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Chhattisgarh ahead on 'Catch the Rain' campaign, as CM Vishnu Deo Sai unveils 5 percent farm model

RAIPUR. (Agency)

In a significant achievement in decentralised environmental action, Chhattisgarh has taken the lead as the best performing state in rainwater harvesting and groundwater replenishment under the Ministry of Jal Shakti's flagship 'Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari' (JSJB) and 'Catch the Rain' campaigns, officials said. Presenting the state's model at the national summit held in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Delhi, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai highlighted how grassroots participation has transformed conventional water conservation into a vibrant mass movement. At the summit, the Chief Minister presented Chhattisgarh's public participation-driven water conservation model and proposed four measures to conserve every drop of rainwater across the country: state-specific 'Catch the Rain' plans, 'State Water Awards' to recognise high-performing states, mapping of water structures through BISAG-N, and quarterly reviews chaired.

Ensure FIR over 'purification' at Haldwani rally venue: Kharge writes to JP Nadda

New Delhi. (Agency)

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge has written to Rajya Sabha Leader of the House J P Nadda, urging him to direct Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami to ensure registration of an FIR against those involved in the alleged "purification" of the venue where he addressed a rally in Haldwani last month.

Kharge, in a letter dated September 2, reminded Nadda of his assurance in the Rajya Sabha that the incident would be investigated and strict action taken against those found guilty. "You may recall that on August 13, 2026, in the Rajya Sabha, with great sadness and anguish, I raised the issue of purification related to untouchability after my public meeting in Haldwani on August 8, 2026," Kharge said in his letter in Hindi.

"In response to my intervention, you stood up in the House and said, 'Sir, what Honourable Khargeji has said is truly a very sad subject. It is not only sad for the Congress Party, but it is sad for all of us.

Whatever has happened will definitely be investigated. I want to say that the Bharatiya Janata Party never supports such an activity. I condemn it, and the National President will also look into it thoroughly. The hurt caused to your sentiments is a matter of regret for all of us," Kharge said. He said Nadda had also assured the House that strict action would follow after the investigation.

"The Honourable Chairman of the Rajya Sabha (C P Radhakrishnan) also expressed grief over this incident," he said.

Raghav Chadha tried to sneak into Delhi voter rolls: AAP on defector MP's SIR claims

New Delhi(Agency)

AAP has accused BJP MP

Raghav Chadha of seeking a backdated voter registration in Delhi after his name was deleted from Punjab's draft rolls. The charge came after Chadha, who quit AAP to join the BJP just months ago, alleged political vendetta over the deletion of his name during Punjab's SIR exercise.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has accused its former leader and BJP Rajya Sabha MP Raghav Chadha of trying to sneak into Delhi's voter rolls through a backdated entry. The AAP's attack came after Chadha alleged that his name was deleted from Punjab's draft electoral rolls during the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR). The draft voter list of Punjab shows Chadha, a Rajya Sabha MP from the state, as having "permanently shifted". Raghav Chadha's name figures in Punjab's draft electoral roll, published on August 13, among those marked "absent, shifted, deceased and duplicate". The reason listed for his deletion is "permanently shifted". He is among 20.66 lakh voters, or around 9.7% of Punjab's pre-SIR electorate, whose names have been deleted from the draft rolls. Chadha had declared in his affidavit for the 2022 Rajya Sabha elections that he was registered as a voter at Booth Number 52 in

Delhi's Rajinder Nagar, according to a report by The Indian Express. AAP's official handle seemingly cited this, saying, "Raghav Chadha has been caught by a National Daily English Newspaper, trying to get his voter registration



made in Delhi through a backdated process, and is now attempting to put the entire blame on the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and Punjab government."

AAP also said it had "received information from Election Commission sources that Raghav Chadha is trying to get his voter registration made in Rajinder Nagar, Delhi,

through a backdated process".

The party said that if any such "backdated or unlawful exercise" had taken place, it should be investigated, adding that it would pursue the matter if the BJP or anyone else had facilitated such an entry.

"It is a matter of public record that Raghav Chadha has been living in Delhi and not in Punjab. If he no longer resides in Punjab, maintaining or shifting his voter registration was his own responsibility," the party also said. The allegations come after Chadha accused the AAP government in Punjab of political vendetta over his deletion from the draft rolls. He said his voter ID was registered in Mohali and questioned why he had been classified as "shifted" despite being a sitting Rajya Sabha MP from Punjab. "This does not seem like a mere clerical mistake. This is a clear case of political vendetta," Chadha said. AAP, however, has denied having any role in the deletion, saying the SIR is conducted by the Election Commission and that the Punjab government does not decide.

"Show Us Proof": AAP vs Central Agency War Over Cases Against Punjab Leaders

Punjab Police wrote to the ED on August 28 seeking the documents and evidence on the basis of which allegations had been levelled against AAP leaders

Chandigarh(Agency)

The political confrontation between the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government in Punjab and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has sharpened following a controversial exchange of letters between the state police and the central probe agency.

Addressing a press conference in Amritsar, AAP Punjab chief spokesperson and MLA Kuldeep Dhaliwal accused the ED of politically targeting AAP leaders and attempting to create a negative perception around the Bhagwant Mann government. He alleged that the agency was following a pattern similar to what AAP leaders had faced in Delhi, where, according to him,



leaders were targeted through cases and arrests. At the centre of the latest controversy is a letter sent by Punjab Police to the ED on August 28 seeking the documents and evidence on the basis of which allegations had been levelled

against AAP leaders. Dhaliwal claimed that despite the state police seeking the material, no ED officer had appeared before the Punjab Police and the requested documents had not been provided. The matter stems from an ED investigation under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act following searches conducted in May in connection with the Change of Land Use case.

The letter has added a new dimension to the ongoing Centre-state confrontation. What began as an investigation by a central agency has now developed into a political and institutional face-off, with AAP questioning the basis of the allegations and demanding that the evidence be placed before the state authorities.

Rs 1,200-crore Secretariat, Olympic City, Formula 1 track: Vijay's Chennai makeover

Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay announced plans for a new Secretariat complex, an Olympic City and a Motor Sports City in Chennai. The proposals aim to recast the capital's administrative capacity and sporting ambitions while retaining Fort St George as a heritage site.

Chennai. (Agency)

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay on Thursday unveiled a grand makeover plan for Chennai, announcing a Rs 1,200-crore new Secretariat-cum-Legislative Assembly complex, a world-class Olympic City and a dedicated Motor Sports City aimed at bringing Formula 1 and other international racing events to the state capital.

The three major announcements, made in the Assembly under Rule 110, seek to reshape Chennai's administrative and sporting infrastructure while positioning the city as a



global destination for governance and elite sports.

NEW SECRETARIAT AND ASSEMBLY

COMPLEX

Vijay announced plans to construct a new integrated Secretariat and Legislative Assembly complex in Chennai, with a built-up area of 20 lakh square feet at an estimated cost of Rs 1,200 crore. The new complex will bring all state government departments together on a single administrative campus, replacing the current fragmented arrangement at Fort St George. The Chief Minister said the move was necessary to meet Tamil Nadu's administrative requirements for the next 100 years. Fort St George, which has served as the administrative headquarters of the state for nearly,

Kerala CM slams Muslim cleric for sexist remarks, religious leaders hit back

Thiruvananthapuram. (Agency)

The controversy over the misogynistic remarks by Kerala Muslim cleric Kanthapuram AP Aboobacker Musliyar widened on Thursday after Muslim scholars met Chief Minister VD Satheesan to express their displeasure over his comments on the issue. While leaders of the Kanthapuram-led Muslim faction met Satheesan, another prominent Muslim leader extended his support to Kanthapuram, arguing that his remarks were in accordance with Islamic religious practices.

The developments came after Satheesan strongly criticised Kanthapuram, the Grand Mufti of India, for saying that women were mandated to remain confined to their homes and should not appear in public, warning that bringing women into public spaces would lead to "great destruction".

Satheesan dismissed the remarks as being contrary to the history of women in Islam as well as the values of modern society and Kerala. His comments, however, have now drawn criticism from sections of the Muslim religious leadership. Referring to Islamic history, Satheesan cited the examples of Khadija, the first wife of Prophet Muhammad, and Aisha, another wife of the Prophet, to argue that women had played prominent roles in public life. "Khadija, the Prophet's first wife, was a major businesswoman. Another wife of the Prophet, Aisha, took part in the Battle of the Camel. She was the commander-in-chief," the Chief Minister said. We strongly oppose expressing such a 19th-century view in the 21st century. Our progressive position is that women are not meant to remain confined to their homes and that they should participate in all aspects of life and live as part of the mainstream," he added.

"Alarming Apathy": India Condemns Century-Old Temple's Demolition In Pakistan

New Delhi (Agency)

India on Wednesday unequivocally condemned the reported destruction of a Hindu temple in the Narowal region of Pakistan, demanding that Islamabad promptly investigate the incident and hold those responsible fully accountable. New Delhi also said that Pakistan must take immediate remedial measures to restore the "desecrated temple" and fulfil its primary obligation to guarantee the safety, security and well-being of all its minority citizens and their cultural heritage. "We have noted with deep concern the disturbing reports of the destruction of a historic Hindu temple in village Siraj, Narowal, Pakistan. We unequivocally condemn this reprehensible act of vandalism against a century-old minority place of worship," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said. "The apparent apathy of authorities and failure to protect this century-old temple is alarming," he said.



Jaiswal said such incidents are a "stark reminder" of the continuing "vulnerability" of minority communities and the "egregious violations" of their religious freedoms and places of worship in Pakistan. "We call upon the Government of Pakistan to conduct a prompt and transparent investigation into this incident and ensure that those responsible are held fully accountable. "Furthermore, the Government of Pakistan must take immediate remedial measures to restore the desecrated temple and fulfil its primary obligation to guarantee the safety, security and well-being of all its minority citizens and their cultural heritage," he said.

Punjab Govt Any Day Ready To Give Salary Plus DA At Par With Central Govt Employees: Harpal Singh Cheema

The Sikh Times

CHANDIGARH; 3rd September: Punjab Government will ensure salary parity plus DA (Dearness Allowance), with Central Government employees if that is what employees seek, Finance Minister Harpal Singh Cheema said on Thursday, making it clear that the state is ready to match the overall compensation package rather than simply replicate the Centre's DA percentage. The Punjab Group of Ministers, comprising Finance Minister Harpal Singh Cheema, Industries and Commerce Minister Aman Arora and Social Security Minister Dr. Baljit Kaur, said Punjab employees in several major categories already draw higher take-home salaries than their Central Government counterparts despite the Centre's higher DA rate. The ministers said Punjab's existing pay structure has to be viewed alongside the state's substantial salary and pension burden, with 51% of its revenue receipts spent on salaries and pensions against the 38% all-India average. They also highlighted that the Bhagwant Singh Mann government has raised DA by 14% points and already paid over ₹4,500 crore towards the more than ₹14,000-crore

arrears liability inherited from previous governments. The Bhagwant Mann Govt government has increased DA from 28% in November 2021



to 42% in November 2024, through three increments, taking the rate to 34% in October 2022, 38% in December 2023 and 42% in November 2024. The approximately ₹14,100 crore liability for DA arrears relates to the 2016-21 period and was inherited from previous Congress and SAD-BJP governments, according to the factsheet. The Bhagwant Mann government has commit-

ted to clearing the inherited DA arrears and has already paid over ₹4,500 crore towards the liability to employees and pensioners. Raising Punjab's DA to 60% would impose an additional annual burden of around ₹6,500 crore on the state exchequer, requiring it to be weighed against spending on essential public services. Addressing a press conference, Finance Minister Harpal Singh Cheema said Punjab's expenditure on salaries and pensions places the state at the highest level among major states. "While the national average for state expenditure on salaries and pensions is around 38%, Punjab spends 51% of its revenue directly on salaries and pensions. This reflects the substantial financial commitment being made by the state towards its employees and pensioners," he said. The comparative figures presented by the government show Punjab's salaries and pension expenditure at ₹57,177.9 crore against revenue receipts of ₹1,11,740 crore in FY 2025-26 Budget Estimates. The Finance Minister said that comparing basic pay and DA together makes it clear that Punjab employees already receive higher take-home salaries in several major categories than their Central Government counterparts.

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3-year-old girl out with mother to fetch water run over by car in Gurgaon

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A three-year-old girl died after she was allegedly hit by a car near the Dhankot canal on Tuesday evening. A case has been registered against the car driver. The girl, Divya, a resident of Dhankot village, was taken to Vibrant Hospital in Basai after the accident, where doctors declared her dead. According to a complaint filed by Anil Yadav, his wife Kiran Kumari and daughter Divya had gone to fetch water from a tap near the canal when a BYD car allegedly hit the girl, leaving her critically injured. Yadav, who works at a private company and is also a farmer, told police that the driver of the car, Ramlal Yadav, was driving rashly and negligently. According to the complaint, passersby took Kiran and Divya to Vibrant Hospital in the same car after the accident. Anil reached the hospital after being informed about the incident and was told by doctors that Divya had been brought dead. A relative of the girl, who is an ex-serviceman, said the car was being driven by an employee and not its owner. “The driver stopped after the accident and told passersby that he was not the owner of the vehicle. Police took him into custody after being informed. He was later released on bail from the police station, while the car was impounded,” the relative told TOI. After receiving information, police reached the hospital and obtained the girl’s medical report. Police kept the body in the mortuary and handed it over to the family after an autopsy.

Rain washes away Yamuna Expressway shoulder near Dankaur

Noida.(Agency)

A nearly 200-metre stretch of the left shoulder of Yamuna Expressway near Dankaur has suffered significant damage after recent rainfall, with the roadside and edge of the carriageway on the Greater Noida-Jewar side washed away, leaving deep cavities along the route and raising road-safety concerns on the busy expressway. Officials have placed traffic restrictions on the left lane (rescue lane) and begun repair and restoration work, with paver blocks and traffic barriers placed along the affected stretch to alert commuters and secure the area. Traffic movement remains normal on the expressway’s remaining three lanes. Gaurav Kumar, who was travelling from Noida to Agra, said the damage poses a risk to commuters. “A large portion of the road is damaged. Since this is an expressway and vehicles move in speed, it poses safety concerns especially at night when there is no proper lights on the e-way. This should be fixed at the earliest,” he said. JK Sharma, assistant general manager, Jaypee Infratech Ltd (JIL), the concessionaire of the expressway, confirmed that restoration work was under way. “We have noticed this damage as the rainfall made cuts on the left shoulder. We have barricaded the stretch and started restoration works. However, it is a routine repair works conducted whenever such damages come up in the monsoon,” he said, adding that the work would be completed within two weeks. am Limited, Haryana State Electronics Development Corporation, contractors, part-time arrangements and direct outsourcing. Vij said work is continuing to strengthen feeders and distribution infrastructure in villages still receiving 16-hour supply and that they would be brought under the 24-hour system once the prescribed conditions were met.

235 buses with tinted glass, curtains seized in Noida

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

Traffic police have seized 235 private buses with tinted windows, curtains or other coverings that obstruct visibility into passenger compartments across Noida in the past two days following the rape of a 17-year-old girl in a moving bus. The transport departments have started checks on private tourist buses in Noida and Ghaziabad. There were checks conducted on Wednesday at several border areas between Delhi and Noida, including Chilla Border and Jhundpura in Sector 11. Several female police officers were seen instructing commuters to not get on empty buses or buses with no female commuters in them. Such checks are also being conducted at Pari Chowk, Sector 14A, Model Town and near Lal Kuan, among others. On Aug 4, the girl sought a lift from a sleeper bus at Pari Chowk. A probe by Delhi Police revealed that she was raped first by the conductor near Bakhtawarpur Village (Noida Sector 127-128). He then took the steering wheel as the driver forced himself on the girl. The distance travelled by the bus from the place of occurrence to the point where she was dropped at the bus stand in Kashmere Gate is around 26 km. Police found the bus had thick curtains installed, which made it impossible for people to see inside. Ghaziabad assistant regional transport officer Amit Ranjan Rai said the department would launch a special drive to inspect private tourist buses in the district. While such vehicles were already under scrutiny, enforcement would now be tightened, he said. “We will start a drive to check private tourist buses operating in the district,” Rai said. According to officials, private tourist buses will also be required to have GPS and vehicle location tracking devices installed. The transport department will verify whether these systems are installed and functional. The background and credentials of those operating the buses have also come under scrutiny. Character and police verification of both bus drivers and conductors will be made mandatory, officials said. Authorities will also check pollution certificates and other documents required for the operation of the vehicles.

After PAUL sandwich worm row, Gurgaon raids find hygiene violations at Haldiram, Om Sweets, Babbal

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Days after a customer allegedly found a live worm inside a sandwich at PAUL in Gurgaon, surprise raids at five prominent eateries in neighbouring Faridabad have uncovered serious food hygiene violations, including live insects in vegetables, fungus-infested bread and the alleged reuse of cooking oil. A municipal corporation health team carried out inspections on Wednesday at Haldiram, Om Sweets, Babbal, RPS and Gulati in NIT Faridabad, imposing cumulative penalties of more than Rs 15 lakh on the five establishments. At Babbal, inspectors allegedly found live insects crawling inside vegetables and bread covered with fungus stored in a container. Officials said the outlet owner left the premises after spotting the inspection team. At Om Sweets, the team allegedly found cooking oil being reused. Workers were also seen

attempting to throw away a large quantity of kachoris in a dustbin as the inspection team arrived, officials said. Similar violations related to the reuse of cooking oil were allegedly found at Haldiram, while RPS and Gulati were also inspected for hygiene lapses. Babbal was fined Rs 6.5 lakh, while Om Sweets was penalised Rs 6 lakh. Haldiram was fined Rs 2 lakh, RPS Rs 50,000 and Gulati Rs 45,000, taking the total penalties to more than Rs 15 lakh. Officials involved in the drive said they faced pressure to stop the inspections. “When we go to conduct raids, we get a lot of calls asking us to stop the raid. What are we supposed to do — sit back and leave the public at risk? Should we wait for someone to fall seriously ill or die before action is taken?” an officer said. The crackdown has also highlighted a wider problem confronting Haryana’s food safety enforcement system — an acute

shortage of Food Safety Officers (FSOs). Of the 45 sanctioned FSO posts in the state, 27 have been filled through deputation. However, 11 officers are



awaiting posting, while another 11, who completed their on-the-job training on August 19, are awaiting FSSAI certification before they can be formally notified. This has effectively left only five officers handling field responsibilities, with postings in Hisar, Rewari, Jhajjar, Kurukshetra and Karnal. The shortage has created a

regulatory gap, with municipal bodies stepping in to conduct inspections but facing questions over their authority to inspect food establishments. Officials said the latest drive was aimed at ensuring that eateries follow basic food hygiene and safety standards, stressing that establishments — irrespective of their size or popularity — must maintain cleanliness and follow safe food handling practices. The raids come amid growing concerns over food hygiene in Gurgaon and the wider NCR. The recent alleged worm-in-sandwich incident at PAUL in Gurgaon had already sparked outrage, while food safety raids and enforcement drives across the region have renewed questions over how effectively restaurants and popular food outlets are monitored. With inspections now uncovering insects, fungus-infested food and alleged reuse of cooking oil at prominent eateries, has once again put

Sanitation workers extend Haryana strike till Sept 6

Gurgaon.(Agency)

The strike by sanitation workers will continue till Sunday, the workers’ union leading the protest has announced. Haryana Municipal Employees Union alleged that despite their 28-day strike, govt had failed to make efforts to reach a settlement and is using intimidation to suppress the protest. Union leaders claimed govt is attempting to weaken the agitation through alternative arrangements for waste collection. Taking advantage of the situation, some contractors are generating fake, inflated bills for sanitation work during the strike, they alleged. The union demanded an impartial inquiry into all expenditure, bills and payments made for sanitation and waste collection during the agitation. The police force is also being used to threaten employees on

strike, they added. “Govt is using police personnel to facilitate garbage collection to create an impression that sanitation services were normal, while women,



elderly employees and other striking workers were being detained and harassed. Such measures won’t suppress the employees’ protest,” said Basant Kumar, the president of the union’s Gurgaon branch. In Gurgaon, municipal

employees marched from the old MCG office and burnt copies of show-cause notices issued by govt to several fire department employees, who too are on strike. The protesters distributed pamphlets among traders and residents, urging them to support their demands. The union flayed urban local bodies (ULB) minister Vipul Goel, saying employees under his departments remained on strike while residents continued to face difficulties. It also criticised social justice and empowerment minister Krishan Bedi, alleging that his assurance to facilitate a meeting between the employees and the chief minister had not been fulfilled. They accused govt of discriminating against sanitation and sewerage workers, questioning why permanent recruitment was possible for other employees but not for them.

