanju Samson. Having sat out the second T20I to accommodate the team's youth-centric restructuring, the Kerala batter looks

increasingly likely to remain a spectator for the remainder of the UK tour. With national selectors already signalling a long-term freeze by omitting him from the upcoming Zimbabwe itinerary, the door appears to be slammed shut as India doubles down on its new generation. Defending the squad's sudden dip during this experimental cycle, assistant coach Sitanshu Kotak urged a broader perspective. "In the last two years, we haven't lost a single series. We won the (T20) World Cup, we won the Asia Cup T20. (But) after losing two matches, so many people have said 'they are losing now'," Kotak said.

"It is (the nature of the) game. Sometimes, when there is a transition -- the captain has changed, Hardik is not there, (and) you are trying to introduce 3-4 young players -- even then, it should not happen, but such things can happen. The Indian team's efforts remain the same."

## Stock markets climb in early trade on foreign fund inflows

MUMBAI.(Agency)

Market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty climbed in early deals on Tuesday helped by foreign fund inflows and crude oil prices coming back to the pre-war levels amid easing tensions in the West Asia.

The 30-share BSE Sensex advanced 176 points to 78,461.16 in opening trade. The 50-share NSE Nifty went up by 34.1 points to 24,464.45. From the Sensex pack, Titan, Infosys, Eternal, Tech Mahindra, HCL Tech and Tata Consultancy Services were among the major winners. From the laggards, Trent tumbled 9.8 per cent. Larsen & Toubro, Bharat Electronics, ITC and Tata Steel were also among the laggards.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 243.03 crore on Monday, according to exchange data. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, quoted at USD 72.45 per barrel level.

"There are distinct signs of an uptrend in the market. Two factors which were weighing on Indian markets - the crude price hike and sustained FPI selling - are now behind us and has reversed. Crude is back to the pre-war level and FIIs have turned buyers," VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Limited, said. The FPI buying is not yet a strong trend, but the fact that they have stopped selling and turned buyers is a significant shift, which is likely to sustain supported by fundamentals, he added.

In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi tanked 7 per cent. Japan's Nikkei 225 index, Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index were also trading lower.

US markets ended higher on Monday.

On Monday, the Sensex jumped 521.16 points, or 0.67 per cent, to settle at 78,285.07. The Nifty climbed 159.50 points, or 0.66 per cent, to end at 24,430.35.

## Rupee rises 15 paise to 95.28 against US dollar in early trade

MUMBAI.(Agency)

The rupee appreciated 15 paise to 95.28 against the US dollar in early trade on Tuesday on improved market sentiment after reports that Saudi Arabia has slashed August crude oil prices for Asia amid easing of geopolitical tensions in the Middle East.

Forex traders said lower Middle East risk premium and higher traffic from the Strait of Hormuz kept the oil prices lower. At the interbank foreign exchange market the rupee opened at 95.33 and later touched 95.28 against the American currency, registering a gain of 15 paise from its previous close.

On Monday, the rupee had settled at 95.43 against the US dollar. The positive factor for the Indian rupee was Saudi Arabia slashing Asia oil prices by USD 11 per barrel in a record cut in the last 26 years amid improving supply conditions, said Anil Kumar Bhansali, Head of Treasury and Executive Director Finrex Treasury Advisors LLP.

Bhansali further noted that the buying by Indian oil companies also was indicated by the fact that Indian Oil and HPCL had placed tenders to buy 7 million barrels of crude thus keeping the US dollar well bid in the last few days. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading at 100.86, up 0.01 per cent.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading higher by 0.64 per cent at USD 72.45 per barrel in futures trade. Meanwhile, Brent oil prices are trading higher as renewed security concerns in the Strait of Hormuz have offset expectations of strong global crude supplies following Saudi Arabia's steep cuts for Asian buyers. A tanker transiting near the Strait of Hormuz was reportedly struck by a projectile off the coast of Oman, causing a fire but no casualties.

## Five states surpass World Bank's upper middle-class per capita income category: Delhi on top

MUMBAI.(Agency)

There are five states in the country which have surpassed the per capita income threshold set by the World Bank for determining an upper-middle income economy. This stands in sharp contrast to the country as a whole since which is still a lower-middle income economy. It indicates that some states have generated a rise in terms of income that they have broken ahead significantly of the income bracket of the entire country. According to news reports, five Indian states have crossed the World Bank's income threshold based on per capita income. However, economically the most powerful state is not on list. On the other hand, three states including Maharashtra missed the income level by only a few dollars. Let's have a closer look at the different states.

