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## Govt taking comprehensive reforms to curb exam paper leaks, protect future of youths: President in I-Day address

### The Sikh Times

New Delhi: Underlining that students are the "architects of India's future," President Droupadi Murmu on Friday said the government is taking comprehensive steps to reform public examinations to completely curb paper leaks and unfair means, making the system transparent, secure, and trustworthy. In her address to the nation on the eve of the country's 80th Independence Day, the President stressed that just as government and society remain united to ensure national security, everyone must contribute through joint and concerted efforts to safeguard the present and future of students. "Public examinations become gateways to opportunities for our students. The government is undertaking comprehensive steps to reform these examinations. The objectives of these reforms are to completely curb the use of unfair means in public examinations, make the examination system more transparent, more secure, and more trustworthy for the youth," she said. SouthAsians & Diaspora Her remarks assume significance in the backdrop of recent nationwide Gen Z and student-led protests demanding systemic overhauls, fast-track investigations, and stringent legal action following high-profile paper leak irregularities in competitive examinations. Highlighting the spirit of enterprise among young citizens, she said youths are increasingly embracing a culture of job creation rather than job seeking. "Many of our youth are embracing the culture of job creation as they pursue the path of self-employment. The participation of

young entrepreneurs has led to the creation of a strong start-up ecosystem in our country. Major global enterprises are impressed by the talent and dedication of Indian youth and entrust them with leadership roles," she added. The President said such achievers have enhanced the reputation of India's youth power globally and reaffirmed her faith in the country's bright future. Turning to holistic development, the president said that the physical and mental well-being of the youth forms the cornerstone of the nation's future, adding that families and society share the collective responsibility to motivate them. She highlighted sports as a key vehicle for youth development and nation-building under the flagship 'Khelo India' programme. "Under the Khelo India programme, a sports ecosystem is being developed across the country, from the grassroots to the national level. The government is making unprecedented investments to promote sports, yielding remarkable leaps in the achievements of our sportspersons in international tournaments," she said. President Murmu also lauded the "unmatched valour" of the Indian Armed Forces, saying Operation Sindoor demonstrated the country's capability to execute precision counter-terror operations and sent a firm message that terror elements and their backers will face consequences regardless of where they hide. She recalled the anniversary of the military action alongside historic observances like Kargil Vijay Diwas, reaffirming India's tradition of overcoming forces hostile to humanity. "On the 26th of July, we observed Kargil

Vijay Diwas. Earlier, on the 7th of May, we commemorated the completion of one year since the launch of Operation Sindoor. We remembered the unmatched valour of our Armed Forces. That historic operation against terrorism demonstrated the capability of the Indian Armed Forces to act with precision," she



said. She said the operation delivered an unequivocal warning to enemies. "It sent a clear and firm message to terrorists and those who support them, that no matter where they hide, they will have to face the consequences of their actions." The President also highlighted the strategic measures accompanying the counter-terror posture, describing the decision to suspend the Indus Waters Treaty with the nation harbouring terror networks as a "decisive step in the interest of our nation, especially the farmers." SouthAsians & Diaspora On internal security, she termed the eradication of Naxalism a monumental achievement for the country after decades of struggle. "For decades, Naxalism posed a seri-

ous challenge to the nation. Making India Naxal free is a major achievement. Today, enthusiasm prevails in the areas once affected by Naxalism," she said, pointing to all-inclusive development efforts and active local participation in initiatives like the Bastar Olympics and the Bastar Pandum festival. Highlighting

the nation's civilisational heritage, the President said that Sarnath, the site of Lord Buddha's first sermon, was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List this year, following the listing of 12 Maratha military forts last year. She stated that India proudly balances monuments of deep spirituality with historic symbols of military strength and resilience. Addressing foreign policy, she reiterated that peace, dialogue, cooperation, and the ideal of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' (the world is one family) remain the bedrock of India's international relations. "We believe in a rules-based international order. Our endeavour is to ensure that the global community receives appropriate representation in the United

Nations and other multilateral organisations," she stated, noting India's growing stature among Global South nations. The President also touched upon senior care, pointing out that alongside the world's largest young population, India is also seeing a rise in senior citizens and noted that about six crore senior citizens aged 70 and above can now avail of free healthcare services up to Rs 5 lakh per year under government initiatives, urging society to remain sensitive and uphold their dignity. She said the country is moving steadily towards building a 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047, driven by economic resilience, massive digital infrastructure, and empowered youth and women. She stressed that guided by the spirit of 'Antyodaya', the core resolve of the nation remains ensuring the fruits of development reach every individual, even as global warfare and instability present severe economic headwinds worldwide. "Even in such trying circumstances, our economy is moving ahead as the fastest growing major economy in the world. According to economic projections, the growth rate of the Indian economy is expected to be more than twice the average global growth rate. 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan' has further strengthened the foundation of our economic progress and national security," she said. Highlighting internal welfare milestones over the past decade, the President said that more than 25 crore people have been lifted out of poverty and added that nearly 59 crore account holders have joined the banking system under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, with over 32 crore of these account holders being women, while food

security has been ensured for over 80 crore people through free rations. Underlining India's technological leap, she pointed out that the country has developed the world's largest and best digital infrastructure, accounting for more than half of global real-time digital transactions. Highlighting the demographic dividend, the President said that 65 per cent of the country's population is below the age of 35, describing the youth as India's "most valuable asset." She commended young entrepreneurs for driving a robust startup ecosystem and lauded young innovators, citing a recent space exploration milestone led by a team with an average age of just 28 years. SouthAsians & Diaspora Women's empowerment remained a central theme of her address. Celebrating achievements ranging from rural self-help groups to high-altitude defence, she said that the initial target of creating three crore 'Lakshpati Didis' has been achieved, with the government now pushing towards a goal of creating three crore more. "Our girls are performing exceptionally well in education and diverse sectors, from the Drone Didi enhancing agricultural productivity to the Fighter Combat Leader in the Air Force. In the recently concluded Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, women won 8 out of India's total tally of 13 gold medals," she said. The President also highlighted political inclusion, pointing out that the enactment of the 'Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam' in 2023, which reserves 33 per cent of seats for women in the Lok Sabha and Legislative Assemblies, will make Indian democracy more inclusive.

# 80वें स्वतंत्रता दिवस

## की हार्दिक शुभकामनाएं

तेजी से विकसित होते भारत की एक झलक

### स्वतंत्र भारत

### सशक्त भारत। समृद्ध भारत। विकसित भारत

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**रेखा गुप्ता**  
मुख्यमंत्री, दिल्ली

News box

Body of missing woman found in Dhankot canal

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A decomposed body of a woman who had been missing for three days was recovered from Dhankot canal near Dwarka Expressway on Thursday morning.According to the complaint filed by the family at New Colony police station, the deceased, Monam, had gone missing from her home in Devial Colony around 2 pm on Aug 10.Police said Monam had got married in 2022 and around eight months ago, her husband died after accidentally falling from the roof of a house in Rajeev Nagar. Her family members told police that she had been deeply affected by his death and was also undergoing treatment for her deteriorating mental condition.“On Thursday, some passersby alerted the police control room (PCR) about a body of a woman floating in the canal.” Soon after, a PCR team and personnel from Rajendra Park police station reached the spot and pulled the body out of the canal with the help of divers and local residents.Police said th body had decomposed considerably, indicating that it may have remained in the water for two to three days. It was subsequently identified as Monam.

Police have sent the decomposed body to the hospital for a post-mortem examination. Officials said the cause and circumstances of her death would be clear after the post-mortem examination. They are now recording statements of family members and investigating whether she died after falling in the canal herself or whether there were other reasons behind her death.

FIR after gun goes off in Gurgaon society lift, armed visitors to society under lens

Gurgaon.(Agency)

An FIR has been registered at Sector 53 police station after the president of a housing society in Sector 52 had alleged that there had been a firing incident inside one of the lifts in his society. He had also claimed that people carrying weapons have been visiting a flat in the complex frequently. Prashant Co-operative Group Housing Society president Narender Singh had submitted the complaint against unidentified persons on Aug 12, along with the CCTV footage of the firing. He told TOI that he was out of station on the night of firing but when he returned, his neighbours informed him that around 1am a gun had been fired inside the lift of Plot GH-26 on Aug 9. “Residents were afraid to take up the matter with the police, but they approached me, following which I checked the CCTV and submitted all the available evidence with the cops. It seems that they fired one or two rounds,” he said. The residents noticed that the lift had been damaged when they came across it, he added.Singh, in his complaint, has sought a police inquiry into the armed men visiting a flat in the society. Singh said the incident has caused fear among residents, particularly women, children and elderly people.SHO of Sector 53 police station, inspector Narender Sharma, said, “We are investigating the complaint and will take appropriate legal action in the case accordingly.” While the police have registered a case under the Arms Act against an unknown person, sources said a suspect has been identified.

Before Independence Day, schools race to get Vande Mataram right

Noida.(Agency)

Across schools in NCR, “sujalam, suphalam...” is rolling off classroom screens, echoing through assemblies and being replayed on teachers’ phones on a loop. These last couple of weeks, students have devoted their music classes to a singular objective — mastering six stanzas of Vande Mataram before Independence Day.While learning isn’t a problem, it’s the ‘who can teach it’ question that has seen schools scramble to find experts fluent with the song. While the first two stanzas of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee’s Vande Mataram are widely known, few are conversant with the full version – and fewer still with the right pronunciation of the Sanskrit verse.With govt now making the full rendition of Vande Mataram mandatory, the decision coinciding with the national song’s 150th-year celebrations, some schools have borrowed Bengali teachers from other institutions while others are circulating recordings, putting lyrics on giant screens or turning to YouTube.Vande Mataram, according to rules, has to be sung before the national anthem at all events, such as Independence Day celebrations, where both need to be sung. The rules also specify the duration of the full rendition of Vande Mataram at approximately 3 minutes and 10 seconds.At Grads International School in Noida, teacher Sanchari Bhattacharya — who is pursuing a PhD in music — recorded the complete song and shared it with principals across the city.

4,500 cops on guard for I-Day, checks at 11 points

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Around 4,500 police personnel, including traffic cops, have been deployed across the district and checkpoints have been set up at 11 major locations as part of the security arrangement for Independence Day. Checks will be carried out at Sirhaul border, DLF Phase 3, Bakhtawar Chowk, Dundahera, Kaliawas and six other locations till celebrations conclude on Aug 15, an officer said, adding that screening will also be done at hotels, malls, clubs and spots which attract crowds.Five major events will be held across the district as part of the celebrations. The main district-level Independence Day function will be held at Tau Devi Lal Stadium in Sector 38, where Haryana assembly deputy speaker Krishan Lal Middha will hoist the national flag.

Doctors remove 5.4kg breast tumour from Congo woman

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

A 5.4kg tumour, which had turned into an infected wound after it went untreated for months, was removed from the breast of a 44-year-old woman from Democratic Republic of Congo at a Manesar hospital.Doctors at Fortis Hospital said the woman first saw the growth in Dec 2025 but did not seek treatment for it at the time. In the next few months, the tumour grew rapidly and when she reached the hospital on June 18, it covered her entire right breast and was oozing a foul-smelling discharge.The case became even more complicated after doctors found they could not perform an immediate surgery to remove the mass because she was suffering from severe anaemia, malnutrition and sepsis. So, the medical team first worked to stabilise her condition and control the

At New Grain Market in Haileymandi-Pataudi, Pataudi MLA Bimla Chaudhary will unfurl the national flag while Faridabad NIT MLA Satish Kumar will attend a function as chief guest at Govt Model Sanskriti Senior Secondary School in Sector 43. Two other events will be at Shaheed and Freedom Fighters Memorial Stadium in Nakhrola-Manesar and Tau Devi Lal Stadium in Sohna, which will be attended by Gurgaon MLA Mukesh Sharma and Sohna MLA Tejpal Tanwar respectively.Security arrangements will cover the five main celebration venues, VIP routes, entry and exit points, parking areas and adjoining locations. Separate entry arrangements will be maintained for VIPs and the general public,” police spokesperson Sandeep Turan said, adding that cops will also be deployed on rooftops of high-rise buildings

infection.A PET-CT scan provided good news — despite the enormous size of the tumour, the cancer had not



spread to distant organs or lymph nodes.Once the woman’s condition was stable, a team, led by breast oncoplastic surgeon and senior consultant of surgical oncology Dr Mansi Chowhan, performed the complex surgery to remove the tumour.The operation, however, was only part of the challenge. A large portion of the breast skin had been affected by the disease. After removal

around the celebration venues.

Visitors will be screened using door-frame metal detectors and hand-held metal detectors. Women visitors will be screened by women police personnel, with dedicated frisking cabins at the venues, he added. Quick reaction teams will be positioned at VIP stages and other strategic points. Five fire tenders and five ambulances will remain stationed at different celebration venues for emergency response. During VIP movement, traffic personnel will be positioned at road cuts, traffic signals, T-points, flyovers and underpasses to regulate traffic. Police personnel deployed at the checkpoints will be equipped with reflective jackets, torches and wireless communication sets and will check suspicious persons and

of the tumour, the patient therefore required specialised wound care and a skin graft to cover the surgical area. Doctors said the graft healed well and that the woman is now recovering.Her treatment is still ongoing. She will undergo chemotherapy followed by radiotherapy, after which a breast reconstruction is planned.Dr Chowhan said the case highlighted the importance of not ignoring changes in breast anatomy and seeking timely medical evaluation if one spots any changes. “It shows how delayed treatment can transform a potentially treatable breast cancer into a complex medical emergency, with the patient eventually requiring management not only of the cancer but also of infection, severe anaemia, malnutrition and extensive tissue damage,” she said.

Court orders FIR against Yatharth Hospital doc, management for negligence in surgery

Noida.(Agency)

The additional chief judicial magistrate court on Wednesday ordered police to register an FIR against several persons of Yatharth Hospital for being involved in a case of medical negligence during a woman’s gallbladder stone removal surgery. Judge Mayank Tripathi-II directed officers from Beta 2 police station to inform the court about the action they take in the case within a week. Zeta 1 resident Dharendra Singh had approached the court alleging that his wife, Rakhi, became critically ill after a routine gallbladder stone removal

operation because of negligence by a Dr Hamidi, a general surgeon at Yatharth Hospital. He said he took her for a consultation at the hospital on May 30, 2025, after his wife complained of abdominal pain. She underwent an ultrasound that revealed there were two stones in her gallbladder.Dr Hamidi performed a laparoscopic cholecystectomy on her the next day and told Singh the surgery was successful. After the surgery, he showed Singh one of the stones he had removed. When asked about the second stone, the hospital staff allegedly told Singh it had been sent to the laboratory for

testing.When Rakhi regained consciousness, she complained of pain in her stomach and shoulder, but the doctor said such pain was associated with the surgery and was normal. She was discharged on June 2.On the same night, she complained of severe pain at home and Singh called Yatharth Hospital to report her condition. The next day, another USG test was conducted and the doctors described her condition as normal and asked her to go home. However, a consultation with another doctor revealed that only one of the stones had been removed and the other was still inside her body.

vehicles.“Additional checkpoints may be set up depending on the requirement. Ahead of Independence Day, police teams will also check hotels, inns, dharamshalas, restaurants, malls and clubs. The checks will focus on suspicious persons and objects. Anti-sabotage teams will conduct checks at the major celebration venues and along VIP routes. Suspicious bags, luggage and unidentified articles will not be allowed inside the venues,” Turan said.Police said senior police officers will supervise security arrangements at each of the major celebration venues and appeal to the residents attending Independence Day events to follow designated entry and parking arrangements. They also asked residents to remain alert and inform them about any suspicious person, object or activity.

Sub-inspector, home guard killed in separate accidents

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

A home guard and a sub-inspector died in two separate road accidents in the city on Wednesday night and in the early hours of Thursday. Five people, including three police personnel, were injured in the incidents.The first accident occurred around 11.15pm on Wednesday at Rahul Vihar underpass on NH-9, under Crossings Republik police station limits.Home guard Kapil Kumar (40) and constable Praveen Kumar (35) were on a police response vehicle (PRV) headed from Noida Sector 63 to an event in Gaur City-II in Greater Noida West, when an allegedly speeding Thar coming from the opposite direction rammed into their bike head-on. The accused was identified as Sonu Gandhi (34) a businessman, who police said was drunk and returning home after a party in Noida. He was arrested and his car seized.Wave City ACP Priyashri Pal said Kapil and Praveen were taken to a private hospital, where Kapil died during treatment. Praveen, a resident of Noonakheda village on Shamli Road in Muzaffarnagar, sustained injuries to his leg and head and remains under treatment. Kapil, a resident of Hapur, was wearing a helmet that broke on impact. His body has been sent for a medical examination.Based on a complaint by the injured constable, police registered an FIR against the Thar’s driver under BNS sections 281 (rash driving), 106 (causing death by negligence), 125B (endangering life or personal safety of others), and 324(4) (mischief causing damage).

Transformer snag causes outages, industries in Gurgaon flag losses

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Repeated power outages over the past three days are disrupting production in industrial areas in sectors 33, 34 and 37. Manufacturers said two to three outages of about an hour each have been reported daily due to a transformer failure at the 220kV power house in Sector 33. According to the manufacturers, the sudden cuts are not only delaying deliveries but also raising concerns over damage to machinery and equipment. They said the lack of advance information from the power authorities was making it difficult to plan production cycles and safely shut down equipment.The disruption began after a transformer at the HVPNL power house in Sector 33 failed. While HVPNL manages the transmission infrastructure, DHBVN distributes power to consumers. Industrialists said the prolonged disruption reflected a lack of coordination between the two

agencies.