Hindon barrage bridge closed for repairs, commuters brace for detours

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Hindon barrage bridge, connecting Siddharth Vihar with Indirapuram and other trans-Hindon areas, has been closed for repairs for a month. Commuters, particularly two-wheeler riders, will have to take detours of around 5 km to 10 km via bridges from NH9 or Meerut trisection. The barrage bridge was built primarily to monitor water flow but has become an important link between areas on either side of the river. A resident of Gaur Siddhartham in Siddharth Vihar, Saurabh Jha, travels every afternoon to his gym in Indirapuram. “I prefer to take the barrage bridge but this detour will be too long for me. I would need to take the GT Road if I want to take the bridge from Meerut trisection. It is extremely congested and it takes hours to clear,” he said. “I have started looking for a facility closer to home.” An official of the

irrigation department, Sanjay Saini, said, “The grilles of the bridge are rusted and the slab beneath has also broken in many places. We are closing off the bridge for maintenance work for a month.” The department has placed barricades on both sides of the bridge, but bikers could be seen breaching them and driving on the bridge. Meanwhile, a roposed 200-metre bridge remains delayed. Although funds were sanctioned earlier, differences between the UP Bridge Corporation and the irrigation department over the alignment have held up construction. A revised alignment now requires govt approval. “The news of a new bridge connecting both sides of the river brought some respite to daily commuters like us,” another resident of Siddharth Vihar, Nikhit Negi, said. “Even after six months, the work has not started.” Ajay Mittal, executive engineer of the UP Housing Board, which is

funding the project, said, “The irrigation department is the custodian of the river and they were not satisfied with the initial alignment of the proposed bridge, as they said it was very close to the barrage bridge.” Rs 51 crore has already been sanctioned for the new bridge. “The new alignment has been sent to our board for approval but it will take time,” he added. According to the initial plan, the bridge was to be constructed 80m downstream from the barrage between sectors 8 and 9 of Siddharth Vihar township. Now the new proposal shows the bridge is to be constructed 210m downstream from the barrage. From the Meerut trisection to DME, there are four bridges over Hindon. The Old Hindon Bridge is 70 years old and connects the Meerut trisection with Mohan Nagar, but in 2017, the bridge was closed down as it developed cracks. In 2022, a new bridge was constructed.

25 acres of protected Aravali land dug up at Faridabad’s Badkhal

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

Mining may have been banned in Haryana Aravalis for more than two decades, but two excavators were found operating on a 25-acre stretch of forest land in Faridabad’s Badkhal, with extensive rock excavation and large quantities of broken stone visible across the site. During a visit to the site, TOI found the two earthmovers stationed on the rocky terrain, with vegetation cleared from substantial portions of the tract. The land is protected under sections 4 and 5 of Punjab Land Preservation Act (PLPA) and falls within Aravali landscape. No permission was sought from the forest department for the work being carried out at the site, according to officials. The department learnt of the activity and sent a team to the site to halt the work, an official said. A local said excavation had been under way for two days. He said the workers carrying out excavation had shown govt permission for the activity, understood to be for “handling and disposal of up to 500 metric tonnes of stone generated during excavation.” The forest department refuted claims of any such permit. The scale of digging has raised questions over whether rock was



extracted from the site and, if so, where it was taken to. The location is particularly significant: the excavation is along the bank of Badkhal Lake, which govt has been trying to revive since it dried up in 2002. The lake’s rejuvenation project envisages restoring water retention and recharging it with water from a 10 MLD sewage treatment plant. Govt records describe the project as involving lake-bed treatment, bund strengthening and lakefront development. The lake’s

drying has previously been linked to factors including mining in the surrounding Aravalis and groundwater depletion. Mining in Haryana Aravalis has been prohibited by Supreme Court since 2002 through a series of orders aimed at protecting the ecologically fragile range. In 2009, the court imposed a blanket ban on mining across south Haryana after finding extensive damage to the hills. A 2018 report by Supreme Court-appointed Central Empowered

Committee (CEC) found that around 25% of the Aravali range.

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Punjab Govt Any Day Ready To Give Salary Plus DA At Par With Central Govt Employees: Harpal Singh Cheema

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"Punjab outpaces states like Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat when the overall take-home salary is compared. The comparison shows that employees in Punjab are already receiving substantially higher salaries in several categories," he said. He pointed out the state government had also inherited a substantial liability relating to DA arrears. "The present government inherited a massive liability of over ₹14,000 crore relating to the period from 2016 to 2021 from the previous Akali-BJP and Congress governments. The present government is the only government to have committed to clearing the inherited arrears. The Bhagwant Mann government has not denied this liability. Instead, it formulated a liquidation plan and has already disbursed more than ₹4,500 crore in pending arrears to employees and pensioners through monthly installments," he said. Minister Harpal Singh Cheema further said that the Bhagwant Mann government had increased DA by 14% points in three increments. "The DA has already been increased by the present government from 28% to 42% in three increments: 34% in October 2022, 38% in December 2023 and

42% in November 2024, up from 28% in November 2021, despite the state's considerable fiscal pressures," he said. Meanwhile, Information and Public Relations Minister Aman Arora said that the demand for a mechanical increase of DA to 60% must be considered in the context of Punjab's overall fiscal position. "Increasing the DA to 60% would place an additional annual burden of around ₹6,500 crore on the state exchequer. This financial reality has to be balanced against the state's responsibility to fund schools, hospitals, infrastructure and other essential services for the three crore people of Punjab," he said. He said the government had demonstrated its commitment to employment and employee welfare through concrete measures. "The Bhagwant Mann government has provided 70,900 jobs purely on merit. We have also completely eliminated the exploitative outsourced hiring model and initiated the process of transitioning 65,000 personnel to contracts. These steps demonstrate that our government stands firmly with employees and workers," he said. Minister Aman Arora appealed to employee unions to engage with the government through dialogue rather than confrontation.

"Employees are the backbone of good governance. We appeal to the unions to recognise the political opportunism of opposition parties, which made promises before elections without making corresponding financial provisions. We are ready to resolve outstanding issues across the table with CM Bhagwant Singh Mann so that the interests of employees are protected without placing an unbearable burden on the people of Punjab," he said. The Group of Ministers said that the issue must be viewed in its entirety rather than through the single parameter of the DA percentage. The presentation made during the press conference established that Punjab spends 51% of its revenue receipts on salaries and pensions, compared with 38% for the all-India average among major states. It also showed that Punjab employees in several major categories already draw higher take-home salaries than Central Government employees despite Punjab's current DA rate being 42% against the Central rate of 60%. The ministers further said that the government has already increased DA by 14% points since 2021 and has committed to clearing the inherited DA arrears. "Our objective is not to deny employees their rightful dues.

Our approach is to ensure that employee welfare, financial sustainability and the interests of the people of Punjab are protected together," the Group of Ministers said. Clarifying the legal and statutory position, Social Security Minister Dr. Baljit Kaur said the state's position is based on the Punjab Civil Services (Revised Pay) Rules, 2021. "The salaries and DA of Punjab government employees are governed by the Punjab Civil Services (Revised Pay) Rules, 2021, which were framed under Article 309 of the Constitution. These Rules do not prescribe any fixed DA percentage or an automatic formula requiring Punjab to match the Central Government's DA rate," she said. She said Punjab has the constitutional and statutory authority to determine the service conditions of its own employees. "Punjab retains the constitutional and statutory authority to determine the compensation of its employees according to its own financial circumstances. There is no legal provision that automatically requires every state to replicate the Central Government's DA rate. The state must balance employee welfare with the financial resources available to provide public services," she said.

'Vayo Anand' scheme to give senior citizens recreational spaces

New Delhi: Under the scheme, recreational centres will offer facilities ranging from indoor games such as carrom and ludo to yoga, meditation, health and fitness classes, along with newspapers, magazines, books, televisions and computers. The government will provide financial assistance of Rs 2.40 lakh annually, or Rs 20,000 per month to eligible organisations running such centres. Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said, "Ensuring dignity, an active lifestyle and social engagement for senior citizens is the priority of our government." The scheme aims to create a safe and convenient space close to the homes of senior citizens, allowing them to interact with people from their age group and remain socially active. The recreational centres will organise yoga and meditation classes, besides indoor and outdoor games. Activities such as outdoor tours, storytelling sessions, painting, craft and pottery, nutritional counselling and health and fitness classes will also be conducted. The centres will also organise celebrations on occasions like International Yoga Day, Senior Citizens Day and national festivals, with at least five to six such programmes planned every year. To support the health needs of senior citizens, monthly medical camps and first-aid kits will be available at the centres. The centres will remain open for at least five days a week and a minimum of seven hours a day, between 7 am and 8 pm. They will be required to have adequate ventilation and toilet facilities. Preference will be given to centres located on the ground floor or in buildings with lifts, keeping the accessibility needs of senior citizens in mind. Special priority will also be given to programmes for women, persons with disabilities and transgender senior citizens. ExploringTravel Maps The centres will maintain contact with nearby police stations and hospitals to ensure quick assistance during emergencies. Each recreational centre will be required to have at least 200 members aged 60 or above. Under the scheme, eligible recreational centres will receive Rs 20,000 per month, amounting to Rs 2.40 lakh in a financial year. The assistance will be released in two equal half yearly instalments. The scheme will cover centres serving senior citizens aged 60 and above and operating in Delhi from community spaces. Centres run through the RWAs, CGHS and community spaces such as chaupals may also be covered. The operators will be required to ensure that the prescribed facilities and arrangements are made available to senior citizens. The Delhi Government said the scheme is aimed at helping senior citizens stay connected, reduce loneliness and maintain an active social life while providing them with a dignified and healthy environment.

Centre's Parivartan scheme aims to replace 2 lakh polluting trucks, buses in Delhi-NCR within a year

New Delhi: The Centre plans to complete the registration of all beneficiaries under its PARIVARTAN scheme within a year, with the programme

Addressing the media, Umashankar said more than 1,300 truck and bus owners have registered under the scheme within a month of its launch. The

budgetary support from the Centre. It is funded through the National Capital Region Planning Board (NCRPB) under the Ministry of Housing

to scrap older, more polluting vehicles and purchase cleaner replacements. These include a five percentage-point interest subsidy on eligible vehicle loans for five years, a 100 per cent road tax waiver for 10 years, an original equipment manufacturer (OEM) discount of at least 8 per cent on the ex-showroom price, and a waiver of registration fees. Additionally, buyers of BS-VI diesel or CNG vehicles will receive monthly fuel vouchers

ranging from Rs 1,200 to Rs 4,800, depending on the vehicle category, for five years. Those purchasing electric vehicles will instead receive a one-time incentive ranging from Rs 64,000 to Rs 2.56 lakh. The Union

Cabinet approved the PARIVARTAN scheme in June to accelerate the replacement of more than two lakh BS-IV and older trucks and buses registered in Delhi and the NCR districts of Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.



targeting the replacement of more than two lakh trucks and buses in Delhi-NCR that conform to Bharat Stage (BS)-IV or earlier emission norms with BS-VI or stricter norm-compliant vehicles or electric vehicles. GeographicReference Under the Programme for Accelerated Renewal and Incentivisation of Vehicle Assets for Reducing Transport Air Pollution and Network Emissions (PARIVARTAN), eligible vehicles will be replaced with BS-VI or stricter norm-compliant vehicles or electric vehicles. V Umashankar, Secretary, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), said vehicles registered in the National Capital Territory of Delhi and the NCR districts of Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh are eligible for replacement.

scheme covers 37 districts in the NCR—13 in Delhi, 14 in Haryana, eight in Uttar Pradesh and two in Rajasthan. It is expected to benefit around 1.9 lakh trucks and 16,329 buses. Trucks and buses account for only around 3 per cent of the total vehicle fleet in Delhi-NCR but contribute about 36 per cent of the region's PM2.5 emissions, the Secretary said. The PARIVARTAN scheme has a total financial outlay of Rs 9,585 crore, including Rs 5,041 crore in

and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) and implemented by MoRTH. The scheme offers a range of financial incentives to encourage vehicle owners

NAME CHANGE
I, MAMTA KUMARI wife of No-14665672N Rank- HAV Name-HEMANT KUMAR residing at VPO-MAKRANA, TEHSIL & DIST-CHARKHI DADR, HARYANA-127022, have changed my name from MAMTA KUMARI to MAMTA for all future purposes, vide Affidavit dated 03/09/2026 before Executive Magistrate, New Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, SARABJEET SINGH S/O HARBHAJAN SINGH R/O 58/2 LAL BAHADUR SADAN GOLF MARKET NEW DELHI 110001 CHANGED MY NAME TO SARABJEET SINGH SABHARWAL

NAME CHANGE
I, Musser Khan S/O MOHD Tamar Khan R/O H NO 9, Gali No 8/7, Block-G, Sangam Vihar, Delhi 110062 have changed my name to MD Musser Khan for all future purposes

NAME CHANGE
I, MALTI DEVI wife of JC-572238R, Rank- SUB, Name- RAGHURAJ SINGH TOMAR, residing at VPO-ESSAH, TEHSIL-MORENA, DIST-MORENA, MADHYA PRADESH-476134, have changed my name from MALTI DEVI to MALATI for all future purposes, vide Affidavit dated 03/09/2026, before Notary Public, Delhi.

NOTICE

Public at large is hereby informed that my client Rekha Mahajan & Chander Shekhar & Anil Dhanwan & Kapil Gupta the owner of Property No. A-87/88, area 525 sq. yds, Kharsa No. 411, Situated in the revenue estate Village Mahipal Pur, Tehsil Vasant Vihar, Distt. New Delhi-110037. Initially, Shyam Lal was the recorded owner of Property area 525 sq. yds. Letter GPA, ATS, WILL 07.11.1985 & 06.03.1993 executed by Shyam Lal in favour of Partap Singh Letter GPA, ATS & WILL 06.03.1993 executed by Shyam Lal in favour of Partap Singh area 125 sq. yds. Letter GPA, ATS & WILL dated 22.11.1993 executed by Partap Singh in favour of Rattan Lal Bindal (HUF) through its Karta Ashwani Bindal & Atul Bindal (HUF) through its Karta Atul Bindal & Ashwani Bindal (HUF) through its Karta Ashwani Bindal area 125 sq. yds. Letter GPA, ATS and WILL 14.12.1984 executed by Shyam Lal in favour of Kiran Rani area 200 sq. yds. Letter GPA, ATS and WILL 29.08.1990 executed by Kiran Rani in favour of Bishan Singh area 200 sq. yds. Letter GPA, ATS and WILL 17.09.1990 executed by Bishan Singh in favour of Rattan Lal Bindal (HUF) through its Karta Sh. Ashwani Bindal & Atul Bindal (HUF) through its Karta Atul Bindal & Ashwani Bindal (HUF) through its Karta Ashwani Bindal area 200 sq. yds. Letter GPA dated 08.10.1984 executed by Shyam Lal in favour of Jai Singh & Deep Chand area 200 sq. yds. Letter GPA, ATS and WILL 16.02.1989 executed by Jai Singh & Deep Chand in favour of Daya Chand area 200 sq. yds. Letter Regd. GPA, ATS and WILL executed by Daya Chand in favour of Satya Bhushan Wadhwa area 200 sq. yds. Letter GPA, ATS and WILL 12.07.1989 executed by Satya Bhushan Wadhwa in favour of Krishna Chawla area 200 sq. yds. Letter, GPA, ATS and WILL 11.07.1990 executed by Krishna Chawla in favour of Rattan Lal Bindal (HUF) through its Karta Ashwani Bindal & Atul Bindal (HUF) through its Karta Atul Bindal & Sh. Ashwani Bindal area 200 sq. yds. Finally, Sale Deed 22.09.2023 executed by Sh. Rattan Lal Bindal (HUF) through its Karta Sh. Ashwani Bindal & Sh. Atul Bindal (HUF) through its Karta Atul Bindal & Ashwani Bindal (HUF) through its Karta Sh. Anil Dhanwan & Sh. Kapil Gupta in respect of Property No. A-87/88, admeasuring 525 sq. yds., Now our above-mentioned client intends to mortgage the said immovable property for his bonafide requirements to Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Ltd. Whosoever is having any objection to the said mortgage or anyone has claim or right or interest in the property shall contact the undersigned with the objection within 07 days failing which it shall be presumed that there stands no objections.

NEW DELHI

DATE: 1/9/2025

PRAGYA BHUSHAN ADVOCATE

Enrl. No. D/721/02

Office: L-27, GF, Kailash Colony, New Delhi-48

Mob.: 9968006418

NORTHERN RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/Traction Distribution, DRMs's Office, State Entry Road, New Delhi for & on behalf of President of India, invites open e-tender for the under noted work:

1. Name of Work with its location: Replacement of G-Jumper & PG Clamps in GZB-SRE & SPR section.
2. Approx. Cost of work: Rs. 49,96,730.00/-
3. Earnest Money Deposit: Rs. 99,900/-
4. E-Tender Bid Online Submission Period: 14.09.2026 (00.00 Hrs.) to 28.09.2026 (15.00 Hrs.)
5. E-Tender Bid Submission End Date & E-Tender Open Date & Time: 28.09.2026 (15.00 Hrs.)
6. Fund Allocation: 07041032
7. Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen: www.reps.gov.in

No.: 24A-TRD-NDLS-2026-27 Dated: 01.09.2026 3036/2026

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

NAME CHANGE

I, RIMMPI RANI W/o Rajesh Kumar Goyal R/o H.NO.38, Anaj Mandi, Ward No.3, Sampla (36) Rohtak, Haryana-124501, have changed my name to RIMPI permanently.