### The famous five

The country's capital is at the forefront of the states that have moved ahead of the World Bank's threshold. Delhi has a per capita income of \$6,217. In the next four places are Karnataka with a per capita income of \$5,579, Telangana with \$5,407, Tamil Nadu with \$5,329 and Gujarat with \$4,734. The per capita income threshold for upper-middle income economies is \$4,636. Maharashtra, Haryana and Kerala are close while the above five made it to the list, three major states including the one with the biggest economic muscle missed the list narrowly. Maharashtra's per capita income was \$4,628 — only \$8 dollars less than the threshold. Per capita income of Haryana was \$4,627 dollars — only \$9 less, while Kerala's was \$4,610 dollars, which is just 26 dollars below the limit.

### Many states have taken big leaps

In 1994, none of India's major states were in the middle-income category according to current World Bank standards. Today, the per capita income of many states has reached the level of economies like South Africa (\$6,270), Fiji (\$6,230) and Mongolia (\$6,210). At the same time, the per capita income of Karnataka and Telangana is higher than Indonesia (\$5,120) and Vietnam (\$4,970).

# Government denies reports of E25 petrol rollout, says no decision taken yet

**Government sources have denied reports of an E-25 rollout and said no decision has been taken yet. They said E-20 has been in safe use after testing and any further move will depend on scientific findings.**

New Delhi.(Agency)

Amid growing speculation over the next phase of India's ethanol blending programme, government sources have said there is no proposal to introduce E25 petrol at present, adding that testing is still underway and no policy decision has been taken. Sources told India Today that there is "absolutely no need to worry" about the ongoing E20 petrol programme, adding that ethanol-blended fuel has been in use across the country for more than two-and-a-half years after extensive testing and

validation. Officials said the current rollout of ethanol-blended petrol has followed a gradual and scientifically evaluated roadmap rather than a sudden policy shift.

### NO DECISION ON E25 YET

Government sources rejected reports claiming that E25 petrol has already been scheduled for rollout. "It is absolutely false. How can E25 be scheduled when testing itself is still underway?" a government source told India Today. According to the sources, compatibility tests for E25 fuel are still being carried out across different automobile manufacturers and vehicle models. The government is yet to receive the final test reports, and no decision on introducing E25 will be taken until the evaluation is complete. Officials said any future increase in ethanol blending will depend entirely on scientific evidence related to vehicle safety, engine performance and long-term durability.

### E20 HAS BEEN ROLLED OUT IN PHASES

The government said the current ethanol blending programme has itself been implemented gradually over the last few years. According to officials, E15 blending



began in April 2023, followed by E19 in April 2024 and E20 in April 2025.

Sources said every stage of the transition was introduced only after detailed consultations with automobile manufacturers, oil marketing companies and technical experts. "The transition has been gradual and based on technical assessments," a source said.

### OVER 20 CRORE TWO-WHEELERS

### USING ETHANOL-BLENDED PETROL

Government sources said ethanol-blended petrol is already being used by nearly 20 crore petrol-powered two-wheelers and around 20 lakh petrol-powered four-wheelers across the country. According to officials, the scale of adoption shows that the programme has expanded significantly without widespread technical concerns.

The sources added that the current blending programme was rolled out only after detailed technical studies involving vehicle manufacturers, fuel companies and industry experts.

### GOVT URGES PEOPLE NOT TO BELIEVE SPECULATION

The clarification comes amid growing discussion over whether existing vehicles would be compatible with higher ethanol blends if the blending percentage is increased in the future. Government sources maintained that there is currently no proposal to introduce E25 petrol and urged people not to rely on speculative reports.

## South Korea's Kospi suffers 8% crash as tech giants come under pressure

**South Korea's benchmark Kospi index dropped more than 8%, ending at 7,392.04 after a broad sell-off in technology stocks.**

NEW DELHI.(Agency)

After months of strong gains driven by excitement around artificial intelligence (AI), investors are becoming more cautious. That shift was clearly visible on Tuesday, when South Korea's stock market suffered a sharp fall as technology shares came under heavy selling pressure. The sell-off spread across several Asian markets, with chipmakers leading the decline. Investors are increasingly questioning whether the huge spending on AI will deliver the profits that many companies are promising. TECH ROUT SHAKES KOSPI

South Korea's benchmark Kospi index dropped more than 8%, ending at 7,392.04 after a broad sell-off in technology stocks. The sharp fall was

largely driven by losses in two of the country's biggest chipmakers — Samsung Electronics and SK Hynix. Investors continued to reduce their exposure to AI-related companies amid



concerns that stock prices have risen too quickly. The wider MSCI Asia Pacific Index also fell 1.7%, reflecting the cautious mood across the region.

