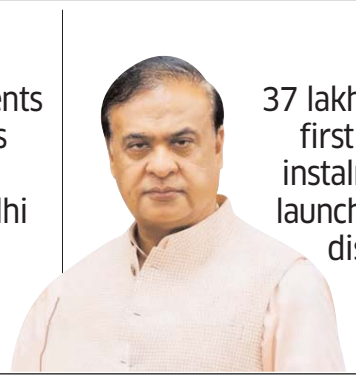
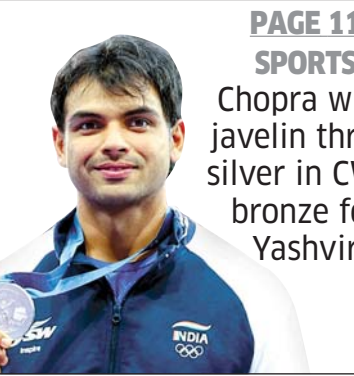


PAGE 6 NATION India's students need PM's apology: Rahul Gandhi 	PAGE 7 USP 37 lakh women receive first Orunodoi 3.0 instalment as Assam launches FY 2026-27 disbursement 	PAGE 8 GLOBAL Enhance use of AI to develop intelligent military: Xi tells PLA 	PAGE 11 SPORTS Chopra wins javelin throw silver in CWG, bronze for Yashvir 	AGENDA 
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Youth must power India's rise: PM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Mysuru

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday called on India's youth to support nation-building through service, innovation, education, and discipline, emphasising that the current generation is responsible for fulfilling Swami Vivekananda's vision for the country.

After inaugurating the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Youth Centre (Viveka Smaraka) at Sri Ramakrishna Ashram, Modi said the memorial should inspire youth to prioritise the nation and uphold Vivekananda's ideals of service and sacrifice. The Centre expands the Ramakrishna Mission's activities.

He noted that while India's youth were once restricted under colonial rule, they are now contributing to global development.

"Today, India is the world's fastest-growing major



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressing the gathering during the inauguration of Swami Vivekananda Cultural Youth Centre in Mysuru, Karnataka

economy. Who has made this possible? The capability of India's youth. Youth of India are giving impetus to the development of the world," Modi underlined. He credited young Indians for India's position as the world's fastest-growing major economy, the

third-largest startup ecosystem, the second-largest mobile phone manufacturer, and for progress in semiconductors, Artificial Intelligence (AI), deep technology, and space technology.

Modi cited the recent launch of a privately developed Indian

DOVAL GETS LOKMANYA TILAK AWARD

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Pune

National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval has called upon young people to take inspiration from Tilak's life and vision. Speaking in Pune after receiving the Lokmanya Tilak National Award 2026 from Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Doval said that freedom is not just about doing what you want, but also means having responsibilities to society and the nation.

"Every Indian, especially our youth, needs to reflect



on his words, consider the vision he held for India and the spirit of nation-building he embodied," he said. He emphasised putting national interests ahead of personal goals during what he called a rare opportunity for nation-building.

Recalling his association with the Ramakrishna Mission, the Prime Minister said the organisation played a significant role in shaping his life and expressed gratitude for the opportunity to interact again with the order's monks.

FULL REPORT ON >> P6

Commercial LPG prices cut by ₹200 in Delhi, Kolkata

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Restaurants, hotels and other commercial establishments have received some relief from high cooking fuel costs, with the price of 19-kg commercial LPG cylinders being reduced by more than ₹200 in metro cities including Delhi and Kolkata.

The biggest reduction was announced in Kolkata (₹209), followed by Delhi (₹202), Chennai (₹200) and Mumbai (₹194). This is the second straight monthly reduction in commercial LPG rates following an ₹183.5 cut on July 1. There has been no change in the price of domestic LPG cylinders.

Following the latest revision, a 19-kg commercial LPG cylinder will cost ₹2,872.50 in Kolkata. Meanwhile, for Delhi, it



would mean that the price comes down to ₹2,728. The two reductions in commercial LPG rates on July 1 and August 1 followed the West Asia crisis, pushing rates to record highs in June. After the outbreak of the conflict in late February, commercial LPG rates had risen by a massive ₹1,373 per 19-kg cylinder—from ₹1,740.50 in February to ₹3,113.50 in June. Alongside, prices of 5-

kg market-priced LPG cylinders were cut to ₹762 from ₹808.50.

The reduction comes as global energy markets continue to adjust to supply risks arising from geopolitical tensions in the region. While the impact of the West Asia crisis has contributed to volatility in fuel prices, the latest LPG revision provides some relief to commercial consumers in key markets.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

CBI FIR names Anil Ambani and Reliance Capital

PRAMOD KUMAR SINGH ■ New Delhi

The Central Bureau of Investigation's Banking, Securities & Fraud Branch in New Delhi has registered a case (RC0742026E0006) against Reliance Capital Limited, its former chairman Anil D Ambani, some unknown public servants, and other unidentified individuals. The FIR, filed under Section 173 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), accuses them of criminal conspiracy, cheating, breach of trust, and misconduct.

The specific provisions invoked are Sections 120B read with 409 and 420 of the Indian Penal Code, along with



Section 13(2) read with 13(1)(d) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, and the corresponding amended provisions under the 2018 version of the Act.

The FIR was registered after a complaint on 21 July 2026 by Ningshen Thothar, Regional Provident Fund Commissioner-I (Investment Division)

at the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation. The EPFO says that investments made between 2013 and 2021 in Reliance Capital-related instruments caused a wrongful loss of ₹1,007.55 crore plus interest from the retirement savings of millions of formal-sector workers.

The written complaint provides initial evidence of the alleged offences by those named. The property involved is valued at ₹1,007.55 crore plus interest. By including "unknown public servants," the investigation will also look into possible collusion or regulatory failures by officials who approved or monitored the investments.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

Terror shadow returns over Kashmir migrants

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ Jammu

Migrant workers camping in the Kashmir Valley to earn their livelihood have once again come on the radar of the terrorists, amid a renewed surge in tourist arrivals in the valley.

The targeted killing of two non-locals hailing from Chhattisgarh and a policeman in a gap of less than 10 days has also unnerved the security establishment in the region ahead of the August 5 anniversary of the abrogation of Article



370. Similar incidents of targeted killings were reported after the Abrogation of Article 370 on August 5, 2019.

At least 10 migrant workers were killed in a series of strikes in October 2019. The

trend continued, and migrant workers were made soft targets in 2021, 2022, and 2024.

In the latest incident, two labourers, in their twenties, hailing from Chhattisgarh, were hit by terrorists from point-blank range, in front of their family members, at a brick kiln in the Kelam area of south Kashmir's Kulgam district late Friday evening.

One of the migrant workers, Deepak Ratray (24), succumbed to his injuries before reaching the GMC, Anantnag. The second

worker, Bhoopinder, succumbed to his fatal injuries during treatment at SKIMS, Srinagar, on Saturday.

The terrorists responsible for the Kulgam attack used the same modus operandi as in the horrific Pahalgam attack last year.

The family of one of the two Chhattisgarh labourers killed in the Kulgam terror attack has alleged that the attackers asked the victims about their identity and religion before opening fire.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

PIONEER IN SHORT

INDIA WINS 7TH GOLD IN GLASGOW CWG

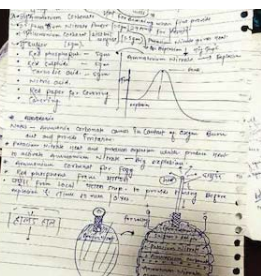
India won their seventh gold medal in Commonwealth Games boxing with Ankush Panghal beating Dimeji Shittu of England in men's 80 kg final on Saturday. Ankush won in a 4-1 split decision against Shittu. The other Indian gold winners were Sachin Siwach, Jaismine Lamboria, Preeti Pawar, Sakshi Chaudhary, Arundhati Choudhary and Priya Ghanghas, while Olympic medallist Lovlina Borgohain and Jadumani Singh settled for a silver each. In the men's 60kg final, Sachin beat Tryaglin Morning Ndevelo of Namibia in a dramatic bout. He made a remarkable comeback after he was behind his opponent in the first two rounds. In the third and final round, Sachin forced a standing count against Ndevelo, resulting in a 3-2 split verdict win in favour of the Indian.

Bomb-making note found with student in Ayodhya

PRAMOD KUMAR SINGH
■ Ayodhya/Lucknow

Security agencies in Ayodhya are on high alert after a handwritten note with detailed bomb-making instructions was found at Rajrishi Dashrath Medical College. The note was discovered on Saturday morning, August 1, 2026, and is linked to a first-year paramedical student who was working the night shift in the college's X-ray lab.

Reports say cleaners found the slip of paper in the X-ray room after the night shift. The note mentioned a "big blast," the words "Holland Hall," chemical formulas, diagrams, and details about the structure, size, and power of explosive



devices. After reading the note, college staff quickly called the local police.

The student has been identified as Sarfaraz, also known as Sarfaraz Khan in some reports, from Balrampur district in Uttar Pradesh. He is a first-year Lab Technician student in the paramedical course and lives in a hostel near the college.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

Twin tales turn into wedding bells

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Kottayam (Kerala)

William Shakespeare's famous play 'The Comedy of Errors' about two sets of identical twins and mistaken identity was enacted in reality in Kerala, but with a difference. Two twin brothers married two twin sisters, and the marriage was solemnised by twin priests in a church. Making the event more special, two twin altar boys assisted the priests.

The ceremony at the Changanassery Metropolitan Church became even more special, with twin priests officiating and twin altar boys assisting them, turning a long-held dream into reality for both families. The

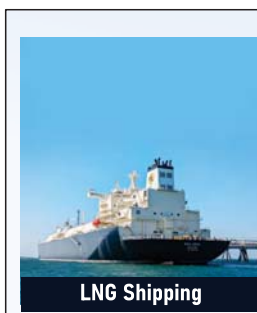


wedding took place on Thursday and set social media abuzz.

Groom Akhil K Thomas married Magi Mary Thomas, while his twin brother, Nikhil K Thomas, stood beside him alongside the bride's twin sister, Maria Mary Thomas. Akhil and Nikhil are the

twin sons of Kunjumon Thomas and Jomol of Vettuparambil in Changanassery, while Magi and Maria are the twin daughters of Tomichan and Marykutty of Kumbuluvellil in Kulathoor, Pathanamthitta district.

CONTINUED ON >> P4



LNG Shipping



LNG TERMINAL



NG TRANSMISSION



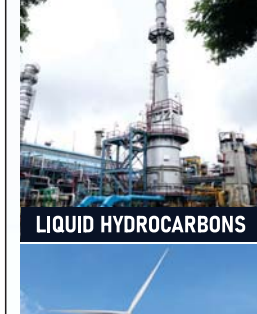
PETROCHEMICALS



SMALL-SCALE LNG



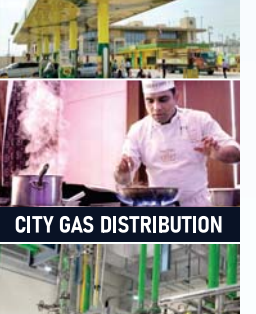
LNG RETAIL



LIQUID HYDROCARBONS



LPG TRANSMISSION



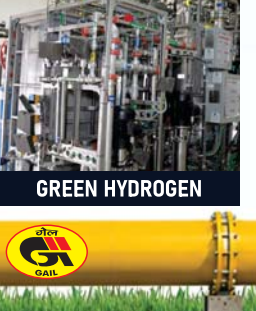
CITY GAS DISTRIBUTION



RENEWABLES



COMPRESSED BIO-GAS



GREEN HYDROGEN



GAIL (India) Limited
(A Govt. of India Undertaking)

STRENGTH BEHIND INDIA'S ENERGY SECURITY

UNAUDITED STANDALONE AND CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER ENDED 30th JUNE, 2026

Pursuant to Regulation 52(4) SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015

HIGHLIGHTS (Q1 FY 2026-27)



Revenue from Operations (Standalone)

₹38,982 crore



PBT (Standalone)

₹5,773 crore



NG Transmission

122.36 MMSCMD

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The results can be accessed through the following link:
https://www.gailonline.com/Financial_Results.html or scan:



Date: 31.07.2026
Place: New Delhi

Regd. Off.: 16, Bhikaiji Cama Place, R. K. Puram, New Delhi-110 066 | www.gailonline.com | CIN: L40200DL1984GOI018976

By order of the Board
GAIL (India) Limited

Sd/-
S. K. Sinha
Director (Finance) & CFO
DIN: 10528036

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any Person having any type of claim/right/interest in the said property, to appear in person or may inform in writing, at the address mentioned above, along with his objections, within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which it shall be presumed that the said person has no objection to the said sale. The said objections, if any, shall be considered at the said public hearing. **Lucern Legal LLP**
N-161, Ground Floor, Sakra Tower, Gautam Nagar, Sector-14, Mayapuri, New Delhi-110028, India.
Contact # 011-40046313 & 41667327

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, the Residential First Floor, (s/s) having an Covered area 120.73 Sq. Mtrs., (s/s) Plot Bearing No. D-49, measuring 231 Sq. Mtrs, situated in the residential colony known as SUNCITY, in and around Village of Gurgaon, District of Haryana, is being sold to the said Shri. Anshu Haryana; hereinafter referred to as said property.