NAME CHANGE

I, NANCY W/O SHIVAM SEHGAL R/O NEAR MAHILA THANA H.NO. 674 SEC-13/17 HUDA, PANIPAT HARYANA 132103, CHANGED MY NAME TO NANCY VOHRA.

NAME CHANGE

I, KAJAL BAIRAGEE W/O ASHISH BAIRAGEE R/O PLOT NO -14 UPPER GROUND FLOOR, BACK SIDE BLOCK -E, GALI NO- 01, BHAGWATI GARDEN EXTN UTTAM NAGAR DELHI 110059 have changed my minor son name AMAN and shall here after be known as AMAN BAIRAGI Permanently for all future Purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, KALPANA W/O ISHWAR SINGH R/O D 404, TAGORE GARDEN EXTENSION DELHI 110027 have changed my name to KALPANA KAUR Permanently for all future purposes

NAME CHANGE

I, HARISH KUMAR GAMTA S/O SHREE KUSHI DAYAL R/O H.NO 174/18A, ADS BLOCK BHOLA NATH NAGAR DELHI 110032 have changed my name HARISH GAMTA Permanently for all future

NAME CHANGE

I hitherto known as FATIMA wife of FAKHRUDDIN, residing at N-53, Abul Fazal Enclave, Jamia Nagar Okhla, New Friends Colony, PO: New Friends Colony, District: South East Delhi, Delhi-110025, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SHEHNAZ.

NAME CHANGE

I, SHEENA KUMAR W/O SATISH KUMAR, R/O HOUSE NO.7, NANGI RAZAPUR, HAZRAT NIZAMUDDIN, SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110013. I HAVE CHANGED MY NAME FROM SHEENAMOL JOHN TO SHEENA KUMAR FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSE.

NAME CHANGE

I, SUCHETA KALRA, W/O NISHANT KALRA, R/O A-61, 6TH FLOOR, NEW TOWN HEIGHTS, SECTOR-91, MEOKA (121), GURGAON, HARYANA-122055, HAVE CHANGED MY MINOR SON NAME "FROM BHAVYA TO BHAVYA KALRA" FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES

NAME CHANGE

I, ROSHAN AARA, D/O AB HADI DESHMUKH, W/O ZAKIR DESHMUKH, R/O H. NO. C-45, RAJU PARK KHANPUR DEVI, SOUTH DELHI, DELHI- 110062, HEREBY DECLARE THAT HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ROSHNI DESHMUKH FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES.

NAME CHANGE

I hitherto known as JAHANVI SILODHIYA D/O ASHOK SILODHIYA R/O J-1 27A, Chanika Place Part-1, Uttam Nagar, PO: D.k.mohan Garden, DIST: West Delhi, Delhi - 110059 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as JANVI.

NAME CHANGE

I hitherto known as ANISH KUMAR son of Shri SARVESH KUMAR RAWAT, residing at D-59, Block-D, Aali Vihar, Santa Vihar, Delhi-110076, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as ANISH RAWAT.

NAME CHANGE

I hitherto known as PRAKASH NAUTIALY S/O JAGDISH PRASADNAUTIALY R/O C-10, Tower-4, Type-2, NBCC, Kidwai Nagar East, Sarojini Nagar, South West Delhi, Delhi-110023 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as PARKASH NAUTIALY.

NAME CHANGE

I hitherto known as SADDAM HUSAIN S/O MUFEED AHMAD R/O M-177, 2nd Floor, Church Street, St. Matthew Church, Laxmi Nagar, East Delhi, Delhi-110092 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SAHIL ZOREN.

NAME CHANGE

I hitherto known as SHYAMA GAUTAM alias SHYAMA KUMAR KAIN daughter of Shri CHARAN SINGH and wife of Shri SANDEEP KUMAR KAIN, residing at A-13, Sunlight Colony-2, Ashram Jungpura S.O, South Delhi, Delhi-110014, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SHYAMA KUMAR KAIN.

NAME CHANGE

I hitherto known as TILAK RAJ alias TILAK RAJ TONGARIA S/O PURSHOTTAM TONGARIA, residing at House No.240, P-2-Block, Sultanpuri, North West Delhi, Delhi-110086, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as TILAK RAJ.

Public Notice

I, Arjun Sharma S/o Dani Sharma, R/O D-1/823, J.C. Colony, Bhaishwa Dairy, Delhi-110042, hereby disown and debar my son Varun from my movable and immovable properties. Henceforth, neither I nor my family shall be responsible for any act, transaction, liability or conduct undertaken by him.

Harish Chaudhary (Advocate)

Chamber No.931, Lawyer's

Chamber Building, Rohini

Courts, Delhi - 110085

Mobile: 7065818414

NAME CHANGE

I, Ram Kirpal Kushwaha C/O Chunnubad, Plot No. 21 And 22 Kharsa No-181, 182, Block-C, Bhagat Singh Park, Siras Pur, North West Delhi Pin-110042 Have Changed My Name To Ram Kirpal For All The Future Purposes....

NAME CHANGE

I, Pinki Gera W/O Om Prakash, House No. 51A, Block - BC, Shalimar Bagh Dist : North West Delhi Pin:110088 Have Changed My Name To Pinky Gera For All The Future Purposes....

NAME CHANGE

I, Sonia Rana D/O Raghubir Singh, House no 564/13, isherdhi gonia, Bank colony gali no.7 ward no. 13, Bahadurgarh, Jhajjar, Haryana Pin : 124507, Have Changed My Name To Sonia For All The Future Purposes

NAME CHANGE

I, Rajbir Singh Rana S/O Gagan Singh, House no 564, Gali no.7 Arya Nagar, Bahadurgarh, Jhajjar, Haryana Pin : 124507, Have Changed My Name To Raghubir Singh For All The Future Purposes

NAME CHANGE

I, Mohan Lal Jain, S/O Rameshwar Das Jain, R/O A M-195, Shalimar Bagh, North West Delhi, Delhi-110086 have changed my name to Mohan Jain for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, MOHD JAMEEL SON OF JUMMA R/O H.NO. C-12/535, FIRST FLOOR, YAMUNA VIHAR, NORTH EAST, DELHI-110053, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME MOHD JAMIL FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSE

NAME CHANGE

I, KHALID SON OF ABID ALI R/O H. NO. A-285, MAIN ROAD, KARDAM PURI, SHAHDARA, NORTH EAST, DELHI-110094 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME KHALID ALI FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSE

LOST & FOUND

I, VIRENDER SINGH S/O SH SATBIR SINGH R/O D-63, FIRST FLOOR, NANGAL DEWAT, VASANT KUNJ, NEW DELHI-110037, state that I have lost my BSC(Computer Science) Degree Certificate, Migration Certificate and Marksheet issued by JNU, Delhi near to Nangal Dewat Crossing on 26th August 2026. The police report of the same has been lodged with PS Vasant Kunj South/E police Station vide LR No-601174/2026 date 02/09/2026.

NAME CHANGE

I hitherto known as UPENDER son of Shri ANIL, residing at B-309, Sanjay Colony Okhla Phase 2, VTC, Okhla Industrial Area, District: South Delhi, Delhi-110020, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as UPENDER KUMAR.

PUBLIC NOTICE

GENERAL PUBLIC IS HEREBY INFORMED THAT BACK CHAIN OF "PLOT NO. 14 AREA 60 QD. YD. KHASRA NO. 786, GULMOHAR CITY, VILLAGE MAHAWAD, PARGANA & TEHSIL DADR, DISTT. GAUTAM BUDDHA NAGAR (U.P.)" I.E. ORIGINAL SALE DEED EXECUTED BY MR. SHAFIQ & MR. NAFEEES KHAN IN FAVOUR OF MR. SUKHVIR SINGH REGD. IN SR- DADR, VIDE DOC NO. 51283, BOOK NO. 1, VOL. NO. 28883, PAGE NO. 287/304 ON DATED 26.09.2024 WAS INADVERTABLY TORNED BY THE OWNER AND SAID PROPERTY CURRENTLY OWNED BY MR. JITENDRA SINGH WHO HAD PURCHASED THE SAID PROPERTY VIDE SALE DEED DT. 16.10.2025 EXECUTED BY MR. SUKHVIR SINGH. NOW MR. JITENDRA SINGH WANTS TO TAKE LOAN AGAINST THE SAID PROPERTY FROM TRU HOME FINANCE LIMITED. PLEASE CONTACT WITH WRITTEN OBJECTION LETTER WITH RELEVANT DOCUMENTS WITH UNDERSIGNED IF HAVING ANY OBJECTION IN RESPECT OF SAID PROPERTY/SALE DEED 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

North Eastern Railway

E-Tendering Tender Notice

Single e-tender on "Single Packet System" through E-Tender Notice No. M_198_1_1_BDCrane MainEngi are invited by Sr. Divisional Mechanical Engineer (C&W), N.E. Railway, Izatnagar for and on behalf of President of India for the Following work:- Name of work: "Annual Maintenance Contract with Spares for inspection and maintenance of 140 Ton Breakdown Crane Main Engine Make-Mercedes Benz, Model-OM 926LA available at Kasganj for a period of 04 years through OEM or authorized dealer by OEM on Single tender basis" Estimated Value of work (Rs.): 44,51,249.67/- Earnest Money (Rs.): 89,000/- Cost of Tender Forms: NIL Period of Work: 48 Month from the date of issue of LOA Date and time for closing of E-tender: Date: 23.09.2026 Time 17.00 hrs. 1. Tenderer may submit their E-tenders online up to 17.00 hrs. on 23.09.2026 2. Please go to the Indian railway website www.reps.gov.in, to see the complete details and upload/submit the E-tender. Sr.DME/EnHm/CPRO/Mech-80 Izatnagar DO NOT SMOKE BIDI/CIGARETTE IN TRAINS

NEWS BOX

Two people killed, suspect dead in Minneapolis shooting

MINNEAPOLIS.(Agency)

Gunfire could be heard throughout a downtown Minneapolis apartment building as police responded to an active shooting Wednesday that left three people dead, including the suspect, and five others wounded, authorities said. The five wounded by gunfire included two Minneapolis police officers, while a sixth person, another officer, suffered other injuries, police Sgt. Garrett Parten said at a news conference. All three officers are in stable condition, according to Hennepin County Medical Center. A 911 call about shots firedat the building came in just after 4:30 p.m. Officers were dispatched and less than two minutes later they were inside the building and quickly found victims, said Interim Police Chief Bill Peterson.Officers heard more gunshots and followed them to a higher floor, where they found "a haze that significantly limited their visibility," he said. Peterson did not provide additional details about the haze.One officer was shot in the leg and another was shot twice in the abdomen, he said. All three injured officers were expected to make a full recovery, he said.Authorities did not provide any details about the suspected shooter but said they were familiar with the person before the shooting.“I’m truly sickened by this level of violence," Peterson said. "That feeling is tempered only by the courageous actions of the Minneapolis police officers, who responded without hesitation, confronted an extraordinarily dangerous situation and worked to end the violence and restore safety."One of the victims was fatally shot at the scene, and one died after arriving at the hospital, he said.

Nepal's PM Balendra Shah Thanks India, China For Flood Relief Efforts

Kathmandu .(Agency)

Nepal's Prime Minister Balendra 'Balen' Shah has thanked India, China, and the United States for their timely assistance following the deadly flash floods in the Bhotkoshi River, which have claimed over 1,200 lives so far. Addressing the Nepali Parliament on Tuesday, Shah acknowledged that emergency assistance teams and relief supplies sent by neighbouring nations helped in dealing with the aftermath of the devastation that swept away villages, roads, and power plants across at least three districts in the country a week ago. Shah also shared the latest casualty figures, which climbed to 1,204 by Wednesday evening as rescue operations continue. More than 4,200 people in Nepal are still unaccounted for, including 275 missing Indian pilgrims and tourists."In these difficult times, we got support from various countries, including India, China, the US, and others. We got support from various banks," Shah said. ce for diversity and LGBTQ communities.Shah's comments came days after Nepal's Foreign Minister Shisir Khanal said the Himalayan country has decided to shift its diplomatic position to claim climate-linked 'compensation' from Kathmandu has also launched a diplomatic campaign to seek international monetary help, with Khanal saying the post-disaster aid should be treated as a matter of "moral liability" and "not charity."major emitters for natural disastersIndia and China were among the first countries to send both relief supplies and specialised assistance to flood-hit Nepal. Since August 26, New Delhi has sent at least five tranches of relief material -- including blankets, sleeping bags, heavy-duty tarpaulins, plastic sheeting, and hygiene kits -- to flood-hit Nepal, with the Indian Air Force conducting multiple sorties to transport emergency supplies.The supplies also include essential medicines, food packets, solar lamps, water purification tablets, and portable generators.

Chicago Woman Among Missing In Nepal Floods, Family "Determined To Find" Her

world.(Agency)

A Chicago family is desperately searching for news after their loved one went missing during devastating floods in Nepal. According to the Chicago Tribune, the missing woman, identified as Poonam Thakkar, was on a holy pilgrimage to Mount Kailash near Nepal's border. She was travelling with a large group, and the entire group is missing. Poonam reportedly departed from the US on August 20 to participate in a sacred pilgrimage toward Mount Kailash. Located near the border of Nepal and Tibet, the mountain holds deep religious significance for Hindus, who revere it as the home of Lord Shiva.She had been following the path of her older sister, Bhumika, who completed the same trip a year earlier. "We are very determined to find my sister," Gunjan Thakkar, Poonam's sister, said as quoted by NBC 5 Chicago. "My other sister... she's already in Kathmandu. She landed this morning with two of our cousins, and they're determined to find her."Also read | Flood Warning

Systems Failed In Nepal. Can Satellites Strengthen Them?

Family members said that when they last spoke to her, she sounded happy and relaxed. Shortly after that call, she shared footage of her surroundings. As per local reports, the family has shared the video. "It was all casual, and she was just sharing how excited she was to be starting the pilgrimage," Gunjan said as per the Chicago Tribune. "She was enjoying every minute of it."According to the report, the travel company also shared updates on its Facebook page, along with photos of those who are missing. "Most of the group members were staying at Hotel Kailash in Rasuwagadhi," they said.Meanwhile, 10 Australian pilgrims, accompanied by our guide Pradip, were travelling from Royal Himalaya Hotel in Syabrubesi toward Rasuwagadhi at the time of the incident.Nepal flash flood Shortly after Poonam posted her updates, high-altitude rock bedrock collapsed in the Himalayas, triggering a massive glacial shift.

BUNIA, Congo.(Agency)

Congo’s Ebola outbreak has killed more than 3,000 people out of more than 6,100 confirmed cases, according to the latest government data from Wednesday, as the disease is spreading at an unprecedented speed, faster than efforts to track and slow it.Data from Congo’s Ministry of Health showed the outbreak has recorded 6,186 confirmed cases, including 3,007 deaths since it was declared a global health emergency in mid-May. It remains the fastest-growing outbreak of Ebola ever. Jean-Claude Angwanzia, a resident of Bunia, said that he left Mambassa in the epicenter of Ituri province, because he didn’t feel safe. He said that he hardly saw health workers and infected bodies were being mishandled, prompting safety concerns.“I had to flee the area because of the danger looming over us,” he said. The pace of the outbreak is putting a strain

on people's lives.Papy Baraka, a public transportation driver in Bunia, has had to cut down on the number of passengers he picks up in his car.“The disease puts everyone at risk, and daily life has slowed to a crawl. We are afraid,” he said.Recent weeks have witnessed a surge in cases, with two new health zones affected last week in North Kivu, where the fatality rate is much higher than in the rest of the affected provinces. The virus has spread to six provinces.The U.S. Centers for Disease Control said Tuesday in a report that the efforts to contain the virus “remained below established response targets” and the fast expansion of the disease across many health zones indicates “uncontrolled expansion of the outbreak.”The report said that the statistics show that most of the cases are

“occurring outside known transmission chains” as a result of the percentage of confirmed new cases coming from only



between 15% and 20% of known contacts.Director-General of the World Health Organization, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, said on Wednesday that there are chains of

transmission the health authorities are not aware of.“Until every chain is found and broken, the epidemic will continue; And it will continue to pose a threat to DRC, its neighbors, and the region as a whole,” he said.Health workers are struggling under difficult conditions and have gone on strike multiple times to demand their pay.The disease has continued to spread rapidly for several reasons, including conflict in the eastern region of the country where the outbreak is concentrated, attacks on health workers, miners constantly on the move, and inadequate health infrastructure. The resumption of school in the middle of the outbreak has also raised concerns about transmission in classrooms. The World Health Organization said that the outbreak is on track to exceed the deadliest on record, West Africa's regional outbreak between 2014 and 2016, which killed 11,000 people.

Arizona police confirm Tucson gay bar shooting was hate crime

NEWYORK.(Agency)

Police in Arizona have confirmed that a shooting at a Tucson gay bar that left three people dead, including the shooter, was a hate crime.The suspect, 44-year-old Ousman Ceesay, was new to the Tucson area and did not know the victims, the Tucson Police Department said in a news release Tuesday night.While searching his home, detectives found a note that “indicated he acted alone and that this shooting was a targeted attack motivated by hate toward the LGBTQIA+ community,” the department said.Shooter confronted the victims in a parking lot outside barVincent Anthony Siqueiros, 42, and Cameron Davis Capara, 33, were in the parking lot of the Venture-N bar



around 12:30 a.m. Monday when they were confronted and then shot by Ceesay, police said. Ceesay then shot himself with a 9mm handgun and never tried to enter the bar, police said.Both Siqueiros and Capara died at the scene, and Ceesay was pronounced dead at a nearby hospital. Police said Ceesay was carrying a note with a list of other LGBTQIA+-associated businesses in the region.He had no prior contacts with

the police department and was not prohibited from possessing firearms, the police department said.Police say there is no active threat to L G B T Q I A communityPolice officers have contacted each of the businesses on the list, and the department said there is no known active threat to the community. The department is working with community organizations to provide support, and officers were expected to staff a candlelight vigil for Siqueiros and Capara set for Wednesday evening at a local park.Rainbow-colored candles, flowers and photos honoring the pair lined the exterior wall of the Venture-N, a cozy neighborhood bar not far from the University of Arizona campus.

With his eye on reelection, Israel's Netanyahu turns his focus to his divided base

JERUSALEM.(Agency)

As Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu seeks reelection, his main concern these days isn't his political rivals. It's some of his biggest supporters.A series of small, pro-Netanyahu parties are competing in the run-up to the Oct. 27 vote. But instead of strengthening the Israeli leader, these parties — including hard-line blocs led by polarizing Cabinet ministers Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich — risk weakening his chances for reelection by splitting the vote among Netanyahu's base.The election is largely a referendum on Netanyahu's nearly uninterrupted 17-year rule and his handling of a turbulent period marked by mass protests, Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, attacks and nearly three years of war. A victory would mark a stirring

comeback for the embattled leader, while a loss would likely end the



reign of a man who has shaped Israeli politics for three decades. With his legacy on the line, Netanyahu is imploring his erstwhile allies to unite into larger parties that have a better chance of entering parliament."When we unite, we win.