A DHBVN official denied any coordination issue between the two agencies. “We are working to fix the issue and supply will be normalised soon,” the official said. Industrialists said the outages were affecting units that depend on uninterrupted supply, forcing them to halt production midway and spend additional time restarting machines and processes. “Production comes to a halt whenever the power goes off suddenly. Restarting the machines takes time, and in some cases, there is also a risk of damage to tooling,” said Deepak Maini, chairperson of Progressive Federation of Trade and Industry (PFTI).Maini said the outages were causing production losses and affecting delivery schedules. “The biggest problem is that we are not told when the power will be cut or how long the outage will last. If industries are informed in advance, we can adjust our production schedules and secure

machines before the supply is disconnected,” he said.Industrialists said the impact extended beyond the duration of the outages. They said that when the production lines stop abruptly, they can take considerably longer to stabilise after power is restored. “An outage of an hour does not necessarily mean that we lose only one hour of production. Depending on the machine and manufacturing process, restarting and bringing the line back to normal can take considerably longer,” said an industrialist from the Sector 37 belt. Another manufacturer said sudden outages were particularly disruptive for units involved in precision manufacturing and automated processes. “We need to know in advance if there is going to be a shutdown. It allows us to complete a production cycle, switch off machines properly and protect material and equipment. Sudden outages increase both downtime and the risk of damage,” he said.

The ncertainty has also affected manpower planning, movement of raw materials and dispatch.

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# 9-year-old killed, teen cousin critical after group attacks them in Gorakhpur

Gorakhpur (UP): A nine-year-old boy was killed and his 15-year-old cousin critically injured in Pipraich after a group of men allegedly attacked them on Saturday night with sticks, iron rods and bricks, police said on Sunday. Officials said the attack occurred days after a panchayat settled an issue regarding the alleged harassment of the deceased's female relative, a Class 11 student, by the attackers. Death & Tragedy According to police, the deceased has been identified as Saras Singh, a Class 4 student and a resident of Araj Basdila in the AIMS police station area. They said he had been staying with his maternal aunt in a village under Pipraich because his mother died five years ago. His cousin, Shivkumar Singh, is undergoing treatment at the BRD Medical College. Police said tension had been simmering between the two sides following allegations that a Class 11 girl from Shivkumar's family was harassed by a local youth, Sikandar Sahani. Although a

village panchayat had reportedly settled the matter, resentment persisted, police



said. On Saturday evening, Saras and Shivkumar were on their way to a panchayat

shop when members of the rival group allegedly intercepted them near Bela

Police said Shivkumar was the primary target, but Saras sustained severe injuries while trying to intervene. Both were rushed to the Pipraich Community Health Centre and later referred to BRD Medical College, where Saras succumbed to his injuries late in the night. The incident triggered tension in the village, prompting deployment of additional police personnel. Following this, Gorakhpur's Senior Superintendent of Police, Dr Kaustubh, suspended two policemen, including the SHO of Pipraich police station. GeographicReference On a complaint filed by Raju Singh (father of Shivkumar), police registered a murder case against Sikandar Sahani and eight others — Hari, Rahul, Sandeep, Vikas, Ratneshwar, Manoj, Roshan and Vijay, all residents of Bela Sahwa Tola. Circle Officer (Chauri Chaura) Kundan Singh said that raids were underway to arrest the accused and that the situation remained under control.

## 80th Independence Day Celebrated with Senior Citizens at Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Memorial Old Age Home, Wazirpur

New Delhi, August 14, 2026: The 80th Independence Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm at the Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Memorial Old Age Home, Wazirpur, under the Department of Social Welfare, Government of NCT of Delhi. The celebration was organised on August 14 as part of the Har Ghar Tiranga 2026 programme. Sh. Charan Singh, Superintendent of the Home, hoisted the National Flag in the presence of senior citizens, staff members and guests. Representatives of NGOs also participated in the programme, including Dr. Surat Karan of Saksham Foundation and Ms. Poonam Singh of Asha Ki Kisan. The event created an atmosphere of patriotism and joy among the residents. Senior citizens, staff members and other guests participated enthusiastically in the celebrations. Special food was also arranged for the residents and guests, adding to the festive spirit of the occasion.

## Sub-inspector found dead in car in Lucknow; probe ordered

Lucknow: Sub-Inspector Ajay Kumar, a 2020-batch officer posted at the Sarvodaya Nagar police outpost under Ghazipur police station, had been out of contact since Thursday afternoon, according to the Lucknow Police. After repeated attempts by colleagues to reach him over the phone failed, his mobile phone location was traced to the Para police station area. A police team rushed to the spot and found Kumar lying unconscious in a locked Santro car parked by the roadside, according to a police statement.

## Married woman, lover arrested for killing her former partner in UP's Mau

Mau (UP): A married woman and her alleged lover have been arrested for the murder of her former partner in Uttar Pradesh's Mau district, while another accused is absconding, police said on Tuesday. People & Society The victim, Asgar Ali, a resident of Jangipur in neighbouring Ghazipur district, was found stabbed to death in a rented room in the Kanshiram Colony area under the Sarailakhansi police station limits early Monday. ASP Anoop Kumar said the investigation revealed that the murder was the result of a love affair and personal rivalry. "The accused woman, Shahzadi, had been living separately from her husband for around two-and-a-half years. During this period, she devel-

oped a relationship with Asgar Ali, but the two later fell out. She subsequently became close to Akash Rao, while Suraj Rajbhar was also in contact with her," Kumar said. The officer said Asgar allegedly objected to her relationship with Akash and had assaulted her, following which Shahzadi and Akash allegedly conspired to eliminate him. "To execute the plan, a rented room was arranged in Kanshiram Colony. Around 4.40 am on Monday, Akash Rao and Suraj Rajbhar reached the room. Asgar was overpowered by Suraj, while Akash stabbed him in the chest with a sharp-edged weapon, killing him on the spot," Kumar said. According

to the officer, the two accused fled on a scooter after the incident, while Shahzadi left the room shortly afterwards. Police have arrested Shahzadi and Suraj Rajbhar and seized the scooter allegedly used in the crime, Kumar said. Law Enforcement Efforts are on to recover the murder weapon and arrest Akash Rao, who is absconding and has a criminal history, the officer said. "Preliminary investigation and interrogation of the accused indicate that the murder was the outcome of a conspiracy driven by a love affair and jealousy. Further legal proceedings are underway," Kumar added.

## Former UP minister Nanak Ram Bhurji dies after falling from 7th floor in Lucknow

Lucknow: Nanak Ram Bhurji, 68, was a former minister of state and currently a member of the BJP. His relatives have alleged foul play, saying there were no visible injury marks on the body - inconsistent with a fall from the seventh floor - and demanded a thorough investigation into the matter. According to the police, the officer in charge of the MLA residence informed the local police outpost that a man had fallen from an upper floor behind the legislators' residential complex. Police rushed to the spot and shifted him to the Civil Hospital, where doctors declared him dead. Director of Civil Hospital Dr G C Gupta told that the

former minister was brought to the hospital around 2.35 pm. "He was brought dead. His body had external injury marks. A postmortem will be done to ascertain the exact cause of death," Dr Gupta said, adding that Bhurji's relatives had also arrived at the hospital. Bhurji was not allotted any room in the new Darulshafa building, so how and why he reached there and the circumstances leading to his fall remain unclear. Preliminary inquiry revealed that Bhurji had been suffering from depression for a long time and was frequently seen

roaming around the MLA residence complex, the police said. Legislative Branch Meanwhile, Arun Gupta, who identified himself as Bhurji's brother and a former MLA, questioned the circumstances surrounding the death, demanding a fair probe into the incident. Speaking to PTI Videos at the spot, Gupta claimed there were no visible injury marks on Bhurji's body and said this was inconsistent with a fall from the seventh floor. "If someone falls from the seventh floor, there are bound to be serious

injuries or the body would be badly damaged. This is a matter that requires investigation and the government should get it probed," he said. Gupta said it was not known who was with Bhurji at the time of the death. His body had external injury marks. A postmortem will be done to ascertain the exact cause of death," Dr Gupta said, adding that Bhurji's relatives had also arrived

at the hospital. Bhurji was not allotted any room in the incident and called for examination of his mobile phone records to ascertain whom he had been in contact with before his death. Asked whether the family suspected foul play, Gupta replied, "Yes, we suspect it could be a case of murder." The police said the body had been sent for post-mortem.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, REKHA, is legally mother of Army No. 2813649L, Rank - HAV, Name - DAHAKE GIRISH BHASKAR, presently residing at Vill - Kaottha (Rly), Post - Kaottha (Rly), Tal - Deoli, Dist - Wardha, State - Maharashtra, Pin - 442302, have changed my name from REKHA to REKHA BHASKARRAO DAHAKE and date of birth from 12/10/1967 to 01/01/1967 for all future purposes. Vide affidavit dated 13/08/2026 before Public Notary, Delhi.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, Kamaljeet Kaur, W/o Harbans Singh, D112 Behind Bank Of India Vishnu Garden Delhi Pin 110018 Have Changed My Name To Kamaljeet Kaur For All The Future Purposes

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, Yash S/O Bhandar Singh, 1987 Old Housing Board Colony Sector 15, Sonapat Pin 131001, Haryana, India Have Changed My Name To Yash Panchal For All The Future Purposes

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
GENERAL PUBLIC IS HEREBY INFORMED THAT BACK CHAIN OF "3RD FLOOR WITH ROOF PROPERTY NO. 239, AREA 32 SQ. YDS., KHASRA NO. 642, VILLAGE CHANDRAWALI ALIAS SHAHDARA IN THE ABADI OF CHAR TITI WALI TELIWARA ILLAQ SHAHDARA DELHI 110032" I.E. 1. ORIGINAL TITLE DOCUMENT/KHATUNI, IN FAVOUR OF SMT. PUSHPA DEVI W/O LATE SUNDER LAL, 2. ORIGINAL NOTARY GPA, ATS & WILL DT. 20.09.1990 EXECUTED BY SMT. PUSHPA DEVI W/O LATE SUNDER LAL IN FAVOUR OF SMT. USHA RANI VERMA W/O SH. NANAK CHAND, 3. ORIGINAL NOTARY GPA, ATS & WILL DT. 21.06.1996 EXECUTED BY SMT. USHA RANI VERMA W/O SH. NANAK CHAND IN FAVOUR OF SMT. PUSHPA DEVI W/O LATE SUNDER LAL AND 4. DEATH CERTIFICATE SH. SUNDER LAL HAVE BEEN LOST / NOT AVAILABLE WITH THE CURRENT OWNER MR. RAJESH KUMAR AND SAID OWNER MR. RAJESH KUMAR ACQUIRED THE SAID PROPERTY VIDE RELINQUISHMENT DEED DT. 09.01.2023 EXECUTED BY 1) SMT. ASHARANI 2) SMT. SUSHMA RANI 3) SMT. SUNITA SIKKA ALI D/O LATE SUNDER LAL IN FAVOUR OF SH. RAJESH KUMAR S/O LATE SUNDER LAL NOW MR. RAJESH KUMAR WANTS TO TAKE LOAN AGAINST THE SAID PROPERTY FROM TRUHOME FINANCE LIMITED. PLEASE SUBMIT THE SAID ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS IF FOUND BY ANY PERSON. ALSO PLEASE CONTACT WITH WRITTEN OBJECTION LETTER WITH RELEVANT DOCUMENTS WITH UNDERSIGNED IF HAVING ANY OBJECTION IN RESPECT OF SAID PROPERTY/DOCUMENTS WITHIN 10 DAYS OF THIS PUBLICATION. ITS USE BY ANYONE IS ILLEGAL.

ADITYA VERMA, ADVOCATE  
E-16, MANSAROVAR PARK, SHAHDARA, DELHI-110032  
MOBILE NO. 9999042521

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, MUSHRAT W/O MOHD REHAN R/O 2636, Gali Khajoor Wali, Kucha Chelan, Darya Ganj, Delhi-110002, have changed my name to MUSARRAT JAHAN for all purposes.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, RAHISUDDIN SON OF ALEYH-DAAD R/O H NO. 57-B, GALI NO. 1, KARDAMPURI, NORTH EAST, DELHI-110094 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME RAIS AHMED ALI FUTURE PURPOSE

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, CHANDERKESH GUPTA S/O KATWARU GUPTA R/O H NO-304 STREET NO-2 FRIENDS COLONY OLD FARIDABAD HARYANA 121002 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO CHANDERKESH GUPTA

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
I, Geeta Kour w/o Dharmender Singh S/O Asha Singh resident of A63, Vikash Vihar Nilothi New Delhi, has evicted my son Harvinder Singh and daughter-in-law Anrit Kour from all his movable and immovable properties due to their indecent behavior and not being under his control and has severed all his family relations with them. If any person does any kind of transaction with them in future, he himself will be responsible for it to them.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
This is to inform the general public that Mrs. Aparna Samanta D/o Mr. Deepak Samanta & Mr. Satyajit Maity S/o Mr. Swapan Maity intends to purchase a THIRD FLOOR WITHOUT ROOF RIGHTS, PROPERTY NO. 1867/1, GALI NO. 14, AREA MEASURING 66 SQ. YDS., OUT OF KHASRA NO. 27 SITUATED AT GOVINDPUR EXTN., KALKAJI, NEW DELHI-110019, from Mr. Samarth Gupta S/o Mr. Parveen Kumar Gupta and same was owner of the said property from Relinquishment Deed dated 08.05.2026 executed by Mrs. Neelam Gupta W/o Mr. Parveen Kumar Gupta & Mrs. Shuchi Malik W/o Mr. Diwanish Malik and after death of Mr. Manohar Lal had expired on 28.10.2025, and he was purchased the said property vide Regd. GPA dated 30.03.1988 executed by Mrs. Kanchan Bhatia W/o Mr. Indrajit Bhatia. The property is stated to be free from all encumbrances, liens, charges, mortgages, claims, and other third-party interests. Please also note that the said property is proposed to be financed by Bajaj Housing Finance Ltd., Ghaziabad, U.P. If any person(s) object(s) regarding subject property, then kindly may submit his/her objection within 07 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.

[ASHWANI KUMAR] Advocate  
Chamber No. 122, Telsil Compound, Ghaziabad, U.P.  
kumar2021ashwani@gmail.com

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, KARAN SINGH GAUTAM S/O NIHAL SINGH R/O H.NO. 8/61 A, RAM GALI VISHWAS NAGAR, P.O. - SHAHDARA, DIST: SHAHDARA DELHI - 110032 HAVE CHANGED TO MY NAME KARAN SINGH

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, SHADAN ALAM, S/O ANJUM AND FURQUAN ALAM, R/O H. NO. R-89, STREET NO. 22, BRAHAM-PURI, NEW SEELAMPUR, NORTH EAST DELHI- 110053, HEREBY DECLARE THAT THE NAME OF MY PARENTS HAVE BEEN CHANGED: Father's Name: FURQAN ALAM Mother's Name: ANJUM JAMAL

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, HARDAS S/O RAM DAS R/O H.NO. 63-A, SANIK ENCLAVE, GALI NO-06, NEAR DURGA MANDIR, VIKAS NAGAR, UTTAM NAGAR, DIST: WEST DELHI - 110059 HEREBY DECLARE THAT THE NAME OF MINE & FATHER HAVE BEEN CHANGED: MY CORRECT NAME: HARDASS FATHER NAME: RAM DASS

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, ROSHAN KUMAR SAHNI S/O DEEPAK KUMAR SAHNI R/O D-101 GALI NO-76ANESH NAGAR SHAKARPUR DELHI 110092 CHANGED MY NAME TO ROSHAN SAHNI

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Information is hereby given to the general public that our client Shri Nirmal Kumar Ahlawat 2, Shri Vimal Ahlawat are the owner and in possession of a Freehold Residential Built-up Property Bearing No. C-356-B, on Plot No. 11, with roof/terrace rights, area measuring 135 Sq. Yds., i.e., 112.87 Sq. Mtrs., out of Khasra No. 113/15, Situated in the area of Village Palam, Delhi State Delhi, Colony Known as Gali No. 41, Mahavir Enclave, Part-III, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi-110059. Our client acquired the said property by virtue of a Gift Deed dated 07.05.2026 duly registered as Document No. 2026/161/6792, in Book No. I, Volume No. 16666, on Pages. 1-18, on 07.05.2026, with the Sub-Registrar Office of South West Kapashera, We are notifying/declaring publicly that Sh. Rajinder Singh Ahlawat S/o Sh. Chandan Singh Ahlawat and Shri Rajender Singh Son of Shri Attar Singh both are same person. Therefore, our client hereby declares that except him, no other person has any right, title, interest, claim or objection in respect of the above-mentioned property and the said property is presently financed / mortgaged with Piramal Finance Ltd., Branch Jhandewalan New Delhi. If any person(s) have any objection(s) or claim(s) with respect to the right, title or interest in the Said Property then contact us within 07 days from the date of Publication of this notice and or the same to the undersigned if found by anyone. Thereafter no claim shall be entertained

[NAVEEN KUMAR VERMA] Advocate  
F-211, Sector-3, Vaishali, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201010 (Contact at 09958871432)

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Geeta Kour w/o Dharmender Singh S/O Asha Singh resident of A63, Vikash Vihar Nilothi New Delhi, has evicted my son Jasvinder Singh and daughter-in-law Simran Kour from all his movable and immovable properties due to their indecent behavior and not being under his control and has severed all his family relations with them. If any person does any kind of transaction with them in future, he himself will be responsible for it to them.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
It is hereby notified to the general public that my client Mr. Rajesh Kumar Rathour Son of Hakim Singh, resident of 23 Second Floor, Pocket-6, Rohini Sector-22, Sultanpuri C Block, North West Delhi, Delhi-110086, has disowned and debarred his son Mr. Gyanesh Rathour Son of Rajesh Kumar Rathour from all his movable and immovable properties due to his cruel and disrespectful behaviour towards him and has severed all relations with him. Mr. Gyanesh Rathour shall be solely responsible for any kind of unethical or unlawful acts committed by him. My client shall not be liable or responsible in any manner whatsoever.