NOTICE is hereby given to general public by the said client, Deepak Kohli (hereinafter called the said owner of the said property) that the said property along with said floor is a Sale Deed dated 06.04.2019 registered as document no. 2231 executed by Mrs. Vishaika Singh and being a only legal heirs of the said late Shri. Anshu Haryana, the said owner of this Sale Deed. It has been also informed that initially Mr. Suneet Jain was the owner of the said property vide a Conveyance Deed dated 24.09.2002. Thereafter, Mr. Suneet Jain sold the said property to the said Neeta Singla & Dr. Rupak Singla vide a sale Deed dated 07.06.2004. Thereafter, the said property has been sold to Mrs. Vishaika Singh vide a sale Deed dated 27.01.2019. Mrs. Vishaika Singh is the sole owner of the said property to Mrs. Koel Kanta Kohli & Mr. Deepak Kohli and one of the co-owner Mrs. Koel Kanta Kohli expired legal behind her husband Mr. Deepak Kohli. The said co-owner has become owner of the said property. The said owner has also informed that the said floor is not mortgage anywhere and there is no dispute or any litigation pending against the said property.

Any person including Bank/s, Financial Institution/s, relative/s having any claim, right or interest of any nature whatsoever relating to or upon the said floor is hereby called upon to appear in person or may inform in writing, at the address mentioned above, along with documentary evidence, by Registered AD Post, to the undersigned at the address mentioned herein below within 07 days of the publication of this notice and in the event of no objection being received from any person, the title of the owners in respect of the said floor shall be deemed to be clear of any mortgage or encumbrance of any nature whatsoever and any subsequent claim shall be the responsibility of the said owner/claimant/clients, and not of the undersigned.

Shivkant Arora, Advocate
For M/s, LGF Defence Law Offices

Lakshmi Yojana portal goes live; 34,000 women register in 12 hours

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Women began queuing at registration camps across Delhi from 8 am on Saturday as the portal for the Delhi Lakshmi Yojana went live, beginning the rollout of the city Government's ₹2,500 monthly financial assistance scheme. According to figures shared by the Government, within 12 hours, more than 34,000 registrations have been completed. Nearly over 9,000 applications have been pending for MLA recommendation.

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Saturday launched the online registration portal (www.dly.delhi.gov.in) for the Delhi Lakshmi Yojana at the office of the district magistrate in East Delhi.

"The Delhi Lakshmi Yojana is a scheme that will provide economic empowerment to the sisters of Delhi. The Government has allocated a

budget of ₹5,100 crore for this. The portal has started from today, and registration has also begun," Gupta said while addressing a gathering after launching the portal.

The Chief Minister said the Delhi Cabinet had originally approved the scheme as the Mahila Samridhhi Yojana, but it was later renamed Delhi Lakshmi Yojana to better reflect the broader vision of women's dignity, prosperity and economic empowerment. The name draws inspiration from Goddess Lakshmi, who symbolises prosperity, financial security and the well-being of families.

The Delhi Government's Women and Child Development Department has set up camps to help applicants check their eligibility, fill in personal and family details and upload the documents required for the scheme. Officials and volunteers at the centres were seen guiding women through



the online process as queues formed from early morning. The scheme will initially be implemented for a period of three years and is expected to benefit nearly 17 lakh women. The Delhi cabinet, headed by Gupta, on Tuesday, approved the scheme, fulfilling a key BJP poll promise made during the assembly elections last year.

According to the scheme guidelines approved by the cabinet, women aged between 21 and 60 years

whose family income is up to ₹2.5 lakh per annum will be eligible to apply.

Women already receiving benefits under any other financial assistance scheme or pension, taxpayers, Government employees, women with more than three living children, families with annual electricity consumption exceeding 2,400 units, those owning four-wheelers, or families with any member in Government service or facing a criminal case will not



be eligible for the scheme.

The Chief Minister said the scheme is expected to benefit around 17 lakh women initially and will be implemented for a period of three years.

The scheme offers beneficiaries two financial options. Under the first, ₹1,000 every month will be credited to a Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) wallet for day-to-day expenses, while the remaining ₹1,500 will be deposited in a recurring deposit (RD) or fixed deposit (FD) account.

Under the second option, the entire ₹2,500 monthly assistance can be deposited into an RD or FD account to help beneficiaries build long-term savings with interest.

The chief minister said a digital "negative list" would regulate spending through the CBDC wallet to ensure the assistance is used only for essential household needs. The amount cannot be spent on alcohol, tobacco, narcotic substances, lottery tickets, gambling, betting or other

prohibited goods and services. She said the scheme would operate through a fully digital platform integrating applications, document verification, eligibility assessment, approvals, PFMS integration, banking services, CBDC transfers and SMS alerts to ensure transparency and accountability.

Every application will undergo a four-stage verification process involving the District Programme Management Unit, the District Women and Child Development Officer and the District-Level Approval, Monitoring and Grievance Redressal Committee before approval, she said.

The verification process will include Aadhaar authentication, Delhi voter registration, family income, electricity consumption, vehicle ownership, pension status and government employment records. False declarations or fraudulent claims would

invite recovery of the assistance amount along with legal and administrative action, the Chief Minister said.

The chief minister said the Delhi Lakshmi Yojana is not limited to providing monthly financial assistance. Beneficiaries will also be connected with various government schemes and government services, including APAAR ID, ABHA ID, Poshan Tracker, immunisation, the Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam campaign, the Swachh Bharat Mission and other social development programmes.

"Efforts will also be made to link women with self-help groups, skill development and entrepreneurship training so that they can become self-reliant in the long run," she said.

Applicants or their parents or husbands must have been residents of Delhi for at least 10 years, and the beneficiary must be a registered voter in the national Capital.

How social media amplified Jantar Mantar violence and drew police scrutiny

PRAMOD KUMAR SINGH
■ New Delhi

Delhi Police have expanded their investigation into the violence at the student-led Jantar Mantar protests in mid-July. They are now focusing on several well-known YouTubers, social media influencers, and three digital marketing firms. The Special Cell is reviewing posts, videos, and livestreams to find content that may have spread rumours, heightened emotions, or encouraged clashes between protesters and security forces.

This is different from earlier efforts, which mostly involved blocking accounts or removing content. Now, police are examining how online activity turned a protest about alleged NEET paper leaks into a major event both online and in person. What began as an online campaign against exam issues quickly became a sustained protest at Jantar Mantar. Posts and videos from creators on Instagram and other platforms reached more young people than traditional political messages.

Many creators used their phones to record gatherings, interview participants, and share short videos calling for Union Education



Minister Dharmendra Pradhan to resign.

The march toward Parliament on July 20 turned violent. Police reported that over 100 security personnel were injured, and several FIRs were filed for rioting, attacking officers, and damaging property.

Protesters were also injured during the use of tear gas, baton charges, and clashes near Connaught Place and nearby areas. Later, facial recognition systems identified nearly 2,900 people with past criminal records among those present at the peak of the protest.

As clashes happened on

the streets, social media also became a place for competing stories. Delhi Police found and blocked over 400 accounts linked to Pakistan that shared AI-generated deepfakes, edited photos, and fake videos. These included false claims about protester deaths, army involvement, and altered content featuring activist Sonam Wangchuk. Another 180 accounts were flagged for spreading misinformation. Police also requested the removal of hundreds of posts with abusive content aimed at the Prime Minister and the Government.

Livestreams and real-time

posts played a key role during the protest. Videos and comments could quickly unite people or create divisions. Investigators say some content went beyond simply documenting events; it spread rumours and strong language that may have influenced the crowd. Digital forensic teams are now examining mobile data, chats, location details, and other electronic evidence, along with CCTV and bodycam footage.

The latest part of the investigation focuses on well-known YouTubers and influencers whose channels are popular with young people,

who made up much of the protest crowd. Police say they are reviewing some livestreams and posts to see if the language or presentation may have encouraged unrest.

Three digital marketing and social media management companies are also being investigated. Police are looking at their documents and promotional work to see if they helped spread protest messages or planned strategies. Influencers have been questioned in past Delhi protests, but this investigation is bigger, showing how much India's creator economy has grown. Independent channels and short videos often cover stories that traditional media miss, offering quick updates and a personal touch.

However, the same tools that allow more people to share their views can also spread false information quickly, especially when algorithms promote posts that get strong reactions. Livestreams, in particular, give a raw sense of being present, which can influence how people behave in the moment. Police have sent notices under the Information Technology Act and asked platforms to provide data and remove

certain content. Earlier checks found about 450 posts with deepfake or AI-generated material. Now, investigators want to find out if any of this content was part of a planned effort to mislead people or increase tensions.

The Jantar Mantar incident shows that social media can both help and harm modern protests in India. It makes it easy to spread information and highlight real issues, as seen in the protest's early online success. But it can also allow foreign interference, fake stories, and fast-spreading content that is hard to verify.

For influencers and digital companies, this investigation raises questions about their responsibilities. When a livestream or short video reaches hundreds of thousands of people instantly, it becomes harder to tell the difference between sharing opinions and contributing to public disorder, especially when legal issues arise.

As Delhi Police follow the digital trail, the case highlights a bigger challenge. In a time when smartphones let anyone broadcast and algorithms decide what becomes popular, keeping public order now means watching both physical spaces and online activity.

Mother thanks PM Modi for forgiving her daughter

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

In a heartfelt gesture amid a raging controversy, the mother of Ruchika Singh, the young woman accused of making abusive remarks against Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has publicly thanked him for his decision to forgive her daughter and other youngsters involved.

The remarks, captured in a viral video from a July 23, 2026, protest at A viral video from a protest on July 23, 2026, at Delhi's Jantar Mantar, organised by the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) over the NEET paper leak, led to widespread outrage after Ruchika Singh's remarks. Noida Police filed a Zero FIR against her under sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita for intentional insult, public mischief, and defamation.

The case was later moved to Delhi Police since the incident happened in the capital. There is also confusion about her age, as the FIR lists her as 25, but she claimed to be 15 in her apology. The abusive language directed at him and his late mother was described as a "cultural shock" and an "ugly spectacle." Calling the protesters

"misguided children" or "mischievous youngsters," he emphasised that mistakes often occur at a young age and present an opportunity for correction. "I want to forgive them. Society should also accept my decision," he said, arguing that dragging them through courts would not solve deeper societal issues. He compared it to the tongue being bitten by teeth: both belong to us, so one does not punish the other.

Ruchika Singh posted an apology video, folding her hands as she spoke. She explained that she went to Connaught Place with a friend and was influenced by others, including some YouTubers, to speak out, which led her to use vulgar language.

"What I did is unforgivable... This is my first and last mistake," she said, apologising to the whole country and saying she did not post the video herself. Later, she thanked the Prime Minister and called his forgiveness the "biggest birthday gift."

Her mother also expressed her thanks, saying, "The Prime Minister has forgiven her. I thank him. My appeal is that children of a young age should be kept away from social media."

BJP file police complaint against Rahul, Pappu Yadav over Ram Temple skit



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi/Varanasi

BJP leaders, led by MP Bansuri Swaraj, filed a police complaint in Delhi on Saturday seeking action against Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi and MPs Pappu Yadav and Awadhesh Prasad for staging a skit during a protest over alleged donation theft at the Ram temple in the Parliament complex. Separately, Varanasi Police registered an FIR against the three leaders.

Swaraj, MP from New Delhi, along with BJP MLAs, submitted the complaint at the Parliament Street police station. The complaint alleged that Gandhi, Independent MP Pappu Yadav, and Samajwadi Party's Awadhesh Prasad had mocked Sanatan culture and attempted to ridicule Indian traditions.

On Friday, Pappu Yadav, wearing saffron, performed the skit with other Opposition MPs in front of the Makar Dwar at the Parliament complex. The protest was against alleged embezzlement of donations at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

During the skit, MPs, including Gandhi, placed money in

boxes. At the same time, Independent MP Rajesh Ranjan (Pappu Yadav) put money into his pockets to symbolise the alleged theft at the Ram temple.

Varanasi Police also registered a case against the three opposition leaders based on a formal complaint submitted at the Kotwali police station by some seers alleging that these MPs have insulted Sanatan Dharma, according to Gaurav Banswal, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Kashi Zone.

Yadav represents the Purnia constituency in Bihar as an Independent MP. Awadhesh Prasad is the Samajwadi Party MP from Faizabad in Uttar Pradesh. Agatguru Balak Das said the skit was a mockery of Sanatan Dharma in the House was unforgivable.

"No follower of Sanatan Dharma can forget this act. It has hurt our religious sentiments. So we have demanded that a case be registered," he said.

On Saturday, Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Bajrang Dal activists held a protest in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, against the opposition leaders over the skit.

Woman killed after DTC cluster bus runs over her; driver apprehended

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

A 60-year-old woman was killed after a DTC cluster bus ran over her near the Pooth Kalan bus stand on Saturday here, triggering protests by her family members and locals who briefly blocked the road and pelted stones before police pacified them.

Police apprehended the bus driver Rajesh, seized the vehicle, registered a case and initiated separate legal action against unidentified people who allegedly vandalised the bus after the accident. The deceased was identified as Indira, wife of Ramesh and a resident of Sultanpuri.

According to police, a PCR call regarding the accident at the Pooth Kalan bus stand on Kanjhawala Road in



outer Delhi was received at the Sultanpuri police station at 11:05 am.

"When a police team reached the spot, Indira was found lying unconscious near the rear wheel of a DTC cluster bus on route number 114A from Azadpur to Auchandi Border," a senior police officer said.

She was transported to Sanjay Gandhi Memorial Hospital in Mangolpuri,

where doctors declared her brought dead, the officer said. Police said after the victim's death, her family members and residents blocked the road near the accident site, causing temporary traffic disruption. During the commotion, some unidentified people allegedly pelted stones at the DTC cluster bus involved in the accident and damaged its window panes, they said.

Police reached the spot and assured the protesters that strict legal action would be taken against the driver.

Following the assurance, the protesters dispersed, and traffic was restored.

Police are examining the circumstances leading to the accident and are also collecting eyewitness accounts and other evidence to establish the sequence of events.