When we split up, we lose," Netanyahu told Channel 14, a TV station that serves as an unofficial mouthpiece for the prime minister.Here's a closer look at Netanyahu's situation:Forming a government is tricky Israeli voters choose between political parties, not individual candidates.Parties that receive the most votes secure the most seats in the 120-member parliament. But any party that can muster just 3.25% of the vote wins representation. That means that more than a dozen parties can be part of any given parliament. No single party has ever captured the parliamentary majority needed to form a government. Instead, a party leader — usually the head of the largest party — forms a coalition with smaller partners to secure a 61-seat majority.Netanyahu currently heads a coalition of religious and ultranationalist parties.

Rubio says he does not think India, Iran are discussing trade deal; warns of US sanctions

world.(Agency)

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio has said he does not believe India and Iran are currently discussing a trade deal, while warning that countries helping Tehran circumvent US sanctions could themselves face punitive measures. Rubio's remarks came days after Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. The two leaders discussed bilateral ties, trade and the situation in West Asia.Asked about the meeting and whether India and Iran were working towards a trade arrangement, Rubio said, “Well, I don’t think there’s a trade deal between India and Iran.”Speaking on The Brian Kilmeade Show, Rubio said countries were free to pursue their own foreign policies and noted that several nations maintained contact with Iran. However, he reiterated Washington's opposition to any efforts to help Tehran evade US sanctions “I think what ultimately happens, though, is , and the President’s been very clear, is no country should be helping Iran evade sanctions,” Rubio said. He added that countries should not create mechanisms that allow Iran to generate revenue that could be used to “sponsor terrorism and try to build a nuclear weapon”.“And if countries decide to do that, then we’re going to have to sanction them too,” Rubio said.At his meeting with Pezeshkian, Modi had said India wanted to strengthen its long-standing ties with Iran and expand and diversify bilateral trade. “Met President Masoud Pezeshkian in Bishkek. Reiterated our commitment to strengthening India's long-standing friendship with Iran across diverse sectors. We want to expand and diversify our trade basket in the times to come,” Modi said in a post on X. The two leaders also discussed the situation in West Asia, with Modi reiterating India's support for efforts aimed at securing lasting peace in the region. The Ministry of External Affairs described the meeting as “fruitful”. MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said Modi reiterated India's position that issues in the region should be resolved through “dialogue and diplomacy”.The discussions also covered the safety of commercial shipping, seafarers and civilians amid the ongoing conflict, as well as the need to safeguard freedom of navigation and commerce.

A judge blocks Trump's new bid to curb birthright citizenship, citing Supreme Court precedent

world.(Agency)

A federal judge has blocked President Donald Trump's latest attempt to limit birthright citizenship, granting a preliminary injunction against an executive order that the administration said would target “birth tourism.”U.S. District Judge Deborah L. Boardman in Maryland on Wednesday issued the injunction until a class-action lawsuit brought by immigrant families and advocacy groups is resolved.“The Supreme Court has spoken: Children in the certified class are “citizens at birth,”” Boardman, appointed by President Joe Biden, wrote in Wednesday's ruling.Birthright citizenship is guaranteed under current law for anyone who is born on U.S. soil, with a few exceptions. The law stretches back to 1868, when the 14th Amendment was ratified in the aftermath of the Civil War.But Trump has long wanted to end birthright citizenship, issuing a previous executive order declaring that children born to people who are in the United States

illegally or temporarily are not American citizens. The Supreme Court struck down that attempt in June.In August, the president tried again with a narrowed executive order



that appeared to restrict automatic citizenship for specific categories of people, including children born to adults with connections to foreign embassies or organizations or to anyone considered an “alien enemy” of the United States.The order defined birth tourism as someone who enters the United States on a “nonimmigrant visa for the purpose of giving birth on American

soil.” Birth tourism is already considered fraud and grounds to restrict a visa if someone seeks one specifically to obtain U.S. citizenship for a child. The order sought to deny citizenship to children born to adults who “engaged in a commercial transaction to purchase or access birthright citizenship,” and some families said they feared their children could be denied citizenship simply because they purchased airfare to come to the U.S. and got pregnant after they arrived. Families and organizations who sued over the birthright citizenship restrictions told the court that the executive branch has taken a broad view of who qualifies as an alien enemy, sometimes relying on speculation or misinformation to make that determination.Others said they feared their children would be denied citizenship because a member of the parents' extended family was connected to a gang in their home country, even though the parents were not gang members.

Bengaluru’s IT power must reach ITIs; Vision Group hopes to make K’taka global player: Bagchi

BENGALURU.(Agency)

Subroto Bagchi, Mindtree co-founder who helped shape India’s technology success story, has turned his attention to a quieter but more fundamental challenge. Recently appointed chairman of Karnataka’s newly-formed Vision Group for Skill Development, Bagchi believes the state’s greatest obstacle is its own glittering past. Bagchi argued that Karnataka’s identity as the birthplace of world-class IT, biotechnology and unicorn startups has cast a long shadow over the less glamorous institutions that train the majority of its workforce. Industrial Training Institutes, polytechnics and short-term skill programmes for youth from the bottom of the pyramid have remained largely invisible, he said. “The things that make us world-class, the formula of the past, can be well utilised to make skill development aspirational, to take the Bengaluru magic to Hubballi and Hoskote.” The Vision Group, constituted under the Karnataka State Skill Policy 2025-32, brings together leaders from industry, academia, civil society and government. Described its first-year priorities, Bagchi said the group must first learn about skill development through a new lens by listening to the “unspoken voice of the real Karnataka”.

‘Shakti Apas’ to back safety, well-being of girl students in Odisha

Bengaluru.(Agency)

The Odisha government will appoint distinguished female professionals as ‘Shakti Apas’ in every district across the state to promote safety, empowerment and overall well-being of girl students in higher educational institutions (HEIs). The Shakti Apas will be appointed under the Shaktishree initiative, a safety and empowerment programme launched by the state government in June last year for female students in higher education. Issuing a communication to the colleges concerned, Higher Education secretary Aravind Agrawal said appointment of the Shakti Apas will be done through nodal officers of 30 degree colleges identified at the district level. “Each district will nominate five distinguished female professionals as Shakti Apa, though the number can be increased by the collector to a maximum of 10, depending on the geographical area of the district, to ensure wider coverage and effective implementation of the initiative,” he said. As per the selection criteria, distinguished female professionals with a minimum 15 years of work experience in their respective fields will be prioritised in the nomination process. Women entrepreneurs and industry professionals with experience in leadership, skill development and women’s empowerment initiatives can also be nominated. Eligible candidates may include women social workers working in women’s safety and child protection, and retired women government employees, preferably from the police, armed forces and legal and cyber security experts.

Over 44K e-challans issued on first day of Zero Fatality Week in Bhubaneswar

BHUBANESWAR.(Agency)

The Zero Fatality Week launched by the state Transport department on Tuesday saw a whopping 44,746 e-challans issued for various traffic violations on the very first day. The special road safety campaign, aimed at reducing accidents and fatalities, will be observed in the first week of every month from September, 2026 to March, 2027. Launched under the direction of Commerce and Transport minister Bibhuti Bhusan Jena, the drive is part of the efforts to ensure strict compliance with road safety rules and bring down the number of road accidents in the state. Officials said of the total challans issued on Tuesday, 25,282 were for not wearing helmets, 4,160 for over speeding, 1,383 for triple riding and 1,216 for driving without valid insurance. Another 703 violators were penalised for not wearing seat belts, 549 for operating vehicles without permits, 157 for driving in the wrong direction and 91 for driving under the influence of alcohol. More than 500 challans were issued for other violations of motor vehicle rules. Among regional transport offices (RTOs), around 571 challans were issued in Jharsuguda, 516 in Cuttack, 511 in Puri, 415 in Ganjam and 1,410 in Bhubaneswar. On the opening day of the Zero Fatality Week, counselling sessions were also held for drivers at several places, including special awareness programmes organised jointly by the Transport department and drivers’ associations in Sonepur, Bhadrak, Talcher and Jajpur, said officials.

A minor went missing in Gujarat. The trail has led police to flood-hit Nepal

The Gujarat High Court was told that electronic evidence indicated that the minor and the man who allegedly kidnapped her had crossed over to Nepal.

Vadodara.(Agency)

A missing teenager, a worried family, and a police trail leading to Nepal: A Gujarat court on Monday heard how a Rajkot father’s search for his missing daughter had acquired an unexpected cross-border dimension, leading investigators to the flood-hit country, where conditions have added urgency to the search. The man, who drives a rickshaw, approached the Gujarat High Court alleging that his minor daughter was kidnapped by a man from another faith about a month ago. The minor—just about two weeks shy of 18, as per the age in the complaint—left her home on August 6 and did not return, following which her father lodged an FIR on August 7. The father subsequently filed a habeas corpus petition through advocate Nabil Baloch, seeking that she be traced and produced before court. He alleged that the man named in the



complaint had been “harassing (his) daughter for about a year”. He also claimed that the man had earlier lived near the family’s residence and had allegedly “threatened to take the girl

The state told the court that the police immediately began searching for her after the FIR was registered and following an application from the petitioner on August 18. The electronic evidence gathered during the investigation, the state submitted, indicated that the minor and the man had crossed over to Nepal, prompting the police to pursue the search in that direction but that the situation in Nepal was “extreme” at the moment. During the hearing, the court orally inquired when investigators had first traced the Nepal connection and questioned the state about the whereabouts of the minor and the respondent, particularly in the context of the devastation in Nepal following the floods. The state informed the court that the technical information linking the minor to Nepal had only emerged about two to three days ago. It said the police had identified one or two IP addresses originating from Nepal and had sought assistance there.

Disha Salian death: 10 questions that made Bombay High Court seek a fresh CBI probe

Mumbai.(Agency)

A spot panchnama conducted more than nine hours after Disha Salian’s death, police officers seen at the building before the death was officially recorded, unexplained discrepancies in the accidental death report and forensic samples, and the delayed seizure of her phone and laptop were among 10 circumstances that the Bombay High Court on Wednesday said raised “reasonable suspicions” and required a fresh probe. While directing the CBI to register an FIR and investigate the June 2020 death of Salian, former manager of actor Sushant Singh Rajput, a bench of Justices Sarang V Kotwal and Ranjitsinha R Bhonsale said the Mumbai Police investigation “raises more questions than it answers”. The court stressed that these observations were made only while deciding

whether an FIR and fresh investigation were warranted, and directed the CBI to investigate the case independently “in all aspects”



The 10 circumstances flagged by the HC: **1. Spot panchnama delayed** Police reached the spot “very shortly after the incident”, but the panchnama was conducted more than nine hours later. The HC said the delay, particularly in view of indications that

police suspected foul play, and “quite significant” events prior to registration of ADR remained unexplained and raised “reasonable suspicion” about the initial investigation. **2. ADR timing questioned** The death occurred at 2.25 am on June 9, while the ADR was registered at 3.07 am. Yet the ADR referred to her parents’ statements saying they had no suspicion, although her father reached the hospital only around 4 am. The HC said it was unexplained how his statement could have been referred to in the earlier ADR. **3. Police presence before death recorded** CCTV showed police personnel at the building between 1 am and 2.14 am. The HC found no explanation in the ADR or subsequent investigation about why they were there, who they were or what they did.

Mumbai Port orders safety probe after crane overturns at Indira Dock

Mumbai.(Agency)

The Mumbai Port Authority (MbPA) has ordered a detailed investigation into the overturning of a shore-based mobile crane during heavy-lift cargo operations at Indira Dock on Sunday evening, and directed the operators concerned to take corrective and preventive measures, the port authority said in a press statement. The incident occurred around 7.15 pm at BPS Berth while the crane was being used for project cargo operations alongside M/V Vienna. The crane overturned towards the vessel, following which a fire broke out. The MbPA Fire Brigade, with assistance from the vessel’s crew, brought the fire under control, the release said. Two crane operators were

injured and evacuated to hospital for treatment. The affected area was subsequently secured. Senior MbPA officers have been monitoring the situation. The site has



been inspected by the statutory safety authority concerned, according to the statement. The port authority said representatives of the vessel, P&I and

insurance agencies, the operations and maintenance operator and other stakeholders have been engaged for surveys and assessment of the incident, as well as for the safe retrieval and removal of the affected crane. MbPA said it was ensuring that the operators undertake necessary corrective and preventive measures to ensure safe and compliant cargo operations and prevent a recurrence. The authority added that the investigation would examine any possible negligence, dereliction, violation of safety requirements or other non-compliance. If lapses are established, action will be taken against the persons, operators or agencies found responsible in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Chennai Metro eyes November trial on Koyambedu-Trade Centre line

CHENNAI.(Agency)

The first train on the Chennai Metro Rail’s Koyambedu - Chennai Trade Centre stretch is expected by November this year on a trial basis, while uncertainty clouds the opening of the Vadapalani-Poonamallee stretch, with no word yet from the Prime Minister’s Office on when it will be inaugurated. The trial phase is expected to continue for about four months, as the system is tested before commercial operations begin. Nearly 90% of the track work on the almost 26 km Koyambedu-Chennai Trade Centre section has been completed, T Archunan, director (projects) of Chennai Metro Rail Ltd (CMRL), told TNIE. The Metro is also considering extending the operational stretch to Alandur. “We are planning to complete the track works in the next 10 days and discussions are on with the board to extend the stretch till Alandur,” Archunan said. About 1.5km of track work remains, including 300 metres on the double-decker section, around 150 metres at Koyambedu station and additional work in the Mugalivakkam section. CMRL is also preparing to operate driverless trains on the stretch. The CMRL has already undertaken trials using driverless trains and has gained operational experience, while the required software has been installed on the trains, Archunan said.

‘Haunted’ hostel: Top officers spend night with students to dispel ghost fears

Amravati Collector Ashish Yerekar, Zilla Parishad CEO Satyam Gandhi, Superintendent of Police Niketan Kadam and other senior officials stayed at the campus in Chikhaldara taluka and urged students to reject superstition and adopt a scientific outlook.

Nagpur.(Agency)

To confront rumours of a “ghost” haunting a tribal residential school in Amravati’s Doma village, the district’s top officials spent Tuesday night at the campus, having dinner and interacting with students in an effort to restore confidence after hundreds of children fled the hostel in fear. Amravati Collector Ashish Yerekar, Zilla Parishad CEO Satyam Gandhi, Superintendent of Police Niketan Kadam and other senior officials stayed at the campus in Chikhaldara taluka and urged students to reject superstition and adopt a scientific outlook. The episode began with rumours that some girl students had been “possessed”, prompting around 610 of the hostel’s approximately 850 students to leave for their homes. A subsequent health assessment found no evidence of supernatural activity and linked the symptoms reported by affected girls to dissociative or conversion symptoms



associated with mental stress and fear. Weeks later, around 350 of those who left had still not returned, although school authorities said the festive season and holidays could also have contributed to the absence. “There were rumours of presence

of a ‘ghost’ at the school, which created fear among students. We wanted to personally be there, stay the night and instil confidence among the students,” Kadam told . Yerekar urged students to draw inspiration from tribal leaders such as Birs

Munda and Tantya Bhil and “keep superstition away” from their lives. He also encouraged them to aspire to become IAS and IPS officers. The officials’ informal interaction included dinner and discussions about their careers and civil services journeys. Students also spoke about their fears and asked the officials for guidance. The team inspected and inaugurated a newly constructed girls’ hostel on the campus, intended to improve accommodation and address overcrowding. Kalyani Gopichand Jawarkar, a Class XI science student, said the officials’ visit helped remove fear among students. “They removed the fear from our minds and gave us confidence,” she said. The earlier assessment had recorded symptoms including crying spells, fearfulness, low mood, physical complaints, loss of appetite, forgetfulness and memory loss among affected girls, with the episode described as resembling “selective hysteria”.

Fentanyl labelled Vitamin C, antacids: Gujarat man gets 4 years in US prison

Ahmedabad.(Agency)

A businessman from Gujarat has been sentenced to over four years in prison in the US for using his Surat-based company to smuggle chemicals used to manufacture fentanyl, a synthetic opioid illegally used in recreational drugs. US District Judge Pamela K Chen sentenced Bhavesh Lathiya, 37, to 54 months in prison. Lathiya, who founded and led Surat-based Raxuter Chemicals, pleaded guilty in April to smuggling and distributing precursor chemicals, knowing they would be used to manufacture fentanyl. He was also ordered to pay forfeiture of \$24,560 and will be deported once his prison term ends. According to court filings cited by US Attorney Joseph Nocella, Jr.’s Office for the Eastern District of New York, Raxuter Chemicals sold and smuggled more than 50 pounds of chemicals commonly used in fentanyl manufacture, supplying buyers in the United States and Mexico. “During a national crisis when hundreds of Americans were dying every day of fentanyl overdoses, Lathiya smuggled and distributed chemical ingredients, including those that were the building blocks for this deadly drug, without any regard for the harm that his conduct would cause,” stated Attorney Nocella. He said the sentence sent a message that the office would “hold precursor traffickers like the defendant accountable for their role in the fentanyl supply chain”. The Surat-based company shipped its products through international mail and package carriers, and prosecutors said the chemicals it distributed covered all the materials needed to manufacture fentanyl through the most common synthesis routes. To evade detection at the border, Lathiya allegedly mislabelled packages and falsified customs declarations.

The Bishkek Balancing Act: How India’s dual engagements define its strategic autonomy

When Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Russian President Vladimir Putin and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian in quick succession on the side-lines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in Bishkek on August 31, he was doing more than managing two important bilateral relationships. He was making a larger statement about how India sees its place in a world increasingly divided by geopolitical conflict and competing blocs.The SCO itself is instructive. It brings together Russia, China, Iran, India, Pakistan and the Central Asian states, countries that the West views through very different lenses. Yet India is comfortable engaging all of them, even as it simultaneously deepens its relationships with the United States, Europe, Israel and the Gulf. That is not simply hedging. It is an assertion that India’s interests are too broad and its strategic choices too important to be defined by any single relationship. The Modi-Putin meeting was particularly significant because it reaffirmed the depth and resilience of a relationship that has survived enormous geopolitical change. Defence, energy, trade and the wider international situation were on the agenda. Yet Modi also used the meeting to reiterate India’s position that the Ukraine conflict must move from continuing war towards an end to the war.The meeting with Pezeshkian carried a different but equally important message. Against the backdrop of the continuing West Asia crisis and the vulnerability of the Strait of Hormuz, Modi reiterated India’s preference for dialogue and diplomacy while emphasising the importance of safeguarding freedom of navigation and commerce.Two meetings, therefore, sent one broad signal: India will engage where its interests demand engagement, irrespective of the preferences of other powers. The Middle Ground Under Pressure The real question, however, is whether India can continue to occupy this middle ground - deeply engaged with Russia and Iran while simultaneously managing an increasingly consequential relationship with Washington.The answer is still yes. But the price of strategic autonomy is rising.India’s relationship with Russia remains anchored in energy and defence. Russian crude has become an important component of India’s energy security, while the wider defence relationship remains substantial. But this deepening engagement now carries a more direct economic cost. The US Senate has passed the Lindsey Graham Act of 2026 by an 86–11 vote. In its present form, the legislation would authorise the US President to impose tariffs of up to 100 per cent on countries among the largest purchasers of Russian oil and gas, putting India and China squarely in the zone of risk.The important distinction is that this is no longer merely the threat of an executive action that can be negotiated away through bilateral diplomacy. It represents a broader congressional push to weaponise access to the US market against countries that continue significant commercial engagement with Russia.India has already experienced the costs of this approach. The question now is whether New Delhi will allow external pressure to determine its energy choices. Its answer so far has been clear: energy security, affordability and national interest remain the primary considerations.This does not mean India is indifferent to sanctions. Quite the opposite. It means that India is learning to navigate a world in which sanctions, tariffs, export controls and financial restrictions are increasingly being used as instruments of geopolitical power.That is a very different proposition from either joining a bloc or defying one. The West Asia Conflict and the Energy Calculus The crisis in West Asia has, if anything, reinforced the logic of India’s Russian engagement. India imports more than 80 per cent of its crude oil, making the security of maritime energy routes a strategic rather than merely commercial concern. Any prolonged disruption around the Gulf or the Strait of Hormuz immediately changes the risk calculation for New Delhi.