**SURAJ KUMAR Advocate**  
Chamber No. 631, Rohini District Court, Madhuban Chowk, Sector 14, Rohini, Delhi-110085

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
This is to inform you that Mrs. Anita Kumari W/o Mr. Narendar Kumar intends to purchase the Third Floor (RHS), without roof rights, built on Plot Bearing no. 133, area measuring 113 Sq. Yds., out of 130 Sq. Yds., out of total area 250 Sq. yds., out of Khasra no. 104 and 105, situated in the revenue estate of village Dindarpur, colony known as Presently known as Shyam Vihar Phase I, E-Block extn., Najafgarh, New Delhi, from Mr. Deepanshu Dalal S/o Mr. Rajesh Dalal and Mr. Prashant Jakhur S/o Mr. Kulbir Singh Jakhur, Mr. Neeraj Singh Jeena S/o Mr. Laxman Singh Jeena and all owners of the property vide GPA dated 31.03.2025 executed by Mrs. Uttara Das W/o Mr. H.K. Das alias Harekrishna Das. The property is free from all encumbrances, liens, charges, mortgages, and other third-party claims. The physical possession of the property is presently with Mr. Deepanshu Dalal S/o Mr. Rajesh Dalal and Mr. Prashant Jakhur S/o Mr. Kulbir Singh Jakhur, Mr. Neeraj Singh Jeena S/o Mr. Laxman Singh Jeena. The proposed purchase of the aforesaid property is to be financed by Aditya Birla Housing Finance Limited, Branch: Noida, U.P. If any person(s) object(s) 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.

[ASHWANI KUMAR] Advocate  
Chamber No. 122, Telsil Compound, Ghaziabad, U.P.  
kumar2021ashwani@gmail.com

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, NAMDEV legally father of Army no - 2813736Y, Rank - NK, Name - More Vyankoba Namdev, Presently Residing At Panshewadi, Post-Panshewadi, Teh - Kandhar, Dist - Nanded, State- Maharashtra, Pin - 431714 have changed my name from NAMDEV to NAMDEV MADHAVRAO MORE for all future purposes. In my son's service record my date of birth wrongly mentioned as 01/06/1971 instead of my correct date of birth as 01/01/1973 Vide Affidavit dated 15/07/2026 before Notary Public Delhi.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, PRATIBHA legally mother of Army no - 2817391A, Rank - SEP, Name - ARBAT SHUBHAM RAMKRUSHNA, Presently Residing At - Dewarda, Post- Palod Teh - Akot, Dist - Akola, State- Maharashtra, Pin - 444101 have changed my name from PRATIBHA to PRATIBHA RAMKRUSHNA ARBAT for all future purposes. In my son's service record my date of birth wrongly mentioned as 11/07/1976 instead of my correct date of birth as 01/01/1976 Vide Affidavit dated 13/07/2026 before Notary Public Delhi.

**Date of Birth Change**  
I, BHASKAR NAMDEORAO DAHAKE, is legally father of Army No. 2813649L, Rank - HAV, Name - DAHAKE GIRISH BHASKAR, presently residing at Vill - Kaottha (Rly), Post - Kaottha (Rly), Tal - Deoli, Dist - Wardha, State - Maharashtra, Pin - 442302, have changed my date of birth from 05/08/1960 to 01/01/1960 for all future purposes. Vide affidavit dated 13/08/2026 before Public Notary, Delhi.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
This is to inform the general public that Mr. Prashant Verma intends to purchase a Property No.H-35, area 50 sq. yds., i.e. 41.80 sq. mtrs., in Block-H, out of Khasra No.29/29, Situated at abadi of Jagat Puri in the area of Village Khureji Khas ilaqa Shahdara Delhi-110051, from Mr. Sandeep Kumar and same was owner of the said property from Relinquishment Deed dated 19.7.2018 executed by Mrs. Kavita Sachdeva, Ms. Uma and Mr. Shyam Khanna, vide Document No.4400, in Book No.1, Pages No.36-39, Vol No.1350, on dated 28.07.2018 SRO- VIII/A Preet Vihar, and after death of Mrs. Ishwari Devi, and jointly Mrs. Ishwari Devi and Mr. Sandeep Kumar purchased the said property vide Sale Deed dated 29.08.2012 executed by Mrs. Kamlesh Dhawan, vide As Doc. no. 17742. The property is stated to be free from all encumbrances, liens, charges, mortgages, claims, and other third-party interests. Please also note that the said property is proposed to be financed by Bajaj Housing Finance Ltd., Subhash Nagar Delhi. If any person(s) object(s) regarding subject property, then kindly may submit his/her objection within 15 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.

[ASHWANI KUMAR] Advocate  
Chamber No. 122, Telsil Compound, Ghaziabad, U.P.  
kumar2021ashwani@gmail.com

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, MOHAIS S/O MOHD DULARE R/O KHNO B-BLOCK 3RD FLOOR GALI NO-8 SANGAM VIHAR DELHI 110084 CHANGED MY NAME TO MOHD RAIS

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, DULARE KHAN S/O MEHBOOB KHAN R/O KHNO B-BLOCK 3RD FLOOR GALI NO-8 SANGAM VIHAR DELHI 110084 CHANGED MY NAME TO MOHD DULARE

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, RESHMA BEGUM W/O AZHAR SAIFI R/O 35/180 BLOCK 35 TRILOK PURI DELHI 110091 have changed my minor son name ANAS TO ANAS AZHAR SAIFI Permanently for all future purpose

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, Md. Afzal S/o Md. Islam R/O RZ-2534-A/27, Third Floor, Tughlakabad Extension, New Delhi-110019 I have changed the name of my minor daughter aged 14 years from Qaynat to Qaynat Afzal for all future purposes.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, MOHD FAISAL KHAN S/O FAROGHE KALEEM KHAN R/O D-264 B, 2ND FLOOR, GALI NO - 6 SHAKAR PUR BARAMAND MANDAWALI WEST VINOD NAGAR DELHI - 110092 have changed my name to MOHAMMAD FAISAL KHAN Permanently for all future

**सर्वजनिक सूचना**  
मैं अपने क़े मोहम्मद अज़मल से ग़लत आचरण के कारण उससे सम्बन्ध संबंध समाप्त कर लिहूँ हूँ। भविष्य में उसके क़िन्नी भी क़ुर्रण या लेहिन का वह स्वयं जिम्मेदार होगा। सक्तीन केम उस 40 वर्ष निवारी बी-1/47, आगर नगर, ज़ेम नगर-3, निवारी सुलेमान नगर, दिह्ली - 110086

| NORTHERN RAILWAY Tender Notice                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The Dy. Chief Engineer/Const Northern Railway, Shakurbasti, Delhi for and on behalf of the President of India invites e-tender under two Packet System for the under noted work:- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Name of work and location                                                                                                                                                         | Balance work for Construction of Dayabasti Grade Separator including earthwork blanketing, Retaining wall, PSC Girders, Steel Girders, Bridges and other misc. work etc. on Dayabasti Azadpur section under Dy. CE/C/SBB |
| Completion period of the work                                                                                                                                                     | 24 (twenty four Months)                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Approx Cost of work                                                                                                                                                               | ₹ 73.16 Cr                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Earnest Money amount (to be deposited Online)                                                                                                                                     | ₹ 14633100.00                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Sale/availability of tender document on Railway Website                                                                                                                           | Tender documents will be available on IREPS web site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in from 31.08.2026 to 14.09.2026 upto 15.00 hrs                                                                                                  |
| Last date/Time of upload of tenders                                                                                                                                               | 14.09.2026 upto 15.00 hrs Tender documents can be uploaded by the tenderer on IREPS web site w.e.f. 31.08.2026 to 14.09.2026                                                                                             |
| Date & Time for submission of E-tender and opening of tender                                                                                                                      | 14.09.2026 at 15.00 hours (immediately after closed of uploading of tender)                                                                                                                                              |
| Opening of tender                                                                                                                                                                 | 14.09.2026 at 15.00 hours (immediately after closed of uploading of tender)                                                                                                                                              |
| Tender Notice No. 435-ACSC-C-SBB Dated: 13.08.2026 2800/2026                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Serving Customers With A Smile                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

| SUPPLY & INSTALLATION WORKS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| E-tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following work:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |  |
| <b>E-Tender No.:</b> DB265548, <b>Dated:</b> 06-08-2026; <b>Item 1: PL Code (Group):</b> 459035060019; <b>Description:</b> Supply and installation of bulb thermal actuator/thermal head having action temperature as 68 degree celcius to 72 degree celcius in the existing Aerosolbased fire suppression system suitable for Pyrogen make model TAD-IN. [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery]. <b>Total Qty.:</b> 5461 Nos; |  |
| <b>Earnest Money:</b> ₹5,79,960/-; <b>Date and time of closing of E-tender at 14:30 hrs. on 04-09-2026.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |  |
| For details please visit IREPS website <a href="https://www.ireps.gov.in">https://www.ireps.gov.in</a> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |  |
| <b>NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY</b><br>Serving Customers With A Smile                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |  |
| Dy. CMM/DBRT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |  |

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
This is to inform general public at large that our client, Mr. Ram Nayak who have approached Aadhar Housing Finance Limited, for Portion of Plot No. 218, area measuring 75 Sq. Yds., Part of Khasra No. 128, Situated in the area of Village Bindapur, Colony known as O-Extn., Vani Vihar, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi. GPA Dated 02.04.2009 executed by Smt. Mahinder Kaur in favour of Mr. Ram Nayak (Doc No. 3024), in the will, ats are missing. And the said property having Portion of Plot No. 218, area measuring 75 Sq. Yds., Part of Khasra No. 128, Situated in the area of Village Bindapur, Colony known as O-Extn., Vani Vihar, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi., is going to be mortgaged in Aadhar Housing Finance Limited All persons, if any, including bank, financial institutions, or any parties having any claim (Objection to Khasra Number), demand, right, interest in respect of or against the said property or any part thereof by way of inheritance, assignment, mortgage, charge, possession, lien or otherwise, are hereby required to make the same known in writing within 7 days with the documentary evidence from the date of publication, failing which the said claim of the person/s, if any will be considered waived and settled.

**Ms. Rani Shilpee (Advocate)**  
Office Add: H. No. T/181, UGF, Shukar Bazaar, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi-110059  
Mobile no. 9717780057

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
This is to inform the general public that Mr. Jai Parkash S/O Jitender Kumar who is the owner of A House No 849 (PID No. 1CQT-DAT6), area measuring 60 Sq. Yards, comprised in Khatwa Khata No 563/603 Mustil No 31 Kila No (17-11), (27-11), Kite 2 Rakla 15 Kanal 2 Marla, share to the extent of 18/2718, Waka Siwana Meuja Dhanawpur Hall Colony Surat Nagar, Phase 2, Telsil Kadipur, District Gurgaon, Haryana-122006, within MC Gururam through Transfer Deed Reg No 3819 DATED 19.06.2026 executed by Mrs. Asha Devi W/o Mr. Jitender Kumar in Favour of Mr. Jai Parkash S/O Jitender Kumar. Here chain documents of said property that is: 1) Original Reg. Sale Deed reg no 11887 dated 12.01.1999 executed by Mr. Charan Singh S/o Mr. Ram Kala in Favour of Mr. Col. Dinesh Chand Kulshrestha S/O Mr. B. P. Kulshrestha, Total land area 60 Sq. Yards 2) Original Reg. GPA no 1548 dated 30.05.2012 executed by Mr. Col. Dinesh Chand Kulshrestha S/O Mr. B. P. Kulshrestha in favour of Mr. C. P. Ranga S/o Mr. Srinidhan Ranga Above said document has been lost, a complaint for which was lodged in the Haryana police citizen services vide Application Number : 132270752600927 and missing date : 06/08/2026 and same is acknowledged [That Mr. Jai Parkash S/O Jitender Kumar is true and lawful owner of the said property. The customer is availing loan facility from Tru home Finance limited Gurugram Branch against the said property and the lender will create its charge over the said property to secure the facility. Any person who has any right, objection or claim against the said property can raise objection within 7 days from the date of issuance of publication of notice. No claim of any kind whatsoever shall be entertained thereafter. Kindly contact below Address -

**Deepak Malik, (Advocate)**  
Address - Shop - 2 kataria complex Dayanand colony Gurgaon Mob - 9540419009

NEWS BOX

Israeli settlers' siege of Palestinian homes draws a sharp US rebuke

QUSRA.(Agency)

For five nights, Israeli settlers surrounded three Palestinian homes on the outskirts of a town in the occupied West Bank, preventing the families from leaving safely as their food and water supplies dwindled.Qusai Abu Rida was holed up inside with his teenage son when settlers cut the water and electricity, leaving them to drink well water as dozens of Israeli settlers erected tents outside. His Palestinian American brother in Ohio, who owns the house, watched the siege unfold on security cameras and called for updates.The standoff in the northern West Bank town of Qusra is the latest in a wave of settler violence convulsing the territory, which Israel seized in the 1967 Mideast war and which would make up the main part of a future Palestinian state.On Thursday, U.S. Ambassador Mike Huckabee referred to the settlers as "terrorists" — a word American officials usually reserve for Palestinian militants. It was an unusually sharp rebuke from the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump, who has given unprecedented support to Israeli settlement over the years. Mounting criticism of Israel from the United States could pose a challenge for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is trying to maintain good relations with his country's closest ally as he mobilizes ultranationalist voters ahead of a tough battle for reelection in October. Settlers have remained in the area despite the army interveningOn Sunday, dozens of settlers arrived at the homes in Qusra, blocking doors and preventing occupants from leaving, according to the families.

Jared Kushner to visit Israel and Egypt next week with Board of Peace officials to talk Gaza

WASHINGTON.(Agency)

President Donald Trump's son-in-law and negotiator Jared Kushner will travel to the Middle East next week to try to advance plans for an end to the conflict in Gaza after a deal recently announced by the Trump administration ran into Israeli opposition.An official with the Board of Peace, the body Trump established to oversee the fragile ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas war, said Kushner, board high representative Nikolay Mladenov, and executive board member and former British Prime Minister Tony Blair would arrive in Israel on Sunday.The group will then travel toCairo, where meetings of a Palestinian technocratic group set to assume control of Gaza under a U.S.-brokered ceasefire deal have been taking place for the past several months, the official said. The trip was reported earlier by Axios.The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because planning for details of the trip has not yet been finalized, said the meetings would demonstrate the determination of Trump and the Board of Peace to "see peace, prosperity and sustainable security emerge" in a demilitarized Gaza where Hamas has ceded

North Korea slams US-South Korea military drills and threatens strong response

SEOUL.(Agency)

North Korea on Friday threatened unspecified stern steps against the United States and South Korea ahead of their upcoming military drills, which Pyongyang called a war rehearsal that claimed would be more provocative than last year.The warning is typical of the harsh rhetoric that North Korea often deploys ahead of major US -South Korean military exercises and suggests the country could conduct more weapons tests in coming days. North Korea has often used major US- South Korean military training as a pretext to ramp up its testing activities to expand its weapons arsenals and promote public support for leader Kim Jong Un.The US and South Korean militaries are to start their major summertime Ulchi Freedom Shield exercises Monday and have described their scope as similar to past years. The allies have said the exercises are meant to strengthen their readiness against North Korean threats and reiterated that they are defensive in nature.In a statement carried by state media Friday, North Korea's Foreign Ministry called the US -South Korean training "a rehearsal for an aggressive war" that is triggering a different level of instability in the region. "It is our consistent principle of ensuring security to respond to a new level of a threat with a new level of a deterrent," the statement said. North Korea "will more clearly express its stance on the enemies to cope with any threats and challenges through the responsible and decisive exercise of the right to legitimate self-defense.

Israeli settlers' siege of Palestinian homes draws a sharp US rebuke

QUSRA.(Agency)

For five nights, Israeli settlers surrounded three Palestinian homes on the outskirts of a town in the occupied West Bank, preventing the families from leaving safely as their food and water supplies dwindled.Qusai Abu Rida was holed up inside with his teenage son when settlers cut the water and electricity, leaving them to drink well water as dozens of Israeli settlers erected tents outside. His Palestinian American brother in Ohio, who owns the house, watched the siege unfold on security cameras and called for updates.The standoff in the northern West Bank town of Qusra is the latest in a wave of settler violence convulsing the territory, which Israel seized in the 1967 Mideast war and which would make up the main part of a future Palestinian state.On Thursday, U.S.

Ambassador Mike Huckabee referred to the settlers as "terrorists" — a word American officials usually reserve for Palestinian militants. It was an unusually sharp rebuke from the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump, who has given unprecedented support to Israeli settlement over the years.Mounting criticism of Israel from the United States could pose a challenge for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is trying to maintain good relations with his country's closest ally as he mobilizes ultranationalist voters ahead of a tough battle for reelection in October. Settlers have remained in the area despite the army intervening On Sunday, dozens of settlers arrived at the homes in Qusra, blocking doors and preventing occupants from leaving, according to the families.Israeli troops have intervened multiple times, but the

settlers keep returning, said Loui Ridi, the homeowner in Ohio who spells the family name differently. Rights groups have long accused Israeli forces of turning a blind eye to settler violence or of intervening to protect the settlers. “It's a cycle,” Ridi said. "They need to be prevented from the entire area, not just removed and moved 100 feet away so when the (Israeli military) leaves, they come back."On Tuesday, Israel's military condemned the siege as "illegal, reprehensible, and unacceptable," and declared Qusra a closed military zone. The next day, dozens of settlers returned, tried to block the road with rocks and clashed with Israeli soldiers, according to video shot by village residents. On Thursday, the military said troops dismantled "wo illegal outposts" in Qusra and a nearby village, and detained one Israeli. It said more

soldiers were sent to "carry out defensive missions and patrols."Qusra Mayor Abdel Azim Wadi said that Israeli forces evacuated more than a dozen homes to take up positions in the village. The settlers, though removed from their outposts, remain in other parts of the village, he added. Abu Rida said soldiers gave the occupants of all the homes 30 minutes to evacuate and move into one of the besieged houses. The military said the soldiers have been told to allow families to remain in their homes and not to operate in them, but families have not yet returned, Abu Rida said. It's still nt clear when families in the besieged area will be able to get basic supplies and what would happen to their homes. Israel's military said the families had basic supplies like food and water when it checked in on them on Wednesday.