BJP slams Kejriwal over E20 opposition; questions his expertise

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Union Minister Harsh Malhotra on Saturday slammed AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal for his opposition to E20 petrol, saying that his remarks on the issue made it seem "he did not even study at any IIT".

Kejriwal claims to be an IIT graduate. However, his statements not only on E20 but also on several technical issues make it seem as if he has not even studied at an industrial training institute (ITI), Union Minister of State for Road Transport and Highways Harsh Malhotra said.

"Had Kejriwal truly been educated at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), he would never have opposed ethanol-blended petrol, which helps the nation save foreign exchange, increases farmers' income, and provides cleaner air to citizens," Malhotra, who also heads Delhi BJP, said in a statement.

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) supremo Arvind Kejriwal who held a National Townhall against E20 at Delhi's Constitution Club and announced that he will march to the Prime Minister's residence on 4 August to personally submit more than two lakh online



AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal during the National Town Hall Against E20 at the Constitution Club in New Delhi

PTI

petitions signed by people across the country against E20 petrol.

He said he would leave at 12 noon with a group of 100 people to hand over the peti-



minimum temperature of 27.6 degrees Celsius and a maximum of 33.7 degrees Celsius, while Ayanagar saw a minimum temperature of 27.1 degrees Celsius and a maximum of 33.6 degrees Celsius. According to IMD data, Safdarjung, Palam and Ridge stations recorded trace amounts of rain in the morning hours.

Lodhi Road recorded trace rainfall between 8.30 am and 11.30 am and 0.1 mm rain in the next three hours.

The IMD has forecast very light to light rain for the next few days.

"There is a possibility of very light to light rain on Sunday. Similar weather conditions are expected to continue for the next few days," said an IMD official.

According to the IMD forecast, the maximum temperature on Sunday is likely to be around 33 degrees Celsius, while the minimum temperature is expected to be around 26 degrees Celsius.

The air quality in the city remained in the "satisfactory" category on Saturday, with a 24-hour average Air Quality Index (AQI) reading of 80 at 4 pm.

tions to the Prime Minister. The event at the Constitution Club began with a street play by students, featuring satirical performances inspired by 'Kauin Banega Crorepati' and other characters to highlight concerns surrounding E20. Kejriwal also pressed three demands over the roll-out of E20 fuel. The AAP Chief appealed to only those who are not afraid of police 'lathis' (batons) or imprisonment to join him in the march.

Responding to a question about his announcement to march to the Prime Minister's residence and the related security concerns, Arvind

Kejriwal said, "Just as the Leader of the Opposition (LoP) was allowed to go up to a certain point, I hope we too will at least be allowed to reach that point."

Malhotra said Kejriwal's Town Hall speech today on the E20 issue has once again raised serious questions about his claimed educational qualifications.

He seems determined to spread "misinformation" regarding E20 petrol, Malhotra charged, challenging Kejriwal to produce even 100 vehicles that have actually suffered damage or engine failure because of using E20 fuel.



IN FOCUS



Ram temple donation probe in final stage: Trust member

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Ayodhya (UP)

The investigation into the alleged theft of donations at the Ram temple in Ayodhya has intensified, with a newly constituted probe team questioning people inside the temple premises, a member of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust said on Saturday.

Trust member Mahant Dinendra Das said the inquiry into the alleged irregularities involving gold, silver and other offerings made by devotees has reached its final stage.

His statement comes days after the trust tightened surveillance over the collection and counting of donations by introducing enhanced transparency measures amid the ongoing probe.

Reacting to an incident in Parliament in which a picture of Ram Lalla was



allegedly placed on the floor, Mahant Das expressed strong objections, calling it an affront to religious sentiments.

He appealed to Members of Parliament to respect religious faith and the image of Lord Ram.

Additionally, Das mentioned that worship and darshan at the Ram temple are continuing smoothly, with daily aarti and rituals being performed in

personnel and other designated staff, has been deployed to oversee the process. Around 40 donation boxes installed across the temple complex are now being emptied on different days instead of all at once.

According to the trust, two professional videographers and 360-degree cameras have been deployed to record the entire exercise, while additional CCTV cameras have been installed inside the donation counting room.

Officials of the State Bank of India seal the donation-filled boxes after they reach the counting room.

The enhanced monitoring was introduced weeks after the alleged theft of temple offerings triggered a Special Investigation Team (SIT) probe. Police have arrested multiple accused in the case and the investigation is underway.

President approves tougher law on paper leak cases

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

An amended law that empowers states to set up fast-track courts for speedy trials of accused and enhance punishment in public examination question paper leak cases has received the assent of President Droupadi Murmu.

In a gazette notification issued on Friday, the law ministry said President Murmu has given her assent to the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026, after it was cleared by both Houses of Parliament earlier this week.

Now, investigations into paper leak cases are to be completed within two months. According to the legislation, individuals involved in paper leaks or unfair means in exams will get jail terms for a minimum of five years and a maximum of 10 years, and a fine of up to ₹50 lakh. For organised



crimes, the amended law proposes a minimum sentence of seven years and a fine of up to ₹10 crore.

The Government pushed for an early passage of the Bill by Parliament amid massive protests here and in other parts of the country by students against the NEET 2026 paper leak.

The new law amends a two-year-old Act by enhancing fines and imposing stricter punishments on paper leak convicts.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had promised the law and fast-track courts amid the recent student protests.

Nepalese mountaineer Purja dies in avalanche on Broad Peak in PoK

SHIRISH B PRADHAN
■ Kathmandu

Veteran Nepalese mountaineer Nirmal Purja died in an avalanche on Broad Peak, located in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir's Gilgit Baltistan, his expedition company said on Saturday. Purja, 43, was among 10 climbers swept away by the avalanche that struck Broad Peak, located in the Karakoram Range near K2, at an altitude of around 7,000 metres on Thursday.

Three bodies, including a Nepalese mountaineer, have already been identified, and six other bodies have been located at the mountain, said a Nepal Mountaineering Association official.

"It is with profound sadness and immense heartbreak that we confirm that Nirmal 'Nimsdai' Purja tragically lost his life following the avalanche on Broad Peak," Elite Expedition said in



a statement on social media.

"Today, we mourn not only Nims, but every life lost in this tragedy, including his trusted climbing partners and guides, Pur Bahadur Gurung (Yukta) and Nima Sherpa," it said.

"The world has lost one of

mountaineering's greatest climbers; a leader who inspired millions through his courage, humility and unwavering belief that human potential is far greater than we often imagine," it added.

Nepal Prime Minister

Balendra Shah extended his condolences on the death of Purja and five other Nepalese climbers.

"Only the physical journeys of Nirmal Purja and all the other departed mountaineers have come to an end; the legacy of their courage, dedication, and contributions will forever remain alive and inspiring. Heartfelt tributes to all the departed mountaineers. Sincere condolences to the bereaved families, relatives, and well-wishers," he said in a social media post.

The Broad Peak expedition marked the end of Purja's illustrious mountaineering career. It is the world's 12th-highest mountain and is considered one of the most challenging peaks to climb.

Purja had successfully climbed all 14 peaks above 8,000 metres around the world in just six months

and six days, setting a new record in 2019. He was about to complete his mission of climbing all 14 eight-thousanders twice after completing the Broad Peak.

Beginning in 2003, Purja had a distinguished 16-year military career, of which he spent six years as a Gurkha and 10 years with the UK Special Forces.

Purja was appointed Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) in 2018.

The avalanche struck the mountain at an altitude of around 7,000 metres on Thursday, sweeping away the 10-member climbing team that had begun its summit push, according to the Alpine Club of Pakistan (ACP). The climbers — six from Nepal, one Pakistani, one Omani, one American and one Chinese — went missing at around 9 am on Thursday following the avalanche. (PTI)

Justice Ujjal Bhuyan calls for transparency in appointments

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Criticising the collegium for not giving reasons for judicial appointments, Supreme Court judge Ujjal Bhuyan on Saturday said that failure to do so allows space for judges who make unconstitutional remarks like describing "groups of people as ants".

"I have noticed that the last three collegium resolutions contain no reasons whatsoever. Is this a step back from the principle of transparency?" Justice Bhuyan said.

Speaking at a panel discussion at the launch of a report by legal think-tank Vidhi's AJLI initiative, Justice Bhuyan stressed that not disclosing reasons for elevation allows undesirable candidates to enter the judiciary.

"By not giving reasons, the



institution actually does a disservice to many judges who are genuinely outstanding and have done tremendous work.

"Conversely, by withholding reasons, we also create space for individuals to enter the judiciary who may later describe groups of people as 'ants' and make other remarks that are wholly unconstitutional and contrary to the values of the Constitution," Justice Bhuyan said. To prevent entry of such

people, "there should be some discussion, there should be some reasons given", he said. Justice Bhuyan said that recently a high court judge had made such remarks.

Though Bhuyan did not name any individual, a former Allahabad High Court judge had sparked a furore with his remarks at a VHP event in 2024, with opposition leaders calling for action against him for his "hate speech". Justice Bhuyan said the last three statements of the Supreme Court collegium did not contain any reason at all for recommending elevation of judges.

"Some may even say they were somewhat formulaic or copy-paste in nature. But at least some reasons were given to justify the recommendations," he said.

Youth must power India's rise: PM

He described Mysuru as a centre of India's enduring cultural consciousness. Swami Vivekananda's association with the city and the support extended to him by the then Maharaja of Mysuru had played a key role in the swami's journey to the West. Quoting the principle "Shiva Jnane Jiva Seva" (serving humanity is serving God), he said the Viveka Smaraka should inspire youth to place the welfare of the poor and the nation above personal interests.

He stated that initiatives such as Atmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India are advancing because of the contributions of India's youth. He emphasised the need to provide opportunities, guidance, and support for young people, and called for a strong commitment to cleanliness, conservation of natural resources, and water preservation. "We have to work in mission mode to conserve water," he said.

Listing achievements, Modi highlighted progress in education, including the establishment of over 650 universities, nearly 14,000 colleges, more than 4,000 ITIs, nine IIMs, seven IITs, and 13 AIIMs in the past 12 years. He noted that MBBS seats have increased to about 140,000 and the number of medical colleges has reached 823.

PM further mentioned that over 14,000 PM SHRI Schools and more than 10,000 Atal Tinkering Labs are fostering innovation and scientific thinking. He said that girls are now joining institutions like the National Defence Academy, and students can pursue medical and engineering education in their mother tongues, reducing language barriers.

The Prime Minister stated that programs such as Khelo India, Youth Games, University Games, Para Games, and Winter Games, along with expanded sports infrastructure, are helping to identify talent from rural areas and enhance India's performance in international competitions. The younger generation is being encouraged to engage with Kannada literature and support local artisans by choosing Mysuru's handicrafts, sandalwood products, and traditional crafts.

An official statement said the Viveka Smaraka commemorates Swami Vivekananda's visit to Mysuru in November 1892. During his stay, Vivekananda delivered discourses, interacted with scholars and devotees, and received the patronage of Maharaja Sri Chamarajendra Wadiyar X, whose support enabled his journey to the Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893, it said.

The Viveka Smaraka, located at the historic Niranjana Math, covers over 81,000 square feet and includes a main building and an annex block. Facilities include an experience centre, exhibition hall, amphitheatre with seating for about 700, classrooms, conference rooms, library, reading room, meditation and yoga hall, and a book stall. The centre also provides dedicated facilities for students preparing for competitive examinations, according to the statement.

Commercial LPG prices cut by ₹200 in Delhi...

The lower input cost may also offer some support to the broader hospitality and food-services sector.

These prices — revised on the first of every month, based on benchmark international prices and foreign exchange rates — vary from State to State depending on local taxes such as VAT. Rates of domestic LPG used in household kitchens remain unchanged at ₹942 per 14.2-kg cylinder. Prices of domestic LPG were last raised by ₹29 per 14.2-kg cylinder on June 7. Rates had gone up by ₹60 in March after the West Asia crisis led to supply disruptions and a surge in international energy prices.

In contrast, ATF prices were raised to ₹115 per litre from ₹110 per litre. The increase reverses a reduction of a similar proportion implemented on July 1 and could raise operating costs for airlines, for which fuel is a major expense.

Petrol and diesel prices, which were hiked by about ₹7.50 a litre each in May, too, remained unchanged. Commercial LPG prices have witnessed multiple revisions this year. In June, oil marketing companies increased the price of a 14.2-kg domestic LPG cylinder by ₹29, raising the retail price in Delhi to ₹942 from ₹913. Earlier, on March 7, oil companies had raised domestic LPG prices by ₹60 per cylinder, citing disruptions in global energy markets linked to the conflict in West Asia.

Commercial LPG prices were also revised upward in April, when oil marketing companies increased the price of 19-kg commercial cylinders by ₹195.50 across metropolitan cities amid heightened geopolitical tensions in West Asia. Following that revision, the retail price of a commercial cylinder stood at ₹2,208 in Kolkata, ₹2,031 in Mumbai, and ₹2,246.50 in Chennai.

The year began with another hike. Effective January 1, oil marketing companies increased the price of a 19-kg commercial LPG cylinder by ₹111, taking the retail price in Delhi to ₹1,691.50. The price of the 5-kg Free Trade LPG (FTL) cylinder was also raised by ₹27.

Terror shadow returns over Kashmir migrants

The Resistance Front (TRF), widely regarded as a proxy of the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba, claimed responsibility for the attack.

Preliminary investigations by the central and local agencies have also hinted that Lashkar-e-Taiba commander Latif Bhat and his associate are likely to be behind the recent targeted killings in Jammu and Kashmir, including the death of two migrant workers in a terrorist attack in Kulgam on Friday.