The downside of India’s infra push

Corporate bad loans and debt write-off are rooted in the economic growth path chosen by the nation

BY now, you know about the Subhash Chandra payout controversy. The facts are contested, but one thing is clear — several big lenders are unlikely to get back the thousands of crores that they lent to the companies associated with his Essel Group.This is the latest episode of an endless soap opera. Big companies take mega loans for large projects; those projects turn out to be economically unviable; they default on loan repayments; lenders take over whatever assets are left and sell them to recover some of their money; the assets fetch a fraction of the loan amount, and the rest has to be written off. In business lingo, this is called “taking a haircut” — the kind your mother forces you to get when you have let your locks grow fashionably wild.Most commentators blame this continuous loan write-off saga on an alleged corrupt nexus between politicians in power, officials running PSU banks and politically connected corporates. Indeed, that is part of the story. However, the reality is that India would still have this problem of corporate bad loans, and subsequent debt write-off, even if the system were absolutely clean and honest. This is because of the infrastructure-led path of economic growth that we have chosen over the past four decades. It began in the mid-1980s, when Soviet socialism started to falter and fail, and neoliberalism took root in the West. Equally important was the rise of the Asian Tigers — Singapore, South Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Our netas, babus and corporate honchos visited these nations, saw their swanky skyscrapers, glitzy malls, superfast highways, multilayered flyovers and state-of-the-art ports and airports, and came back with a belief that Nehruvian socialism, with its restrictions on the private sector and aesthetic distaste for consumerism, was holding India back.Economic policies slowly turned right from the mid-1980s, before finally completing a 180-degree turn towards liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation in 1991. The objective was to dramatically increase highway connectivity, build new ports, upgrade airports, generate more electricity, build a world-class communication system and give middle-class consumers fancier homes and bigger cars.Over the next two decades, laws were amended to allow private companies to build, operate and earn from highways, power stations, airports, ports, and mobile



projects. Private players had to invest only 25-30% of the project’s cost as their own equity. PSU banks were nudged to lend the rest. The government would step in wherever there was a shortfall, either by lending through specialised infrastructure finance institutions or directly through budgetary funding. While that solved the funding problem, the issue of revenues remained a sore point. Private players realised very soon that it wasn’t going to be easy to recover their investments. Indians didn’t earn enough to pay the tolls and rates needed to make the projects profitable. The Atal Bihari Vajpayee government found a solution — it handed out highway contracts, private players built the highways and earned tolls for a limited period, and then handed the highways back to the State once they had earned enough. In fact, 90% of the

money spent on the much-vaunted National Highways Development Project during the Vajpayee years came from the government.The UPA devised a new mechanism of public-private partnership to build infrastructure on steroids. In the 10 years of UPA rule, infrastructure loans jumped tenfold, almost all of them coming from State-owned banks. In some cases, almost all of a project’s financing turned out to be debt. It is worth understanding how this worked, since it effectively transferred all the risk on to the lenders. The owners of Company A would set up a separate Company B for an infrastructure project, where they had to invest 25-30% as equity. The owners would take a loan from a PSU bank on the books of Company A, and then use it to finance their equity investment in Company B. In effect, PSU banks had lent all of the money — partly directly to Company B and the rest to Company A — leaving private players with practically no skin in the game. The reckless infrastructure spending was great for generating high economic growth — after all, real capital investments were being made and assets were being built. But most of these turned out to be economically unviable. Power companies couldn’t get State Electricity Boards to buy from them, highway projects were unable to collect enough toll, airports and ports incurred losses, the stock of unsold homes shot up.Private companies stopped paying back their loans, and they piled up as bad loans — euphemistically called Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) — on the books of banks. The NPA crisis gave birth to a new insolvency and bankruptcy system, where lending agencies were empowered to take over the assets of defaulters and sell them to recover their money. So far, only 30% of the money lent has been recovered. Banks have had to “write off” the rest to clean up their balance sheets and be able to lend again.What is more egregious is that a few big business houses have picked up the distressed assets for a song, often using money borrowed from those same PSU banks. It has led to monopoly control in several infrastructure segments, including airports and real estate.This is an inevitable design feature of private-sector-led, infrastructure-driven growth path in a country where only 5% of the population drives most of the consumption. Corruption is simply its side effect.

Make affordable flu vaccine available to all in National Capital

If vaccination is to form part of Delhi’s annual public health strategy, the government must find a way to make it accessible for the most vulnerable

The surge in H1N1 viral infections in Delhi this year is strong enough to demand attention. It is not, however, evidence of a new or unusually lethal virus. That distinction matters. The state government put the number of H1N1 cases as of August 27 at 2,729, out of 3,736 influenza A and B cases recorded overall. Influenza A accounted for 3,447 cases, of which H1N1 is a subtype that accounted for almost four-fifths. The H1N1 strain, which has circulated among humans since 2009, has since become established as a seasonal influenza virus. However, the scale and nature of this year’s outbreak makes it stand out. Last year, another influenza A subtype—H3N2—was more prominent in Delhi. And the Indian Council of Medical Research has found no evidence yet of a new threat or an unusual genetic shift in the H1N1 to make it more virulent. That leaves a question Delhi has long been reluctant to confront: why does a city that knows influenza recurs every year continue to treat



each rise in cases as an administrative surprise? Influenza viruses keep evolving, making annual vaccination the practical way of reducing the risk of serious illness. The vaccine composition recommended by the World Health Organization for the 2026-27 season in the

northern hemisphere includes an updated H1N1 component. It would not prevent every infection, but it can reduce the risk of severe disease, particularly among those most vulnerable. That suggests a policy Delhi should have had years ago: an annual influenza programme, with vaccination offered before the seasonal rise to older people, pregnant women, young children and people with chronic illnesses—accompanied by systematic surveillance. Influenza is usually self-limiting, but in those at risk it can lead to pneumonia, respiratory complications and, in severe cases, hospitalisation or death.However, a second policy question remains. The vaccine’s price is such that access to it cannot be left entirely to the private market. If vaccination is to form part of Delhi’s annual public health strategy, the government must find a way to provide it free to the poorest and most vulnerable, and at subsidised rates to others who cannot afford it. Price should not determine who among those most vulnerable gets protection from serious disease.

Human follies worsen natural calamities

As the images from Nepal horrify us, we must understand that disaster amid nature’s fury is often a failure of management. Kerala and Assam, which face frequent floods, must scientifically reassess how the changing climate affects their unique geologies and move from disaster response to prevention

We live in an era when changing rainfall patterns, floods, landslides, heat waves and other extreme climatic events are no longer rare. As the devastation in Nepal—soon after deadly floods in Kerala and Assam—showed, we must urgently adapt to live with climate change. Yet, an important distinction must be made: rain itself is not a disaster. Disaster results from the interaction of natural hazards with vulnerable landscapes, inappropriate land use, inadequate scientific understanding, weak early-warning systems and delayed decisions.Kerala—where heavy monsoon rainfall is a natural feature—is particularly exposed as it is marked by densely-packed valleys and extensive development along slopes and floodplains. Intense, short rainfall can rapidly saturate the slopes, overwhelm drainage systems and transform streams into destructive torrents. Landslides occur when rainfall-induced saturation combines with geological structure, soil thickness, weathering, slope geometry, drainage and land-use conditions to destabilise slopes. The problem is aggravated when wetlands are reclaimed, drainage channels obstructed, floodplains encroached upon and hill slopes modified for roads, buildings, plantations and infrastructure. Such interventions reduce the natural capacity of the landscape to absorb, store and safely convey water.Kerala’s 41 west-flowing rivers are generally short and steep, resulting in rapid hydrological responses during extreme rainfall. Flood risk, therefore, increases when river channels, floodplains and wetlands are prevented from performing their natural functions. The devastating floods of 2018 had demonstrated the complex interaction between extreme rainfall, catchment conditions, reservoir storage and dam operations. Kerala should undertake independent scientific assessments of

reservoir operations and flood management practices. Dam operating rules, reservoir storage, flood cushion and downstream risks must be reassessed under changing climatic conditions. Reservoir sedimentation also requires continuous assessment because loss of storage capacity can affect flood management. Controlled desiltation may be appropriate in selected reservoirs after rigorous engineering and environmental assessment. However, indiscriminate dredging of natural rivers should be avoided. Groundwater deserves equal attention. Rivers are dynamic, physical, hydrogeological and ecological systems, not merely drainage channels. Scientific mapping of aquifer hydrodynamics, protection of recharge zones and conservation of riverbeds and wetlands should become integral components of water-resource management.Kerala’s highlands require stronger scientific understanding of slope stability. Rainfall is only one trigger among several interacting factors. Geological structure, soil properties, weathering, slope geometry, drainage, vegetation and land-use changes determine susceptibility.The disasters at Kavalappara and Puthumala in 2019, Pettimudi in 2020, Kokkayar and Koottickal in 2021, and Mundakkai-Chooralmala in 2024 demonstrate the devastating consequences of slope instability.Not just Kerala, several Indian states urgently need high-resolution landslide-hazard mapping, continuous slope monitoring, detailed geological investigations and scientifically-established rainfall thresholds. Research must directly influence land-use decisions, road construction, quarrying regulations, building permissions and evacuation plans. Mountain soils require extremely long geological and

biological processes to form; their loss through erosion and landslides therefore cannot be quickly restored. India’s forecasting, Doppler radar, satellite observation, lightning detection, automated weather stations and numerical modelling capabilities have improved considerably. The real test begins after a warning is



issued. An effective system must establish a clear chain: forecast followed by hazard assessment, decision-making, warning signal, evacuation, rescue and, finally, recovery.A warning has little value if vulnerable families are not evacuated, dangerous roads remain open or downstream communities uninformed about rising reservoir levels. It must reach fishermen at sea, farmers, travellers, residents beneath unstable slopes and families living near rivers. Messages should be location-specific, simple and actionable.

The lesson from Assam Assam provides an important parallel. The state has repeatedly suffered devastating floods, riverbank erosion and landslides, causing substantial loss of life and property. Last month’s severe events, which have claimed over 100 lives, illustrate its continuing vulnerability. The state’s geological and geomorphological setting is fundamental to understanding this risk. The tectonically-active Himalayan region, the mighty Brahmaputra and its highly braided channel system create conditions conducive to recurrent flooding and erosion. The river transports enormous quantities of sand, silt and clay derived from the easily erodible tertiary formations of the young Himalaya.Extreme rainfall and high-sediment loads can alter channel morphology, intensify bank erosion and reduce effective flood-carrying capacity across extensive floodplains. The 1950 earthquake, estimated at around 8.6 magnitude, further demonstrates the region’s intense tectonic activity. It triggered numerous landslides and introduced enormous sediment quantities into river systems, producing long-term geomorphological changes.Flood and landslide management in Assam, therefore, cannot depend primarily on emergency response and relief. It requires integrated river-basin management, sediment monitoring, floodplain regulation, landslide-risk assessment and improved early-warning systems. Quarrying, deforestation and other activities that destabilise slopes and drainage systems must be strictly regulated. Large-scale ecological restoration and afforestation are particularly important in vulnerable catchments.

Telangana man stabs wife to death, her mother injured while trying to stop attack

Telangana. (Agency)

A man stabbed his 28-year-old wife to death and injured her mother when she tried to intervene during the attack in Telangana's Rajanna Sircilla district, police said. The incident occurred following a dispute between the victim, Gandikota Jyothi and her husband, Pallapu Suresh. Sources said Suresh stabbed Jyothi multiple times, including in the neck and abdomen. She sustained critical injuries and died on the spot. The attack allegedly took another violent turn when Jyothi's mother, Yellamma, attempted to intervene and stop Suresh. He attacked her as well, leaving her seriously injured. Locals rushed Yellamma to a nearby hospital, where she was admitted for treatment. Police reached the scene after being alerted and began examining the circumstances surrounding the attack. Meanwhile, a hunt is underway to nab Suresh.

Ropar DC forms panel to probe Sirhind canal breach near Chamkaur Sahib

Ropar. (Agency)

Taking note of the breach in the berm of the Sirhind canal near Chamkaur Sahib, Ropar deputy commissioner Aaditya Dachalwal has ordered a committee headed by the SDM to conduct a high-level inquiry. On Wednesday, the DC said a survey of the entire Sirhind Canal berm in Rupnagar district had been initiated to prevent recurrence. A proposal has also been submitted to the Punjab govt to raise, widen and strengthen the 1.75-km-long berm from the incident site at Jatana village. A proposal was also being sent to the



state govt to widen and raise the main bridge connecting Sri Chamkaur Sahib with Bela-Behrampur to facilitate residents' movement, Dachalwal said. He said if the panel reports negligence on the part of any official, appropriate departmental action will be ensured against him. Meanwhile, canal department officials said the Sirhind Canal was operating at full capacity due to the paddy season. Leakage occurred around 5.30 am at Burji No. 55600/R near Chamkaur Sahib, causing the road over the adjoining canal bank/berm to subside. The department had already stocked soil-filled EC bags for canal safety during the paddy season. With these bags and help from local villagers, the leakage was plugged by 8.30 am. The damaged road was subsequently restored using soil, machinery, and tippers.

Young hearts recover fully after MIS-C battle: PGI study

Chandigarh. (Agency)

Nearly three to five years after surviving multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C), a rare but life-threatening condition following COVID exposure, children treated at the PGI have shown near-complete recovery in heart health, physical development and mental well-being. A prospective observational follow-up study published in the Pediatric Infectious Disease Journal by Drs Suresh Kumar Angurana, Salu Mahato, Nidhi Chauhan and others evaluated 51 MIS-C survivors between Nov 2024 and Sept 2025. These children, aged between 1 month and 12 years old (with a typical age of 7 years), had been hospitalized for MIS-C during the height of the pandemic between Sept 2020 and Aug 2022. During their initial emergency hospital stays, the children faced severe body-wide illness. Every single patient suffered from persistent fever. Additionally, 65% experienced severe digestive issues like vomiting, diarrhea, or stomach pain; about 51% developed breathing troubles; and 49% suffered skin rashes, eye redness, or mouth sores. Rare but severe complications included severe eye bleeding in 4% of cases and tissue damage in the fingers or toes in 2%. Blood tests at admission confirmed massive internal inflammation, with 71% showing high inflammatory proteins, 72.5% displaying stress markers in the heart, 68.6% having elevated blood-clotting markers, 47% having low platelet counts, 39% having low white blood cell counts, and 49% showing liver inflammation.

Court reinstates Punjab cop dismissed over Lawrence Bishnoi jail interview

The Punjab and Haryana High Court has set aside the dismissal of DSP Gursher Singh Sandhu in the Lawrence Bishnoi interview case. The ruling says Punjab could not skip a regular inquiry, though the pending probe may continue.

Chandigarh. (Agency)

The Punjab and Haryana High Court has quashed the dismissal of Punjab Police Deputy Superintendent of Police Gursher Singh Sandhu, who was removed from service over the controversial interview of jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi from the prison. The court said the state had failed to

show why a regular departmental inquiry could not be held and ordered Sandhu's reinstatement with all consequential benefits. In its judgment pronounced on Tuesday, Justice Namit Kumar set aside the Punjab government's January 2025 order, which had dismissed Sandhu from service under Article 311(2)(b) of the Constitution. The court, however, said the quashing of the dismissal order and reinstatement would be without prejudice to the state's right to continue the departmental inquiry already pending against Sandhu and other police officials before an inquiry officer. Sandhu was dismissed for allegedly facilitating the recording of an interview of Bishnoi while the gangster was in police custody. A private news channel had aired two interviews of Bishnoi in March 2023. The government had invoked powers under Article 311 of the Constitution to dismiss Sandhu. Challenging the order, Sandhu argued that the government had wrongly invoked Article 311(2)(b) to dispense with a regular departmental inquiry and had denied him an opportunity of being heard. Sandhu, who was then posted as DSP, SAS Nagar,

had been issued show-cause notices in September and October 2024. He said he had no role in bringing Bishnoi to Punjab or in overseeing his stay in custody at the CIA staff premises in Mohali, and that he was never an investigating officer in any case



against Bishnoi. The court noted that the respondents' stand for dispensing with the inquiry was based mainly on Sandhu's alleged non-cooperation and his alleged failure to receive the chargesheet.

It observed, "Even assuming for sake of argument that the petitioner had initially failed to receive the complete chargesheet,

such conduct, by itself, could not justify dispensing with the inquiry under Article 311(2)(b) of the Constitution. The employee cannot frustrate a departmental inquiry merely by remaining absent or declining to participate. Therefore, mere non-cooperation or absence of the delinquent employee cannot be elevated to a circumstance rendering the holding of an inquiry constitutionally impracticable." The court further said, "Mere recital in the order that an inquiry is not reasonably practicable would not, by itself, be sufficient. The competent authority must demonstrate a real and proximate nexus between the circumstances prevailing at the relevant time and the inability to hold departmental enquiry." It also observed that there was no allegation that Sandhu had threatened or intimidated witnesses. The court said there was no material to show that any witness had expressed unwillingness to testify against him because of any threat or coercion attributable to him, and no material to suggest that he had tried to tamper with evidence or interfere with the functioning of the inquiry officer.

'Behind the Goddess': Gujarat temple protest art form strives for survival

'Mata ni Pachhedi' is a ritual textile painted with Goddess Durga as the central theme. Mastered by the Chitaras, a community of Devipujaks (earlier called Vaghri), it started as a form of protest over 300 years ago, when the community was not allowed inside certain temples. The community largely resides in and around Ahmedabad

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

WHEN HE was young, Om Chitara would come home from school to see his father Kiranbhai and other family members busy in dyeing, drawing and filling colour on fabric in a section of their home that doubled as a studio. They would create pieces of art that would be revered and worshipped.

At 10 years, he learnt the art himself and now, 22-year-old Om Chitara – a ninth-generation artist – is among those keeping the dwindling art of Mata ni Pachhedi alive.

Literally translating to 'Behind the Mother Goddess', Mata ni Pachhedi is a ritual textile painted with Goddess Durga as the central theme. Mastered by the Chitaras, a community of Devipujaks (earlier called Vaghri), it started as a form of protest over 300 years ago, when the

community was not allowed inside certain temples. The community largely resides in Ahmedabad and around it. Om says the tradition took shape across different periods



for different reasons: during times of conflict and temple destruction, the cloth offered a portable form of worship; later, caste barriers made it an alternative for communities denied entry into temples. At

their home in the Vasna area of Ahmedabad, the upper floor has a studio. "Our home serves as both our living space and our sanctuary for preserving Mata ni Pachhedi.