### SAMSUNG AND SK HYNIX LEAD THE LOSSES

Samsung Electronics fell 9.3%, even though the company recently reported a 19-fold jump in profits. The stock has already more than doubled this year, leading some investors to book profits after its strong rally. SK Hynix declined

9.5% after beginning the marketing process for its planned US listing. The weakness in both companies weighed heavily on the overall South Korean market, as they are among the country's largest listed firms. The recent surge in AI-related shares has been fuelled by expectations of strong demand for AI chips, data centres and related technology. However, many investors are now asking whether these high valuations can be justified. There are growing concerns that companies are spending billions on AI infrastructure without clear evidence that the investments will translate into higher productivity or long-term profits. This uncertainty has made AI stocks more volatile in recent weeks. Despite the recent market weakness, SK Hynix is moving ahead with plans for a Nasdaq listing in the United States.

The company is looking to raise about \$28 billion through the share sale. The offering is expected to be closely watched by global investors, as it will provide an important test of market appetite for AI-related investments.

## Tata Nexon, Harrier EV to get new rivals as Mahindra prepares two SUV launches

NEW DELHI.(Agency)

Mahindra is working on its upcoming Vision S and BE 07 SUVs. Both models have been spotted testing several times. They are expected to make their official debut towards the end of 2026. The Vision S will be an important product for Mahindra, as it will be the first production vehicle based on the company's new NU-IQ platform, which supports both petrol and electric powertrains. It can also accommodate front-wheel-drive and all-wheel-drive setups. Mahindra Vision S: What to expect? The Vision S is expected to be a rugged lifestyle SUV measuring under four metres in length. It will compete with upcoming models such as the Renault Boreal/Bridger and Tata Scarlet, while also taking on popular compact SUVs like the Hyundai Venue, Tata Nexon, Kia Sonet, Maruti Brezza and

Skoda Kylaq. Spy shots suggest that the production version will stay close to the Vision S concept showcased earlier. The



SUV is expected to feature a large touchscreen infotainment system and a fully digital instrument cluster integrated into the dashboard. The display size could be around 12.3 inches.

Higher variants may come loaded with features such as leatherette upholstery,

powered front seats, ventilated seats, an electronic parking brake, a 360-degree camera and Level 2 ADAS with radar-based safety functions.

Mahindra BE 07: What to expect? The BE 07 will become the second model under Mahindra's BE electric vehicle brand. It will also be the fourth product in India to use the company's dedicated INGLO EV platform. While Mahindra has not yet revealed official powertrain details, the BE 07 is expected to borrow the 59 kWh and 79 kWh battery packs from the BE 6. A rugged lifestyle SUV measuring under four metres in length. It will compete with upcoming models such as the Renault Boreal/Bridger and Tata Scarlet, while also taking on popular compact SUVs like the Hyundai Venue, Tata Nexon, Kia Sonet, Maruti Brezza and Skoda Kylaq. Spy shots suggest that the production version will stay close to the Vision S concept showcased earlier. The

# Big Tech's India problem: Why the government is tightening the screws

**India has stepped up scrutiny of Google, Meta, Telegram and Signal over platform design, safety and data issues. The actions signal a broader shift towards home-grown digital rules centred on accountability and user protection.**

New Delhi.(Agency)

Until recently, the world's biggest technology companies largely decided how their platforms would work and then rolled out those features across markets, including India. That equation is beginning to change. Over the past few weeks, Google, Meta, Telegram and Signal have all found themselves under the government's scanner for issues ranging from platform design and user safety to privacy, piracy and cybercrime. While each case may appear different, experts say they point to a larger shift: India is no longer just asking Big Tech to follow the rules. It is increasingly deciding what those rules should be. The message from New Delhi is becoming increasingly clear: access to one of the world's largest digital markets now

comes with greater expectations on accountability, transparency and user protection.

### A SERIES OF ACTIONS, ONE BIGGER MESSAGE

The government's recent actions have cut across multiple technology platforms and different policy concerns. Telegram was temporarily blocked during the NEET-UG re-examination and directed to disable message editing for existing posts to prevent the spread of leaked exam papers. The platform later received a separate anti-piracy notice from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

Meta, meanwhile, was asked to halt the rollout of WhatsApp usernames after the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) raised concerns that the feature could make impersonation and identity spoofing easier. The company is also facing scrutiny over Instagram advertisements allegedly promoting child sexual abuse material (CSAM). Signal and Telegram have also been asked to explain how their anonymity features align with India's security and law enforcement requirements. Viewed individually, these actions appear to deal with different issues.

Taken together, however, they point to a broader shift in the government's thinking. Instead of merely responding to harmful content after it appears online, policymakers are increasingly examining whether a platform's design itself creates



opportunities for misuse. Explaining the government's concerns around WhatsApp's proposed username feature, MeitY Secretary S. Krishnan recently said the issue was not just the feature itself but the greater scope it created for cybercrime. The kind of encouragement that it provides or the facility it provides for committing more cybercrimes... is a very serious issue," Krishnan said, adding that usernames could facilitate impersonation and identity spoofing. The government, he said, had

therefore sought explanations not only from WhatsApp but from other platforms as well. That marks an important shift—from regulating content to questioning platform architecture.