World War II Memorial in DC vandalized with bubbles, graffiti

WASHINGTON.(Agency)

The World War II Memorial on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., was vandalized Thursday, with bubbles filling a fountain and "Clean hands dirty \$" written in red paint.The Interior Department released a statement late Thursday saying: "Our U.S. Park Police are on the scene and the investigation is ongoing. The public should know we will find the person responsible for this disgusting act."The Friends of the National World War II Memorial, a nonprofit organization that helps

maintain the site, said: "There are many places in our country for expression, debate, and



disagreement. A national memorial honoring those who served and those who never

returned home should never be used as a canvas for vandalism." The Veterans of Foreign Wars called the vandalism "an act of profound disrespect, a slap in the face to the veterans who served and sacrificed and to the families who carried that burden at home." The World War II Memorial is just east of the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool on the Mall. After a botched repair job earlier this year left the pool with peeling blue sealant and green algae, President Donald Trump blamed the issues on vandalism without providing evidence.

Judge drops Nevada case against electors accused of forging certificate in 2020 election

LAS VEGAS.(Agency)

The yearslong case against six Nevada Republicans who were accused of submitting a bogus certificate that falsely declared Donald Trump the winner of the state's 2020 presidential election has been dismissed, a judge ruled Thursday.The dismissal marks the latest setback in swing states' efforts to prosecute fake electors who tried to keep Trump in the White House after he lost to Joe Biden in 2020.Three other fake elector cases in Arizona, Michigan and Georgia have been dismissed. Arizona Attorney General Kris Mayes recently dismissed her office's criminal case but vowed to bring it back to a grand jury in hopes of securing another indictment. The dismissal was a legal maneuver aimed at getting around a deadline for starting new grand jury proceedings after Mayes lost an appeal earlier in June. Nevada Attorney General Aaron

Ford, who is also running for governor as a Democrat, brought charges relating to forgery and "offering a false instrument for filing or record" against the six



Nevada Republicans, who pleaded not guilty.His office plans to appeal the ruling.The defendants included Michael McDonald, the chair of the Nevada Republican Party, and Jesse Law, the former chair of the Clark County Republican Party.In a Thursday statement, McDonald's defense attorney Richard Wright called the attorney general's plans to appeal "hasty" and "premature" and said continuing the case was

politically motivated.After the 2020 election, the six Republican electors gathered outside of the Nevada Legislature to sign a certificate giving the state's six electoral votes to Trump, despite Biden winning the state by more than 30,000 votes. The ceremony was broadcast online, and the video footage was used as evidence in the case.The case hasrevolved around the defendants' intent behind submitting the certificate.Prosecutors argue the defendants intended for their documents to be mistaken for actual electoral votes that then-Vice President Mike Pence would count on Jan. 6, 2021. The defendants say submitting the certificate was an act of "political theater" designed to publicize their concerns about the election. They were preserving their rights to challenge the official election results and had no intent to deceive a government agency into accepting the GOP certificate as real, their attorneys argued.

US takes U-turn, says Tehran’s nuclear programme not priority in Iran war as focus shifts to lowering oil prices

WASHINGTON.(Agency)

The top US priority now in the Iran war is no longer its nuclear program but to bring gasoline prices down for American consumers, the vice president said Thursday, with the treasury secretary adding that new economic punishment to wear down Tehran is imminent.The comments by Vice President JD Vance and Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent illustrate the powerful leverage Tehran has gained by shutting down the Strait of Hormuz. Preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, consistently touted by President Donald Trump as his main reason for the war,- now takes a back seat to getting oil flowing again freely through the strait, Vance said on Fox News.Vance's comments underscored

the stark reality that the war now centers on control of the Strait of Hormuz, the critical fuel supply conduit that was open before Trump started the war along with Israel in late February.Iran has all but shut it down in retaliation and thus found a crucial bargaining chip against Trump as he struggles to find a way out of the war and shies away from resuming large-scale attacks.The 80-year-old president's approval rating is plummeting, the war is unpopular among Americans and midterm elections are approaching in November.Republicans fear Trump and the war, which has caused gasoline prices to soar, will cost them their control of Congress."I know that oil is down today and it's way down from the highs in the early days of the conflict," Vance said on Fox News. "That's goal

number one -- keep oil and gas cheap for Americans all over our



country.""And then obviously goal number two is ensure that Iran never gets a nuclear weapon," he added.Low Keying itThe vice president has been among the members of the administration most skeptical of the offensive launched against Iran in late February.These remarks, however, appear to confirm the more cautious

approach now favored by the US president, which involves maintaining strong economic pressure on Iran by blockading its ports and preventing it from selling oil.Heralding more economic punishment, Bessent threatened to subject Iran to economic isolation "like the world has never seen before." He said new measures are expected next week.Only days ago Trump had said an agreement to reopen the strait was imminent. Now his administration seems to be digging in, with diplomacy on hold as he hopes economic suffering will cause Iran to yield."We are low-keying it," Trump said Sunday. "We are only semi-negotiating with them. We are just watching Iran with its huge inflation and the fact they have no money," Trump told the news outlet Axios.

## Changing City: No more Mahalaxmi traffic detour New bridge set to cut commute by December

Mumbai.(Agency)

For motorists negotiating Mahalaxmi’s congested roads, a long awaited missing link could be in place by the end of this year. The BMC has completed the 78.5 metre pylon of its new cable stayed bridge, which will connect Mahalaxmi ground directly with Saat Rasta and provide an alternative to the existing Mahalaxmi railway over bridge.

The civic body is now pushing to complete the remaining work and open the four lane bridge to traffic by December 31, 2026.

About the project

After a structural audit of old bridges across the city, the BMC’s standing committee cleared proposals for a new bridge in Mahalaxmi. The upcoming bridge will replace an older east-west structure that passes over the railway tracks of the Mahalaxmi railway station. The bridge will commence from the Keshavrao Khadye Marg near the racecourse in the west, surpass the western railway tracks and land near Shirin Talkies along Keshavrao Khadye Marg in the east.

## The 2018 report that predicted Mumbai’s landslide this week, almost word-for-word

Mumbai.(Agency)

The Geological Survey of India (GSI) had warned the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) eight years ago that the Kurla hillside which collapsed on Wednesday, killing eight people, was likely to give way, and listed protective works that were never carried out, government records show. Documents reviewed by The Indian Express show the GSI had sought “immediate attention” to Hill No. 3 at Saki Naka, where three landslides between 2005 and 2008 killed 16 people and damaged at least 26 houses.

The GSI, the Centre’s nodal agency for landslide studies, prepared a 435-page risk assessment in 2018 after two years of field visits and technical studies across 74 landslide-prone pockets of Mumbai, and asked the BMC to frame a land-use policy for the city’s vulnerable areas. The report named Kurla among Mumbai’s five primary landslide-risk zones, along with Bhandup, Ghatkopar, Vikhroli and Chembur.

## Mumbai restaurants pull down shutters amid Maharashtra food safety crackdown

Mumbai.(Agency)

Eateries across Mumbai can be seen pulling down their shutters — for a few hours, a few days or longer — to carry out repairs, apply a fresh coat of paint, fix broken tiles or undertake deep cleaning.

The closures come as Maharashtra’s Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has sharply stepped up enforcement in the city, suspending licences and sharing photos and videos from the premises.

Vijay Shetty, president of the Indian Hotel & Restaurant Association (AHAR), said the intensity of the crackdown has pushed many of the association’s member restaurateurs into pre-emptive overhaul mode — renovating, retraining staff and hiring outside help to avoid risking a suspension.

“They are third-generation owners, their image has been built by their ancestors over decades,” Shetty said, referring to many of the association’s members. “FDA is not only suspending licences but also naming and shaming restaurants, which is causing significant financial loss as well as a lot of harm to the reputation they have built over the years. There is mental trauma alongside financial loss.”

# Ambala Sikh protest turns violent; cops use tear gas, lathi charge to clear highway

A Sikh community protest over the delayed FIR against GurSimran Singh Mand led to a highway blockade in Ambala and police action. The standoff continued even after the FIR was filed, as protesters sought the release of detained youths.

Ambala.(Agency)

A protest by members of the Sikh community over the alleged delay in registering an FIR against GurSimran Singh Mand in the Panjokhra Sahib dispute turned tense in Ambala on Thursday, with police using tear gas and a lathi charge to clear a highway blockade.

A large number of Sikh protesters gathered on the highway demanding that a case be registered against Mand. The protesters had earlier held a meeting and announced that they would block the National Highway if their demand was not met. As the protesters moved towards the highway from the gurdwara, police put up barricades and used tear gas to stop them. The protesters, however, broke through and blocked the highway, leading to a long traffic jam and the deployment of

heavy police forces. Amid mounting pressure, police later registered an FIR against Mand. However, the protest did not end. The protesters then demanded



the immediate release of Sikh youths who had been detained by the police. Several rounds of talks between police officials and Sikh representatives failed to break the deadlock. As darkness fell, police presence on the highway was further

increased and protesters were asked to clear the road.

When they refused to move, police used tear gas and resorted to a lathi charge to disperse the protesters. The highway was subsequently cleared and traffic restored.

Several police personnel were injured during the operation. Haryana DGP Ajay Singhal visited the Military Hospital and Civil Hospital in Ambala to meet the injured personnel and enquire about their condition. According to preliminary information released by the Haryana Police, six to seven personnel were injured. Those injured include DSP Virender Sharma, who suffered a serious thumb injury, along with Constables Rakshit and Naveen Kumar, Head Constable Sandeep Kumar, ASI Satish and ASI Pankaj, who sustained finger injuries.

# Canada work permit: Can protesting Indian students continue to stay on?

Jalandhar.(Agency)

For close to a month, Indian students in Canada have been protesting after their Post-Graduation Work Permit (PGWP) applications were refused, leaving them with a difficult choice.

These students, who have completed nearly two years of study at Portage College and its former partner campuses in Alberta, Calgary, and Edmonton, have spent around Rs 30 lakh to Rs 50 lakh on tuition and living expenses. They said they had not anticipated a refusal of their work permits and had expected to work in Canada after completing their programmes.

The refusals have reportedly cited concerns over the eligibility of the programmes, including whether they were credit-earning and qualified for a

PGWP. Portage College has said immigration decisions are made by the Canadian federal agency Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).



It has advised affected graduates to seek independent immigration advice.

The Canadian government has made it clear that those individuals whose PGWP applications have been refused and who

do not have any other legal status to remain in Canada must leave the country. In such a situation, can these individuals maintain their legal status? Here’s what to know.

What happens after the PGWP refusal?

After a PGWP refusal, if the students do not have any other legal status to stay in Canada, they cannot continue working and have to leave the country. They may, where eligible, apply for restoration of status within 90 days of losing their status, but the refusal does not automatically give a student 90 days to remain in Canada.

According to the IRCC, the 90-day provision relates to the restoration of temporary resident status after status has been lost; it is not a 90-day grace period following a PGWP refusal.

# Severe safety lapses at Chandigarh’s Sukhna Lake, finds audit

Chandigarh.(Agency)

At Chandigarh Sukhna Lake, where boat rides are one of the major attractions for visitors, a basic safety requirement of life jackets was given a “casual and lackadaisical” treatment, an inspection report has revealed.

The findings during the compliance audit of Chandigarh Industrial and Tourism Development Corporation (CITCO) left a stark mismatch at the iconic lake: 145 boats, 488 life jackets required — but only 225 available. The findings are contained in the Inspection Report of the Compliance Audit of Chandigarh Industrial and Tourism

Development Corporation (CITCO) for the period 2021-2022 to 2023-24, obtained by Chandigarh activist R K Garg from the Director General of Audit,



Delhi.

The report has also described the approach towards their specifications, purchase and maintenance as “lackadaisical” and “casual”, warning that it “may

cause danger to the life of visitors”. “Lackadaisical and casual approach in deciding specifications and purchase of life jackets has led to purchase and maintenance of life jackets for boating at Sukhna Lake, which may cause danger to the life of visitors,” the inspection report said. It called for the involvement of an expert body approved by the Government of India, like National Institute of Water Sport, Ministry of Tourism, Goa and Sports Authority of India, NDRF among others.

“Tourist footfall data for Sukhna Lake has shown a large number of tourists visiting Sukhna Lake... 90,000 (weekday) and 15,000 (weekend) approximately.

## Six Bengaluru hotels fined Rs 1.6L for food safety breach

BENGALURU.(Agency)

The Bengaluru North City Corporation (BNCC) on Thursday imposed a total fine of Rs 1.6 lakh on six hotels and food establishments for violating food safety, hygiene and solid waste management norms.

The inspections were carried out at eateries and hotels in the Byatarayanapura and Yelahanka divisions on the directions of Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar. Health officials found several violations, including improper waste segregation, unhygienic conditions, flies and use of single-use plastic.

Peepai Brewery & Kitchen was issued the highest penalty of Rs 80,000 after officials found expired cooking oil, improperly covered and unlabelled meat in cold storage and no invoice showing the date of purchase of the meat.

Hyatt Centric was fined Rs 40,000 for improper waste segregation and the presence of flies. The establishment was found violating FSSAI and solid waste management rules.

# Gorakhpur teen fakes own kidnapping, uses AI to extort father for online gaming

A Gorakhpur teenager allegedly staged his own kidnapping and sent AI-generated images to demand Rs 1 lakh from his father. Police said the false ransom plot was aimed at raising money for online gaming and involved no real kidnappers.

Gorakhpur.(Agency)

In a bizarre case from Uttar Pradesh's Gorakhpur district, a teenager allegedly staged his own kidnapping and used AI-generated images to demand Rs 1 lakh from his father to fund his online gaming activities.

The incident came to light in the Sikriganj police station area when a man informed the police that his nephew had left home and failed to return. Around the same time, several images were sent from the boy's mobile phone to his father's phone, accompanied by a demand for Rs 1 lakh. Treating the matter as a suspected kidnapping, police immediately registered a case and launched an investigation.

Using call detail records (CDR) and CCTV footage, police teams traced the boy and recovered him safely within two hours. He was later handed over to his family. During questioning, police uncovered an unexpected twist. According to investigators, the boy, who was allegedly addicted to online gaming, had fabricated the kidnapping story himself to obtain money for use in online games.

To make the plan appear genuine, he allegedly sent AI-generated images portraying himself as a kidnapping victim and demanded Rs 1 lakh from his father. Police said no actual kidnappers were involved and the ransom demand had been orchestrated by the boy himself. According to information gathered during the



probe, the AI-generated images were reportedly created with the help of the boy's girlfriend, who lives in Delhi.

Khajani Circle Officer Deepanshi Rathore said police acted immediately after receiving the complaint and traced the boy within two hours with the help of technical surveillance and

CCTV footage. She said the investigation revealed that the boy had staged the kidnapping and sent AI-generated photographs to support the false claim, with the sole aim of raising money for online gaming. Police confirmed that no third party had demanded money in the case.

## Two men went to confront a priest. They ended up buried beneath his temple

Lucknow.(Agency)

On July 25, Ankit (27) and his friend Israr (36) went to a temple in their village in Uttar Pradesh’s Baghpat to confront the priest. Ankit believed the priest was in a relationship with his younger sister and had allegedly warned him several times to end it.

Neither man returned home.

For four days, their families tried to find out where they had gone. They repeatedly asked the priest if he knew anything about Ankit and Israr, but he denied having any information about them, police said.

They lodged a missing person’s complaint on July 29. On Thursday, police recovered their decomposing bodies from the temple premises — they were buried several feet beneath the interlocking tiles.

The priest, who police said is the main accused, and his 14-year-old son are on the run, said Rakesh Kumar Pundir, Station House Officer (SHO) of Chandi Nagar police station. Police have arrested two of his disciples in connection with the case, who allegedly revealed details of the killings during questioning.

Trilled to the temple

Ankit was physically challenged. According to the SHO, he had been unable to move his lower body since birth. Israr, his close friend, used to take wherever he wanted to go on his motorcycle.

## Reposing faith in the hands on Cauvery spigot

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay’s unusual gesture of seeking a meeting with his Karnataka counterpart, D K Shivakumar, to address the Cauvery dispute’s latest episode must be applauded. Sharing the river’s water in a distress year is otherwise a fertile ground for posturing, and can quickly turn into a theatre of spectacle for antagonistic politics. It is unfortunate that circumstances in either state meant that an opportunity was lost to manage the dispute without further escalation and costs. The states would do well to avoid adversarial litigation and pursue deliberative means to coordinate the sharing. The current escalation is the second once since the Supreme Court gave its decision on Cauvery water sharing in 2018. In an unprecedented intervention, the court exercised appellate jurisdiction over an inter-state dispute and modified the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal’s 2007 award. The court’s decision led to the creation of the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) to give effect to its decision, with support of its technical arm, the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee (CWRC). The Supreme Court’s allocation, at 50 percent dependability of the long-term median availability at the river basin, requires Karnataka to release 177.25 thousand million cubic feet in a ‘water year’ (May 31 to June 1) at Biligundlu—the boundary point where the releases are monitored. Since the 2018 order, the institutional architecture of the CWMA has not had to deal with allocation in a distress year (below 50 percent dependability), except in 2023. The Cauvery basin had an unusually good run with the monsoon over the past decade. The 2023 episode followed the usual trajectory of protests and political mobilisation in both states and challenges to the decisions of the CWMA in the Supreme Court—all despite established mechanisms of technical assessment, institutional deliberation and timely directions to share the limited waters during a distress year. The court ultimately declined to interfere with the regulatory authorities’ assessment and directions, underscoring the institutional competence of the CWMA and CWRC. Importantly, these bodies do not operate in isolation from the states: the Cauvery management architecture brings together representatives of the basin states and the Centre, with their deliberations informed by technical inputs from agencies such as the Central Water Commission and the Indian Meteorological Department. The costs of such escalation are not only legal and administrative; they impose wider economic costs and deepen political antagonisms. The political posturing shrinks the space for coordinated and collective efforts to deal with deficit resources and manage the crisis. The current episode is following a similar trajectory. The CWRC has directed Karnataka to ensure 12,000 cusecs of water released daily at Biligundlu for a period of 15 days, revised upwards on August 11 after improved rainfall from an earlier order for 3,500 cusecs. This follows the established institutional process rather than an ad hoc one. They involve repeated assessments of rainfall, forecasts, reservoir storage, inflows and the competing requirements of the basin states, with directions revised as conditions change. Given the uncertainties involved in predicting rainfall and water availability over space and time, no amount of institutional process or litigation can eliminate such uncertainty. It must instead be managed, and that is possible only through collective and coordinated responses. This is the most crucial takeaway here. The legal and institutional architecture, by design, cannot create the political trust needed to address uncertainty collectively. The institutions can respond to hydrological uncertainty, but cannot eliminate it. These uncertainties are likely to grow with climate change.