Around 40 artisans in our community work together to keep this heritage alive, led by four senior craftsmen, including myself," says Om.

The studio has unbleached fabric laid out to dry, earthen pots containing organic dyes made of indigo, henna and wild turmeric. Using specialised bamboo 'kalam pens' they draw on the fabric much like the kalamkari form of art used in clothing textile. "Traditionally, our art relied purely on deep red derived from alum and tamarind seed paste; Black extracted from iron rust fermented with jaggery and water. We expanded our palette to use natural ingredients," says Om.

Illegal codeine syrup sale: Ahmedabad drug wholesaler's licence cancelled

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

The Gujarat Food and Drugs Control Administration (FDCA) has cancelled the drug licence of an Ahmedabad-based wholesaler for sending Codeine-based cough syrups (CBCS) to an unlicensed vendor in Mizoram. The case pertains to an August 7 raid at the General Post Office (GPO) by the Special Operations Group (SOG) of the Ahmedabad City Police, during which they seized 5,050 bottles of Rx Tripolidine Hydrochloride and Codeine Phosphate Syrup with the brand name "Cof-Trip" worth Rs 54.91 lakh, being sent to vendors in several states via postal parcels. One of the retailers, based in Aizwal, Mizoram, was allegedly found not to possess a licence from the state authority.

The FIR in this case was filed at DCB police station on August 10 on the basis of a complaint by PSI JB Desai on behalf of the

State. Hiren Kantilal Patel and Parshva Vora, partners at Prama Healthcare, were booked under sections of the Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances



(NDPS) Act, placed under arrest and the SOG had received four days remand of both accused, till August 14. Since then, both have remained in judicial custody.

On Wednesday, a statement from the SOG said that based on this investigation, the police filed a report with the Gujarat FDCA, which had then cancelled drug licences granted to Prama Healthcare, located in Gujarat Estate, Sarkhej, Ahmedabad. The CBCS was being sent in a consignment of 34 parcels containing 5,050 bottles of 100 ml syrup to seven firms, five in Mizoram, and one each in Uttar Pradesh and Assam. On Wednesday, PSI JB Desai of the SOG, speaking to The Indian Express, confirmed that while the entire consignment being sent to seven retailers across three states had been seized pending investigation, they were yet to receive responses from the states of Uttar Pradesh and Assam regarding the status of one firm each located in their jurisdictions.

Gang 'hired' for real estate agent's murder, say police

Faisal Fatta (53) was attacked on Jilani Bridge when he was returning home on Monday night. He had suffered 21 stab wounds, which caused his death on the spot.

Surat. (Agency)

The murder of a real estate agent in Surat was the result of a 'contract', police said after the arrest of four men linked to a gang. Faisal Fatta (53) was attacked on Jilani Bridge when he was returning home on Monday night. He had suffered 21 stab wounds, which caused his death on the spot.

The police identified the four individuals arrested in connection with the crime as Abhishek alias Rohan Rajendra Devre (27), Kaisarali Abidali (26), Vasim alias Vasiyo Moin Shaikh (21), and Gokul Jadav (20), all residents of the Mandarwaja area in Surat. During their interrogation, the four reportedly said they worked for one Mubarak



Patel, a resident of Mandarwaja. Additional Commissioner of Police (Crime) Karanraj Vaghela said: "Four men accused of brutally murdering Faisal Fatta have been apprehended. During interrogation, they confessed to eliminating Faisal on the instructions of their gang leader Mubarak Patel. So far, we have learnt that Mubarak was given a contract of Rs 10 lakh to kill Faisal. An advance payment of Rs. 1 lakh was made to him by an unknown party. Once we apprehend Mubarak Patel, the entire picture will be clear." Faisal, who lived at Al Noor Residency in Adajan, was returning home on his moped when he was attacked by four men with knives on Jilani Bridge. The police said Faisal had been in real estate for a long time. He had partnerships with several people and, in some dealings, payments were due.

Leopard breaks into Kufri's Himalayan Nature Park enclosure, kills aged 'Sheru'

Shimla. (Agency)

Taking advantage of a serious lapse, a wild leopard sneaked into a leopard enclosure at the Himalayan Nature Park in Kufri and killed an aged captive leopard named 'Sheru' on August 8, while leaving a five-year-old leopardess, Bandit, unharmed, a senior officer of the Wildlife Department told The Indian Express on Wednesday. The officer said although the intruder leopard was tranquilised, captured and subsequently released into the wild on August 9, the circumstances surrounding Sheru's death became clear only after the post-mortem report was received on August 30.

"The post-mortem report ruled out death due to natural causes and concluded that Sheru died of injuries suffered during a struggle," the officer said. Sources said based on the findings of the post-mortem report, which established that the captive leopard was killed in a fight with another animal, an explanation was sought from officials at the Himalayan Nature Park, Kufri, as to how a

wild animal managed to enter the enclosure. Sources said in the absence of a conclusive post-mortem report, the Wildlife Department initially believed that Sheru could have died of natural causes, despite the fact that a wild leopard had sneaked into the enclosure. Deputy Conservator of Forests (Wildlife), Shimla, Shah Nawaz Ahmad Bhatt said, "We received the post-mortem report of the leopard named Sheru on August 30. It concluded that Sheru died due to injuries inflicted during a struggle with another animal. Indeed, there was a lapse. We visited the spot and found the intruder had sneaked into the enclosure through a small hole or cavity in the iron fence. The gap was repaired. The intruder leopard was released into the forest area after a detailed medical examination." Bhatt said, "Once the Kufri zoo staff submits its explanation, a detailed report will be sent to the Central Zoo Authority (CZA), Delhi." Range Officer Vinita Bhardwaj, the zoo in charge, declined to comment on the matter. A

wildlife official associated with the Kufri zoo said, "Our initial assessment is that the wild leopard, which was later tranquilised and released into the open forest, had picked up the scent of the leopardess Bandit, who was lodged in the same enclosure as Sheru. It



managed to enter the enclosure and became agitated after finding another male with the leopardess. Sheru was aged and fragile and failed to counter the younger leopard." The officer said, "Kufri zoo, known as the Himalayan Nature Park, is situated adjacent to a forested area. The boundaries of the

Mashobra, Chail and Shimla forest ranges are in proximity to the zoo. In such an environment, we cannot rule out the possibility of a wild leopard picking up the scent of a young leopardess and entering the zoo premises."

The officer said, "There are three pairs of leopards in the zoo. Each leopard enclosure has one male and one female. Leopard Sheru and leopardess Bandit had been lodged together for a long time. Sheru was the oldest leopard. He was a cub when a forest team rescued him from a forest fire in the Summer Hill area in 2007. Since then, the leopard has been in the care of the Forest and Wildlife Department. "Leopardess Bandit was also rescued after she was found isolated in a forest area in 2021. The enclosure where Sheru and Bandit were lodged is situated near the Asiatic bears' courtyard. The enclosure was closed on all sides, including the rooftop. Due to the long age, Sheru had been not much active and mostly remain laying inside the enclosure.

Delhi Govt issues safety plan for city, outside buses; orders panic buttons, first-aid kits

The Transport Department has directed every bus operator to ensure that vehicle location tracking devices (VLTDS) and panic buttons remain functional and operational at all times.

Delhi. (Agency)

The Delhi government has issued detailed directions to all bus operators operating in the National Capital Territory of Delhi to ensure strict compliance with the prescribed safety, security and operational requirements for the protection of their passengers. The directions issued by the Delhi Transport Department also apply to buses from other states plying or operating in Delhi. Any violation of the norms may invite action in accordance with the law. As part of the efforts to ensure the passengers' safety, the Transport Department has directed every bus operator to ensure that vehicle location tracking devices (VLTDS) and panic buttons remain functional and operational at all times. Panic buttons must be easily accessible to passengers and maintained in a proper working condition. All buses must also carry serviceable fire extinguishers and first-aid



kits. Operators have been told to ensure that buses are parked at night only at authorised, secure and adequately lit locations. In accordance with applicable rules and directions of the court, buses must not be fitted with curtains or unauthorised films on

windows. The use of films on window glass is prohibited, and the prescribed transparency norms for windshields, rear windows and side windows must be followed. The directions also lay down clear

responsibilities for drivers and bus staffers. Driving under the influence of alcohol or any intoxicating substance is strictly prohibited. Drivers must possess valid driving licences, uniforms and public service vehicle (PSV) badges wherever applicable, while conductors must carry valid conductor licences, uniforms and PSV badges. Bus operators must also ensure proper verification of drivers, conductors, attendants and other staff before their deployment. Further, wherever required, buses must have an authorised attendant, and all doors must remain securely closed while the bus is in motion. Bus crew have been told to extend help to specially abled persons. Special directions have also been issued regarding the safety of women passengers. Bus operators have been directed to sensitise drivers, conductors and other crew members about the prevention of harassment. This gains significance as it follows the alleged gangrape of a minor inside a sleeper bus.

Form SOP on arrest of trans persons: Delhi High Court

Delhi. (Agency)

The Delhi HC on Wednesday asked the Centre and Delhi Police to take appropriate steps for the formulation of an SOP on the arrest and detention of transgender persons. The court also asked the respondents to consider an advisory by the National



Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in this regard. A bench of Chief Justice D K Upadhyaya and Justice Tejas Karia issued the notice to the Centre, police and the Delhi government on a PIL by a law student that sought an NHRC advisory. The plea said while the Delhi Police has a standing order for the arrest of women and senior citizens, it is "silent" on trans persons. The "harm" due to the "vacuum" can be seen when the police in May 2025 arrested three transgender persons, the plea said. It alleged that despite one of them possessing female genital anatomy, all were searched by a male police officer.

Bar Council can't take disciplinary action against law students: SC on Nalsar row

Delhi. (Agency)

The Supreme Court on Thursday ruled that the Bar Council of India (BCI) has no statutory authority to regulate the conduct of law students, holding that any disciplinary action against students must be taken by the educational institution concerned under its own rules and regulations. A bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana passed the order while hearing a controversy involving students of Hyderabad's Nalsar University of Law, who had objected to the proposed participation of the Chief Justice in the university's convocation. The Bar Council BCI, a statutory body that regulates the legal profession and education, had last month issued an order directing state units not to enrol the 2026 graduating batch of Nalsar over their opposition to the CJI's participation in the university event. Following widespread criticism, the BCI withdrew the order and its chairman, Manan Kumar Mishra, had apologised to the students. The bench set aside two notifications issued by the BCI in connection with the Nalsar controversy, although both had been withdrawn within hours of their issuance. The Supreme Court clarified that the BCI has no power to take such disciplinary action, underscoring that the Council acquires disciplinary jurisdiction over law students only after they enrol as advocates. "We are of the opinion that the Advocates Act, 1961, whereunder the BCI has been statutorily created, does not confer any express or implied power upon the BCI or any State Bar Council to take any disciplinary action against the students of law; such a power is preceded by registration of a law graduate as an advocate under the said Act," the court said in its order.

Booth Level Agents liable only for verifiable information in SIR: Delhi High Court

The petitioners challenged the mandate requiring BLAs of political parties to give a personal undertaking certifying they have personally verified all details in the enumeration forms.

Delhi. (Agency)

The Delhi High Court on Thursday ruled that booth level agents of political parties are not liable for verifying all details in enumeration forms during the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls. Justice Amit Bansal said booth level agents (BLA) are liable only for verifiable information like the elector's photograph. "In the opinion of this court, BLA can only be a made liable in terms of section 31 of the Representation of People Act for information that can be verified by the BLA, i.e., the

photograph on the enumeration form matches with the identity of the elector," the judge said. Section 31 states that making false declarations with respect to the preparation, revision or correction of



an electoral roll is punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year, or with fine, or with both. The judge passed the judgement on a petition by the Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee (DPCC) president Devender Yadav and the

chairman of the DPCC's booth management committee. The petitioners challenged the mandate requiring BLAs of political parties to give a personal undertaking certifying they have personally verified all details in the enumeration forms. According to the petitioner, neither the Representation of the People Act nor the Registration of Electors Rules contain any provision empowering the Election Commission to ask the representatives of political parties to give such an undertaking. "The requirement of a personal undertaking from BLAs is directly contrary to the statutory scheme of verification prescribed under Section 23 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, which mandates that the inclusion of any name in the electoral roll shall be made by the Electoral Registration Officer, and only after 'proper verification of facts in such manner as may be prescribed'," the petition had said.

Delhi Cabinet clears ease of doing business bill to cut red tape

Delhi. (Agency)

In a big boost for the ease of doing business, a Bill was okayed during a Cabinet meeting chaired by CM Rekha Gupta on Wednesday to bring fundamental changes to the existing process for obtaining approvals, registrations, licences and other clearances for enterprises. With the Delhi Ease of Doing Business Bill, 2026, cleared, the government is working to create a system where business owners and entrepreneurs do not have to visit different government offices, submit the same information multiple times or wait for long periods for the necessary approvals. Through the Bill, different business-related processes

will be brought under a system that is simple, transparent, time-bound and technology-driven. The most important feature of the



proposed law would be a single-window system. Under this, a simple and user-friendly online portal will be created where businesses can apply for approvals, registrations, no-objection

certificates, licences and other requirements related to their operations. The Delhi State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation will be made the nodal agency for all business approvals. For several activities included in Schedule-3 of the Bill, approval, permission, licence or no-objection certificate will be granted as soon as the application is submitted. Self-declaration will be accepted for specified low-risk categories and cases falling within the prescribed limits. Furthermore, the burden of duplicate registrations on businesses would also be reduced. Further, a negative-list-based system would be adopted to provide greater freedom to conduct business.

Delhi SIR: 2.18L forms submitted for inclusion in voter list

Delhi. (Agency)

A total of 2,18,139 forms were submitted for inclusion of names into the voter list and over 51,000 objections were filed for removal of voters names till September 1 under the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) in Delhi, according to official data. According to data provided by Delhi Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), a total of 2,14,534 Form-6 were submitted up to August 31 and another 3605 were filed on September 1. The claims and objection phase started on August 31 and will conclude on September 30, during which voters can file Form-6 for inclusion of their names, Form-7 for objection and removal of names, and Form-8 for change in registered address. The highest number of Form-6 (29,510) for inclusion of names in the voters lists were submitted from the West Delhi district, while maximum objections (14,663) were filed from South East Delhi district for removal of names from the rolls, up to September 1. West Delhi district recorded the highest number of Form-6 at 29,510, followed by South East (25,446), North East (25,010), North West (22,189), South West (20,191), according to the data. Out of total 51,522 Form-7 filed on first two days after publication of draft rolls on Monday, highest were from South East (14,663), North (11,626), West (8,930) and East (2,621) districts. South East district also witnessed the highest number of exclusions of voters in the draft rolls among the 13 districts in Delhi. A total of 2,63,801 Form-8 were submitted for change in registered address by the voters. The highest number was 33,083 from East district followed by North East (32,783), South East (30,581), South (26,331) and West (25,387), showed data. A total of 47.5 lakh voters out of 1.45 crore were removed from the draft rolls of 70 Assembly constituencies in Delhi. The final voters list of Delhi will be published on November 4.

CJP ex-spox Vijeta Dahiya says attacked over Hinduism reforms, podcast trap used

Delhi. (Agency)

Former Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) spokesperson Vijeta Dahiya has alleged that he was lured to northeast Delhi's Jaffrabad on the pretext of recording a podcast, only to be confronted by a group of men over his social media videos on Hinduism and Hindu Gods. He alleged that the men threatened to "cut him into several pieces" and chased him to Jaffrabad Metro station. Dahiya told India Today Digital that the incident took place on August 31 and that he filed a police complaint the same day, alleging wrongful restraint, wrongful confinement and threats to his life. He also said he approached the police seeking security for himself and his family. "A person identifying himself as Rohit first contacted me on WhatsApp on August 5. He introduced himself as being from the team of one Prince Gaur and invited me for a podcast," Dahiya told India Today Digital.

Dahiya said the WhatsApp display picture of the person showed an Instagram handle, "@Jagatdambrader4", along with a Facebook link identifying the person as Prince A Gaur. When Dahiya asked about the exact Instagram and YouTube channels associated with the podcast, he was allegedly sent links to an Instagram account named "MJ Mukeshjain", and a YouTube channel called "Shallu Nisha Podcast".

"The same person was seen in those videos and also appeared as MJ Mukesh Jain," Dahiya told India Today Digital, adding that he eventually agreed to the podcast invitation after being repeatedly contacted over several days. "This is like a regular drill for me, people keep contacting me for podcasts and I do attend them," he said. On August 31, Dahiya said he agreed to meet the person after being offered a pick-and-drop arrangement. A cab arrived at Dahiya's residence around 3

pm and took him to Jaffrabad's DDA Colony, where he arrived at around 4 pm. Dahiya said Rohit, who he described as a member of Prince Gaur's team, met him there, paid the cab driver and told him



that they had to wait at a nearby park because "Sir" was about to arrive. Dahiya claimed that Rohit himself was Prince Gaur who initially tried to conceal his identity.

CONFRONTED UPON ARRIVAL FOR PODCAST RECORDING:

DAHIYA

Dahiya alleged that one of the people who called him for a podcast started a confrontation over his social media content. "Tu hindu devtaon ko apne Instagram pe kyun gali deta hai?" ("Why do you abuse Hindu Gods on Instagram") Dahiya alleged that Prince Gaur confronted him aggressively. Dahiya said he responded that he had not abused anyone and was only trying to promote rational thinking. He alleged that when he tried to leave, Gaur grabbed his hand and forced him to sit down. "I have never abused Hindu Gods, and I have only spoken about the reforms that are needed in the religion," Dahiya told India Today Digital. "He [Prince Gaur's team member] said, 'You are trapped today. Our people are coming soon. Wait...'," Dahiya was told by one of the people he met in Jaffrabad. The 38-year-old activist alleged that he managed to free his hand.

NEWS BOX

India Women eye batting polish against Hong Kong before Pakistan showdown



New Delhi. (Agency)

India have little to worry about in terms of the result, but plenty to work on with the bat when they face Hong Kong, China in their second Group A match of the Women's Asia Cup in Dubai on Thursday.The seven-time champions began their campaign with a 94-run win over Thailand, but the margin of victory masked an uneven batting performance. India were comfortably placed at 101 for two after 10 overs before losing their way, finishing on 159 for nine. Shafali Verma's 64 off 36 balls provided the impetus, while T20I debutant Pratika Rawal chipped in with 22 off 18. However, the middle and lower order struggled to maintain the momentum.India were eventually bailed out by their bowlers. Deepti Sharma produced a remarkable spell, while Nandni Sharma also claimed three wickets as Thailand were bowled out for 65. The performance underlined India's bowling depth, but also highlighted the need for greater batting consistency ahead of the more demanding Group A clash against Pakistan on September 5.Hong Kong, meanwhile, will look to build on a spirited opening performance. They pushed Thailand all the way before going down by six runs, showing that they are capable of making life uncomfortable for more established opponents. Against India, though, they will face a considerably tougher challenge.