### FROM DIGITAL MARKET TO DIGITAL RULE-MAKER

Experts believe the recent actions are not isolated incidents but part of a larger evolution in India's digital policy. The shift isn't anti-Big Tech. It's India moving from being a market that accepts global defaults to one that sets its own," said Vivek Kumar, Independent AI Governance, Cyber & Privacy Consultant. According to him, several long-running policy initiatives have now started coming together.

"The DPDP Rules, AI Governance Guidelines, deepfake regulations and ongoing Competition Commission investigations are all maturing around the same time. What appears to be a sudden burst of action is actually several policy threads coming together," he said. Akshesh Kumar Ajaykumar Shah, Founder and CEO of Cognify.ai, agrees that India has entered a more mature phase of digital regulation.

## How can Annual Information Statement help identify discrepancies in your ITR filing? 8-line checklist explained

New Delhi.(Agency)

Tax experts advise taxpayers to carefully review their Annual Information Statement (AIS) before filing their Income Tax Returns. Any discrepancy in these records may lead to incorrect income reporting, refund delays or tax notices. By reconciling AIS data with supporting documents before filing the return, taxpayers can avoid compliance issues and ensure accurate reporting. Why is checking AIS important before filing ITR? AIS displays a comprehensive view of information to the taxpayer before filing the return of income. It promotes voluntary compliance and enables seamless prefilling of returns. AIS provides a consolidated view of various financial transactions linked to a taxpayer's PAN, including salary income, interest earned, securities transactions, TDS and other high-value transactions.

By reviewing the AIS before filing, taxpayers can identify errors, report missing income accurately and rectify inaccurate entries using the feedback mechanism on the income tax portal. Since the Income Tax Department analyses the AIS data to verify information reported in tax returns, any discrepancy between the two may attract scrutiny. Here are the crucial things that every taxpayer should check before filing an ITR.

1. Review all reported financial information  
The AIS includes information relating to:  
Taxes deducted at source (TDS)  
Taxes collected at source (TCS)  
Specified Financial Transactions (SFT)  
Payment of taxes  
Demand and refund  
Annexure II salary  
Interest on refund  
Outward foreign remittance/purchase of foreign currency  
GST turnover under information code (EXC-GSTR3B)  
Checking your AIS before filing ensures accurate income reporting, claiming all eligible TDS credits and directly prevents tax demand notices.
2. Check general information part in AIS  
The general information part contained under AIS displays the information on PAN, masked Aadhar number, name of the taxpayer, date of birth mobile number, e-mail address and address of taxpayers. Taxpayers should verify any discrepancy in this information before filing the return.

Boney Kapoor Drops Pics from

# Anshula Kapoor

## Rohan Thakkar's Pre-Wedding Festivities: 'Made For Each Other'

Filmmaker Boney Kapoor called daughter Anshula Kapoor and son-in-law Rohan Thakkar 'made for each other'. As Anshula and Rohan's wedding festivities are underway in full swing, Boney took to his official Instagram handle on Monday and dropped a couple of unseen photos from the Chooda and Mehendi ceremony. In the primary photo from the album, Boney was seen adorably giving the bride-to-be a peck on the cheek.

The entire Kapoor clan, including brother Arjun, sisters, Janhvi, Khushi, and Shanaya, uncles Anil and Sanjay Kapoor came together to celebrate the upcoming nuptials, along with other members of the family. Boney also

penned an emotional note wishing Anshula and Rohan a happy married journey ahead.

He went on to write, "New journey begins for my genius pretty daughter Anshula With Rohan, who are made for each other, will surely make this journey happy eternally (sic)", along with red heart and hug emojis.

Meanwhile, Arjun enjoyed a memorable moment during Anshula's chooda ceremony as 'kaleeras' landed on him.

Posting a glimpse of the chooda ceremony on social media, she wrote, "When the kaleera lands on your brother.. and he's happier than anyone else." The clip showed Anshula shaking her 'kaleeras' over her seated unmarried friends and siblings, and a piece of the ornament fell on Arjun. The '2 States' actor was also seen proudly flaunting the fallen kaleera with a broad smile on his face.

"I've never seen anyone so committed to getting chosen by a kalira! @arjunkapoor My fav part? The Kalira that fell on him said 'smile'!", Anshula added. For those who do not know, the kaleera ceremony is a significant and fun pre-wedding tradition in North India. During the ceremony, the bride-to-be shakes her 'kaleeras' tied to her chooda over the heads of her unmarried siblings and friends. It is believed that the person on whom the kaleera falls will be getting married soon.