Security agencies suggested that Bhat's aide, Waris Shah, provided logistical support for the attacks. Taking serious note of the targeted killing of migrant workers, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday chaired a high-level security review meeting and

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directed authorities to intensify anti-terror operations, strengthen security arrangements across the Union Territory, and ensure enhanced protection for labourers from outside Jammu and Kashmir.

According to a statement issued by the spokesman of the Lok Bhavan, LG Manoj Sinha chaired a high-level security meet and directed all the Deputy Commissioners and SSPs to conduct a comprehensive review of the Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) established to protect labourers from outside Jammu and Kashmir.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah strongly condemned the dastardly killing of two labourers in Kulgam. He announced an ex-gratia relief of ₹10 lakh each from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF) for the next of kin of the deceased. The Chief Minister expressed profound grief over the loss of innocent lives and said the assistance would be in addition to the ₹6 lakh immediate relief being provided by the District Administration. Meanwhile, CM called for an investigation into the killing, and asked why such incidents happen whenever his party demands the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's Statehood.

During the security review meeting, LG Sinha also directed that the employers must ensure all workers from other states and UTs of the country are provided insurance and that their details are registered with local police and district authorities. "We must intensify precise, high-impact anti-terror operations to neutralise the terrorists," the Lieutenant Governor said. Ground reports claimed, after the migrant workers were targeted in the Kelam area, the security forces swiftly launched cordon and search operations and set up security check posts to track down the perpetrators behind the attack.

He instructed the authorities to ensure dignified last rites for the victims of the Kulgam terror attack and to provide all the support to bereaved families. The meeting also discussed the security arrangements in place for the ongoing Shri Amarnathji Yatra and strengthening of the security grid.

CBI FIR names Anil Ambani and Reliance...

Reliance Capital, once a leading non-banking financial company in the Anil Ambani group, accumulated large debts, failed to meet its obligations, and eventually entered insolvency proceedings under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code. From 2013 to 2021, the EPFO, as a major institutional investor, held investments in Reliance Capital's debt and related securities.

The complaint claims that the way these investments were solicited, documented, and handled amounted to criminal cheating and breach of trust, not just commercial failure. The use of sections from the Prevention of Corruption Act suggests that public officials may have helped or overlooked irregularities.

The timing of the FIR is important. It was filed years after Reliance Capital's financial collapse and asset resolution, which shows that EPFO's

review of past investments found possible evidence of criminal conduct, not just credit risk. By naming Anil Ambani as chairman at the time, the agency is challenging the idea that company promoters are protected when there are allegations of conspiracy and dishonest actions.

Investigators will need to trace the investment path, checking which instruments were bought, what claims were made, who acted as intermediaries, how the funds moved, and whether there was any diversion or special treatment that left EPFO with bad assets. Including "unknown public servants" means they will also check if EPFO's investment rules, credit checks, or oversight were weakened. The case depends on recovering documents, doing forensic accounting of the ₹1,007-crore exposure, and proving dishonest intent rather than just poor business decisions. This high standard of proof has made it hard to prosecute many past financial crimes.

This case is important for EPFO's more than 70 million subscribers. Provident-fund money is deferred wages, not risk capital. If misappropriation or fraud is proven, it damages trust in the safety-net system. For companies, the FIR shows that old defaults involving public funds can still be investigated criminally even after insolvency is resolved. The CBI has registered the case and begun its investigation. Whether the allegations will lead to charges, convictions, or recoveries depends on the evidence collected in the coming months. One of India's largest retirement-fund managers has formally accused a major business group and its former chairman of causing a large loss through actions now considered criminal.

Meanwhile, a spokesperson for Anil D Ambani said: "The FIR registered by the CBI pertains to Reliance Capital Limited. Ambani served as a Non-Executive Director/Chairman of the Board of Reliance Capital Limited from 2005 until November 2021, when the Reserve Bank of India superseded the Board of Directors of the company and appointed an Administrator. Ambani denies any wrongdoing whatsoever, and reserves all rights available to him in law."

Bomb-making note found with student in Ayodhya

His father has passed away. On Friday night, July 31, Sarfaraz worked in the X-ray lab from 10 pm to 8 am with two colleagues, Abhishek and Subhash. Police from the Darshan Nagar outpost, led by Inspector Brijbhushan Pathak, detained Sarfaraz after the college gave them the note and related items. He was taken to Ayodhya Police Lines for questioning. Officers from the Special Operations Group (SOG), Special Task Force (STF), Special Branch (SB), and Intelligence Bureau (IB) are questioning him. Abhishek was also detained, while Subhash, who is from Sultanpur, left for his village early Saturday morning. In early questioning, Sarfaraz said he could not sleep during his night shift and started watching a film about Bhagat Singh on his laptop. He said the movie showed bomb-

making techniques, which he wrote down on paper before falling asleep. The cleaning staff and morning shift workers later found the note.

Investigators are looking into several parts of the case, such as how detailed the notes are, where the information came from, and why the note was written. Authorities want to know if Sarfaraz was just curious after watching the film or if there was a more serious reason. Ayodhya police have not made any official statement yet and say they will act after checking all the facts.

Finding this kind of material in a sensitive place like Ayodhya has raised concerns for security agencies. The city, which is home to the Ram Temple, is under extra watch because of its religious and historical importance. Several agencies are investigating to rule out any bigger plot or connections.

"The investigation is focused on how and why the note was made and left in the lab. College officials have worked closely with police, making sure the area and the note were secured quickly. More updates are expected after questioning and forensic tests are finished. This case shows the need for ongoing vigilance in educational institutions, especially those with labs, as authorities carefully review the student's explanation," sources in Uttar Pradesh said.

Twin tales turn into wedding bells

Officiating at the wedding were twin priests Father Anto Pezhumkattil and Father Ajo Pezhumkattil of the Kanjirappally Diocese, while twin brothers Jeron James and Johon James from Pala assisted them at the altar.

The arrangement was planned. The twin sisters searched for twin priests and found them through a church in Kothanalloor, which is known for gatherings of twins.

"It had been our dream since childhood to have a wedding surrounded by twins," the sisters said. "Our parents and family also wished for it. Jesus Christ made it happen. When we invited the priests, they immediately agreed to come." The priests also said the ceremony would remain special for them. "Officiating at the wedding of twins is very special," they said. "It is an experience that gives us memories for a lifetime. Such occasions remind us of goodness and togetherness," they said.

Reflecting on their own lives, they added, "They were born together and they are beginning a new life together. We, too, entered the priesthood together. These are beautiful memories."

The two brothers work in the Merchant Navy and the sisters are employed in the IT sector. For guests, it was a rare wedding marked by pairs standing side by side, and for the families, it was the joyful completion of a childhood dream. Indeed, the marriage was made in heaven. Incidentally, a Hindi film based on Shakespeares' famous novel was made in Gulzar titled 'Angoor.' Sanjeev Kumar and Deven Verma played the role of twins.

ED attaches ₹782 cr Raheja Developers assets

PRAMOD KUMAR SINGH
■ New Delhi

On Saturday, the Enforcement Directorate (ED)'s Delhi office provisionally took control of properties worth about ₹782.36 crore owned by Raheja Developers Ltd. This action, under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, brings the total seized assets in the case to ₹2,399.65 crore.

The latest order focuses on properties linked to Raheja Developers and its top staff, including Director Navin M Raheja. According to ED officials, this is part of a bigger investigation into claims that were promised but never received, and investigators



nearly ₹2,425.99 crore for homes that were never delivered, were misused. Buyers paid for apartments that were promised but never received, and investigators

say much of the money was not used as intended, leaving buyers without homes and limited choices. The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of the Delhi

Police had already filed several FIRs after complaint from buyers who said they were cheated, which led to the PMLA investigation. This is not the first time the ED has taken action. On April 28, 2026, it took control of properties worth ₹1,113.81 crore. Another round on June 15, 2026 froze assets worth ₹503.48 crore. With the latest attachment of ₹782.36 crore, the total now exceeds ₹2,399 crore, which is almost the same as the amount allegedly collected from homebuyers.

This large operation shows the ED's efforts to recover money from crime and help homebuyers who invested their savings. Many buyers

are still paying loans for homes they never got.

ED sources say the temporary attachment keeps the assets safe during the investigation. Under the PMLA, these properties cannot be sold, transferred, or used as collateral without the agency's approval.

The Directorate says the investigation is still going on, and more assets could be attached or arrests made. The case against Raheja Developers reflects a common trend in India's real estate sector, where companies collect large sums and then delay or abandon projects. This investigation stands out because of the large amounts involved and

the extensive use of the PMLA to freeze assets.

For the thousands of families waiting for justice, the latest attachment gives hope that the lost money might be recovered and returned through legal action. Still, the long wait and financial stress have been hard for many. Navin M Raheja and others are still under investigation.

The ED has not said when charge sheets will be filed, but the three big attachment orders in four months show the process is moving faster. With nearly ₹2,400 crore in assets now attached, authorities are working to break up the financial network built on broken promises. The investigation is ongoing.

States Focus



HIMACHAL TO START HELICOPTER SERVICES IN CHAMBA, SAYS CM

Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said on Saturday that the Himachal Pradesh Government is working to initiate helicopter services in Chamba district by the end of 2026 or early 2027. "The facility will improve air connectivity and provide further impetus to tourism and other developmental activities in the district", he said.

He made the statement after inspecting the under-construction heliport at Sultanpur, which is being built at an estimated cost of ₹12 crore. "Once completed, this facility will boost development in Chamba district and encourage tourism in the region," Sukhu added.

Earlier, the chief minister visited disaster-affected areas of Chamba to take stock of the damage caused by heavy rains and landslides during the current monsoon season.

During his visit, he inspected the affected areas on the ground and interacted with locals to understand their concerns and difficulties. Sukhu first visited Sheetla bridge and the Rana Mohalla area of Sultanpur, where significant damage has been reported during the ongoing monsoon. (PTI)

Centre to release ₹2,117 cr SDRF to 7 flood-hit States



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Central Government has approved the advance release of its share of the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF), worth ₹2,117.85 crore, to support seven flood-affected states during the ongoing monsoon season, an official statement said on Saturday.

Of the affected states, Himachal Pradesh, Odisha and Nagaland have already received the first instalment of the Central share for the financial year 2026-27.

"To ensure timely availability of funds for relief operations, Union Home Minister Amit Shah has approved the advance release of the second instalment of the Central share of SDRF to Himachal Pradesh and Odisha," the statement said.

Himachal Pradesh has been sanctioned ₹193.95 crore, and Odisha is to get ₹500 crore as their second instalments. The advance release of first instalments has been approved for Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat and Maharashtra by relaxing documentary requirements under applicable guidelines, considering the urgent need for resources for relief measures, the statement said.

The assistance approved for Arunachal Pradesh amounts to ₹44.55 crore, for Assam ₹379.35 crore, for Gujarat ₹500 crore, and for Maharashtra ₹500 crore.

"With this approval, a total of ₹2,117.85 crore has been made available to the flood-affected States to strengthen their ongoing relief and response measures," the statement said.

Antilia bomb scare: Charges framed against 10 accused

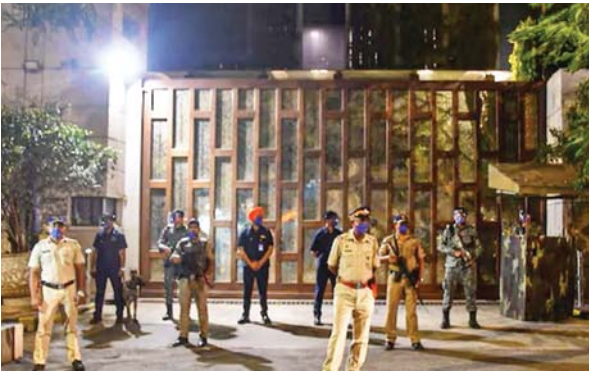
PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Mumbai

A special NIA court on Saturday framed charges against ten persons, including former policemen Sachin Waze and Pradeep Sharma, in the 2021 Antilia bomb scare and businessman Mansukh Hiran murder case.

The accused will face trial for offences under the Indian Penal Code related to murder, extortion, destruction of evidence and criminal conspiracy as well as relevant provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and the Explosive Substances Act.

Special National Investigation Agency court judge Chakor Baviskar framed the charges after the accused pleaded not guilty. Besides Waze and Sharma, the other accused in the case are Riyazuddin Kazi, Sunil Mane, Vinayak Shinde, Anand Jadhav, Satish Tirupati Mothkuri, Manish Vasanthai Soni, Naresh Gaur and Santosh Shelar.

Kazi, Mane and Shinde are also former policemen. The prosecution has accused all ten persons of forming a "terrorist gang" and entering into a criminal conspiracy between February and March 2021.



Security personnel outside Mukesh Ambani's home Antilia in Mumbai after the bomb scare

An SUV with explosives inside was found near billionaire industrialist Mukesh Ambani's south Mumbai residence 'Antilia' on February 25, 2021.

Businessman Mansukh Hiran, who claimed that the SUV had been stolen from his possession, was found dead in a creek in neighbouring Thane on March 5, 2021.

A few days later, Waze, once known as an 'encounter specialist' police officer, was arrested in the case.

According to the NIA, the accused allegedly posted a message on the Telegram channel 'Jaishish-UI-Hind' containing the threat "Agle baar connect ho kar ayega" (next time the bomb's wires

will be connected) to create an impression that a terrorist organisation was involved in the incident.

The NIA's draft charges, filed earlier before the court, identified Waze as the mastermind of the crime. His motive was to terrorise wealthy individuals and extort money to meet a ₹100-crore monthly target allegedly set by a high-ranking political figure while simultaneously attempting to regain his "lost glory" as a "super cop", the central agency said.