## North-East forests under siege

### States are handing over large tracts of land to private contractors for oil palm cultivation

THE North-East has the last remaining dense and virgin forests in India, and these are falling prey to unrelenting destruction through commercial exploitation. Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Manipur and Tripura are in a race to hand over large tracts of land to private contractors to grow oil palm and manufacture palm oil, replacing relatively expensive imports. While the government claims that these plantations are only using degraded land or “Jhum” (slash and burn) residual plots, there are reliable reports that the region’s rich and variegated forests are being cut down to make way for ecologically destructive oil palm plantations. Under the National Mission on Edible Oils — Oil Palm (NMEO-OP), adopted in 2021, the current national cumulative acreage under oil palm of 640,000 hectares (ha) will be scaled up to 1 million ha by 2029 and the total potential footprint is estimated at 2.8 million ha. Currently, the acreage is largely concentrated in the southern states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, but further expansion is likely to come from the North-East. According to official figures, the oil palm acreage in the region is 68,324 hectares, with Mizoram in the lead with 30,000 ha and Arunachal Pradesh with 25,000 ha. The immediate target for 2026 is 92,543 ha. The longer-term target for the North-East is 962,000 ha.

Under the NMEO-OP, the Union government is aggressively promoting oil palm cultivation and processing in the North-East through a public-private template. The mission pays Rs 20,000/ha for plantations using domestic seedlings and Rs 29,000/ha for those using imported seedlings. After planting, there is a gestation period of four years before the first yield, during which a subsidy of Rs 50,000/ha is payable. There is also a guaranteed floor price of Rs 15,400 per tonne for the output. Thanks to such generosity, state governments are actively plotting and allocating tracts of land to private contractors to grow oil palm. The land thus allocated is ostensibly degraded, but peer-reviewed studies tell a different story. Using satellite surveys, Global Forest Watch, an international NGO, claims that five northeastern states (Assam, Mizoram, Arunachal, Nagaland and Manipur) accounted for about 60% of India’s total tree-cover loss between 2001 and 2023. It was found that the Dampa Tiger Reserve in Mizoram had



been encroached upon for the planting of oil palm. There are three major companies engaged in oil palm cultivation in the North-East. These are Patanjali, Godrej Agrovet and 3F Oil Palm Private Ltd, which is already a major player in South India. How have we come to this when government figures claim that India’s forest cover is 24.5% of its geographical area and is expanding? In the latest Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) that the government has submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the target

normally fall in the category of forest. This is what enables the State to pass off an oil palm plantation which has replaced a virgin forest as “no change in land use” and “no loss of forest”. There is more. The Forest (Conservation) Amendment Act, 2023, restricted the definition of forests only to those which were registered in government land records, as per the Indian Forest Act of 1927 or officially entered in government records on or after October 25, 1980. These records left out of purview forests on tribal lands or those maintained as community forests. This was the case with forests in the North-East, which were not registered during the colonial period, and this continued after Independence. However, a Supreme Court ruling in 1996 protected forests on tribal and community land by bringing them under India’s forest conservation laws. The court held that all forests that match the dictionary definition of “forest”, regardless of who may own them and irrespective of whether they were officially recorded, are entitled to protection by the State.

It is this ruling which is being sought to be changed by the amendment of 2021, since most of the forests in the North-East do not figure as such in official records. They do not qualify as “forest” at all. It is through this unseemly sleight of hand that the oil palm story in the region has taken wing. On a public interest litigation filed by conservationists, the Supreme Court has put a temporary halt to all commercial exploitation in forest areas, as spelt out in its earlier judgement. The government is contesting this decision. The development imperative and the national security compulsion are being put out to defend the amendment, but they lack credibility. One hopes that the court will stand its ground because the little that is left of our invaluable forest resources belongs to the generations to come. The Union government seeks to revive ancient Indian culture and traditions and yet seems disconnected from the ancient wisdom which considers our forests to be sacred and sees divinity in trees, mountains and rivers. The tattered garment of green that still covers Mother Nature in the hills and valleys of the North-East must never be violated.

## Difficult to digest top hotel brands failing the sniff test

### Raids by Karnataka’s Food Safety and Drug Administration exposed dangerous cost-cutting methods adopted in kitchens presumed to be serving the finest and freshest dishes

What food safety officials discovered in Bengaluru’s luxury hotels over the past week strips away the notion that fine dining and hygiene are synonymous. Rotten meat, expired dairy and bakery products and mouldy vegetables were found in five- and three-star restaurants. The 30 teams deployed by Karnataka’s Food Safety and Drug Administration (FDA) to inspect 60 hotels in the state capital seized 640 kg of meat, chicken and fish, 276 kg of vegetables, 49 litres of used oil, and large amounts of cereals, milk products and sauces past their use-by dates. Other serious violations included unhygienic storage, inadequate segregation of vegetarian and non-vegetarian items and wrong labelling. Officials sent at least 77 samples for testing and destroyed over a tonne of foodstuff. Supply centres were inspected, kitchens shut, licences suspended and notices issued.

Big brands like Taj Hotels, Shangri-La and Atria were caught in the net, leaving their regular patrons with uncomfortable questions about what their meals might have contained. The raids exposed dangerous cost-cutting



methods adopted in kitchens presumed to be serving the finest and freshest dishes. They also exposed dishonesty in the management of upper-crust hotels, whose exorbitant prices make the betrayal even more difficult to digest. It is baffling that well-known restaurants do not have strict procurement and monitoring systems, or

regular quality checks. The industry is trying to pass off the raids as unwarranted, with arguments on shelf-life under certain temperatures. Whether that or reliance on quick-commerce led to the slack practices, rotten food is unacceptable. Similar drives are being conducted in other states, too. Maharashtra’s FDA has cracked down on restaurants, bakeries, dairies and canteens—including at the high court, secretariat and IIT—and suspended some licences over handling and storage. Inspections have also begun at warehouses of online retailers Amazon and Blinkit. Gujarat, Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh have banned cheaper imitations of paneer, cheese and butter.

It is worrying that these are not isolated cases. When luxury restaurants violate the rulebook, it’s harsh to point the finger at smaller restaurants. But star hotel or street vendor, this is a serious matter about health and trust. When the voice of Indian consumers, who are largely unaware of their own rights, is treated as insignificant, strict food safety checks are an imperative. Let’s make a healthy habit of it.

## Picking the top global diplomat

### As the race to succeed António Guterres as the next UN secretary-general gets into gear, Ugandan diplomat Olara Otunnu, one of the seven candidates, could end up being judged by a voting system he himself devised decades ago. It’s been a long journey for someone who witnessed the descent of Idi Amin’s regime into terror

Forty-five years ago, Ugandan diplomat Olara Otunnu devised an informal voting system to break a bitter deadlock over the appointment of a United Nations secretary-general. Now, in one of diplomacy’s more intriguing ironies, the same ‘Otunnu Formula’ is being used to determine whether he should occupy the world’s highest diplomatic office. Otunnu is one of seven candidates seeking to succeed António Guterres. The field includes Costa Rica’s Rebeca Grynspan, who emerged as the early favourite after the first informal Security Council straw poll, alongside former Chilean President Michelle Bachelet, International Atomic Energy Agency Director-General Rafael Grossi, former Senegalese President Macky Sall, Ecuador’s María Fernanda Espinosa and Guyana’s Carolyn Rodrigues Birkett. Yet, every experienced diplomat knows that the eventual winner must not only impress the wider UN membership but also avoid a veto from one of the Security Council’s five permanent members. For the former Ugandan foreign minister and UN undersecretary-general, however, the contest is about more than personal ambition. Wars in Ukraine, Gaza, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo have exposed the limitations of the international system. The next secretary-general, he argues, must restore the organisation’s ability to persuade, mediate and command international trust. Otunnu says he entered the race only after repeated encouragement from world leaders and former colleagues convinced him his experience was needed at a difficult moment for the UN. “The UN’s moral authority is not lost, but it has been seriously eroded,” he explains in an exclusive interview, arguing that the secretary-general’s greatest strength lies not in military power but in leadership rooted in the

principles of the UN Charter. His convictions were forged long before he entered international diplomacy. As a student leader in Uganda, Otunnu witnessed the descent of Idi Amin’s regime into terror. “I experienced first-hand the nature and magnitude of evil,” he recalls. The experience taught him how easily brutality can become accepted as normal, how institutions crumble under political pressure and how dictators seek either to eliminate opponents or buy them off. “This searing experience was the beginning of my lifelong commitment to human rights.” During our conversation he also reflected on Amin’s ability to charm those he wished to recruit before turning ruthlessly against anyone who resisted. It was, he believes, a lasting lesson in the corrupting nature of unchecked power.

Exile eventually took him to St John’s College, Oxford, which he describes as “my first United Nations”. Suddenly, he found himself among what he calls “all the tribes under the sun”, forging friendships with fellow students including Tony Blair, Benazir Bhutto and future political leaders from Africa, Asia and Australia. Oxford, followed by Harvard, convinced him that successful diplomacy begins with understanding cultures long before negotiations start. His career subsequently took him through virtually every level of the UN—as ambassador,

president of the Security Council, foreign minister, president of the International Peace Academy and, perhaps most memorably, Special Representative for

than political leaders. He believes the next secretary-general must also confront challenges scarcely imagined when the UN was founded.



Children and Armed Conflict. Among his strongest memories is a visit to a refugee settlement in Sudan, where Muslim elders asked the UN to help build a church for their Christian neighbours because they already had a mosque. Deeply moved by the request, Otunnu found private donors to help. For him, it remains a powerful reminder that ordinary people often show more wisdom

Artificial intelligence, he says, requires an international framework bringing together governments, technology companies and experts to establish shared rules before the technology outpaces regulation. One of his first priorities would be convening a global round table on AI. Otunnu also offered a striking perspective on Idi Amin’s expulsion of Uganda’s Asian community. While describing it as a “horror and catastrophe”, he believes many who left ultimately escaped the even greater bloodshed that later engulfed those who remained. Uganda, he says, has never fully recovered from the destruction of much of its professional and intellectual class. He is under no illusion about the political mountain he faces. Although Grynspan has emerged as the early frontrunner, UN leadership contests often change dramatically as governments seek a consensus candidate acceptable to the major powers. Whatever the outcome, Otunnu has already shaped the office he now seeks. Four-and-a-half decades after devising the informal straw-poll system that transformed the selection of secretaries-general, he now finds himself subject to the very process he created—a fitting twist in a diplomatic career that has taken him from the terror of Idi Amin’s Uganda to the threshold of the world’s most demanding international post.

Haryana amends building code, allows maximum four dwelling units per plot

**Panchkula. (Agency)**

The Haryana Government has amended the Haryana Building Code, 2017, allowing only one dwelling unit per floor, up to a maximum of four units per plot, subject to compliance with the applicable zoning plan or architectural control sheets and conditions set by the competent authority.

The Town and Country Planning Department issued the amendment on August 13, 2026, under the powers granted by Code 13.2 of the Haryana Building Code, 2017. The revised provision stipulates that a building must comply with the restrictions set out in the zoning plan or architectural control sheets for the relevant sector or site.

It further states that only one dwelling unit per floor, up to a maximum of four units per plot, is permissible, subject to the terms and conditions specified by the competent authority. It also omits the existing Preface of the Haryana Building Code, 2017.

Defence Ministry revises remuneration of contractual medical staff at ECHS polyclinics

**Panchkula. (Agency)**

The Ministry of Defence has revised the monthly remuneration of Medical Officers, Specialists and Officer-in-Charge (OIC) of ECHS polyclinics engaged on a contractual basis, with the revised rates ranging from Rs 95,000 to Rs 1.30 lakh per month.

According to a letter issued by the Directorate of Ex-Servicemen Welfare, the remuneration of the OIC, Polyclinic, Medical Officer Officer, and Dental Officer has been revised from Rs 75,000 to Rs 95,000 per month.

The remuneration of Medical Specialists, Gynaecologists, and Radiologists has been increased from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 1.30 lakh per month. The letter also specifies the terms relating to remuneration, allowances and leave of re-engaged retired contractual staff.

A fixed monthly amount will be admissible as remuneration during the contract period, arrived at by deducting the basic pension from the pay drawn at the time of retirement. The amount of remuneration so fixed will remain unchanged for the term of the contract.

**JK: Jammu Div Comm hoists Tricolour, takes salute at full dress march past rehearsal**

**Jammu. (Agency)**

The Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar today hoisted the National Flag and took the salute from marching contingents during the full-dress rehearsal of the Independence Day Celebrations conducted here at Maulana Azad Stadium. In his address, the Divisional Commissioner congratulated the participants and urged them to uphold the unity, integrity and sovereignty of the nation.

He encouraged them to imbibe the spirit of patriotism and selfless service in their daily lives. He further appealed to the citizens to participate enthusiastically in the Independence Day celebrations and reaffirm their commitment towards nation-building, while paying homage to the freedom fighters whose sacrifices made the nation's independence possible. Deputy Commissioner Jammu, Dr Rakesh Minhas, SSP Jammu Joginder Singh and other senior sectoral officers were present on the occasion.

The full dress rehearsal began with the recitation of the National Song, followed by flag hoisting, singing of the National Anthem, inspection of the parade, the chief guest's address and the full-dress march past.

# Heavy rain forecast over Haryana, Punjab and Delhi during August 14-19; Himachal faces very heavy spells

**Panchkula. (Agency)**

Northwest India is set for a prolonged wet spell, with the India Meteorological Department (IMD) forecasting isolated heavy rainfall over Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi and Punjab throughout August 14-19, while Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand are likely to experience spells of heavy to very heavy rainfall.

According to the All India Weather Summary and Forecast Bulletin issued by the National Weather Forecasting Centre at 8.27 am on August 14, fairly widespread to widespread rainfall is likely over Himachal Pradesh, Jammu-Kashmir-Ladakh and Uttarakhand during August 14-19. Punjab is likely to receive fairly widespread to widespread rainfall on August 14-15, while Haryana, Chandigarh and Delhi

are forecast to receive similar rainfall on August 14-15 and again on August 17. The IMD has forecast isolated heavy rainfall over Haryana, Chandigarh and Delhi as well as Punjab during August 14-19. Jammu-Kashmir-Ladakh is likely to receive isolated heavy rainfall on August 14 and during August 16-19. The hill states face a more intense spell. Himachal Pradesh is likely to receive heavy to very heavy rainfall at isolated places on August 14 and again during August 17-18, while Uttarakhand is likely to receive heavy to very heavy rainfall on August 14 and during August 16-17. For August 14, the IMD has forecast heavy rainfall at isolated places over Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Punjab and Jammu-Kashmir-Ladakh. Heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely at isolated

places over Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. On August 15, isolated heavy rainfall is likely over Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Uttar



Pradesh. The rain spell is expected to continue on August 16, with isolated heavy rainfall forecast over Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu-Kashmir-Ladakh.

Uttarakhand is likely to receive heavy to very heavy rainfall at isolated places.

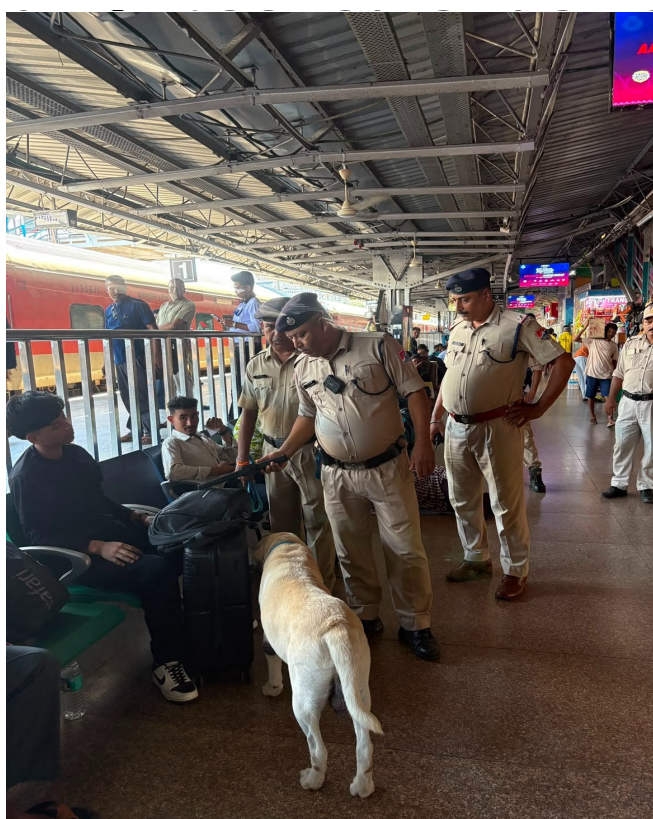
On August 17, heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely at isolated places over Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, while isolated heavy rainfall is forecast over Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Punjab and Jammu-Kashmir-Ladakh.