## Raveena Tandon Defends Aishwarya Rai Bachchan After Cannes Trolling Over Her Look: 'Miserable Behaviour'



Raveena Tandon has come out strongly in support of Aishwarya Rai Bachchan after the latter was trolled online for her appearance at this year's Cannes Film Festival. The actress criticised the culture of judging women through the narrow lens of age, weight and appearance, saying that such behaviour has become one of the most toxic aspects of social media. Aishwarya had made her much-awaited appearance on the Cannes red carpet earlier this year in a sculptural blue outfit designed by Amit Aggarwal. While several fans praised her look, a section of social media users criticised her appearance, outfit and photographs from the event.

### Raveena Tandon Defends Aishwarya Rai Bachchan

Reacting to the trolling, Raveena said it was deeply unfair to reduce a woman's identity to her physical appearance. She questioned why public conversations around women, especially actresses, continue to revolve around how they look rather than what they have achieved.

"It is unfortunate and incredibly unfair. This relentless, hyper-fixation on a woman's aging process, her weight, or her wardrobe choice is an ongoing toxic trait of our digital culture," Raveena said in a statement.

The actress said that the constant scrutiny women face online reflects an unhealthy digital culture, where even accomplished public figures are judged through unflattering pictures, camera angles or experimental fashion choices.

### Raveena Tandon Praises Aishwarya Rai's Global Legacy

Raveena also praised Aishwarya Rai Bachchan's contribution to Indian cinema and her long-standing global presence. She said Aishwarya has represented India with grace and dignity on international platforms for decades.

"Aishwarya is an absolute global icon who has represented our country with unparalleled dignity and grace on international platforms for decades. To reduce a woman of her stature, achievements, and intelligence down to a bad camera angle or an experimental dress is just miserable behaviour," she added.

## Shilpa Shirodkar Says She Lost Chaiyya Chaiyya Because Farah Khan Thought She Was Fat, Weighed 100 Kgs



90s Bollywood diva Shilpa Shirodkar made a startling revelation about missing out on one of Bollywood's most iconic songs, 'Chaiyya Chaiyya' opposite Shah Rukh Khan.

The actress, who recently appeared on the dance reality show, 'India's Best Dancer Season 05', recalled the incident stating that Farah Khan, the choreographer of the iconic song, thought she was fat for the song. Host Haarsh Limbachiya asked, "Shilpa ma'am, I got to know one thing. The iconic song, Chaiyya Chaiyya, you were supposed to do it, initially."

Recalling the incident, Shilpa said, "Yes, actually Farah had come with the song, and she said, 'This is the song, but I will give you 15 days. Reduce your weight.' So I ate boiled vegetables for 15 days. But I might have lost weight, but it wasn't less as per Farah. So she came back and said, 'Sorry, but you're still fat. We can't take you for the song,' and then the song happened with Malaika (Arora). I mean, I'm not lying. I was fat, so I didn't get the song, and Farah says, I was 100 kilos. I wasn't 100 kilos."

The revelation left everyone on the set surprised. Adding a lighter touch to the conversation, Shilpa turned to judge Geeta Kapur and said she had witnessed the incident herself. Geeta, smiling, replied, "I was an assistant."

Praising her honesty, Haarsh Limbachiya remarked, "I have to admit one thing. She's so selfless and so honest. No one calls her a heroine on national TV."

Talking about Shilpa Shirodkar, the actress has been a part of many successful films and television projects over the years. In the 90s era of Bollywood, Shilpa was considered one of the hottest actresses and was a part of many hit movies like Him, Kishan Kanhaiya and many more. She also became a popular face among television audiences during her stint on 'Bigg Boss season 18'.

# Anjali Anand

## Recalls Breaking The Ice With Ritesh Deshmukh On Dhamaal 4 Sets: 'I Told Him...'

Anjali Anand has opened up about working with Ritesh Deshmukh in the upcoming comedy film Dhamaal 4. The actress, who plays the female lead opposite Ritesh in the film, recalled their first meeting on set and revealed how she broke the ice with him by telling him that she knew several of his famous dialogues. In an interview with IANS, Anjali shared that her first interaction with Ritesh quickly turned into a fun and memorable moment because of her fondness for his films.

### Anjali Anand Recalls Her First Meeting With Ritesh Deshmukh

When asked about a memorable moment from the sets of Dhamaal 4, Anjali said that meeting Ritesh for the first time stood out for her.

"With Ritesh, I think the most memorable moment was when we met. And I just told him how crazy I am about all his films and dialogues. And he was shocked that I know all his dialogues," she said.