Further, he conspired with other accused to eliminate businessman Mansukh Hiran because Hiran refused to take the blame for the explosives and was considered a

Suvendu assures Taslima Nasreen of full security in West Bengal

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Kolkata

West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari on Saturday assured exiled Bangladeshi author Taslima Nasreen of full security whenever she visits the State, using her return to Kolkata after nearly 19 years to project what he described as a fundamental political shift in Bengal under the BJP Government.

Addressing a literary event on anti-fundamentalism at Rabindra Sadan, where Nasreen made her first public appearance in Kolkata since being forced to leave the city in 2007, Adhikari said the state had entered an era where freedom of expression and constitutional rights would be protected.

"It is my duty as the chief minister and also as the minister in charge of the police department to provide you with security whenever you visit West Bengal," Adhikari said.

"Not just once, whenever



you wish, come to West Bengal as many times as you want. You will receive complete security," he told the author and the gathering.

Making a broader political statement, the chief minister said Bengal had changed with the change of Government.

"This is a West Bengal free from shackles and fear. Every pillar of the Constitution is protected here. Everyone has the right to come here, and everyone has the freedom to

express themselves," he said.

Welcoming Nasreen to what he called a "safe West Bengal", Adhikari said her presence itself demonstrated that democracy, constitutional values, freedom of speech and fundamental rights were now secure in the State.

"Today it has been proved that under the new Government, democracy, the Constitution, freedom of speech and fundamental rights are protected in

Bengal," he said.

Without naming any political party, Adhikari contrasted the present with the past, saying, "The era of threats, intimidation, and attempts to silence people is over."

The chief minister presented Nasreen with a portrait of Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, noting that the year marked the 150th anniversary of Vande Mataram.

The event marked Nasreen's first public appearance in Kolkata since November 2007, when she left the city amid violent protests over portions of her autobiographical work 'Dwikhandito' (Split: A Life).

The controversy had erupted after the publication of the book, triggering demonstrations in several parts of West Bengal.

The then Left Front government banned the book and, citing a deteriorating law and order situation, shifted Nasreen out of Kolkata before she eventually left the State. For the BJP Government,

Nasreen's return carries political symbolism that extends beyond a literary event.

Her forced departure from Kolkata in 2007 has long remained a contentious episode in Bengal's political discourse, frequently invoked by the BJP to accuse successive Left Front and Trinamool Congress Governments of compromising freedom of expression in the face of religious extremism and vote-bank politics.

By hosting Nasreen publicly at one of Kolkata's premier cultural venues and framing her return as evidence of restored constitutional freedoms, the BJP Government sought to reinforce its narrative of a decisive break from the State's previous political order.

Nasreen, known internationally for her outspoken criticism of religious fundamentalism and advocacy of women's rights, has lived in exile since leaving Bangladesh in 1994 following threats from Islamist groups over her writings.

India-China border trade at Nathula resumes after six years

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Gangtok

The border trade between India and China through the Nathula Pass resumed on Saturday after six years, marking the revival of one of the oldest trading corridors along the ancient Silk Route, officials said.

The trade had remained suspended since 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent strain in India-China border relations.

A formal reopening ceremony was held at Nathula in East Sikkim, where officials from the two neighbouring nations participated, signalling the return of seasonal trade through the strategically significant mountain pass at over 14,000 feet.

Announcing the resumption, Sikkim's Commerce and Industries Department Secretary Karma D Youtso said the seasonal trade will be conducted from Monday



to Thursday until November under the existing bilateral trade protocol.

"Thirty-eight registered traders have been issued trade passes this year. Around 36 notified items, including handicrafts, handloom products, traditional religious articles, ready-made garments and other approved goods, will be traded through the route," Youtso said.

She added that elaborate security arrangements have

been put in place, with the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) enforcing the Standard Operating Procedure. Additional ITBP personnel have been deployed at Nathula, including a women's platoon for the first time.

The reopening is expected to inject fresh momentum into the local economy by generating business for registered traders, transport operators and other stakeholders dependent on border trade.

Punjab Guv urges youth to contribute to nation building

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Chandigarh

Punjab Governor and Chandigarh Administrator Gulab Chand Kataria on Saturday urged the youth to pursue excellence with integrity, remain committed to education and public service, and contribute to nation-building.

Addressing a felicitation ceremony for successful civil services candidates organised by Sankalp IAS at Punjab Lok Bhavan, Kataria said every honest effort, irrespective of the profession, strengthens the nation and helps realise the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

He praised Sankalp IAS for mentoring civil services aspirants and said the institution has emerged as one of



Gulab Chand Kataria

the country's leading centres for producing successful IAS, IPS and other civil services officers.

He appreciated the organisation's management, mentors, donors and students for their contribution through quality education and guidance.

Highlighting Chandigarh's achievements in school education, Kataria said government schools in the city have consistently delivered strong academic results.

He noted that Chandigarh ranked first among all states and Union Territories in the Performance Grading Index

(PGI) 2.0 for school education and is the only State/UT to receive the "Uttam-3" grade.

The governor also urged the youth to stay away from drugs and focus on education, character building, and public service, asserting that a drug-free and empowered youth is essential for achieving the goal of Viksit Bharat 2047. Rajya Sabha MP Avinash Rai Khanna appreciated the governor's campaign against drug abuse and said public office is a responsibility to serve society with honesty and dedication.

He highlighted the importance of Education and Social Responsibility (ESR) and called for support for humanitarian initiatives, including donations of life-saving medical devices for those in need.

Air India deploys B787-9 aircraft on Delhi-Toronto route

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Mumbai

Air India on Saturday said it has deployed its new B787-9 aircraft on the Delhi-Toronto route and has expanded its Canada operations for the Winter 2026-27 season with a new non-stop service between Mumbai and Toronto.

The development will see overall capacity between India and Canada increasing by 4,400 seats each month, with premium seat capacity to Toronto boosting by 71 per cent, Air India said.

The launch of a seasonal 3x weekly non-stop service between Mumbai and Toronto between October 25 this year and March 26 next year will add nearly 2,000 seats each week



between the two countries, making Air India the only carrier operating direct flights between the two cities, the airline said.

The service will be operated by Air India's Boeing 777-300ER aircraft with significantly upgraded cabin interiors, featuring eight luxurious first class suites with privacy

sliding doors, 40 flat beds in business class, and 280 seats in economy, it said.

Through Air India's hubs at Mumbai and Delhi, customers travelling to/from Canada can connect seamlessly to destinations including Ahmedabad, Amritsar, Bengaluru, Chandigarh, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kochi,

Ludhiana, and Vadodara, among several other Indian cities, Air India said.

It also said that of the 10x weekly flights the airline operates on the Delhi-Toronto route this Winter, 7x weekly services will be operated by the brand-new Boeing 787-9 aircraft, featuring the airline's latest cabin products.

The remaining 3x weekly services will be initially operated by Boeing 777-300ER aircraft and will transition to the new Boeing 787-9 from January 2027 as more aircraft join the fleet.

With that, all Air India flights to and from Toronto will feature all-new or significantly upgraded cabin interiors, delivering a consistent premium experience across the market, it said.



States Focus



ODISHA SIR: OBJECTIONS CAN NOW BE FILED TILL AUGUST 19

The Election Commission has revised the schedule for the ongoing SIR exercise in Odisha, giving voters an additional fortnight to file claims and objections, and pushing the final publication of the electoral rolls to September 21, according to a notification.

The last date for filing claims and objections has been extended from August 4 to August 19, according to the notification issued by the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) on Friday. Consequently, the period for issuing notices, scrutiny of applications, hearings and disposal of claims and objections has also been extended from the earlier September 2 deadline to September 17.

The final electoral roll, originally scheduled to be published on September 6, will now be released on September 21. July 1, 2026, will continue to be the qualifying date for the revision exercise.

The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise, which included house-to-house enumeration between May 30 and June 28, led to the exclusion of around 20.14 lakh electors from the draft electoral roll published on July 5. (PTI)



UNION HEALTH MINISTER NADDA REVIEWS NEET-PG 2026

Union Health Minister JP Nadda on Saturday reviewed preparations for the NEET-PG 2026, directing all agencies to ensure the examination is conducted in a smooth, secure, transparent and technology-driven manner, while cautioning candidates against rumours and fraudulent claims of question paper leaks. The NEET-PG 2026 examination is scheduled for August 30 and will take place in a single shift across approximately 340 cities and over 1,300 examination centres. A total of 2,73,183 candidates have registered for the examination, an increase of over 12.5 per cent compared to the previous year. (PTI)

NSA Ajit Doval conferred Lokmanya Tilak National Award 2026 in Pune

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Pune

Union Home Minister Amit Shah presented the LokmanyaTilak National Award 2026 to National Security Advisor AjitDoval in Pune on Saturday, recognising his major contributions to India's security.

AjitDoval, 81, has served as India's National Security Advisor since May 2014, making him the longest-serving holder of the position. He received the award for his key role in strengthening the country's security. A 1968-batch IPS officer, Doval has handled sensitive assignments in Mizoram, Sikkim, Punjab, and Jammu and Kashmir. He has also worked in Indian missions in Islamabad and London, and played major roles in operation- like the surgical strikes, the Balakot air strike, the Doklam resolution, and other strategic efforts.

In his speech, Amit Shah described Doval as the main architect of India's current national security and foreign policy. "Whenever history is written, if anyone analyses internal security and external security, then clearly, for Ajit Doval ji, a golden page will have to be kept reserved; there is no



Union Home Minister Amit Shah presents the Lokmanya Tilak National Award 2026 to National Security Advisor Ajit Doval in the presence of Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, Deputy CMs Eknath Shinde and Sunetra Pawar in Pune

PTI

doubt about this," Shah said. He said Doval's advice has been confident in every major national security decision under Prime Minister Narendra Modi since 2014, helping to make India's foreign policy stronger and more confident, with a "backbone of steel." Shah recalled his first meeting with Doval after the 2008 Ahmedabad serial blasts, when then Gujarat Chief Minister Modi asked for Doval's input. He also compared Tilak's fearless vision of Swaraj with Doval's excellence in keeping India

strong and sovereign. Doval accepted the award humbly and spoke about his personal connection to Pune. He recalled living in the city as a child about 76 years ago when his father served in the Army. He went to school there and first learned about Tilak from a teacher. "I could never have imagined that, 76 years later, I would return to the same city to receive an award instituted in his memory. It is truly my good fortune," he said. Doval urged young people to take inspiration from

India's students need PM's apology: Rahul Gandhi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi should apologise to the country's students for giving them a "corrupt" exam system and that they don't want his "forgiveness".

In a post on X, Gandhi said the prime minister has the audacity to speak of "forgiving" students even when he did not visit a single parent whose children committed suicide after they felt their career was destroyed due to leaked papers and cancelled



exams. "Nothing is more painful than seeing a parent grieve their child. "Behind every young life

lost is a family carrying pain that will never leave them - and serious questions about a broken education

system," he said in his post after meeting the families of those who lost their children during his day-long visit to Tamil Nadu. "Leaked papers. Cancelled exams. Years of preparation destroyed overnight. Our students are told to work honestly in a system that is not honest with them. "And the Prime Minister has the audacity to speak of 'forgiving' students," the leader of opposition in Lok Sabha said. Gandhi said he (Modi) has not met a single grieving parent.

Farooq links Kulgam attack to J&K Statehood demand

MOHIT KANDHARI
■ Jammu

Strongly condemning the killing of two migrant workers in Kulgam, National Conference president Farooq Abdullah on Saturday kicked up a political storm by claiming such attacks seem to occur whenever the demand for the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's Statehood gains momentum.

"I do not know why such incidents happen whenever we are demanding statehood," Abdullah told reporters.

Describing the incident as deeply unfortunate, Abdullah also called for a fair and impartial investigation to identify those responsible.

Speaking to reporters, Abdullah said it was essential to ascertain who was behind the attack. "It is deeply unfortunate. We do not know who killed them, and we do not know who the perpetrators

are. There should be a thorough and honest investigation to identify those responsible," he said.

Leader of the opposition in J&K Assembly, Sunil Sharma, who met members of the victim families in PCR Srinagar, said, "The tragic and heartbreaking incident that occurred Friday evening in the Kelam area of Kulgam is deeply distressing. To gun down young men in front of their own children, people who came to Kashmir merely to work as daily wage labourers to feed and raise their families — what kind of jihad is this? What are you trying to prove by doing this? I believe the security forces need to be on a high alert right now, and the entire ecosystem supporting them must be completely rooted out. We need to eliminate the terrorists as well as demolish their support structure. An attempt is being made to disrupt the peace that has been estab-



lished here, and I believe this is absolutely intolerable. The elements who continue to promote Pakistan's narrative here must be dealt with strictly."

Former JK BJP Unit Chief Ravinder Raina also hit back. Reacting to Dr Abdullah's statement, Raina said, "He is a very responsible person, and in the context of the terror attack that took place in Kulgam, Farooq Abdullah made a deeply unfortunate and highly controversial statement. When innocent labourers are brutally murdered by terrorists, the nation expects every political leader to stand united against terrorism, not to make any specu-

lative statements, not to create confusion, or to divert attention from the perpetrators. He is just justifying this terror attack and relating this attack to Statehood. This is highly condemnable".

On the other hand, Peoples Democratic Party chief Mehbooba Mufti called the Kulgam terror attack a security failure. She demanded a proper investigation, saying such incidents should not occur despite heightened security during the Yatra.

Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee has strongly condemned the killing of non-local labourers in Kulgam.