TIME TO TEST THE BENCH

With India expected to be strong favourites, the match offers Harmanpreet Kaur and the team management an opportunity to look beyond the result. Renuka Thakur, Arundhati Reddy and Radha Yadav are among the players who could benefit from game time. India already know what their established players can offer; the greater value now could lie in testing those who may have to step in later in the tournament.

India's interest first: Khalid Jamil defends senior players' snub for Brazil, Uruguay



New Delhi. (Agency)

India head coach Khalid Jamil has defended his decision to leave several senior players out of the squad for the upcoming friendlies against Brazil, Uruguay and Panama. Jamil stressed that the omissions are not a call for the experienced players to retire, but said India's interests must come before individual reputations.Speaking to the Times of India, Jamil said the likes of Sandesh Jhingan, Rahul Bheke, Lallianzuala Chhangte, Liston Colaco and Jeakson Singh remain in contention for future selections. He added that injuries, form or fitness could bring the senior players back into the squad when require"I know the talk is that a lot of senior players have not been called up, but I am not shutting the door on them or asking them to retire,"Jamil told TOI. "If the need arises, we will get them back, possibly for injury (cover) or replacements (due to form)."

INDIA'S INTEREST COMES FIRST

Jamil's selection has attracted attention because India will face three nations that featured at the 2026 FIFA World Cup. Panama, ranked 44th in the world, will be followed by five-time world champions Brazil and two-time winners Uruguay, with the latter two matches scheduled in Kolkata. Two of India's three recent captains, Jhingan and Bheke, have been left out, while goalkeeper Vishal Kaith, Chhangte, Colaco and Jeakson are also missing. Jhingan has 77 international appearances, while the group collectively brings more than 200 caps to the table. Jamil, however, does not believe a match against a team of Brazil's stature should determine selection on the basis of past service.

7 wickets, hat-trick: Chamari Athapaththu's historic night lights up Women's Asia Cup

Chamari Athapaththu produced a stunning seven-wicket haul and a hat-trick as Sri Lanka crushed Indonesia by 75 runs in the Women's Asia Cup. Her figures of 3.3-0-5-7 created several records, including the best bowling figures by a full member player and the best figures in Women's Asia Cup history.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Chamari Athapaththu produced a night to remember as Sri Lanka crushed Indonesia in their Women's Asia Cup clash in Dubai on Wednesday, with the veteran all-rounder rewriting the record books with a stunning seven-wicket haul and a hat-trick.Athapaththu was almost unplayable,



ripping through the Indonesian batting line-up with figures of 3.3-0-5-7. Her spell combined control, aggression and remarkable efficiency, leaving Indonesia with no answers as Sri Lanka secured a commanding 75-run victory.Athapaththu repeatedly breached Indonesia's defence on her way to completing her five-wicket haul.

She then went a step further, claiming three wickets in consecutive deliveries to become the first Sri Lanka Women's cricketer to take a hat-trick in T20Is. The performance was particularly significant for Athapaththu, one of the most recognisable names in women's cricket. While she has built her reputation as a

destructive opening batter and influential leader, her bowling took centre stage on this occasion and became the defining story of the match.

THE RECORDS ATHAPATHTHU CREATED

Athapaththu's seven-wicket haul was not merely a personal milestone. It placed her performance among the greatest bowling spells in the history of women's T20 internationals.

SRI LANKA WRECK INDONESIA

The emphatic victory gave Sri Lanka a major boost in their campaign. After posting 124/7, they defended the total with remarkable ease, dismissing Indonesia for just 49 to complete the victory. Batting first, Sri Lanka found themselves in deep trouble after being reduced to 62/6 in 12.3 overs. However, a gutsy 50 off 35 balls from Nilakshika Silva, who added 50 runs in partnership with Kawya Kavindi, helped Sri Lanka recover and cross the 120-run mark.From there, the bowlers took charge and never allowed Indonesia back into the contest.

Where are the off-spinners? BCCI to discuss Sundar's back-up in review meeting

Washington Sundar's fitness concerns have exposed a potential gap in India's red-ball off-spin stocks, with the selectors set to discuss back-up options and the need for a reliable successor to the all-rounder.

New Delhi., (Agency)

Indian cricket's traditional strength in spin bowling is facing an unusual challenge: finding quality right-arm off-spinners to provide depth beyond Washington Sundar. The issue has become more relevant after Sundar was included in India's squad for the upcoming three-match T20I series against Afghanistan, although his selection remains subject to fitness clearance.India's squad for the series

includes four players, Jasprit Bumrah, Washington Sundar, Nitish Kumar Reddy and Harshit Rana, who are yet to receive



fitness clearance. Their inclusion has raised questions about the uncertainty surrounding the squad, particularly with other fit players available.Bumrah is recovering from a left knee injury sustained during the England ODI series in July, while Sundar and Nitish are

recovering from hamstring and quadriceps injuries, respectively. Harshit has also had long-standing knee issues that kept him out of the T20 World Cup and the UK tour.The selection of injured or recovering players is not unprecedented. However, repeated instances of players failing to regain fitness in time, as seen with Bumrah and Sai Sudharsan during the Sri Lanka Test series, have added to the concerns.

WHERE IS THE NEXT RED BALL OFF-SPINNER?

When it comes to red-ball cricket, Sundar has emerged as India's preferred off-spinning all-rounder in recent years, offering control with the ball and valuable runs down the order. But the question is becoming increasingly straightforward: if Sundar is unavailable, who is India's next genuine off-spin option?

Alcaraz rallies to reach US Open third round, Sabalenka storms through

NEW YORK. (Agency)

Carlos Alcaraz got off to a sluggish start but stormed home, and Aryna Sabalenka was in control all the way as the defending champions led a stream of contenders into the third round of the US Open on Wednesday.Spain's Alcaraz, seeded second in his first tournament since a wrist injury forced him to the sidelines in April, got off to a sluggish start but finished in convincing fashion in a 4-6, 6-0, 6-3, 6-2 victory over 72nd-ranked Jaime Faria of Portugal.Alcaraz won his seventh major title at the Australian Open in January but arrived in New York an unknown quantity after a wrist injury forced a four-month layoff

that saw him miss Roland Garros and Wimbledon.He dispelled doubts with a straight-sets first-round victory over



Roman Safiullin, but took some time to find his range against the big-serving Faria, who claimed the first break of the match for a 4-3 lead in the first when

Alcaraz flubbed a forehand.He made the break stand up to take the set, but Alcaraz stepped up his intensity and Faria folded under the pressure."Tough match for me," Alcaraz said, adding that after failing to convert an early break point he briefly lost his composure. "After that I was in a rush. I didn't take time, I wasn't patient and that obviously cost me the break," he said. "I tried to stay calm ... think good things are going to happen again."Meanwhile a ruthless Sabalenka took the next step on the road to a rare US Open three-peat with a 6-1, 6-1 rout of 160th-ranked Russian qualifier Polina Iatcenko that lasted just 53 minutes.

Carlos Alcaraz wakes up after first-set wobble to storm into US Open third round



New Delhi. (Agency)

Defending champion Carlos Alcaraz continued his comeback at the US Open by recovering from a slow start to beat Portugal's Jaime Faria 4-6, 6-0, 6-3, 6-2 and reach the third round. The Spaniard was forced to work for his second win in New York after Faria took the opening set and briefly put him under pressure.The world No.2, playing his first night session of the tournament, struggled to settle early against the 72nd-ranked Faria, who broke for a 4-3 lead before using his big serve to close out the opening set. Alcaraz admitted he had been rushing his shots but found his rhythm as the match progressed.It was a tough match. I was feeling great, but I was in a rush and I didn't take time and it cost me a break (in the first set)," Alcaraz said.

ALCARAZ FINDS HIS RHYTHM

Faria continued to threaten at the start of the second set, earning two break opportunities, but Alcaraz managed to withstand the pressure. The defending champion then raised his level, producing a stunning drop shot-lob combination before sweeping through the rest of the set without dropping a game.Against Faria's powerful serve, Alcaraz knew patience would be crucial."Against someone like Jaime, who serves at 140-141 miles per hour every time, you have to try and be focused and calm. I told myself good things are going to happen. I just had to stay there all the timThe shift in momentum was decisive. Alcaraz began finding more space from the back of the court in the third set, extending rallies and forcing Faria to defend for longer periods as the Portuguese gradually lost his grip on the contest.e," he said.

NIGHT SESSION MAKES DIFFERENCE

Alcaraz also had to adjust to conditions that were markedly different from his opening-round daytime match against Roman Safiullin.

Aryna Sabalenka cruises into US Open third round, Frances Tiafoe advances

New Delhi. (Agency)

Defending champion Aryna Sabalenka continued her strong start to the US Open with a dominant win over Russian qualifier Polina Iatcenko on Wednesday. Frances Tiafoe also booked his place in the third round, but had to work considerably harder against Japanese qualifier Rei Sakamoto. Top seed Sabalenka needed just 48 minutes to beat world No. 160 Iatcenko 6-1, 6-1 under the lights at Arthur Ashe Stadium. The Belarusian is chasing a third consecutive US Open title, a feat that would put her alongside Serena Williams and Chris Evert.Sabalenka raced through the opening set in only 24 minutes and immediately put Iatcenko under pressure again in the second. She broke in the opening game and held to love in the next, although the 28-year-old briefly wobbled when she dropped her serve in the fourth game.The setback did little to

disrupt Sabalenka's rhythm as she straight back to move 4-1 ahead before closing out another convincing victory. The result extended her winning streak at the tournament to 16 matches and set up a third-round meeting with Kamilla Rakhimova.I'm super happy to play in front of you, the night sessions here are the best," Sabalenka told the Arthur Ashe Stadium crowd after the match. "I'm happy with my level, happy with the focus and happy to be through this match.SABALENKA KEEPS TITLE DEFENCE ON TRACK

Sabalenka's power and precision proved too much for Iatcenko, who struggled to stay in rallies against the top seed. The Belarusian's latest straight-sets win keeps her firmly on course for an unprecedented third successive US Open crown.

broke The 28-year-old will now face Rakhimova



with another step towards that historic target in sight.TIAFOE SURVIVES SAKAMOTO TEST

Tiafoe advanced with a 6-3, 7-6(2), 7-5 victory over Sakamoto at Louis Armstrong Stadium, keeping alive American hopes of

ending a 23-year wait for a home men's champion in New York.

The world No. 12 made the perfect start by breaking in the opening game, but Sakamoto repeatedly tested him with his powerful serve. The Japanese qualifier fired 18 aces and pushed the second set into a tiebreak after Tiafoe produced consecutive double faults while trying to close it out."Tiafoe responded by winning four of the first five points in the tiebreak and took control. Sakamoto, who had reached the main draw by defeating his idol Kei Nishikori, fought until

the end but his 40 unforced errors proved costly. After being pushed to five sets in the first round, the two-time US Open semi-finalist was relieved to finish this one in straight sets.

India's services growth improves in August, but remains near four-year low

New Delhi. (Agency)

India's services sector saw a small improvement in growth in August, but demand remained weak, keeping overall activity close to a four-year low, according to HSBC India Services PMI survey. At the same time, services firms increased hiring at the fastest pace in more than a year.

The HSBC India Services Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI), compiled by S&P Global, rose to 54.1 in August, from 53.3 in July. However, the reading was slightly below the preliminary estimate of 54.5.A PMI reading above 50 indicates growth, while a reading below 50 points to a contraction.

NEW BUSINESS GROWTH REMAINS WEAK

Despite the improvement in the headline PMI, new business growth remained subdued. New business, which is a key measure of demand, grew at its second-slowest pace in more than four years.New export orders also offered little support, growing at broadly the same pace as in July.

The headline services PMI was also slightly below its long-run average, showing that the sector's recovery remained modest.

SERVICES FIRMS STEP UP HIRING

One of the more positive signs came from the labour market. Services companies increased hiring at the fastest rate in 15 months, suggesting that businesses still have some confidence in their prospects.

However, business confidence remained below its long-run average for the second consecutive month. Firms remained cautiously hopeful that market conditions and demand would improve.

Goyal asks auto component makers to prioritise safety to climb up value chain

New Delhi. (Agency)

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Wednesday urged auto component manufacturers to prioritise safety and integrate better safety features into their products, saying the industry should not wait for the government to identify and address potential risks.Addressing the 66th Annual Session of the Automotive Component Manufacturers Association of India (ACMA), Goyal said Indian auto component manufacturers need to focus on moving up the value chain, reducing import dependence and delivering high-value solutions.“Let's focus on one more area — safety. Why do you leave it to the government to worry that if there is a flood or if there is an unfortunate event?” Goyal said.

His remarks come as Indian auto component makers seek to deepen their integration into global supply chains, where safety, quality and technology standards are increasingly critical to competitiveness.“Now convert your local businesses to global businesses. And for those products where you still need to bring resilience in your supply chain, to insulate and protect yourself from future black swan events — move up the value chain. I think it's time we started delivering integrated, very high-value solutions,” the minister said.Goyal linked the greater focus on safety with the industry's broader ambition to move up the global value chain, saying Indian manufacturers would need to strengthen their capabilities to compete in international markets.Auto components account for a significant share of India's exports, but the sector continues to run a trade deficit. Hyundai Motor India Managing Director and CEO Tarun Garg, speaking at the ACMA event on Wednesday, said the sector has a trade deficit of \$1.4 billion.

'Intellectual dishonesty': SBI hits back at 2.6% GDP growth claim, says numbers compared incorrectly

New Delhi. (Agency)

The State Bank of India (SBI) has rejected claims that India's nominal GDP growth in the first quarter of FY27 was only 2.6%, saying the figure came from comparing two different versions of the GDP data. The pushback came after former finance secretary Subhash Chandra Garg questioned the government's reported 7.8% real GDP growth for Q1 FY27.Garg pointed to a revision in the previous year's current-price GDP saying that Q1 FY26 GDP had been revised from around Rs 86 lakh crore to about Rs 80 lakh crore and argued that, without the revision, nominal growth would have been around 2.6%.Official data released by the ministry of statistics and programme implementation (MoSPI) showed real GDP growing 7.8% year-on-year in Q1 FY27. Real GDP at constant prices stood at an estimated Rs 81.36 lakh crore, up from Rs 75.46 lakh crore in Q1 FY26. Nominal GDP growth was reported at 10.3%.SBI said the 2.6% figure does not represent a valid comparison, rather it is "completely unsolicited and a sure sign of intellectual dishonesty.”

Dispute over the 2.6% figure

The National Statistical Office (NSO) had estimated nominal GDP for Q1 FY26 at Rs 86.1 lakh crore when it released the quarterly figures on August 29, 2025.However, the August 31 release, prepared using the new GDP base year of 2022-23, revised the Q1 FY26 figure down to Rs 80 lakh crore.For Q1 FY27, nominal GDP was estimated at Rs 88.3 lakh crore.According to SBI, the 2.6% growth figure comes from comparing the latest Rs 88.3 lakh crore estimate with the older Rs 86.1 lakh crore figure for Q1 FY26, instead of using the revised number.

SC warns builders that project brochures are promises, not just marketing

The court made it clear that what developers deliver must match the representations made to homebuyers.

New Delhi. (Agency)

The Supreme Court has made it clear that real estate developers cannot make promises in project brochures and later treat them as mere marketing claims. If buyers are sold a project based on specific plans and facilities, developers are expected to deliver what they have promised.The court made the observation while hearing a dispute over DLF Home Developers' The Primus housing project in Sector 82A, Gurugram. The case centres on a 24-metre-wide road shown in the original project plan, which the court found had not been maintained as

promised, reported Hindustan Times.A bench of Justices Ahsanuddin Amanullah and R Mahadevan said the deviation was “not minor, but substantial”. It warned that if the project was not brought in line with the original brochure and plan, it could pass appropriate orders.

WHAT THE SUPREME COURT FOUND ABOUT THE ROAD

The court was referring to a report prepared by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), which had been asked to conduct a preliminary inquiry into the road and other complaints related to the project.According to the CBI's findings, the 24-metre-wide road did not exist across the project in the manner shown in the original plan and brochure.

The road was supposed to run for about 147 metres. However, around 52 metres of this stretch has been developed as a green patch. Another sizeable portion that

still looks like a road is being used for parking by residents and visitors.This means that nearly 100 metres, or about two-thirds of the planned road, is either a green area or being used for parking.



The Supreme Court questioned why the issue had not been fixed despite giving the parties several opportunities.

The bench also stressed that its concern was not limited to the road. It said the larger issue was whether the project being

delivered to homebuyers matched the representations made to them when they bought their flats.

WHAT DID DLF PROMISE HOMEBUYERS?

The Primus was marketed by DLF as a premium residential project from around 2012. Its promotional material referred to facilities including two 24-metre-wide access roads, banquet facilities, tennis courts and swimming pools.However, some buyers later alleged that several aspects of the project did not match what had been promised.

The dispute began with complaints filed by five homebuyers before the

National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC). The consumer body delivered its judgment on May 29, 2023. Both the buyers and DLF Home Developers subsequently approached the Supreme Court.

India services PMI rises to 54.1 in August, employment growth hits 15-month high

New Delhi. (Agency)

India's services sector strengthened in August because of resilient demand and a continued rise in new business, while employment growth accelerated to a 15-month high, according to the HSBC India Services PMI data released on Thursday. The seasonally adjusted HSBC India Services PMI Business Activity Index rose to 54.1 in August from 53.3 in July which showed a stronger pace of expansion in the sector.In addition, service providers reported sustained demand conditions and higher new business inflows with marketing initiatives and stronger customer demand supporting activity during the

month.International demand also remained supportive with new export orders rising solidly and at a pace broadly similar to July. Firms reported stronger business from customers in markets including Australia, Brazil, Canada, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and the UAE, the HSBC data showed.

Apart from that, employment across India's services economy increased at a marked pace with around 11 per cent of survey respondents reporting higher staffing levels, while the rate of job creation was the strongest in 15 months with firms citing the need to support customer service, sales and digital operations.Pranjul Bhandari, chief India economist at HSBC said services activity

expanded faster in August, supported by stronger output and new business."Employment increased at a marked rate, with job creation reaching a 15-month high," Bhandari said and added that price pressures picked up only modestly. Additionally, the HSBC India Composite PMI Output Index stood at 54.3 in August, unchanged from July, as faster growth in services offset a slowdown in manufacturing. HSBC's data also showed aggregate employment rising at its fastest pace in 14 months, with robust hiring in services more than offsetting a reduction in manufacturing employment.Aggregate new order volumes also increased at a faster pace.

Rupee jumps 47 paise to 94.26 against US dollar in early trade

MUMBAI. (Agency)

The rupee appreciated 47 paise to 94.26 against the US dollar in early trade on Thursday, supported by much higher than expected FCNR (B) deposits mobilisation. Forex traders said the rupee's movement reflects strong underlying inflows and aggressive RBI intervention offsetting the negative impact of higher crude oil prices and global yields.At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 94.30 against the US dollar, then gained ground to touch 94.26, registering a gain of 47 paise from its previous close.On Wednesday, the rupee settled at 94.73 on Wednesday, recording a gain of 22 paise. India mobilised a record USD 127.23 billion through foreign-currency deposits under a special central-bank programme aimed at bolstering the country's foreign-exchange liquidity."This gives RBI a long rope in terms of defending the rupee, it creates a huge sterilisation problem as banking system liquidity surplus will likely go to around Rs 10 lakh crore as banks swap the deposMeanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading at 99.43, marginally lower by 0.16 per cent on safe-haven demand amid renewed US-Iran tensions.Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading marginally lower by 0.16 per cent at USD 95.48 per barrel in futures trade, on escalating US-Iran



tensions and fears of disruption to oil flows through the Strait of Hormuz.On the domestic equities market front, Sensex climbed 221.17 points to 76,791.52 in early trade, while the Nifty was trading up 59.55 points to 23,974.