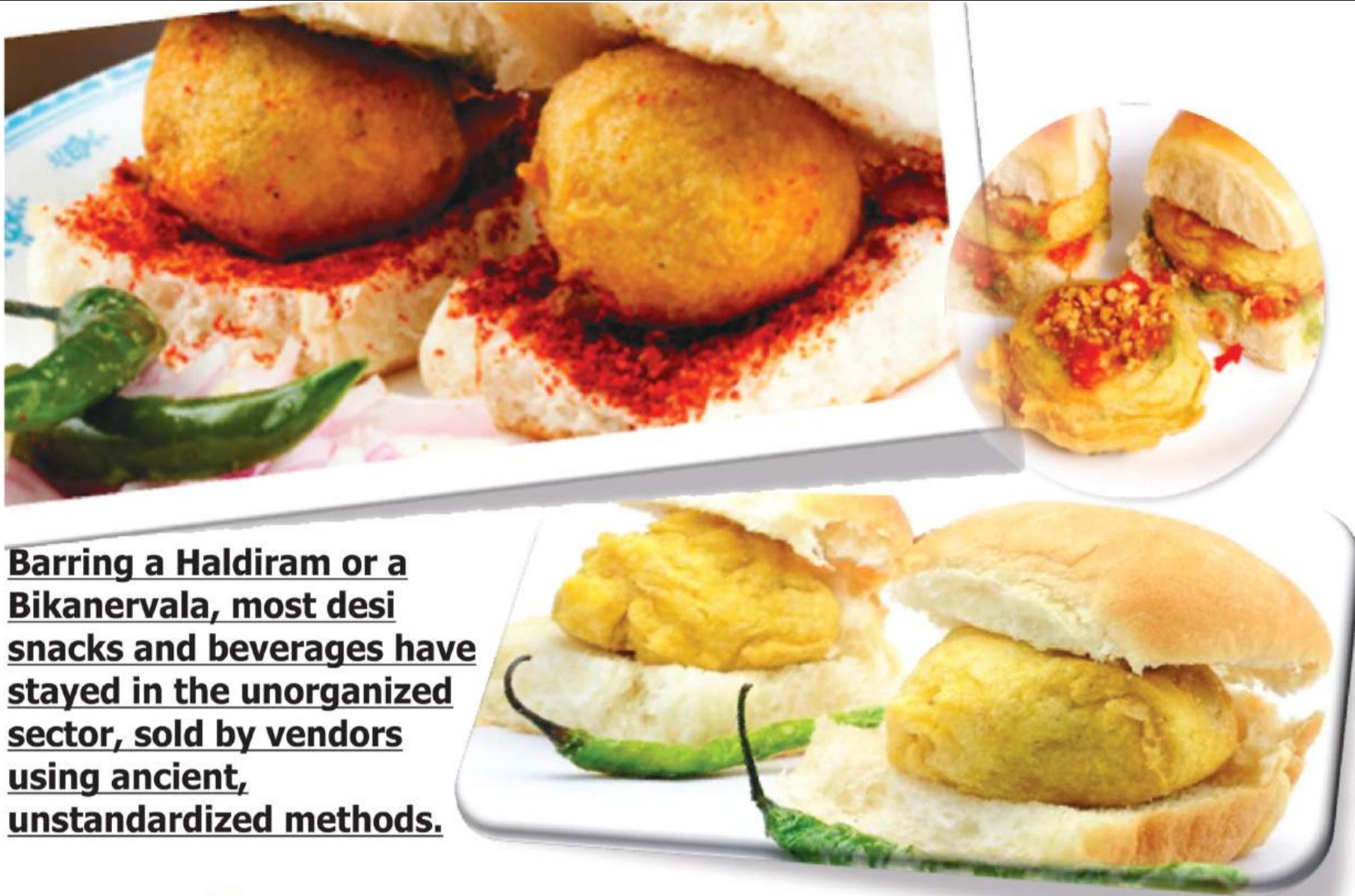
The actress further recalled a funny moment where she mentioned one of Ritesh's popular scenes to him. "And the ice break moment was when I told him, Hey baby, there's a scene where he's dancing. That's a honeymoon line. That was my favorite thing. So that was a very funny thing," Anjali added.

### Anjali Anand Says Dhamaal 4 Is A Family Film

Speaking about Dhamaal 4, Anjali said that the film brings back the nostalgia of chaotic, fun-filled comedies. According to her, the upcoming film stands apart because it blends humour with adventure.

"I think Dhamaal 4 brings back the nostalgia of fun, chaotic films. There is a lot of adventure, which makes it quite different from others. It's not just horror comedy or action comedy—I think Dhamaal is the only adventure comedy we have. I believe that is something audiences will get to see more of. Dhamaal 4 is a family film, so you can watch it with your kids. There is no vulgar comedy in the film," she said.