In a statement, JKPC President Tariq Hameed Karra described the attack as cowardly with nefarious designs. "This is unacceptable and highly condemnable. This is a matter of great concern, and those responsible for security must gear up to defeat their designs."

Kerala: 4 killed in landslides as heavy rain triggers floods

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Idukki/Kottayam (Kerala)

Four people were killed while several others were rescued following separate landslides in Idukki and Kottayam districts on Saturday, as incessant heavy rain triggered floods and fresh landslides across Kerala, officials said.

The deceased was identified as Sumathi (65), a resident of the Adoormala area near Kudayathoor in Idukki district. Debris from a landslide struck her house in the early hours of Saturday, the district administration said.

Neighbours managed to rescue her husband, Ravi, and the couple's son, Ratheesh.

Both sustained injuries and were admitted to a hospital in Thodupuzha.

Authorities said the family's house was destroyed in the landslide.



Sumathi's body was recovered after a search operation carried out by personnel of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), Fire and Rescue Services, police and revenue officials.

A youth died, and his mother was buried under debris in a landslide at Payyanithottam in Poonjar in Kottayam district.

The deceased is identified as Josephine (24), son of Johny, and his mother Rejina Johny (46), who were

Self-enumeration for Census begins in West Bengal

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Kolkata

The self-enumeration exercise for India's 16th Census began in West Bengal on Saturday, with Chief Minister Suven- du Adhikari saying the survey would create a permanent record for genuine beneficiaries, as he drew a clear distinction between illegal immigrants and refugees. He, however, clarified that the Census exercise and illegal immigration were separate issues.

Facing questions over the status of people not included in the voter list and facing SIR tribunals, Adhikari said illegal immigrants from Bangladesh were ineligible for welfare benefits and would be sent back, as "we will not be able to feed them". However, those covered

record will be created. It will help take the state forward in the coming days," the chief minister said.

The window for the first phase of the once-in-a-decade population survey will remain open from August 1 to August 15, during which people can submit their details through the official portal se.census.gov.in. This will be followed by a house-listing phase from August 16 to September 14, during which information on the condition of housing, household amenities and assets possessed will be collected.

About the exclusion of names under the SIR of electoral rolls and the ASDD (Absent, Shifted, Dead, Duplicate) list of voters, Adhikari said many of those who figure in the list have not challenged it. "Out of the 27 lakh people



under the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) would be treated as refugees, not infiltrators, the chief minister affirmed. After filling in his details on the official Census website, marking the launch of the self-enumeration phase of the decennial survey, Adhikari said the Census data would be used to create a permanent record for extending aid under Government welfare schemes to eligible beneficiaries.

"Once the information comes in February, people will not have to submit documents repeatedly for social aid. They don't have to stand in queues for every social scheme, caste certificates or benefits. A permanent

who were given an opportunity to approach the SIR tribunal, around seven lakh had applied. The rest have not submitted any application or appeal so far," he said.

Adhikari further said that until the entire process was completed, it would not be possible to determine whether those who had not made any claim as voters would later seek recognition as Indian citizens.

"There are two kinds of people who have come to Bengal from Bangladesh. One category is that of infiltrators. They will not stay in Bengal. They will be identified, verified and sent back. We will not be able to feed them," Adhikari said.

Cauvery row: DK Shivakumar asks agitators to end protests

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Mysuru (Karnataka)

Karnataka Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Saturday appealed to organisations opposing the release of Cauvery water to Tamil Nadu to withdraw their proposed agitation, saying water cannot be retained once the Kabini reservoir reaches full capacity and warned protesters not to endanger their lives.

The chief minister, who was speaking to reporters at Mysuru airport amid protests over the Cauvery Water Management Authority's direction to release 3,500 cusecs of water to Tamil Nadu for 15 days, also accused the BJP of "politicising" the issue. He asserted that Karnataka would protect farmers' interests while abiding by court



orders, and said the state had secured a "major victory" in the Supreme Court on the Mekedatu project.

"Kabini reservoir is filling up. Once a dam is full, water has to be released. It is impossible to hold it back. I humbly appeal to those planning to agitate against the release of water to withdraw their decision," he said. Noting that offi-

cials were providing hourly updates on the reservoir, Shivakumar said the inflow into Kabini had touched 40,000 cusecs, and nature could not be controlled by human decisions.

"Even if we decide not to release water, once the reservoir is full, it is impossible to hold it back. Protesters should not go near the points where water is being released. The force of the water can sweep you away. No one should lie down in the path of flowing water," he said.

Appealing against a bandh or protests, the CM said democratic protests were respected but should not disrupt public life or the legal framework, adding that people of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu were citizens of the same country.

AIIMS Bhopal patents new device for wisdom tooth surgery

UMESH NIGAM ■ Bhopal

A team of doctors at AIIMS Bhopal has developed an indigenous medical device that promises to make impacted wisdom tooth surgery easier, safer and more effective. The innovation, which took nearly five years of dedicated research and development, has been granted a patent and is expected to improve the treatment of patients who require surgical removal of impacted third molars, commonly known as wisdom teeth.

The device has been designed to address one of the biggest challenges faced by oral and maxillofacial surgeons during wisdom tooth extraction, particularly in patients with restricted mouth opening. Such cases often make surgical access difficult, increasing the com-



plexity of the procedure and the risk of complications. According to the research team, the newly developed instrument enhances visibility and accessibility during surgery, enabling doctors to perform the procedure with greater precision and reduced effort.

Doctors involved in the project said the innovation helps minimise tissue trauma, reduces unnecessary force during tooth

extraction and lowers the chances of injury to surrounding tissues. As a result, patients are expected to experience less pain, reduced swelling and faster recovery after surgery. The improved surgical approach may also reduce the need for excessive medication and contribute to better overall treatment outcomes.

The patented device was developed by specialists from the Department of

Dentistry at AIIMS Bhopal with support from researchers across multiple departments. The project reflects the institute's growing emphasis on indigenous medical innovation and research aimed at solving practical clinical challenges. The research team worked extensively to refine the design and ensure that the device could effectively address the limitations of existing surgical techniques.

Doctors said the innovation would be particularly beneficial for patients suffering from conditions that restrict mouth opening, where conventional wisdom tooth surgery can be technically demanding. By providing improved access to the surgical site, the device enables surgeons to carry out complex procedures more efficiently while enhancing patient safety.

The successful development of the device highlights the potential of home-grown medical technology in advancing healthcare solutions. With the patent now secured, the researchers hope the innovation will find wider clinical adoption and contribute to improving oral healthcare standards across the country. The achievement also reinforces AIIMS Bhopal's commitment to promoting research-driven healthcare innovations that offer practical benefits to both medical professionals and patients.

This breakthrough is expected to encourage further indigenous innovation in medical technology, reducing dependence on imported surgical devices while strengthening India's capabilities in affordable and patient-centric healthcare solutions.



The consent that was not: Paradox of digital world



RAJLAXMI SINGH

In 2017, the Supreme Court's judgment in *KS Puttaswamy v. Union of India* established that privacy was not a privilege granted by the State, but rather an intrinsic dimension of human dignity. The enactment of the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 was held as a deliverance to that constitutional promise. At its core lay consent; an idea that individuals should meaningfully decide how their personal data is collected, processed, and used.

Yet a closer reading of the Act reveals an uncomfortable question: if consent is truly the cornerstone of this framework, why does the law spend so much of its architecture dismantling it?

This is not merely a question of legislative drafting. It concerns the very nature of autonomy, and the relationship between citizens, corporations, and the State in an increasingly surveilled digital republic.

The Act's consent framework, on paper, is commendable. Consent must

be free, informed, specific, and unambiguous, and such requirements are consistent with the constitutional vision articulated in *Puttaswamy*, where the nine-judge bench recognised that informational privacy entails the individual's right to control the narrative of their own data. Consent, in this sense, is not a procedural checkbox, but rather a legal expression of personal autonomy, as well as dignity.

Yet the Act simultaneously introduces "certain legitimate uses", which is a category of situations under which personal data may be processed entirely without consent.

Employment purposes, State welfare functions, legal obligations, medical emergencies, voluntarily disclosed information — the list is broad, and deliberately so. Individually, each exception appears defensible. Collectively, they raise a more structural concern: when exceptions are wide enough to swallow the rule, the rule ceases to function as one.

This is not hyperbole — it is a principle well established in constitutional jurisprudence. The *Puttaswamy* judgment did not merely recognise privacy as a fundamental right; it prescribed that any restriction upon it must satisfy a three-part test of legality, necessity, and proportionality, drawing from the stan-



dards articulated in *Modern Dental College v. State of Madhya Pradesh* (2016). The question the DPDPA invites, therefore, is whether its "legitimate uses" carve-outs survive proportionality scrutiny — or whether they represent administrative convenience dressed in constitutional clothing.

Defenders of the Act will rightly argue that no modern privacy framework can function on consent alone. Hospitals

cannot pause emergency care to obtain authorisation. Governments cannot administer welfare schemes if every data transaction requires individual sign-off. These are not hypothetical concerns — they are operational realities. The DPDPA's exceptions, in this reading, are not concessions to power but concessions to practicality.

This argument has merit, and it deserves acknowledgement. The Act

does represent a meaningful step forward — for a country that, until recently, had no comprehensive data protection legislation, the DPDPA's baseline requirements around transparency, purpose limitation, and data fiduciary obligations are not insignificant. The framework is imperfect, but it is not inconsequential.

The concern, however, is not that exceptions exist — it is that the Act offers limited mechanisms to scrutinise whether those exceptions are being invoked appropriately. There is no independent regulatory body insulated from executive influence; the Data Protection Board operates under conditions that raise legitimate questions about its autonomy. There is no robust proportionality review built into the exception-triggering process. The result is a framework that places considerable institutional discretion in the hands of data fiduciaries and State agencies, with the individual left to trust that this discretion will be exercised responsibly.

This is the deeper philosophical problem. Privacy is ultimately about agency — the capacity of individuals to exercise meaningful control over information about themselves. When legal frameworks migrate from individual choice toward institutional discretion, they risk a subtle but consequential

transformation: citizens cease to be active participants in data governance and become, instead, its passive subjects. The shift is rarely announced. It happens incrementally, exception by exception, until consent — once the cornerstone — becomes largely ceremonial. The DPDPA is, without question, a significant milestone in India's evolving data protection landscape. But its treatment of consent reveals an unresolved tension between individual autonomy and administrative practicality — a tension that the Act acknowledges without adequately resolving. As India's privacy framework matures through legislative revision and judicial interpretation, the task for lawmakers and courts alike will be to ensure that consent does not calcify into symbolism.

A privacy law should not merely inform citizens that they possess control over their data. It must guarantee that such control remains substantive, enforceable, and constitutionally proportionate — not just in the preamble, but in practice. The DPDPA's success will ultimately be measured not by how prominently it enshrines consent, but by how meaningfully it protects the individual's right to say no.

The writer is a class XII student. Views expressed are based on her research and analysis

37 lakh women receive first Orunodoi 3.0 instalment as Assam launches FY 2026-27 disbursement

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Guwahati

The Assam Government on Saturday commenced the financial year 2026-27 disbursement under its flagship welfare programme, Orunodoi 3.0, with Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma launching the first monthly instalment through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) to more than 37 lakh women beneficiaries across the State.

The State-level programme was held at Srimanta Sankardeva Kalakshetra in Guwahati, while similar events were organised simultaneously at over 3,500 locations across Assam, including Gram Panchayats, Urban Local Bodies, Village Council Development Committees (VDCs), Village Development Committees (VDCs) and MAC areas.

As a special relief measure, beneficiaries residing in the flood-affected districts of Sivasagar, Charaideo, Golaghat and Jorhat received an additional ₹2,500 each to support their recovery from the recent floods.

Addressing the gathering, Chief Minister Sarma



described Orunodoi as the State government's flagship social welfare initiative, saying it has become a significant instrument for strengthening women's financial security and promoting inclusive socio-economic development across Assam.

He said that while monthly assistance under the scheme had continued until April 2026, further disbursements were deferred following the formation of the new Government as the State budget had not yet been passed. With the budget now approved, the Government has resumed payments, reaffirming its commitment to providing uninterrupted welfare support to eligible families.

The Chief Minister also

announced the introduction of an Aadhaar-linked payment system under Orunodoi 3.0, aimed at ensuring transparent, duplication-free and seamless transfer of benefits directly into beneficiaries' Aadhaar-linked bank accounts.

He acknowledged that some beneficiaries whose bank accounts are yet to be linked with Aadhaar may experience temporary delays in receiving the current instalment. However, he assured that the Government is facilitating Aadhaar-bank account linkage to ensure timely disbursement.

To improve implementation of the scheme, Sarma announced that the Government will appoint 'Orunodoi Sarothi' in every

Legislative Assembly constituency. The functionaries will assist beneficiaries with enrolment, payment-related issues and other grievances associated with the scheme.

Outlining the future roadmap for Orunodoi, the Chief Minister said the Government is exploring the introduction of an advance payment facility for beneficiaries. He further stated that efforts are underway to enable beneficiaries to access bank credit by leveraging their Orunodoi benefits, a move aimed at promoting financial inclusion and livelihood opportunities.

He also announced plans to expand the scheme's beneficiary base and increase the monthly financial assistance beyond the current ₹1,250, further strengthening Assam's social protection framework.

Finance Minister Jayanta Mallabaruah also addressed the programme. The event was attended by MLAs Dipu Ranjan Sarma, Pradyut Bordoloi and Bijay Gupta, Guwahati Mayor Mrigen Sarania, senior Government officials and beneficiaries from different parts of the State.