The IMD's day-wise warning shows heavy to very heavy rainfall over Himachal Pradesh on August 18, with isolated heavy rainfall also likely over Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Punjab, Jammu-Kashmir-Ladakh and Uttarakhand. On August 19, isolated heavy rainfall is likely over Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu-Kashmir-Ladakh and Uttarakhand.

## NFR Steps Up Security Vigil Ahead OF 80th INDEPENDENCE DAY Celebrations

**The Sikh Times**

Maligaon, 14th August: Ahead of the celebration of the 80th Independence Day of the nation, the Railway Protection Force (RPF) of Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has further strengthened security arrangements across the zone to ensure the safety and security of passengers, trains and railway property. Heightened vigil is being maintained at its railway stations, on-board trains and across railway premises, with RPF personnel undertaking extensive patrolling and surveillance. Additional attention is being accorded to sensitive and vulnerable locations to prevent any untoward incident and ensure a safe and secure travel environment during the Independence Day period. As part of the intensified security measures, comprehensive checking and frisking drives are being conducted at railway stations and on-board trains, covering passenger areas, waiting halls, platforms, circulating areas and other strategic locations. RPF teams, assisted by trained sniffer dogs, are carrying out thorough checks of passenger luggage,



unattended articles and sensitive areas. Security personnel have been strategically deployed at important locations, while regular public announcements are being made to sensitise passengers and urge them to immediately report any suspicious person, object or activity to railway authorities. NFR remains committed towards ensuring the highest standards of passenger safety and security, particularly during an occasion of national importance such as the Independence Day. RPF personnel across the zone have been directed to remain on heightened alert and maintain close coordination with other security and law-enforcement agencies wherever required. Passengers are also requested to remain vigilant, refrain from accepting articles from unknown persons and extend full cooperation to security personnel during checking, thereby contributing towards safe, secure and hassle-free railway journeys.

## Failed exam, bought fake certificates: 3 'doctors' arrested in Rajasthan

**Jaipur. (Agency)**

Three men have been arrested in Rajasthan for using forged Foreign Medical Graduate (FMG) screening certificates to obtain medical registration and practise as doctors despite failing the mandatory exam.

The three accused paid between Rs 25 lakh and Rs 29 lakh to obtain fake FMG screening certificates after repeatedly failing the examination conducted by the National Board of Examinations in Medical Sciences (NBEMS).

One of them went on to treat patients in an emergency ward without registration with the Rajasthan Medical Council (RMC). The arrests are part of a wider investigation into a suspected



racket involving foreign medical graduates, brokers and others who allegedly helped candidates obtain forged FMG certificates and use them to secure internships and medical registrations.

According to the police, more than 100

foreign medical graduates have so far come under the scanner, while 30 accused have been arrested in connection with the case. The case, registered in Jaipur on February 4, 2026, involves allegations of cheating, forgery and criminal conspiracy.

## 'Make public transport safer, laws stricter': Women pursuing higher education in Ahmedabad

Many say men staring at them is also one of the very common problems they encounter. A student says workers should undergo background verification, and that people should not employ without proper checks.

**Ahmedabad. (Agency)**

For many young women pursuing their education here, the alleged rape of a 23-year-old design student in an apartment building where she shared a flat with her friends has forced them to question how safe they feel in the city.

Several say they feel the most unsafe when using public transport. Nupur, an 18-year-old student who pursues management studies at a private institute, doesn't feel comfortable at the hostel she stays in. Her daily bus journey to and from college also worries her. "I don't think it is safe to travel from my college to the hostel by bus."

Another student from the same institute, who has lived in a girls' hostel for about a year, said on the condition of anonymity that she too feels unsafe when using public transport. She says she has had no issues at the hostel she resides in. At a paying guest or PG accommodation, the residents, who are 19-year-olds and students at a private technology institute in Gota, say living away from home made them feel vulnerable when they go out. They say their accommodation, which has a warden and helpers, makes them feel safe. Many say men staring at them is also one of the very common

problems they encounter. A student says workers should undergo



background verification, and that people should not employ without

proper checks. At another PG, the warden says every resident is registered. Residents need parents' permission to attend college function, and they are not allowed to leave the premises after 11 pm, she says. "No delivery personnel are permitted to go in".

"While there is no security guard, we have CCTV cameras. No male visitors, including family members, are allowed to go upstairs. Maintenance personnel complete their job under supervision. The PG has been operating for nine years without any safety-related incident," the warden declares.

## Morbi: Water tank demolition goes wrong, damages house



**Ahmedabad. (Agency)**

A controlled demolition of an old overhead water tank went awry as the structure collapsed near a house, damaging one of its walls, in a Morbi village on Thursday. No person was injured in the mishap, the village sarpanch said.

The incident occurred around noon at Hirapara village in Tankara taluka of Morbi. The village panchayat had planned and carried out the demolition of the 25-year-old water tank since it was in a derelict condition. The decision to bring it down in a controlled demolition was taken because locals feared that it might collapse on its own in severe weather conditions, Praveen Manji Sephar, the sarpanch of Hirapara Gram Panchayat, said.

In a video sourced from the village, the water tank can be seen being tied with ropes. As the bottom of the structure collapses, the tank swings towards a nearby residential colony and comes crashing down on the house closest to it, causing one of its walls to collapse.

Sephar said: "We decided to demolish a 25-year-old unused water tank before it collapsed on its own and hurt somebody. While we were doing it today, it fell in a direction other than intended and hit a house." Sephar added that the gram panchayat would repair the damage caused to the house owned by farmer Rajni Savji Savsani, and the repair would begin on Friday.

# Caste, Covid vaccination centre: What citizens have to answer in Census 2027

**This will mark the first time caste information is being collected as part of the decennial Census, which was originally scheduled for 2021 but was postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Union Cabinet has approved Rs 11,718 crore for conducting Census 2027.**

**Delhi. (Agency)**

Caste, religion, Covid-19 vaccination details, Aadhaar and mobile phone numbers are among the 40 questions citizens will be asked during Census 2027 as the Centre has finalised the questionnaire.

According to an order issued by the Registrar General of India, the questionnaire will seek details including whether a respondent belongs to a Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe, as well as their caste. This will mark the first time caste

information is being collected as part of the decennial Census, which was originally scheduled for 2021 but was postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Union Cabinet has approved Rs 11,718 crore for conducting Census 2027.

The population enumeration phase will begin on September 1 in Ladakh and snow-bound areas of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. The exercise in these areas will continue until September 30. An online self-enumeration facility will be available from August 17 to 31, ahead

of the door-to-door exercise. For the rest of the country, population enumeration will be carried out next year.

**CASTE, RELIGION, FAMILY DETAILS**

The 40-point questionnaire will seek a range of demographic and personal information. Respondents will be asked about their age, marital status, age at marriage, spouse, nationality and religion.

Details of parents, mother tongue and other languages known, literacy and digital literacy will also be recorded. For women who are currently married, widowed, divorced or separated, the



questionnaire will include questions on the number of surviving children, children from the current marriage and children born alive during the previous year.

The caste question is a major addition to

the Census exercise.

The questionnaire is not expected to provide a predefined list of castes; instead, respondents will state their caste and the information will be recorded accordingly, according to sources. The decision to include caste in the Census was taken by the Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in April last year.

**COVID-19 JABS, BANK ACCOUNTS, AADHAAR**

The questionnaire will also touch on several areas of everyday life and documentation.

## 400 ventilators, 910 oxygen concentrators unused at GTB hospital; Delhi HC upset

**Delhi. (Agency)**

The Delhi High Court has taken note of expensive equipment lying unused in government hospitals in Delhi. It expressed “shock” on 400 ventilators and 910 oxygen concentrators reportedly lying unused at Guru Teg Bahadur (GTB) Hospital.

A bench of Justices Prathiba M Singh and Manmeet Pritam Singh Arora are hearing a suo motu case, in which it routinely monitors healthcare services in the city’s government hospitals.

The situation at the Delhi State Cancer Institute is no different, where a very large number of equipment meant for cancer diagnosis and treatment lied unused, the court was informed. It noted that Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital and Chaudhary Brahm Prakash Ayurved Charak Sansthan also faced a similar situation, in which all their equipment and machines were reported to be lying unused.

The court was informed by GTB Hospital that the ventilators and oxygen concentrators were procured or donated during Covid-19 and were now surplus. They are part of a wider list of critical medical equipment lying idle in 26 government hospitals, the bench was told.

**Machines from top firms**

The division bench of the High Court observed, “Equipment appears to be manufactured by globally well-known companies, and it is unclear as to why such equipment is being permitted to lie unused.”



## 60 aircraft, Rs 1 lakh crore: Air Force's big push to modernise transport fleet

**The IAF is set to acquire around 60 multi-role transport aircraft in a nearly Rs 1 lakh crore programme, with Indian firms leading global partnerships to replace ageing platforms.**

**New Delhi. (Agency)**

The Indian Air Force is set for a major overhaul of its transport fleet, with the Defence Ministry set to acquire around 60 multi-role transport aircraft in a programme estimated at nearly 1 lakh crore, according to defence officials.

The proposed acquisition is aimed at replacing ageing transport platforms and strengthening the IAF’s ability to rapidly move troops, equipment and supplies.

Indian defence companies are expected to play the lead role in the programme, with multiple firms being considered for partnerships



with global aircraft manufacturers. According to defence sources, the tender has already been issued to multiple Indian companies, including Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, Tata and Mahindra.

Mahindra Defence has partnered with Brazilian aerospace major Embraer to offer the C-390

Millennium, while Tata is working with US-based Lockheed Martin to pitch the C-130J Super Hercules. The C-130J is already operated by the IAF, which has 12 aircraft in its fleet.

The proposed programme is expected to have a strong indigenous manufacturing component. Around 20 per cent of the aircraft could be delivered in fly-away condition, while the remaining platforms are envisaged to be manufactured in India with more than 60 per cent indigenous content through joint ventures between Indian companies and the original equipment manufacturers.

## Sonam Wangchuk calls for 'second Independence movement' to reshape Indian politics

**Delhi. (Agency)**

Climate activist and education reformer Sonam Wangchuk has called for a “peaceful revolution” in India, arguing that the country needs a fundamental change in the way it chooses its political leaders if it is to remain a “respectable nation” and emerge as a developed country by 2047. In a video message posted ahead of Independence Day on Thursday, Wangchuk called for “India’s second Independence movement” and urged citizens to suggest “selfless, fearless men and women of character and substance” who could help shape the country’s future.

Wangchuk said he had been unwell over the past few days and had spent time thinking about India, its progress and its future. “Fifty years ago, the neighbouring countries that were behind us, or were



equal to us, have now gone miles away from us,” he said, naming Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh while referring to per capita GDP.

Wangchuk warned that if the current trajectory continued, India would not become a developed country by 2047, the centenary of its Independence, and could struggle to hold its place in the global economy.

He said India needed a major change if it

wanted to remain a “respectable nation” by 2047.

**‘NOT ABOUT ANY ONE POLITICAL PARTY’**

Wangchuk congratulated people who had sought change and protested over the past two months. He said the agitation had also led to a change in the Union education ministry, referring to the resignation of the Education Minister. “I would like to congratulate you on one hand, that you wanted change and you protested in the last two months. And even though there was change...the Minister of Education resigned. But the next Minister of Education, I don’t see any miracle from him either,” he said.

Wangchuk said India’s progress remained closely linked to its education system. “As long as education is behind, the future of the country will also be behind,” he said.

## Two boys drown in rainwater-filled pit in Delhi's Narela

**New Delhi. (Agency)**

Two minor boys, aged nine and 11, drowned in a rainwater-filled pit near DDA flats in Delhi’s Narela area on Thursday, police said. According to police, the two children, residents of Bawana, had gone to the area to play and entered the pit, which was filled with rainwater.

Police received information about the drowning and rushed to the spot. The children were pulled out with the help of local residents and taken to Satyawadi Raja Harish Chandra Hospital in Narela, where doctors declared them brought dead, a senior police officer said. The bodies were sent for medico-legal proceedings and further investigation is underway.

A family member said one of the boys had left home around 10 am after taking money from his father, who works as a labourer, to buy candies. The boy was a Class 5 student.

The mother of the other child said she was away at work when she received a call from local residents informing her that her son had drowned. “He went for tuition at around 10 am. I was calling to find out whether he had returned from tuition. I don’t know why he went there,” she said.

The incident took place at 100 Foota in Narela, on vacant land near the DDA flats. Local residents alleged that the pit had been created during construction work and subsequently filled with rainwater. Police said the exact circumstances in which the children entered the pit and the sequence of events leading to their drowning are being ascertained. They also appealed to parents and guardians to keep a close watch on children during the monsoon and prevent them from playing near open pits, drains and water bodies.

**The Air India Airbus A320 aircraft, which was en route to Delhi from Phuket on August 4, experienced a sudden altitude drop of about 300 feet. The airline had initially attributed the incident to severe turbulence.**

**New Delhi. (Agency)**

Initial findings by Airbus have revealed the seven seconds of horror on the Air India Phuket-Delhi flight that suddenly lost around 300 feet of altitude on August 4. Following an analysis of the flight data recorder, Airbus revealed that flight controls on AI 2379 were lost for four seconds after all three hydraulic systems stopped working within about two seconds.

This affected several important controls used to manoeuvre the aircraft, explaining why it might have lost altitude. The incident happened on August 4 when the Air India Airbus A320 aircraft was headed to Delhi from Phuket.

It left 20 passengers and four cabin crew members severely injured. Seventeen people had to be hospitalised. The

aircraft, which had 137 passengers, later stabilised and landed safely in Delhi.

**WHAT AIRBUS FOUND IN ITS PROBE?**

Air India had initially attributed the incident to severe turbulence. Airbus, which is the manufacturer of the aircraft, and the French aviation accident investigation authority are assisting the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) in the investigation.

Citing the post-flight maintenance report, sources said 11 system alerts were recorded within a span of two to three minutes.

The issue began around 4.02.44, according to Airbus’s analysis. For about four seconds, the aircraft lost the use of important flight controls, including the ailerons, elevators and spoilers.



located on the wings, help in controlling the aircraft’s movement and speed. The hydraulic systems eventually recovered at around 4.02.51, helping restore control of the aircraft. In an aircraft, hydraulic systems provide the

force needed to move key flight controls and other aircraft components.

Airbus also pointed to a “full nose-down input” as the flight lost altitude. It basically means the aircraft received a command to lower its nose, causing the aircraft to pitch downward.

Admitting technical glitches in connection with the incident, Airbus has asked Air India to carry out a detailed inspection of the aircraft. It is, however, yet to identify the root cause behind the incident.

“We understand that the flight encountered a sudden loss of altitude on August 4, resulting in injuries on board... checks on the plane’s systems and sensors are needed to provide more information about the incident,” Airbus said in its communication to Air India.

NEWS BOX

VVS Laxman likely to become BCCI Director of Cricket



New Delhi. (Agency)

VVS Laxman, the former India batter and current head of the BCCI Centre of Excellence, is likely to take on a much bigger responsibility within Indian cricket. The development comes as the BCCI prepares for a possible reshuffle of key positions in September.

With Ajit Agarkar's tenure as chairman of the senior selection committee set to end in September and the national team's coaching setup also under scrutiny, the board could make some significant changes. Sources have indicated to India Today that Laxman is likely to be given the role of Director of Cricket. Meanwhile, there have also been reports that the BCCI could extend Agarkar's tenure until June 2027. The proposed move would represent a significant expansion of Laxman's current responsibilities at the Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru, where he has been overseeing player development and high-performance programmes. There is no official confirmation yet from the BCCI on the appointment or the exact structure of the proposed role. Laxman has already remained closely involved with the senior team, stepping in as interim coach when required. Most recently, he guided a young India side to a 3-0 T20I series win in Zimbabwe while Gautam Gambhir and his regular support staff were rested after the England tour.

**WHAT DOES DIRECTOR OF CRICKET MEAN?**

While the exact responsibilities would depend on the BCCI's eventual structure, a Director of Cricket role would potentially place Laxman at the centre of India's wider cricketing operations.

Kalyan Chaubey misleading government: Bhutia slams AIFF for snubbing FIFA event



New Delhi. (Agency)

Former India captain Bhaichung Bhutia has criticised the All India Football Federation's decision to prioritise the high-profile Brazil friendly, arguing that the reported cost could be better directed towards developing Indian football. He also accused AIFF president Kalyan Chaubey of misleading the government over the fixture.

Bhutia's comments come after the All India Football Federation confirmed that India had withdrawn from the inaugural FIFA ASEAN Cup, choosing instead to focus on the Brazil friendly scheduled for October 3 at Kolkata's Salt Lake Stadium. The AIFF had initially agreed to participate in the tournament, which was to feature India alongside Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore. "Spending something between Rs 50 to 70 crores for one friendly against Brazil is uncalled-for... Especially when Indian football is currently going through so much of the financial crisis. Kalyan Chaubey is simply misleading the government."

"There wasn't even one athlete from Bengal who figured among India's medal winners in the recently concluded Commonwealth Games. The government should spend money on upcoming sportspersons and try building infrastructure. We would all love to watch Brazil, but not by paying such a large sum." The former India captain had also raised questions over the purpose of the Brazil fixture before the AIFF confirmed India's withdrawal from the ASEAN Cup, pointing to the wider problems facing Indian football.

We need to improve: Michael Carrick calls for more Manchester United signings

Michael Carrick believes Manchester United can challenge for the Premier League title but wants further reinforcements. The United boss has made it clear that strengthening the squad remains a priority before the new season.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Michael Carrick believes Manchester United have enough potential to challenge for the Premier League title but admits the squad still needs strengthening before the new season. The United head coach has called for more additions while stressing that any new arrivals must improve the team.

United have made three additions so far, with Youri Tielemans, Andrey Santos and Karl Darlow joining the squad.

Speaking from United's pre-season base in County Kildare, Carrick made it clear that recruitment remains a priority as the club looks to build on last season's third-place finish. "We've definitely got the potential to achieve something really special," Carrick said. "I'm not hiding from the fact – and we should aim to do it. I can't give you a definite answer on [winning the title] but it's certainly what we're pushing to do because we have to. That's the club we are."