**Barring a Haldiram or a Bikanervala, most desi snacks and beverages have stayed in the unorganized sector, sold by vendors using ancient, unstandardized methods.**

# First-gen Foodpreneurs pack old vada in new pav

Several entrepreneurs are trying to change that by using global practices to sell Indian street food. Green mangoes are hard. And no one knows this better than Neeraj Kakkar, co-founder of Paperboat. Hector Beverages, the makers of Paperboat, has been selling its aam panna drink (green mango juice flavoured with roasted masalas) for a while. Green mangoes are notoriously hard to process because they are tough, and Kakkar says his team had to innovate extensively to make Paperboat's aam panna flavour taste like its fresh, home-made version. "So our biggest challenge is today our biggest advantage. Nobody has done this kind of thing before and it is difficult to replicate," says Kakkar. Paperboat now boasts an array of 10 distinct beverages including jaljeera, golgappe, kokum and chilled rasam. Many more innovative

products are under development including coconut water and the juice of purple carrots. The company, which opened its biggest factory in Mysuru a few months ago, works with agricultural universities and farmers across the country to figure out best practices, as they break new ground on products. Across the country, entrepreneurs are picking up traditional Indian food and beverage products to challenge Western imports like colas and burgers. In some cases they are reimagining the products and offering innovative variants. Mr & Mrs Idli and Idli Factory offer exotic stuff like Idli Manchurian, Kanchivaram Idli and Punjabi Idli. Faaso's, with funding from Sequoia and Lightbox, and Kaati Zone do a variety of Indian rolls, including Cheesy Corn Salsa and Chicken Mushroom. In other cases, they are using technology to

make the products at scale and sell them around the country, the way McDonald's and KFC do. Ammi's Biryani, with funding from Saif Partners, is doing that with biryani, as is the Hyderabad-based chain Paradise which is opening outlets in cities like Bengaluru at a fast clip. At Paradise, the self-service counter is clearly modelled after the McDonald's and Burger Kings of the world, with combos and packages and easy-to-select options. Similarly, Jumboking pioneered the organized vada pav business, and was quickly followed by Goli Vada Pav, which has received funds from Ventureast. Dheeraj Gupta of Mumbai initially dabbled in the Indian mithai (sweet) market. But the technology needed to keep sweets fresh was expensive and since the venture wasn't very profitable, Gupta was finding the going difficult. He looked at India's streets and realized how disorganized the vada pav business was. "Vada

pav was the largest selling snack in Mumbai but no one had thought of organizing that segment," he says. He borrowed Rs 2 lakh from his father and founded Jumboking. The venture is about to open its 100th store and is present across the top eight cities in the country. The company charges a 30% premium on vada pavs compared to the street pavs. It also focussed on the bread size, weight and size of the patty and eliminated wastage. The patties needed instant quick freezing at minus 18 degrees centigrade, and with hygiene a priority for Gupta, he invested in the required technology. Hygiene is a big focus for most, because for many middle class Indians today, that's the concern they have about food offerings from the unorganized segment. "Tea is available in all corners of this country but our focus is the white collar corporate employee in the top seven cities who are conscious about cleanliness and consistency," says Amuleek Singh Bijral, founder of Chai Point. Most tea joints in India end up being smoking joints, which discourages nonsmoking customers. Chai Point does not allow smoking and so enjoys a broader clientele. The average price of a glass of tea at Chai Point is less than Rs 20, less than a fourth of the price at leading cafe chains, and is designed to drive volumes. The company's 50 outlets sells more than three million

glasses a month. Hygiene, comfort and innovation is also the focus of Chennai's Idli Factory. "My biggest driver is to create food for travelling, which means comfort food that is well-packaged and easy to carry," says R U Srinivas. The company's flagship product is its 'Madras bars' which are idlis shaped like bars coated with powders such as milagai podi, garlic podi and curry leaf podi. Srinivas researched and tested 300 different batters before arriving at the best combination of rice and dal to create idlis that would remain soft and fresh even after they are cold. Arvind Singhal, chairman and MD of retail consultancy Technopak, says native food offers great opportunity in terms of revenue. "Indian food has long been neglected," he says, and appreciates startups like Chaayos and Chai Point that have leveraged Indian tea rather than going after coffee, like many others. Singhal also notes that many Indian startups in this space fail because they complicate their menus by adding too many different items. Keeping it simple helps with handling the supply chain, quality assurance and faster service across all outlets, and in keeping prices low. Bijral of Chai Point agrees. While expanding his food variety option looks enticing - currently it contributes 25% of topline - Bijral wants to reduce it to 20% and focus even more on tea. "Let others sell food," he says. Idli Factory also has a skeletal menu, and Srinivas intends to keep it that way. So does Jumboking's Gupta, who notes that multinational food chains too stick to a narrow menu but offer different versions of that menu. "Once this mindset (to complicate menus) changes, it will benefit a lot of entrepreneurs," he says. But that strategy could have its limitations too. When Mohan Kumar, partner with Norwest Venture Partners, received a request from a food startup for investment, he analysed a number of companies in the space. He found that some 25 companies in the space had touched revenues of Rs 200-300 crore, but then stopped growing. "Probably there aren't enough categories to scale up and these companies tend to get acquired by bigger ones. Big Indian players like ITC and Marico understand the market well. Some of the MNC competition too could catch up," he says. Jacob Kurian, partner at private equity fund New Silk Route, which has invested in Bengaluru-based Vasudev Adigas, a south Indian food retail chain, feels that Indian food businesses tend not to grow beyond the local area as the promoters tend to be contented at a certain size. One exception, he notes, is Haldiram. "The skill set needed to grow till Rs 200 crore and to grow beyond that are different," he says. Kurian also notes that unlike the earlier family-owned Indian businesses, those like Paperboat and Chai Point are not family businesses and don't have legacy issues. "Let these guys reach around Rs 200 crore and then we will see," he says. That could happen if the brands can go into smaller towns or even global. Paperboat's Kakkar is not sure if his drinks can be as popular as Coke in small towns. But he notes with some satisfaction: "Cola sales are declining globally."