2001 ₹7 crore UCO bank fraud case: Delhi court convicts three, acquits bank official

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

A Delhi court has convicted three former directors of a textile company for cheating UCO Bank of ₹7 crore in 2001 by submitting forged documents to obtain a loan that was later diverted. The court also underlined that the accused persons "cannot wriggle out of the criminal liability by conveniently arguing that they have entered into a settlement with the bank."

Special Judge Sudhanshu Kaushik held Amit Chaturvedi, Sanjay Chaturvedi, and Parvin Juneja, ex-directors of Dwarakadish Spinners Ltd (DSL), guilty of criminal conspiracy, cheating, and using forged documents as genuine.

The court, however, acquitted a former UCO Bank official, Bikash Basu, saying that the prosecution failed to prove his involvement in the conspiracy and that there was no evidence that he received any illegal gratification or acted with criminal intent. The case stems from a 2009 FIR by CBI, according to which the officials con-



spired to obtain a loan of Rs 7 crore from UCO Bank's Parliament Street branch in 2001. Initially, they claimed the funds were for prepaying a loan from the Industrial Financial Corporation of India (IFCI).

After the loan was sanctioned, the directors misrepresented to the bank that IFCI had refused the prepayment. They persuaded the bank to convert the loan into a machinery-financing scheme under the government's Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFs), the CBI said. It said that to secure the disbursement, the accused submitted a forged Chartered Accountant (CA) certificate and a fake invoice from a dummy firm to show they

had purchased and installed new machinery.

The CBI probe revealed that no machinery was ever purchased, and the funds were siphoned off to the group's associate companies, according to the FIR.

In a 160-page order pronounced on July 29, the court said, "There are circumstances to indicate that the criminal intention to cheat the bank was present since inception and the accused persons acted together to achieve the desired object of diverting the sanctioned funds."

"There is astounding evidence to establish that accused persons cheated the bank and diverted the disbursed loan amount," the court added.

It said there is evidence to conclude that all the accused persons entered into a criminal conspiracy to cheat UCO Bank to obtain a loan for financing the purchase of machinery under the TUFs by making a false representation that the sanctioned funds would be used for installing new machines.

"There is evidence to show that each one of the accused was fully aware of the steps involved in obtaining the loan as well as its disbursement and diversion of funds," the court said.

On the defence's argument that DSL entered into a 'one-time settlement' with the bank, the court said the case cannot be categorised as a simple matter where the borrower committed default in payment of the loan amount.

"It has been established that the accused persons deceived the bank and obtained the disbursement of the loan based on a fabricated CA certificate and a forged invoice. It has been established that the disbursed funds were intentionally diverted by the accused persons," the court said.



Coal India production rises 8% to 50.36 MT in July

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

State-owned CIL on Saturday said its production grew 8.4 per cent to 50.36 million tonnes (MT) in July. Coal India Ltd (CIL) accounts for over 80 per cent of domestic coal output.

Despite challenges posed by the rains, the company recorded healthy growth in coal production. Simultaneously, it has sustained strong momentum in coal supplies through a demand-responsive inventory optimisation strategy, enabling it to maintain a comfortable balance between production and supplies. "Coal India Ltd recorded a robust operational performance in July 26-27, registering an 8.44 per cent growth in coal production," it said in a statement.

Coal supplies also increased 18.38 per cent to 64.19 MT during July, over the year-ago period. "Coal supplied in July FY27 marks the highest-ever coal offtake for the month in any financial year. The previous highest July supply stood at 60.5 MT, achieved in FY 24-25," the statement said.

The strong operational

momentum follows another record performance in June FY27, when CIL supplied 65.95 MT of coal, its highest-ever supply for June.

Consequently, the company's cumulative coal supplies during the first four months of FY27 (April-July) rose 6.9 per cent to 262.04 MT, the highest-ever volume supplied for the corresponding period.

The previous record was 259.4 MT, achieved during April-July 2024-25.

Coal supplies to the power sector — the company's largest consumer segment — also grew 18 per cent, increasing to 49.77 MT in July from 42.35 MT in the corresponding month of the previous year. Supplies to the non-regulated sector also registered healthy growth, rising 21 per cent to 14.42 MT from 11.89 MT during the same period. CIL also recorded a significant improvement in overburden (OB) removal, a key mining activity that supports sustained coal production.

During July, overburden removal increased 21.11 per cent to 120.35 million cubic meters (Mcum) from 99.36 Mcum in July FY26.

ED attaches deposits of conman, suspended Tripura IAS officer in cheating case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Bank deposits worth more than ₹1 crore belonging to an alleged conman, a suspended Tripura cadre IAS officer and a private company have been attached under the anti-money laundering law, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) said on Saturday.

The probe pertains to a man named Utpal Kumar Chowdhury who is alleged to have cheated businessmen claiming his "close proximity" with senior Government officials posted in Tripura.

"The attached assets com-

prise bank balances held in the names of the entities controlled by Chowdhury, suspended IAS officer of the Tripura cadre Abhishek Chandra, and a private housing company," the central agency said in a statement.

The provisional attachment order to attach bank deposits worth ₹1.12 crore was issued on July 31 under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), it said.

The ED said Chowdhury projected himself as a senior officer of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and got "fake" identity cards to



that effect. He incorporated firms bearing deceptive similarity to Government departments and public sector undertakings like 'Directorate

of Higher Education, Tripura' and 'Bridge & Roof Co.', and also "fraudulently" took control of a registered trust named Chaltakhali Swamiji

UPI transactions reach record high of ₹29.9 lakh crore in July

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Transactions through the popular Unified Payments Interface (UPI) again reached a record high of ₹29.9 lakh crore in July, according to data released by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI). UPI transactions touched a record high of ₹29.9 lakh crore in May 2026.

As per the data released on Saturday, UPI transactions in volume terms were 23.66 billion in July, higher than 23.2 billion in May and 22.72 billion in June. The value of transactions was at ₹29.88 lakh crore in July against ₹25.08 lakh crore in the same month a year ago, registering 19 per cent annual growth.

UPI transactions in volume terms were 19.46 billion in June 2026. "UPI continues to strengthen the foundation of India's digital payments



ecosystem. In July 2026, it processed 23.66 billion transactions worth ₹29.88 lakh crore, reaffirming its role as the preferred mode of payment for millions of Indians," PayNearby MD and CEO Anand Kumar Bajaj said.

As UPI adoption deepens, the focus must remain on building trust, awareness and ease of usage at the grassroots, he said, adding that strengthening these founda-

tions will be essential to ensuring that the growth of digital payments translates into wider and more meaningful financial inclusion across Bharat.

UPI is now live in about ten countries, including the UAE, Singapore, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, France, Mauritius, and Qatar, positioning India as a global leader in digital payments. Its growing international adoption is boosting remittances, promoting financial inclusion, and strengthening India's position in the global fintech landscape.

NPCI, an initiative of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Indian Banks' Association, is an umbrella organisation for operating retail payments and settlement systems in India (IBA).

It runs the UPI used for real-time payments between peers or at merchants' end while making purchases.

Vodafone Idea gets ₹26.8 crore DoT notice for default in spectrum-related rollout obligations

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Telecom Department has issued a notice to Vodafone Idea for payment of ₹26.83 crore in liquidated damages, citing alleged default in minimum rollout obligations in respect of spectrum allocated under auctions of 2022, the telco said on Saturday.

The company said it is reviewing the notice received on Friday (July 31) and evaluating next steps.

On the details of the notice, issued by the Department of Telecom, Vodafone Idea (VIL) in a BSE filing said that this is for payment of "liquidated damages amounting to ₹26.83 crore for alleged default in compliance of minimum rollout obligations in respect of spectrum allocated under Spectrum



Auction conducted in 2022".

Currently Government is having more than 49 percent shares in Vodafone Idea, controlled by Kumar Mangalam Birla. Government decided to take the shares of the debt-sunk Birla Group firm, after converting with the company's dues of more than ₹52,000 crore with Government on AGR (Adjusted Gross Revenue).

Though Government is the largest shareholder, the company is managed by the

Birla Group, led by Kumar Mangalam Birla.

The violation pertains to network rollout obligations as specified under the Notice Inviting Applications 2022 (the bid document), which needs to be complied with once the spectrum is assigned. Vodafone Idea, however, said there is no financial or other impact on operations.

"The company is reviewing the notice and evaluating the next steps in this matter," the filing added.

FROM THE

WORLD

SRI LANKA

Rescue begin for fishermen

The Sri Lankan Navy and Air Force have launched a joint search-and-rescue operation for fishermen reported missing after venturing into the sea before a fishing ban was imposed due to rough weather, officials said.

Director General of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Susantha Kahawatta said several fishermen who had gone to sea before authorities announced the ban were now in distress.

A fishing boat that left the northwestern coastal town of Chilaw with two fishermen on board has gone missing, officials said. In a separate incident, the body of a fisherman from the coastal town of Negombo washed ashore after his boat reportedly struck a rock in rough seas. The Sri Lanka Air Force deployed a surveillance aircraft to assist Search teams in the operation, officials said.

USA

Santos agrees for settlement

Disgraced former Congressman George Santos agreed to pay \$35,000 to settle a federal investigation into his suspicious trades on the prediction marketplace Kalshi after he bet against his own plans to attend President Donald Trump's State of the Union.

The one-time Republican lawmaker from New York on Friday said he settled with the federal Commodity Futures Trading Commission to "put this matter behind him", noting that he did not admit to doing anything wrong. "He chose a prompt, practical resolution, rather than protracted, costly litigation, and that choice should not be mistaken for admission of any wrongdoing, because it is not one," Santos' Joseph Murray said in a statement

Santos shared on X. The commission said settlement represents the more than \$17,000 Santos earned.

Trump threatens more strikes on Iran as Hormuz tensions rise

SAMY MAGDY/AAMER MADHANI

■ Cairo

US President Donald Trump threatened more strikes on Iran as the United States presses for the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz.

Hours later on Saturday, Kuwait said it responded to a new round of drone attacks from Iran while a tanker was struck in the strategic waterway. Meanwhile, Israel carried out heavy strikes on the Gaza Strip after the Palestinian militant group Hamas agreed to disarm.

Speaking to reporters during a meeting with members of his Cabinet at the Camp David presidential retreat in Maryland, Trump said "we just want to win" in Iran and signalled that he expected US military action to continue for some time.

He said the US will hit Iran "very hard" until they can't take it anymore.

Later that day, White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt expressed the US administration's frustration anew, charging that Tehran last month signed a memorandum of understanding with the US on a truce but then quickly "broke it, shot at commercial ships, and killed American soldiers."

"President Trump is not going to stand by and allow this terrorist behavior to occur," Leavitt said in a statement. "Iran will continue to pay until they come to the table in, what President Trump deems, a meaningful way."

Enhance use of AI to develop intelligent military: Xi tells PLA

KJM VARMA ■ Beijing

Chinese President Xi Jinping has called on the armed forces to enhance use of AI as part of a drive to develop an "intelligent military system" and asked them to enhance combat capabilities as a testing criterion for promoting high-quality modernisation.

Speaking ahead of the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) 99th anniversary celebrated on Saturday, Xi said the military has made "significant progress" in modernisation and called for "decisive" advances to achieve its objectives.

Xi, who also heads the military, told a Politburo group study session on Thursday



Palestinians inspecting destroyed buildings at the scene of an Israeli airstrike, at al-Maghazi refugee camp, central Gaza Strip

Kuwait's military said Saturday that its forces were responding to drone attacks, which were part of Iran's assaults on the country.

In a statement, Maj Gen Saud Abdulaziz Al-Otaibi, spokesman for Kuwait's Defence Ministry, said the drones hit "a number of vital facilities," including a Government structure in the country's north. He said there were no casualties.

The British Navy said Saturday that a tanker was struck and a separate explosion hit close to a vessel in the Strait of Hormuz off the coast of Oman. No casualties were reported in either incident, it said. The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Organisation said an unknown projectile hit the vessel on Friday 11 nautical miles northeast of Lima, Oman. The attack damaged the vessel's engine room.

The group said that on Saturday a large splash and an explosion were reported close to another tanker while it was sailing 21 nautical miles

northwest of Khasab city. Iran has repeatedly attacked vessels attempting to transit through the Strait of Hormuz without its authorisation as part of its ongoing conflict with the US.

Israel strikes Gaza after Hamas says it will disarm

Intense Israeli strikes on Friday night and Saturday killed at least four people in central and northern Gaza and wounded dozens more, according to local health officials.

The strikes came after Hamas confirmed Friday that it will disarm in a potential breakthrough for ending the war in Gaza, though major obstacles remain. Israel has not officially commented on the Hamas deal, which is part of a US-brokered ceasefire announced last October.

That agreement called for Hamas to disarm and hand over power to an independent Palestinian administration. Israel was to withdraw and an International Stabilization

Force was to be deployed. In a post on X Friday, Israeli far-right lawmaker Itamar Ben-Gvir called the deal "unacceptable" and said the killings in Gaza must continue. "Israel must win," he said.

The strikes overnight in Gaza followed evacuation orders by Israel's military. An Israeli military official said it was striking Hamas. The official spoke on condition of anonymity in line with regulations. Egypt, a key Gaza ceasefire mediator, lauded Hamas and other Palestinian groups for "their positive response" in the phased peace plan, Egyptian state-run media reported.

Houthi rebels forced eight Saudi ships to reroute from the Bab el-Mandeb strait after the Iranian-backed rebels announced a blockade on Saudi shipping in the chokepoint. Brig Gen Yahya Saree, the military spokesman for the Houthis, said in a statement Friday that the vessels changed route to the Cape of Good Hope around Africa to avert the blockade.