Foreign institutional investors purchased equities worth Rs 6,688.37 crore on a net basis on Wednesday, according to exchange data.Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank), or FCNR(B) deposits accounted for USD 127.226 billion in inflows as of August 31, the Reserve Bank of India said Wednesday. Including overseas foreign-currency borrowings (OFCB) and external commercial borrowings (ECB), total inflows under the measures reached USD 136.377 billion.its with RBI," IFA Global said in a research note.

Oil prices edge lower, while Asian shares rise, tracking Wall Street gains

Brent crude, the international standard, fell 0.4% to USD 95.26 per barrel. Benchmark US crude shed 0.1% to USD 90.84 a barrel.

HONG KONG. (Agency)

Oil prices slipped Thursday after recent gains, with Brent crude trading near USD 95 a barrel, while Asian shares advanced. US futures edged higher.Renewed fighting between the US and Iran pushed oil prices sharply higher earlier in the week. US President Donald Trump said Wednesday he doesn't expect the US bombing campaign to last "much

longer."Brent crude, the international standard, fell 0.4% to USD 95.26 per barrel. Benchmark US crude shed 0.1% to USD 90.84 a barrel.Tokyo's Nikkei 225 advanced 0.2% to 64,455.83. Among major gainers, OpenAI investor SoftBank Group rose 2.9%, memory chipmaker Kioxia Holdings rose 0.6%, and chip equipment manufacturer Tokyo Electron gained 0.8%.South Korea's Kospi rose 1.4% to 6,656.81. Samsung Electronics was 1.3% higher, while memory chipmaker SK Hynix was up 1.4%.In Hong Kong, the Hang Seng edged 0.1% higher, to 25,344.80. The Shanghai Composite index climbed 0.4% to 3,958.79.Australia's S&P/ASX 200 gained 0.5% to 9,025.10.The Taixi in Taiwan rose 0.6%, while India's Sensex climbed 0.3%.The regional advance followed gains for stocks on Wall Street, where the benchmark S&P 500 gained 0.5% on Wednesday. The Dow Jones Industrial Average climbed

0.6%, and the technology-heavy Nasdaq composite rose 0.5%.Investors welcomed some encouraging signals about demand for artificial intelligence



from two big tech companies, Dell and Palo Alto Networks. The AI boom has been the key driver behind the S&P 500's gains this year.Dell Technologies surged 15.8% following strong quarterly profits. Among some of the biggest names, Nvidia gained 3.2%, Meta Platforms climbed 2.5%, and Micron Technology rose 2.4%.Other big tech companies tied

to the AI boom also rallied. Chipmaker Nvidia, whose big market value tends to give it more influence over the broader market's direction, rose 3.2%, while computer memory seller Micron Technology gained 2.4%.

In the bond mart, the yield on the US 10-year Treasury fell to 4.77% from more than 4.81% early Wednesday after a global bond sell-off triggered growing concerns over inflation and the Iran war -caused energy shocks as well as rising US government debt. The US is set to releas an employment report for August on Friday.

In other dealings early Thursday, the Japanese yen strengthened sharply against the US dollar, with the dollar trading at 157.78 yen early Thursday, down from 158.71 yen late Wednesday. The dollar had surged to above 160 yen earlier in the week, raising expectations that regulators might intervene to prevent the yen from falling further.

Esha Deol

Makes Comedy Comeback With Malamaal Weekly 2: 'This Is Exactly What I Needed'

Actor Esha Deol is set to return to comedy with Malamaal Weekly 2, joining the film's cast, which also includes Rajpal Yadav, Paresh Rawal, Riteish Deshmukh, Elvish Yadav and others. According to the press note sent by the team of Esha Deol, the actress is returning to a genre she has always enjoyed with Malamaal Weekly 2, a comic caper that comes at the right time for the actor after horror-comedy 'Ghungat' and the Telugu film 'SYG'.



"This is exactly what I needed: something fun, light-hearted and full of laughter. Having just completed two very different films, the horror-comedy Ghungat and the Telugu film SYG. I was really looking forward to doing a complete comic caper, and Malamaal Weekly 2 came along at just the right time," said Esha Deol as quoted in a press note. Having previously featured in comedies such as 'No Entry', 'Shaadi No.1' and 'One Two Three', Esha says the genre has always been close to her heart. The film's script was a key factor in drawing her to the project. "Having done films like 'No Entry', 'Shaadi No.1' and 'One Two Three', comedy is a space I've always loved and really wanted to come back to. The script is absolutely hilarious, and I genuinely think everyone is going to love it. I'm just so happy to be part of a film that's all about fun, laughter and pure entertainment," she adds as quoted in a press note.

Released in 2006, 'Malamaal Weekly' featured a strong cast including Paresh Rawal, Om Puri, Riteish Deshmukh, Rajpal Yadav, and Asrani. The story

follows Lilaram, played by Paresh Rawal, a lottery ticket seller in the poor village of Laholi. When one of the lottery tickets he sells wins a huge jackpot, Lilaram comes up with a plan to claim the prize for himself. What follows is a chain of funny situations and misunderstandings that keep movie buffs in stitches.

The film was based on the 1998 Irish movie 'Waking Ned.' Over the years, the story also inspired remakes in other languages, including the Telugu film 'Bhagyalakshmi Bumper Draw' (2006), the Kannada film 'Dakota Picture' (2012), and the Malayalam film 'Aamayum Muyalum' (2014).



Taapsee Pannu

Calls Out 'Mediocre' Male Actioners: 'Women Doing Action Not Allowed To Go Wrong'

After Baby and Naam Shabana, Taapsee Pannu will be seen engaging in some high-octane action sequences in her upcoming release, Gandhari. Interestingly, it comes almost a decade after Naam Shabana. Speaking exclusively to News18, Taapsee discusses the lack of women-led action films in Bollywood and explains why producers aren't pumping in money to release such films in theatres. "I've done action on the big screen as well as on OTT now. Pehli baat toh budget bahot lagta hai. Action is an expensive genre to make. And obviously, it's not a hidden fact that money invested to make female-driven cinema is way less. Most people aren't willing to put in a lot of money because nobody wants to watch those films. They aren't interested. This has been tried, tested and proven," she says.

"The audience for these films isn't as large as that for action films led by men. That's why there's a lot of budget constraint," Taapsee adds. According to her, the pressure to make these films is huge as the scrutiny on them is equally big. "Our scope of error is zero. We aren't allowed to make any mistakes," she states as she compares these films to the ones headlined

by male stars. "I don't want to take names but compare the women-driven action films to male-led action films that came out lately. You see mediocre storylines, gloss and glamour, fancy action sequences and all the expensive stuff! These films end up collecting so much money. People don't care about the storyline. Plot predictable



hai but chalta hai. People call them 'paisa vasool entertainers'," she remarks. But this same audience hardly ever cuts women-led actioners any slack. "They say, 'Kya bakwaas story hai yeh!' Suddenly, the whole focus is on the storyline. If you want women-led actioners to work, the action, the story and the acting need to be perfect. Sab kuch achcha hona chahiye. Unnees-bees nahi chalega. You've to be better than the best," she emphasises.

Dhurandhar Director Aditya Dhar Cheers For Yash's Toxic, Fans Ask 'Collaboration Soon?'



Months after Dhurandhar hit theatres and ruled box office, director Aditya Dhar is back in the headlines. Why? Because fans think he is soon likely to collaborate with Yash. On Tuesday, Dhar took to his Instagram handle and shared a poster of Yash's recently released movie Toxic: A Fairy Tale For Grown-Ups. He cheered for the Geetu Mohandas' directorial and dropped a red-heart emoji.

In no time, Aditya Dhar's Instagram story grabbed everyone's attention. "Dhurandhar Meets Toxic. Aditya Dhar Insta Story . Please Collab for a Massive Project, i kindly Request ," one of the users wrote. "When Aditya Dhar himself puts up a story appreciating Yash Boss & TOXIC, you know the impact is REAL! Some stars get appreciation. Some stars make other filmmakers stop and take notice. YASH BOSS x TOXIC — THE AURA IS UNMATCHED! ," added another.

"Aditya Dhar expressed his support to @TheNameIsYash on his insta story. Probably the first person from Bollywood coming in support when things aren't in favour of Yash. @AdityaDharFilms Heart of Gold Man! ♥️ ," a third post on X read.

Some of the X users also claimed that Dhar is going to collaborate with Yash for his next project, an official confirmation regarding which is still awaited.

"It is now confirmed that Aditya Dhar's highly anticipated next directorial venture will not feature #RanveerSingh As you all know, the filmmaker is collaborating with the BIGGEST PAN – INDIA SUPERSTAR in the industry today a massive BOX-OFFICE magnet who can effortlessly shatter theatrical records and pull in historic opening numbers," a user wrote.

Toxic: A Fairy Tale For Grown-Ups hit theatres on August 26 and received mixed reviews from all. Besides Yash, the film also stars Nayanthara, Kiara Advani, Tara Sutaria and Rukmini Vasanth in key roles. The film has earned a little over Rs 200 crore as of now.

Vijay Deverakonda Cheers For Wife Rashmika Mandanna Ahead Of Mysaa Release: 'Will Make Fans Proud'



Tollywood heartthrob Vijay Deverakonda turned cheerleader for his better half, Rashmika Mandanna, after the release date for her eagerly awaited drama 'Mysaa' was announced by the makers on Tuesday. Sharing the announcement poster on the Stories section of his official handle, Instagram VD praised his better half, saying, "Violent pilla (red heart emoji) May the gods be with you You will make all your dearest fans proud again with this one (sic)."

The makers revealed that 'Mysaa' would reach the cinema halls across the globe on November 27 this year. Producers Unformula Films took to its official social media and wrote, "Resilient by nature. Fearless by choice. Unbreakable by spirit. Get ready to experience the world of #MYSAA with #RashmikaMandanna like never before. IN CINEMAS WORLDWIDE ON 27.11.26."

For the unversed, Rashmika suffered a serious hip tendon injury while shooting for 'Mysaa'. The unfortunate accident took place during a high-energy dance sequence. One of the four tendons in her right hip was detached.

After recovering at home for some time, Rashmika announced on Sunday that she would be getting back to work shortly. The 'Animal' actress posted a few glimpses from her recovery time with her loved ones – including offering prayers, watching movies, solving puzzles, and spending time with her pets.

Rashmika shared that she is going to miss all of the fun things she got to do during her time at home. "I am getting back to work soon and I am definitely going to miss all of this! (sic)," the 'Pushpa' actress wrote on the photo-sharing app. Apart from 'Mysaa', Rashmika will also be sharing the screen with Vijay in the forthcoming period drama 'Ranabaali'. This is their first project as a married couple. Before this, Rashmika and Vijay were seen together in the movies 'Geetha Govindam' and 'Dear Comrade', making 'Ranabaali' their third professional collaboration.

Krishna Janmashtami

Janmashtami CelebrationsNepal

Eighty percent of the population of Nepal identify themselves as Hindus and celebrate Krishna Janmashtami. They observe Janmashtami by fasting until midnight. They chant Slokas from the Bhagavad Gita and sing religious songs called bhajans. The temples of Lord Krishna are decorated, and bhajans and kirtans are sung or played. The Krishna Mandir in Patan Durbar Square, Narayanhiti Krishnamandir, and other temples of Lord Krishna are the centers for festivities on Krishna Janmaasthimi. Numerous devotees flock to the ancient Krishna temple in old Patan Durbar Square to keep vigil through the revered night of his birth. Observances include people sitting closely together, bodies rocking as women chant the many names of Lord Krishna, such as Narayan, Narayan and Gopal, Gopal. Some sing hymns, others clap their hands, while some others pray. Crowds of men and women edge their way slowly up narrow steps through the seated devotees to the temple's dark interior, to where the main idol stands. There they offer flowers, coins and food, and wait for a glimpse of the Krishna Janmashtami idol. After the temple priest gives them prasad, they make their way home.[citation needed]

Janmashtami Celebrations Bangladesh

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Janmashtami is a national holiday in Bangladesh.[11] On Janmashtami, a procession starts from Dhakeshwari Temple in Dhaka, the National Temple of Bangladesh, and then proceeds through the streets of Old Dhaka. The procession dates back to 1902, but was stopped in 1948 following the establishment of Pakistan and subsequent attacks by Muslim mobs in Dhaka. The procession was resumed in 1989.[12] Pakistan[edit source |editbeta] Janmashtami is celebrated by Pakistani Hindus in the Shri Swaminarayan Mandir in Karachi with the singing of bhajans and delivering of sermons on Krishna.[13]

Janmashtami Celebrations Outside South Asia

The first ever elected government official in the world to issue proclamation for the celebration Janmashtami is Janet Napolitano, while she was the Governor of Arizona. The festival is also celebrated widely by Hindus in Caribbean in the countries of Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica and the Dutch Colony of Surinam. The Hindus in these countries originated from Uttar Pradesh and are the descendants of indentured immigrants from UP. **Street plays** For the past few years, several thousand teams of youth perform street plays on the occasion of Janmashtami worldwide. The performers of these plays are inspired by Pandurang Shastri Athavale, of the Swadhyay Pariwar, to spread the message of Krishna. They disseminate the thoughts of Bhagavad Gita through street plays around the week of Janmashtami.

Krishna Janmashtami also known as Krishnashtami, Saatam Aatham, Gokulashtami, Ashtami Rohini, Srikrishna Jayanti, Sree Jayanti or sometimes merely as Janmashtami, is an annual commemoration of the birth of the Hindu deity Krishna, the eighth avatar of Vishnu.[1] The festival is celebrated on the eighth day (Ashtami) of the Krishna Paksha (dark fortnight) of the month of Bhadrapada (August–September; However, in both traditions it is the same day. So, we have works like Vishnudharmottara Purana saying Krishna Ashtami is in the Bhadrapada month and Skanda Purana stating that it falls in the month of Shravana) in the Hindu calendar. Rasa lila, dramatic enactments of the life of Krishna, are a special feature in regions of Mathura and Vrindavan, and regions following Vaishnavism in Manipur.[2] While the Rasa lila re-creates the flirtatious aspects of Krishna's youthful days, the Dahi Handi celebrate God's playful and mischievous side, where teams of young men form human towers to reach a high-hanging pot of butter and break it. This tradition, also known as uriadi, is a major event in Tamil Nadu on Gokulashtami.

KrishnaBirth

Painting of Krishna being carried across the river. Krishna Carried Across the River

Krishna was the 8th son of Devaki and Vasudeva. Based on scriptural details and astrological calculations the date of Krishna's birth, known as Janmashtami,[3] is 19 July 3228 BCE and departed on 3102 BCE. Krishna belonged to the Vrishni clan of Yadavas from Mathura,[4] and was the eighth son born to the princess Devaki, and her husband Vasudeva. Mathura (in present day Mathura district, Uttar Pradesh) was the capital of the Yadavas, to which Krishna's parents Vasudeva and Devaki belonged. King Kansa, Devaki's brother,[5] had ascended the throne by imprisoning his father, King Ugrasena. Afraid of a prophecy that predicted his death at the hands of Devaki's eighth son, Kansa had the couple locked into a prison cell. After Kansa killed the first six children, and Devaki's apparent miscarriage of the seventh (which was actually a secret transfer of the infant to Rohini as Balarama), Krishna was born. After his birth Vishnu ordered Vasudeva to take Krishna to Gokul to Nanda and Yashoda where he can live safely,away from his evil Uncle Kansa.So Vasudeva took Krishna with him and crossed Yamuna to reach Gokul .There everyone was asleep,so he quietly kept him there and returned with Yashoda's daughter.Kansa,thinking her to be Devki's eight child,threw her on a stone.But she rose in air and transformed into Yogmaya(who is Vishnu's helper)and warned Kansa about his death.Then she disappeared.Krishna grew up in Gokul with his brother Balram. Then he returned to Mathura and killed Kansa with the help of his brother, Balram.

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Janmashtami Celebrations

Hindus celebrate Janmashtami by fasting and staying up until midnight, the time when Krishna is believed to have been born. Images of Krishna's infancy are placed in swings and cradles in temples and homes. At midnight, devotees gather around for devotional songs, dance and exchange gifts. Some temples also conduct reading of the Hindu religious scripture Bhagavad Gita.[6]

Janmashtami Celebrations Manipur

Janmaashtami – popularly known in Manipur as Krishna Janma – is a significant festival celebrated at two temples in Imphal, the capital city of Manipur. The first festival is at the Govindaji temple, and the second is at the International Society for Krishna Consciousness temple. Devotees of Lord Krishna gather mostly at the ISKCON temple.

Places in Uttar Pradesh that are associated with Krishna's childhood, such as Mathura, Gokul and Vrindavan, attract visitors from all over India, who go there to participate in the festival celebrations.[8] People in the city of Dwarka in Gujarat – where Krishna is believed to have established his Kingdom – celebrate the festival by visiting the



Dwarkadhish temple. In Jammu, kite flying is an important part of the celebration on his day.[9] In the eastern state of Odisha, in the region around Puri and in Nabadwip, West Bengali people celebrate Janmashtami by fasting and worship until midnight. Purana Pravachana from the Bhagavata Purana are recited

Janmashtami CelebrationsNorthern and Eastern India

from the 10th Skandha. This section deals with pastimes of Lord Krishna. The next day is called Nanda Utsav or the joyous celebration of Krishna's foster parents Nanda and Yashoda. On this day, people break their fast and offer various cooked sweets during the

early hours. South India[edit source |editbeta] In Southern India, floors in houses are decorated with footprints made from flour, to symbolize Krishna's childhood sport of stealing butter from houses.[10]

Janmashtami CelebrationsMaharashtra

See also: Govinda sport Janmaashtami/ Gokulashtami , popularly known in Mumbai and Pune as Dahi Handi, is celebrated with enormous zeal and enthusiasm. The handi is a clay pot filled with buttermilk that is positioned at a convenient height prior to the event. The topmost person on the human pyramid tries to break the handi by hitting it with a blunt object. When the handi breaks, the buttermilk is spilled over the entire group, symbolizing their achievement through unity. Handis are set up around the city, and groups of youngsters –called Govinda Pathaks – travel around in trucks trying to break as

many handis as possible during the day. Many – such Govinda Pathaks – compete with each other, especially for the handis that dole out hefty rewards. The event, in recent times, has gathered a political flavor, and it is common for political parties and rich community groups to offer prizes amounting to lakhs of rupees. Some of the most famous handis are at Dadar, Lower Parel, Worli, Mazgaon, Lalbaug, Thane and Babu Genu, Mandai in Pune.[7] Cash and gifts are offered for Govinda troops to participate; for over 4,000 handis in Mumbai, 2,000 Govinda troops compete for the prizes.