## 4 not-so-known uses of peanut butter



While, we all know the health benefits of peanut butter and the fact that it makes for a yummy breakfast, not many of us know about its unusual uses.

**Removes foul smell** This one's especially for those homemakers who spend a lot of time in the kitchen. Peanut butter is very effective in removing the smell of fish from your hands and as well as utensils. Simply, rub some peanut butter on to your hands after washing them as well as spread some of the utensils and keep them for a while to get rid of the smell. **To clean leather** Cleaning leather furniture is one of the most challenging things we do, since maintaining them is a tedious task. But, using peanut butter will solve a great deal of your problem. Rub it in a gentle circular motion on the surface and wipe away with a clean cloth. Mix it with some scented oil to mask the smell

**of peanut butter.** To fix scratched CDs With pen drives and portable hard drives, a lot of our old storage methods have been rendered useless. Hence, if you find any of your old CDs getting scratched and damaged, peanut butter can fix the problem. Rub some peanut butter gently on the scratched CDs and wipe it off with a dry cloth to see the magic. **For scratch-free furniture** Our home furniture is subject to a lot of scratches and damage due to daily use. If you do not want the pain of polishing your furniture after every scratch, just apply peanut butter directly on the scratched areas and wipe it off with a dry cloth after a while, and see the scratches disappear.

## Recipe: Coconut Flavoured Alu Vadi

Also known as Patra, Alu Vadi is a popular preparation by the Maharashtrian community. While, some people steam and shallow fry the rolls, some just add a mild tempering of sesame and mustard seeds.



You can also add a dash to freshness to this dish by adding some thick coconut milk to recipe as well as some freshly grated coconut over it and make it even yummier. This dish is a perfect tea time snack, light on the stomach and extremely delectable.

- Ingredients**  
 Alu leaves-7-8 nos.  
 Besan (gram flour)- 100gms  
 Chilli powder-2 tsp  
 Coriander powder- 2 tsp  
 Tamarind pulp- 2 tsp

- A pinch of finely chopped Coriander leaves  
 Salt as per taste  
 Oil-2 tsp  
 1 cup of grated coconut  
**Method:** - Mix all the ingredients together — gram flour, chilli powder, coriander powder and tamarind pulp.  
 - Put in on the leaves and roll it.  
 - Heat oil in the pan.  
 - Add clove, cinnamon, pepper.  
 - Cut the aloo roll and put it in the pan and put

- coconut milk over it.  
 - Keep for 20-25 minutes on a slow flame.  
 - Boil it till the milk dries.  
 - Serve it with grated coconut and finely chopped coriander leaves spread over it.  
 - Also, garnish it with some freshly grated

## Cheese Khakra Pizza

Take 1 khakra and spread the green chutney evenly over it. Then spread tomatoes, cucumbers, capsicum and onions over the layer of chutney.

- Cheese Khakra Pizza**  
**Ingredients:** 8-10 pieces of khakra  
 2 cups tomato & cucumbers evenly cut into small pieces,  
 1 cup any farsan of your choice,  
 1 chopped capsicum  
 1 cup Green chutney (thick),  
 1 chopped onion  
 Pinch of rock salt & black pepper,  
 Crated cheese,  
 Coriander leaves.  
**Method:**



Add salt, pepper powder, and farsan over it. Then grate a generous amount of cheese over it, and garnish it with some coriander leaves. You can also top it with some oregano and chilli flakes for a slightly authentic feel. **How to make the green chutney** Take a bowl of coriander & mint leaves, 4 green chillies, ½ table spoon lemon juice, salt & some sev for thick consistency, jaljeera powder & grind all together in mixer with a little water.