"We always want to strengthen in every way. So it depends on: is it going to make us better, and is it going to help us? It [buying a player] can't be for the sake of it, but, of course, we want to improve. We need to improve." United have spent 83.3 million pounds on Tielemans, Santos and goalkeeper Darlow so far, while Carrick continues to look for a left-back and another

**HAVE MANCHESTER UNITED SIGNED SO FAR?**



respectively. Carrick, however, insists the club will not recruit simply for the sake of making signings. The manager wants additions who fit the team's requirements and can raise the level of competition within the squad. "There's one or two areas where we'd like to improve," Carrick said. "But we are pretty

clear in the messages that we need to keep pushing and there's certain things that we want to try and do, but it needs to be right." The responsibility now falls on director of football Jason Wilcox and chief executive Omar Berrada to provide Carrick with the reinforcements he believes are required.

**WILL MARCUS RASHFORD STAY AT UNITED?**

Another major question concerns Marcus Rashford, who is back with the squad after spells on loan at Aston Villa and Barcelona. The forward could feature against AC Milan in United's final pre-season game, potentially making his first appearance for the club since December 2024. Carrick has welcomed his return and believes Rashford can still play an important role.

"He's our player," Carrick said. "He's our player, and he's a good player, and he gives us something a little bit different in the group."

Tanzid Hasan becomes first Bangladesh batter to hit Test century in Australia

Asan. (Agency)

Tanzid Hasan Tamim became the first Bangladesh batter to score a Test century in Australia, completing a 188-ball hundred during the first Test against Australia in Darwin. The 25-year-old's breakthrough innings continued Bangladesh's superb start after their bowlers had dismissed the hosts for 198. Playing only his second Test, Tanzid built his innings patiently before accelerating as Bangladesh moved ahead of Australia's first-innings total. The left-hander found support from captain Najmul Hossain Shanto, with the pair looking to stretch Bangladesh's advantage after a dominant opening day. Tanzid had already brought up his maiden Test fifty earlier in the innings and reached the century mark after continuing his composed stay at the crease. His knock also took him past Hannan Sarkar's previous Bangladesh



record of 76 for the highest individual Test score by a Bangladeshi batter in Australia. The century added another highlight to what has already been a memorable Test for Bangladesh. Hasan Mahmud had earlier ripped through Australia's batting line-up with 6/55, helping dismiss a star-studded home side for 198 and putting the visitors in an excellent position to take control of the Test.

**TANZID MAKES HISTORY**

Tanzid's hundred has rewritten Bangladesh's record books in Tests played on Australian soil. Hannan Sarkar's 76 at Cairns in 2003 had remained the highest individual score by a Bangladesh batter in Australia for more than two decades.

Cristiano Ronaldo returns to Al Nassr with bold new golden look

New Delhi. (Agency)

Cristiano Ronaldo, the 41-year-old Portugal captain and Al Nassr forward, has returned to club duties sporting a dramatic new look. The five-time Ballon d'Or winner has swapped his familiar dark brown hair for a striking copper-yellow shade as he begins preparations for the new Saudi Pro League season. Ronaldo returned to Riyadh after spending time away following Portugal's World Cup exit against Spain on July 6. He also recently married longtime partner Georgina Rodriguez in a civil ceremony in Cascais, Portugal, adding another major milestone to his summer. Ronaldo shared a picture on his Instagram story on Thursday, posing in a black T-shirt with a necklace, watch and Gucci wash bag. The biggest change, however, was on his head, with the forward sporting a gelled crop of copper-yellow hair. The new colour stood out against his dark eyebrows and offered a very different look for the

veteran forward as he prepares for another season in Saudi Arabia.

**RONALDO RETURNS TO AL NASSR**

Ronaldo was back on the training pitch



with Al Nassr on Thursday as the club prepares for the opening rounds of the 2026-27 Saudi Pro League campaign. New Al Nassr manager Ange Postecoglou has described Ronaldo as someone who is "always ready", but it remains unclear whether the forward will feature in the opening match. Al Nassr begin their league campaign at home against Al Fateh on August 15

before travelling to face Al Riyadh on August 21. According to The Al Nassr Tribune, Ronaldo is expected to make his competitive debut for the new season against Al Riyadh, although the coaching staff are yet to make a final decision.

**A NEW SEASON, BIG TARGETS**

The upcoming campaign will mark Ronaldo's 25th season in club football, with the Portuguese continuing to chase one of the biggest milestones of his career: reaching 1,000 goals. Despite the uncertainty over when he will first play, Ronaldo has continued to work on his fitness through his established training, nutrition and recovery routine. His return will also provide a boost to an Al Nassr side that has strengthened during the transfer window and is looking to mount a serious challenge for major honours.

FIFA chief Infantino receives support from 6 Arab federations amid revolt over World Cup plan

New Delhi. (Agency)

The heads of six Arab soccer federations expressed their "full support" and "confidence" in Gianni Infantino on Thursday as the embattled FIFA president fights to keep his job after his failed World Cup private investment plan. The backing came from 200 World Cup co-host Morocco, Qatar, Egypt, Mauritania, Lebanon and Sudan, with four of the signatories being FIFA council members. "We, the undersigned leaders of our respective football associations, express our full support for Mr. Gianni Infantino, President of



FIFA, and reaffirm our confidence in his leadership and continued commitment to the development of football worldwide," the statement read.

"We deeply appreciate Mr. Infantino's sustained efforts to advance football globally, expand opportunities across

all regions and strengthen the game's role in bringing people and communities together." The statement said the signatories "look forward to continuing our close cooperation with him towards a stronger and more prosperous future for world football, expanding opportunities and further enhancing Arab football's contribution to the global game." Infantino is facing a revolt after his plan to sell stakes in the World Cup to private equity investors. He withdrew the \$20 billion proposal after a furious backlash by global soccer officials, including European body UEFA, which has warned of a boycott of all FIFA games and events.

Arrive as champions: How India prepared for Hockey World Cup under Paddy Upton

New Delhi. (Agency)

What sets a champion from the rest of the field? We may say that it is his/her superior skills to overcome any situation that they find themselves in or just to breeze past their opponents with ease. But, at times, it is also about having that mental strength to overcome anything that is thrown at them. This is where Paddy Upton comes into play for the Indian men's hockey team. The South African mental conditioning coach is no stranger when it comes to guiding champion sides. He was a vital part of the Indian cricket team's backroom staff when they won the 2011 World Cup at home. When Craig Fulton came in as the coach of the men's team, he quickly roped in Upton as a part of his system. His aim was simple. To improve the team's

mental toughness. And that has been evident since Upton collaborated with the Indian team. Since the South African has been a part of things, India won the bronze medal at the Paris Olympics and the 2025 Asia Cup. These were tournaments where India was tested. In Paris, India played with 10 men for more than 40 minutes during the quarterfinal against Great Britain. They were able to push the game into the shoot-out and secure a famous win. During the Asia Cup, India had tough outings against China and Korea early on, but the second time they faced them, the players seemed to be at the peak of their powers. Maybe that's why Hockey India sent the team to the Swiss Alps for a three-day camp, reviving a formula they used in

2024 to get the Olympic bronze. The three-day camp took place at mental conditioning expert Upton's training



facility, located at adventurer Mike Horn's base in the Swiss Alps. And the quarterfinal result was the perfect example of Upton and the lesson

he taught this side to achieve success.

"In the quarterfinal against Britain, India won the match from a situation no other team could have won, because we had prepared for situations like that in the Swiss camp," said Upton to PTI. The camp at his facility, according to Upton, wasn't created to address weakness. Rather, it is a team-building exercise and to push the limits of the players to go beyond their fears.

"It wasn't drive by addressing weaknesses. It was about creating even more team-building and perspective about challenges and fears. Most of the teams would prepare for the World Cup on a hockey pitch, but we had gone for a much more challenging situation physically and mentally," Upton said.

## Stock markets decline in early trade; Sensex down 300 points

MUMBAI. (Agency)

Market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty declined in early trade on Friday as the prolonged US-Iran impasse weighed heavily on investors' sentiment. The 30-share BSE Sensex was down 298.75 points to 77,760.21 in early trade. The 50-share NSE Nifty declined 74.20 points to 24,321.90. From the Sensex pack, Tata Steel, Axis Bank, InterGlobe Aviation, Tech Mahindra, Power Grid and ITC were among the major laggards. Eternal, Titan, Adani Ports and Bajaj Finance were among the winners. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, traded 0.06 per cent higher at USD 87.12 per barrel. The unresolved US-Iran standoff continues to underpin crude oil prices, leaving oil-importing economies such as India more vulnerable to inflationary pressures and currency volatility, Ponmudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth-tech firm, said. In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi and Japan's Nikkei 225 traded higher, while Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index quoted lower. US markets ended higher on Thursday. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 510.69 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data. On Thursday, flag-end buying helped the Sensex end the session in the positive territory. The 30-share index settled 113.61 points, or 0.15 per cent, higher at 78,079.96. The Nifty was marginally down 40.10 points, or 0.16 per cent, to end at 24,395.85, registering its third day of decline.

## FSSAI's warning to celebrities and influencers: Why it matters

New Delhi. (Agency)

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) on Thursday (August 13), issued a warning to celebrities and social media influencers over the promotion of food products through unverified or misleading claims. The regulator's message was that people who lend their public image and influence to food advertising should not simply repeat claims made by brands. They should first make reasonable efforts to establish that the product is safe, legally compliant and that claims about its health or nutritional benefits are properly supported. The warning comes at a time when celebrity advertising and influencer marketing have become an important part of the food and beverage industry. Consumers increasingly encounter food products through Instagram videos, YouTube content, social-media posts and other forms of digital promotion rather than only through traditional advertisements. A recommendation from a well-known actor, sportsperson or influencer can therefore have a powerful effect on consumer choices. "Modern food, beverages and nutritional products in today's comparatively more health conscious society grab increased attention of consumers, especially of the youth. And the role of celebrities and influencers in their marketing has become all the more critical in the digital world," says a senior creative director with a Mumbai-based marketing company, adding that; often the agencies who engage the celebrities or influencers may not be even fully aware of the products that they want to promote.

## L&T to build India's largest single-cluster AI infrastructure facility in Chennai

Kolkata. (Agency)

Amid the growing adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) in India, infrastructure giant Larsen & Toubro (L&T) has taken up a project that is going to be India's largest single-cluster AI infrastructure facility. It will be located in Chennai and will be built in partnership with Together AI, which is a US-based cloud platform for developers and AI researchers who want to build, train, and run open-source generative AI models.. The value of the project can go up to Rs 15,000 crore. It will deploy approximately 10,000 GPUs based on NVIDIA's B300 platform. Large-scale AI model training This mammoth AI factory will be built for Together AI and will be utilised for large-scale AI model training, fine-tuning and inference. Simply put, this entire setup will help provide extremely fast computing power to AI companies and developers. L&T has stated that it is already working on building data centers and AI infrastructure and this project marks a significant step for the company to enter the AI Factory business. "The integrated AI Factory, with capacity of 10,000 B300 NVIDIA GPUs, will be hosted at Vyoma's Chennai data centre.

# Why US called Pune, Gujarat and Chennai 'ugly sister cities' in China trade report

New Delhi. (Agency)

A new White House trade report has put manufacturing hubs in Pune, Gujarat and Chennai in an unusual comparison with Cincinnati, Dayton and Columbus in the US. The comparison is over pumps and compressors. The White House calls such foreign-US pairings "ugly sister cities" in its report, The Great Transshipment Scam: Rise, Scope, and Costs. The phrase has nothing to do with the cities being actual "sister cities". It is the White House's way of describing foreign manufacturing centres that compete with American industrial regions making similar products. But the India reference is part of a much bigger US allegation — that Chinese goods are increasingly

being routed through other countries to get around steep American tariffs.

WHAT IS THE GREAT



### TRANSSHIPMENT SCAM REPORT?

The White House report looks at how Chinese goods may be reaching the US through other countries to get around tariffs imposed on Chinese imports. The report argues that some Chinese

goods are being sent to third countries, where they may undergo limited processing, repackaging or changes to paperwork before being exported to the US as products from that country. That matters because a product entering the US from China can face a much higher tariff than the same product coming from another country. Washington says this has created an incentive to move goods through countries with lower tariff rates. Trade experts refer to this as tariff arbitrage — taking advantage of the difference between the tariff imposed on a Chinese product and the lower tariff on the same product entering from another country. It also makes an important clarification: not every shift

in production from China is suspicious. Companies have genuinely moved factories and diversified supply chains since the US began imposing tariffs on Chinese goods in 2018. The report's concern is with goods that remain essentially Chinese but are given a new route — and potentially a new country of origin — before reaching the US. It calls the broader shift in trade flows the "Great Reallocation" and the network of countries through which China-linked goods may move the "Shadow Transshipment Network".

### WHY IS INDIA ON THE LIST?

India is among the countries placed in Tier 1 of the Shadow Transshipment Network, alongside Canada, the European Union, Israel, Japan, Mexico, South Korea and Taiwan.

## Svatantra Microfin files Rs 3,000 crore IPO papers with Sebi

New Delhi. (Agency)

Svatantra Microfin, a non-banking finance company focused on microfinance and affordable housing loans, has filed draft papers with Sebi to raise up to Rs 3,000 crore through an initial public offering (IPO). The proposed IPO will comprise a fresh issue of shares worth Rs 1,500 crore and an offer for sale (OFS) of shares worth another Rs 1,500 crore. The company may also consider raising up to Rs 300 crore through a pre-IPO placement. If it goes ahead with the pre-IPO round, the amount raised will be reduced from the fresh issue size. The IPO filing comes as Svatantra looks to raise fresh capital to support the growth of its lending business, while some of its existing private equity investors are also looking to sell part of their holdings.

### EXISTING INVESTORS TO SELL SHARES

The Rs 1,500-crore OFS will be split between two existing investors. Advent International-controlled Violicina plans to sell shares worth Rs 1,064.8 crore, while Multiples Alternate Asset Management will sell shares worth Rs 435.2 crore. Violicina currently owns a 28.02% stake in Svatantra Microfin, while Multiples holds 11.45%. Ananya Birla and her firm Antimatter Media together hold a 59.97% stake in the company. Advent and Multiples had jointly invested Rs 1,930 crore in Svatantra Microfin in March 2024, according to the IPO documents.

### WHY IS SVATANTRA RAISING MONEY?

The company plans to use the net proceeds from the fresh issue to increase its Tier I capital base. The additional capital will help it meet future capital requirements and support onward lending as its business and assets grow. Svatantra provides microfinance loans and also offers affordable housing finance through its subsidiary, Svatantra Micro Housing Finance Corporation.

Its lending business is largely focused on women in rural areas, with the company targeting households with annual incomes of up to Rs 3 lakh.

## EPFO deadline: What happens if employers miss the August 15 ECR filing deadline?

New Delhi. (Agency)

Employers have one important compliance deadline to keep in mind this week. The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has asked employers to file the Electronic Challan-cum-Return (ECR) for the July wage month and deposit the applicable PF contributions by August 15.

EPFO shared the reminder on X, asking employers to complete the process on time so that employees' provident fund contributions are credited without delay.

### WHAT HAS EPFO SAID?

In its latest notice, EPFO said, "Important Notice for Employers!

File the ECR for the July wage month and deposit the due contributions by August 15."



The retirement fund body also said timely compliance will ensure that contributions reach members' accounts on time and help employers avoid penalties and compliance-related issues. The ECR is the monthly return through

which employers report employee-related PF contribution details and complete the payment process.

### WHY IS THE AUGUST 15 DEADLINE IMPORTANT?

PF contributions are an important part of an employee's retirement savings. Any delay in filing the return or depositing the dues can affect the timely credit of contributions to members' accounts. For employers, completing the filing and payment within the prescribed time also helps avoid additional compliance costs. Simply put, EPFO's latest reminder is a clear nudge to employers to complete their July compliance requirements on time.

## Most Asian stocks track Wall Street record as US data ease rate fears

New Delhi. (Agency)

Most Asian stocks rose Friday as another soft US inflation reading solidified expectations the Federal Reserve will hold off hiking interest rates, while a further drop in oil prices added to the upbeat mood. The advances tracked a healthy lead from Wall Street, where the S&P 500 ended at a record and the Nasdaq saw its highest close since June after data showed the producer price index slowed sharply in July and came in below forecasts. The reading compounded bets on the Fed standing pat at its meeting next month, following the previous day's consumer price index reading that also pointed to easing inflationary pressure and last Friday's jobs report showing 23,000 positions were lost in July.

Investors are now pricing in a less than 40 percent chance of a September rate hike, compared with 50 percent last week.

"A few weeks ago, traders were being asked to justify why the Fed should not hike again," said Stephen Innes, global strategist at Quintex Intel. "After the latest run of data, the burden of proof has flipped. The market now wants to know what would actually force the Fed to tighten." We've now had a constructive triple-header of dovish US data: softer payrolls last Friday, an obliging core CPI print, and now a risk-friendly PPI release. "The disinflation ducks are starting to line up, and with oil also backing off, the market has steadily stripped away the case for another near-term Fed hike. However, uncertainty prevails on trading floors as inflation at more than

three per cent remains well above the Fed's two percent target, while the Middle East crisis could erupt at any time and send oil prices soaring. Meanwhile, Cleveland Fed boss Beth Hammack reiterated her view that borrowing costs need to rise despite the latest run of figures. "I love to see that those numbers are coming in lower... but I don't have confidence that we're going to continue to see that, or that we're going to see them low enough that it's going to bring us back down to that two percent number," she said in Ohio on Thursday. I think we need to act now," she added. That came after she told Yahoo Finance on Monday that "one 25-basis-point move probably doesn't do a whole lot for the economy. So it's probably some number of (movements)" but did not want to say where they should land.

# India sitting on \$5 trillion worth of gold: Will the govt tap it with a new scheme?

A Gold Monetisation Scheme allow individuals, Hindu Undivided Families and trusts deposit idle physical gold with designated commercial banks which can generate interest for the depositors. It turns a dead asset into income generating financial tool.

Kolkata. (Agency)

India is believed to be sitting on gold worth \$5 trillion, which is far higher than the country's GDP, and the government is planning to revamp its flagship Gold Monetisation Scheme to turn this idle asset into a financial instrument, says reports. The plan comes against the

backdrop of surging crude oil prices, thanks to the continuing West Asia crisis, which is putting a lot of stress on the rupee and the stress is only rising due to gold imports. Reports state that such a monetisation scheme can be announced later in August and it will rope in jewelers for the first time to ensure this vast amount of yellow metal is rolled back into the jewellery production mill, which is the single biggest origin of demand.

"We are awaiting just one or two final approvals, and most of the approvals have been sought... Utilising this mobilised gold as raw material for the jewellery industry will directly reduce India's gold imports," Rajesh Rokde, Chairman, Gems & Jewellery Council, was quoted by the media as saying.

World Gold Council estimates on Indian gold holdings According to an estimate by the World Gold Council, households and



temples in India could be holding about 25,000 tonnes of gold. Estimates by others rise it by 5,000 tonnes. Yet other think the amount could even be 50,000 tonnes. If an individual or body (say a trust) deposits gold in this scheme, it will earn it a pre-determined interest,

turning it into a liquid economic asset.

### Gold deposit schemes in India

The Centre launched the Gold Deposit Scheme in 1999 with the express objective of mobilising idle household and institutional gold. But it required one to deposit at least 500 grams of the yellow metal, a quantity that appeared too large for the scheme to become popular. Later, in 2015, scheme was revamped and merged into the modern Gold Monetisation

Scheme launched in November 2015. While the medium-term and long-term government deposit components were discontinued in March 2025, banks continue to offer Short-Term Bank Deposits (STBD) at their discretion, says a post on the State Bank of India website.



# Kangana Ranaut

Slams Bollywood’s Silence Over Jharkhand Students Protest: ‘Ye Doglapan Nahi Chalega’

Kangana Ranaut has criticised Bollywood’s silence over students’ protests in Jharkhand. She slammed them for their hypocrisy, stating that they shed ‘crocodile tears’ over CJP-led Jantar Mantar protests over NEET paper leak, but aren’t showing their support for Jharkhand students. In a recent interview with ANI, she said, ‘Yeh doglapan film industry ka nahi chalega’, questioning why the same concern is not being shown for students in Jharkhand.

**Kangana Ranaut Slams Bollywood Celebs For Not Showing Support To Jharkhand Students**

In an interview with ANI, Kangana Ranaut was asked about calling veteran actor Naseeruddin Shah a ‘lomdi’ (fox) over his comments on student protests. Defending her remark, she said, “This isn’t a new issue; the film industry has always held this attitude. You witnessed the attack on Parliament. I have many parliamentarian friends whose cars were climbed upon and whose windows were smashed. Everyone knows this; it is no secret.” She further added, “People even climbed up to the gate of my house; there were at least two and a half thousand people outside, and such a massive police force had to be deployed that we couldn’t sleep at night. Yet, when that situation prevailed, they were shedding crocodile tears. But now, regarding the atrocities being committed against children in Jharkhand, are they not Gen Z?”

Kangana slammed Bollywood celebrities over not showing the same support to students protesting in Jharkhand. “This hypocrisy within the film industry will not do. The people in the film industry who shed crocodile tears over the Jantar Mantar protests ought to shed those same tears for the children in Jharkhand now. Those children are facing a plight too,” she said.

**Kangana Ranaut Clarifies Controversial Remark On Gen-Z**

A few weeks ago, Kangana hit the headlines after she criticised young people participating in the Cockroach Janata Party (CJP) protests, referring to them as “Generation Gutter”.

Now, clarifying her remark, she said, “If someone claims to be a cockroach, then naturally, they would live in a gutter.” She added that she did not consider herself a “cockroach” and would reject such a description if it were directed at her. “If someone were to say I live in a gutter, I would deny it. But if someone claims to be a cockroach, then naturally, they would live in a gutter. Where else?” she said. “Did I say that all youth belong in the gutter? I specifically referred to some people or some women,” she added.



Parag Tyagi Pens Heartbreaking Note, Remembers Shefali Jariwala: ‘I Will Join You’



Actor Parag Tyagi remembered his late wife, Shefali Jariwala, on their wedding anniversary on Wednesday. He took to his official Instagram handle and dropped a throwback video of himself enjoying some fun romantic time with Shefali at Mumbai’s Juhu beach area. In the video that included the text ‘Together Forever’, Shefali and Parag were seen enjoying an Ice Gola.

“HAPPY ANNIVERSARY, TOGETHER FOREVER, PARI SIMBA & PAPA (Kisses, hugs and red heart emoji) 16 years of Pure Love & Bliss & counting till I join U both..(sic),” he wrote on the photo-sharing app.

Shefali passed away on June 27, 2025, at the age of 42 in Mumbai after suffering a sudden cardiac arrest, leaving the entertainment industry in shock. She was rushed to the hospital by Parag, but was declared dead on arrival. Shefali and Parag were introduced at a mutual friend’s party, and their connection grew only stronger with time. Parag proposed to Shefali on national television during the dance reality show ‘Nach Baliye 5’. The couple finally tied the knot on August 12, 2014, in an intimate ceremony.

Ever since Shefali’s sudden passing, Parag frequently remembers her with nostalgic posts on social media. He is also seen expressing his love for their fur baby Simba, pointing out how Simba had become a pillar of strength for him since Shefali’s passing.

On July 23, after Simba’s demise, Parag dropped an old video featuring Shefali and their beloved pet dog. “Now mamma is not alone Simba is v happy with mamma.. Can’t wait to join u both (my life lines), on the other side,” he had written on social media.

Pooja Bedi Recalls Being Alone With Aamir Khan After Intimate Scene: ‘He Said, Want To Play Chess?’



Pooja Bedi has laughed off an old rumour suggesting that she and Aamir Khan were attracted to each other while working on Jo Jeeta Wohi Sikandar. The actress, however, recalled another film with Aamir where an intimate scene left her briefly wondering what to expect after the cameras stopped rolling. Directed by Mansoor Khan, Jo Jeeta Wohi Sikandar released in 1992 and went on to become one of Hindi cinema’s most loved coming-of-age films. Apart from Aamir and Pooja, the film starred Ayesha Jhulka, Deepak Tijori and Mamik Singh. Years later, Pooja was asked about speculation that she and Aamir had developed an attraction towards each other during the film. Her response was immediate.

“You got to be kidding me,” she told Vickey Lalwani, laughing away the suggestion.

Pooja then went on to share a very different memory involving Aamir from Aatank Hi Aatank. She had a cameo in the film and revealed that the two had shot what she described as a “passionate love making” sequence. The scene, however, never made it to the final film.

**Pooja Recalls Being Alone In Room With Aamir**

The actress said the sequence was filmed at a bungalow near Mumbai’s Film City. Unlike today, when actors usually return to their vanity vans between shots, Pooja recalled that the arrangements on sets were different at the time.

After completing the intimate sequence, she and Aamir were asked to wait together in a room that had a bed. Being a young actress then, Pooja admitted that the situation made her nervous.

“A million thoughts are going through your head,” she recalled, adding that stories she had heard about Bollywood made her wonder whether she should be worried about what might happen next. With the door shut and both actors sitting silently, Pooja said she became increasingly confused and fearful.

**Pooja Recalls Being Alone In Room With Aamir**

The actress said the sequence was filmed at a bungalow near Mumbai’s Film City. Unlike today, when actors usually return to their vanity vans between shots, Pooja recalled that the arrangements on sets were different at the time.



# Priyanka Chopra

Shares Update On Sridevi’s Biography Release On Her Birth Anniversary: ‘You Are So Missed’

On the occasion of legendary actress Sridevi’s birth anniversary, Priyanka Chopra shared an update on the much-awaited biography being made on the late actor’s life and legacy.

Sridevi, who remains one of the most celebrated actresses in Indian cinema, continues to be remembered for her remarkable body of work and immense contribution to the film industry. Priyanka took to her Instagram stories to offer a glimpse into its progress while remembering Sridevi on her special day. The upcoming biography is expected to shed light on Sridevi’s illustrious career, personal journey, and the legacy she left behind.

The ‘Baywatch’ actress shared a cover of the book that read, ‘Empress- The Definitive biography of Sridevi .. “The epitome of unmitigated talent”—Amitabh Bachchan, Dhiraj U. Kumarr.’ For the caption, she wrote, “The one and only. You are so missed. Happy heavenly birthday #Sridevi #Empress....coming soon.” Boney Kapoor reshared Priyanka’s post on his Instagram stories.

In 2023, Westland Books announced the publication of an official biography on Sridevi. Titled “Sridevi: The Life of a Legend”, the book will explore the life and career of the superstar, who dominated commercial Indian cinema during the 1980s and 1990s. Written by debut author Dhiraj Kumar, the biography is expected to offer a detailed look at Sridevi’s journey, both on and off



screen.

In a statement, Boney Kapoor spoke about author Dhiraj Kumar, who Sridevi considered a part of her family. Describing Kumar as a researcher, writer, and columnist, he expressed his happiness that Kumar is writing a book that captures Sridevi’s extraordinary life and legacy.

For the unversed, Sridevi passed away on February 24, 2018, at the age of 54 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The celebrated actress, known for her role in films like “Mr. India,” “Chandni,” and “Himmatwala,” died after suffering a cardiac arrest.

# Every Promise Delivered



**Bhagwant Singh Mann**  
Chief Minister, Punjab

Today, our great nation has completed 79 years of Independence and during these years, India has emerged as the world's largest democracy with unflinching faith and firm commitment towards peace, harmony and progress. On this solemn auspicious occasion, I extend my heartiest felicitations to our countrymen on behalf of all Punjabis living across the State, country and abroad. I wish them all good health, prosperity and a bright future. On this Red-letter day, I bow my head in reverence to the freedom fighters, martyrs and the patriots of India's national freedom struggle, known and unknown, who displayed unprecedented heroism and valor thereby making supreme sacrifices to free our country from the yoke of British imperialism. I take this opportunity to apprise you that ever since assuming the charge of office in March 2022, my government has taken every step to realize the dreams of the great freedom fighters. For the first time in the history of the state, a government has fulfilled every promise made to the people as a mark of respect to the great national leaders. Going down the memory lane, the unique and unparalleled role of Punjab in the freedom movement need not to be over emphasized, as 80% of great warriors and patriots who laid down their lives or subjected to British tyranny in one form or other faced life imprisonment, gallows and even subjugated to 'Kalapani' in Cellular jail of Andaman Nicobar islands. It is an established fact; that the valiant Punjabis pioneered several movements for ending centuries-old British Raj. Bhai Maharaj Singh-the son of Punjab was the first to lay down his life to free our motherland from the yoke of foreign imperialism. The great martyrs of Punjab, Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, Sukhdev, Lala Lajpat Rai, Shaheed Udham Singh, Kartar Singh Sarabha, Diwan Singh Kalepani, Baba Ram Singh and several others who shed every drop of their blood to achieve the ultimate goal of Independence. The enormous contribution of watershed movements during the Indian freedom struggle like Kuka Movement, Gaddar Lehar, Babbar Akali Lehar, Kama Gata Maru episode, Agrarian Movement besides Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, Gurdwara Reforms Movement, Jaito Morcha and the Parja Mandal Movement reminds us on this auspicious day of the heroic deeds of brave Punjabis in freeing our country from the shackles of colonial rule. Punjab being the border State also suffered the brunt of partition besides a woeful saga of its aftermath as lakhs of people were displaced and rendered homeless. I also take this opportunity to appreciate the huge contribution of my fellow Punjabis on this occasion, in zealously guarding and preserving India's hard-earned freedom on one hand and in ushering in an era of overall development on the other. Whenever India faced any challenge from internal or external aggression, the brave Punjabis have always safeguarded the integrity and honor of the country from the forefront. Exemplary and pro-active role of Punjabi soldiers in Indo-Pak wars in 1965 and 1971 besides hostilities in Kargil, counter insurgency operations in Kashmir and other parts of India would ever be remembered by one and all and continue to inspire the future generations to imbibe a sense of patriotism. Independence Day being an occasion of joy and celebrations is also a moment for introspection and setting of new goals for faster development of the State. We should rededicate ourselves to fulfill the dreams of our freedom fighters by ensuring a harmonious and egalitarian society. We as countrymen must imbibe the nationalistic spirit and sense of patriotism amongst ourselves which indeed, is the essence of a strong nation.

It is a known fact that the hard working and resilient farmers of the state had played a crucial role in making the country self-reliant in food production. Our hard working farmers exploited the only available natural resources of the state in terms of fertile soil and water to feed the nation, a tradition which has been successfully carried from the 1960s till now. Despite the vagaries of weather the contribution of the state in the national food pool has always been on the top.

Though even after 79 years of Independence the dreams of our freedom fighters and great national heroes like Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh and Babasahib Dr BR Ambedkar remain unfulfilled. People had high hopes from the many governments that assumed power in the state through the decades after independence, but most served to dash these hopes because corruption, poverty, unemployment and many other ills are still deeply embedded in the state. However, after assuming the charge of office we not only focused on fulfilling the aspirations of people of the state, but also pledged to realize the dreams of our freedom fighters.

From day one in office, we are making every effort to restore the glory of Punjab and we have been working closely with the people and in unison with the ideals of Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh and Babasahib Dr BR Ambedkar, to achieve these goals. We made a firm resolve to build a new Punjab, free from poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and social evils and put it on the high growth trajectory. It is satisfying to note that we have so far excelled in every sphere be it health, education, employment, infra-

structure, agriculture, power and others.

When we started our journey, the path was strewn with odds and obstacles as the previous Governments left the entire state in fiscal mess due to its ill-conceived policies. However, undeterred by it the state government moved forward and ensured that all the promises made by the people of the state are fulfilled thereby launching a new benchmark in public service. To put Punjab on the fast track of development the state Government has taken bold initiatives coupled with pragmatic policies and programs that have enabled us to achieve the desired results in the various fields as under:

#### MAAVAN DHEEYAN SATKAR YOJNA

Our government has launched this first of its kind scheme in which all the Women of Punjab above 18 years of age are eligible for the benefits of the scheme under which SC Women are getting ₹1,500 per month and those from general category are getting ₹1,000 per month. The total target is more than one Crore Women and a total of 72.13 lakh beneficiaries are getting the benefits of the scheme. The scheme is benefiting

more than 97% of the women, making it one of the most comprehensive women-centric social protection initiatives in the country.

#### MUKH MANTRI SEHAT BEEMA YOJNA

In order to provide comprehensive healthcare to people the state government has launched Mukh Mantri Sehat Yojna- the first-of-its-kind scheme in the country that provides cashless medical treatment up to ₹10 lakh for every resident family in Punjab. It is a matter of immense pride and satisfaction that Punjab is the first Indian state to offer such comprehensive healthcare coverage, which will significantly ease the financial burden on the public while ensuring quality health services. This historic move is aimed at providing universal health care to all the families of the state and around 2.91 lakh beneficiaries receiving treatment support since January this year worth around ₹1,044 crore.

#### MERI RASOI

The state government has started a flagship ration kit distribution drive namely Meri Rasoi to ensure nutritional security for vulnerable households, with nearly 40.48 lakh eligible families covered for the benefits.

Notably, each family receives one ration kit which has been carefully designed to meet essential dietary needs of a household. It contains two kilograms of lentils, two kilograms of sugar, one kilogram of salt, 200 grams of turmeric powder, and one litre of mustard oil for monthly consumption. These food kits are being provided in addition to the wheat already being distributed to eligible beneficiaries under the National Food Security Act, 2013.

#### 650TH PARKASH PURAB OF SRI GURU RAVIDASS JI MAHARAJ

The state government is celebrating 650th Parkash Purab of Sri Guru Ravidass ji Maharaj in an unsurpassed manner. We are fortunate to have got the opportunity to commemorate the 350th Shaheedi Diwas of Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur ji and 650th Parkash Purab of Sri Guru Ravidass ji Maharaj. Sri Guru Ravidass Ji Maharaj had envisioned an egalitarian society free from any sort of discrimination and the state government will leave no stone unturned to celebrate this mega event. Foundation stone of the Sri Guru Ravidass Ji Bani Adhyayan Centre has been laid at Dera Sachkhand Ballan and will come up over 10.4 acres at an overall cost

₹37 crore.

#### MUKH MANTRI TIRATH YATRA YOJNA

Our government also launched Mukh Mantri Tirath Yatra Yojna to enable devotees to undertake free pilgrimage at Sri Harmandir Sahib, Durgiana Temple, Bhagwan Valmiki Tirath Sthal, Sri Anandpur Sahib as well as Naina Devi and other sacred sites. Now under the scheme free pilgrimage will be ensured to people for paying obeisance at Haridwar, Khatu Shyam Ji Maharaj, Salasar Bala ji and others too. The scheme is open to people of all castes, religions, income groups, and regions adding that the pilgrims don't have to spend a single penny in it.

#### REVENUE REFORMS

In order to ensure transparent, efficient and corruption free delivery of revenue services to the people the state government has launched Easy registry and Easy Jamabandi Portal. These revolutionary initiatives reflect the honesty, transparency, and pro-people mindset of the state government. No other state of the country has such robust revenue reforms and will herald a new era of public facilitation.



सत्यमेव जयते  
Government of India

## Heartfelt greetings to all fellow citizens on the

# 80<sup>th</sup> Independence Day



“ I extend my best wishes to all of you on this great festival of Independence. There's only one mantra for 140 crore Indians - Viksit Bharat. To build a Viksit Bharat, we will neither stop nor bow down, and we will build a Viksit Bharat in 2047. — Narendra Modi ”

Live telecast of the Independence Day celebrations from the ramparts of the Red Fort on Doordarshan Network from 6:30 AM onwards.