In southern Lebanon, Israeli forces set off explosions Friday to destroy an underground tunnel network under the Crusader-built Beaufort Castle that Israel says had been used by Iran-backed Hezbollah militants as a command centre. The 12th-century castle, also known as Al-Shaqif, was seized by Israeli forces in May. It was recently added to UNESCO's World Heritage List over Israel's objections. (AP)



Secretary (Economic Relations) Sudhakar Dalela being presented a memento during the National Day celebrations of the Republic of Benin

China holds military drills near disputed shoal in South China Sea

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Beijing

China conducted military drills near the disputed Scarborough Shoal in the South China Sea on Saturday as territorial tensions with the Philippines intensify.

The joint naval and air drills near the shoal, which is known as Huangyan Island in China and Panatag Shoal in the Philippines, tested the army's ability to coordinate air and sea operations and provide rapid reinforcements, according to state broadcaster CCTV.

The drills came after Beijing criticised Manila's attempts to extend its seabed rights in the South China Sea, a vital global trade route with rich undersea deposits of gas and oil that China claims almost in its entirety. The Philippines earlier this week presented its bid to the United Nations to extend its seabed to include the disputed shoal.

"The so-called territorial sea baselines of Huangyan Dao designated by the Philippine side are illegal and invalid," the People's Liberation Army Southern Theatre Command said in a statement.



China also on Saturday released a set of rules for a nature reserve it established last year around Scarborough Shoal. The regulations ban unauthorised fishing, mining and harvesting of corals.

Chinese coast guards frequently face off with Philippine sailors and fishermen in the disputed waters. Last week, at least three such confrontations occurred. In one of the incidents, the Chinese coast guard allegedly wounded a Philippine sailor by striking him in the head with a baton, according to the Philippine military.

Gor calls on Bangladesh PM to join Pax Silica initiative

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ Dhaka

US Special Envoy for South and Central Asia Sergio Gor on Saturday discussed bilateral ties, trade and investment with Bangladesh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman and called on Dhaka to join the US-led Pax Silica initiative, local media reported.

In a meeting with PM Rahman at his office in Tejgaon, Gor said that Bangladesh has significant potential to become a partner in the global economic security alliance focused on critical minerals, energy, semiconductors, and artificial intelligence (AI) infrastructure, the Dhaka Tribune newspaper reported, citing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Pax Silica, led by the US State Department, aimed to reduce reliance on Chinese



US Special Envoy Sergio Gor meets Bangladesh PM Tarique Rahman in Dhaka on Saturday

tech dominance.

The two sides also discussed bilateral relations, trade and investment, regional cooperation and other issues of mutual interest during the meeting, state-owned Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) quoted PM's Deputy Press Secretary Shahadat Shadhin as saying.

"Today I called on the

Honourable Prime Minister @trahmanbp to discuss the great opportunities between the US and Bangladesh to strengthen economic cooperation and enhance our partnership.

This is a priority for the United States, and working together we can achieve real results," Gor, who is also US Ambassador to

India, posted on X after the meeting. Expressing confidence in PM Rahman's leadership, Gor said that stability has returned to Bangladesh under his leadership, the BSS report said.

He said the US has revised its travel advisory for Bangladesh, sending an important message to American investors that the country is now ready for investment. Rahman called on US to invest in warehousing, soybean, cotton, wheat and other agricultural sectors in Bangladesh, saying it would help build a strong and competitive supply chain, BSS reported.

He also highlighted Bangladesh's interest in attracting US investment in the information technology sector, it said. Gor said that US investors are keen to organise a summit in Bangladesh.



सेंट्रल बैंक ऑफ इंडिया
Central Bank of India

1911 से आपके लिए "केंद्रित" "CENTRAL" TO YOU SINCE 1911

Regional Office Delhi (North)
1398, First Floor, Chandni Chowk,
Delhi- 110006

E-AUCTION
SALE NOTICE
(Under SARFAESI Act 2002)

APPENDIX- IV-A [SEE PROVISO TO RULE 8(6) SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

E-Auction Sale Notice for sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the borrower(s) and guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged / charged to the Central Bank of India (secured creditor), the constructive/ physical Possession of which have been taken by the authorized officer of Central Bank of India(Secured creditors), will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "whatever there is" basis on date 07.09.2026 for recovery of dues to the Central Bank of India from below mention Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s). The Reserve Price and Earnest money deposit (EMD) is displayed against the details of respective properties.

E-AUCTION SCHEDULED TO BE HELD ON 07.09.2026 (30 DAY'S NOTICE)

S. No.	Name of Branch	Authorised Officer / B.M.	Name of the Account	Description of Property & Owner Name	Demand Notice Date & Amount Dues (In Rupees)	Date & Type of Possession	In Rupees Reserve Price EMD Bid Increase
1.	Patparganj Delhi	Mr. Mohit Gangwar Mobile: 8171783511	Juneja Trading Co Prop. Rajni Juneja	Shop No.3097/03, Part of Property Bearing Municipal No.1502 (old) and 3097 (New), Ground Floor Situated at Ward No. VI, Mohalla Dassan Peepal Mahadev, Hauz Qazi Delhi -110006 .Area: 83 Sq Ft Owner : Ramesh Rani Juneja.	17.10.2025 Rs.11.32 Lakh + Other Charges Applicable Deductions/ Repayments	12.06.2026 (Physical)	₹ 12,33,000.00 ₹ 1,23,300.00 ₹ 10,000.00
2.	Sehani Ghaziabad	Mr. Abhay Mishra Mobile: 8588907378	M/s R S Marbles Prop. Mahesh Chand Sharma	All that Part and Parcel of Plot along With Boundary Wall, Measuring 400 Sq Yard i.e 334.40 Sq Mtr Situated at Garhi Road Duhri, Pilakhuwa Within Municipal Limit Pilakhuwa , Khasra No.2570 Owner: Mahesh Chand Sharma	17.05.2021 Rs.10.31 Lakh + Other Charges Applicable Deductions/ Repayments	31.01.2023 (Physical)	₹ 27,00,000.00 ₹ 2,70,000.00 ₹ 30,000.00
3.	RWA Sector-15A	Mr. Amit Yadav Mobile: 8077744291	Himanshu Katariya & Rahul Katariya	Residential House No.154, New Nagar Nigam No-159 Situated at Mohalla Sukhimal, Dasna Gate, Tehsil & District- Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh. Area: 75.46 Sq Mtr Owner: Himanshu Katariya and Rahul Katariya	07.08.2023 Rs.34.73 Lakh + Other Charges Applicable Deductions/ Repayments	06.02.2025 (Symbolic)	₹ 43,00,000.00 ₹ 4,30,000.00 ₹ 50,000.00
4.	RWA Sector-15A	Mr. Amit Yadav Mobile: 8077744291	Himanshu Katariya & Rahul Katariya	Two Shops No. 8 & 10, on Ground Floor, Municipal House No. 544, Situated at Mohalla- Kallupura, Pakka Talab, Tehsil & District-Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh Area 29.72 Sq Mtr. Owner: Himanshu Katariya and Rahul Katariya	07.08.2023 Rs.34.73 Lakh + Other Charges Applicable Deductions/ Repayments	06.02.2025 (Symbolic)	₹ 30,00,000.00 ₹ 3,00,000.00 ₹ 30,000.00

E-AUCTION DATE: 07.09.2026, TIME: 12:00 NOON TO 04:00 PM WITH AUTO EXTENSION OF 10 MINUTES

Last Date & Time of Submission of EMD and Documents (Online) On or Before: 07.09.2026 Upto 03:30 PM.

Bidder will register on website: <https://BAANKNET.com> and upload KYC documents and after verification of KYC documents by the service provider, EMD to be deposited in [BAANKNET](https://BAANKNET.com) EMD wallet through NEFT/RTGS/Transfer / Generation of challan from (<https://BAANKNET.com>) . The auction will be conducted through common landing platform BAANKNET.com Portal (<https://BAANKNET.com>) . E-auction will be held "As is where is", "As is what is" and "whatever there is" basis. (All other charges/ dues to the property will be borne by the purchaser).

For detailed terms and conditions please refer to the link provided in www.centralbank.bank.in Secured Creditor or auction platform (<https://BAANKNET.com>) . Helpdesk: (+91) 8291220220, E-mail: support.BAANKNET@psballiance.com

STATUTORY 30 DAY'S SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 8(6) OF THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002

Borrowers/Guarantors/ Mortgagees are hereby notified to pay the sum as mentioned above along with upto date interest and ancillary expenses before the date of e-auction, failing which the property will be auctioned/sold and balance dues, if any, will be recovered with interest and cost.

DATE: 01.08.2026
PLACE: DELHI

Authorised Officer,
CENTRAL BANK OF INDIA, RO Delhi (North), Delhi



सेंट्रल बैंक ऑफ इंडिया
Central Bank of India

1911 से आपके लिए "केंद्रित" "CENTRAL" TO YOU SINCE 1911

BRANCH OFFICE: BULANDSHAHR ROAD INDUSTRIAL AREA, GHAZIABAD, U.P.

DEMAND NOTICE 13(2)
OF SECURITISATION ACT 2002

Demand Notice Under Section 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act, 2002 to the Borrower/s and Guarantor/s.

This Demand Notice is hereby given under section 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 of 2002) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 hereinafter calling upon the under mentioned Borrowers / Guarantors to repay, the Amounts outstanding for the Credit Facilities granted to them / on their Guarantee, within 60 days from the date of this Notice. If you fail to repay to the Bank the below mentioned amount with further interest and incidental expenses, costs etc. in terms of this notice u/s 13(2) of the Act, the Bank will exercise all or any of the rights detailed under Sub-Section (4) of Section 13 and under other applicable provisions of the said Act. You are also put on notice that in terms of sub-section 4 of Section 13 you shall not transfer by sale, lease or otherwise the said secured assets detailed below of this notice without obtaining written consent of the Bank.

The details of the account and Secured Assets along with Amount Outstanding is given below:-
SCHEDULE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES & OTHER DETAILS

Name & Address of Borrower and Guarantor	Description of the Secured Asset	Date & Amount of 13(2) Notice
BORROWER: MR. YASHPAL SINGH Address: House No. A 169, Ground Floor V P Block, Pitampura, Delhi-110034. MRS. NAINA BAKSHI Address: House No. A 169, Ground Floor V P Block, Pitampura, Delhi-110034. GUARANTOR: MRS. RADHA AGARWAL W/O MR. DEEPAK AGARWAL House No.F-2/962, Gaur Homes Govindpuram, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201013.	Immovable Asset A: Equitable Mortgage of Residential Plot No.D-124, Ground Floor Swaranjayanti Puram, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, Admeasuring Area - 108 Sq.Mtr. Sale Deed No.6158 dated 15/06/2023 which was duly registered in the office of Sub - Registrar Ghaziabad vide Bahi No.1, Jild No.17809, Page No. 45 to 68. Owned by Mr. Yashpal Singh. Bounded By: South: Property No. 123 East: 12 Mtr. wide Road West: Property No. 117 North: Property No. 125 Immovable Asset B: Equitable Mortgage of Residential Flat No.3rd A-130, First Floor, Nehru Nagar, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh Being Conveyance Deed No.9597 dated 11/09/2023 duly registered in Sub Registrar Office Sadar Fourth - Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh. Conveyance Deed No.9597, Bahi No.1, Jild No.42507 on Page 189 to 218 dated 11.09.2023, Admeasuring Covered Area 165.50 Sq.Meter in the name of Mrs. Radha Agarwal. Bounded By: South: Property No. 139 East: Plot No. 134 and 135 West: Part of Plot No.A130 North: Road 80 Feet	Date of 13(2) Notice: 16.07.2026 N.P.A. Date: 29.06.2024 Rs.67,56,074.02 (Rupees Sixty Seven Lakh Fifty Six Thousand Seventy Four and Two Paisa Only) plus future Interest at the applicable rate/s of interest mentioned in the Schedule A from the date of notice 16/07/2026 till the date of full and final payment along with incidental expenses, charges and costs recoverable from you as per terms of contract and/or as per law, within sixty days from the date of this notice.

YOUR ATTENTION IS DRAWN TO THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 13(8) OF THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002 IN RESPECT OF TIME AVAILABLE TO YOU TO REDEEM THE SECURED ASSETS.

ALL OUR PREVIOUS 13(2) DEMAND NOTICES ISSUED UNDER SECTION 13(2) OF THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002 STANDS WITHDRAWN

DATE: 01.08.2026
PLACE: GHAZIABAD, U.P.

Sd/- Authorised Officer,
Central Bank of India

Rescue operation ends at Japan's Aeon Mall after earthquake



MARI YAMAGUCHI ■ Tokyo

Authorities ended on Saturday a massive days-long search-and-rescue operation at a collapsed shopping mall in south-west Japan following a powerful earthquake that killed 34 people earlier this week.

The magnitude 7.1 earthquake hit Kumamoto on Japan's southern main island of Kyushu on Tuesday. The Aeon Mall, in the town of Kashima, was one of the hardest-hit sites, after an explosion that followed the quake caused the walls and a floor to crumble.

The explosion, which the company said was believed to be due to a gas leak, occurred after about 3,000 shoppers had been evacuated to a parking lot following the quake, but some employees remained inside. The mall's second floor collapsed.



Spain to put containment fence on Ceuta’s border

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Ceuta (Spain)

Spain announced it was installing a 500-metre-long (1,600-foot) containment barrier on the sea border between its North Africa territory of Ceuta and neighbouring Morocco after between 50,000 and 60,000 migrants breached the frontier earlier this week.

The death toll has climbed to 67, including some who drowned and others who were killed in a stampede to cross a breakwater barrier, the Spanish Government said on Saturday. A handful of exhausted migrants who swam to Ceuta's urban Tarajal beach Saturday



morning were met by soldiers who escorted them back across the border.

Spain's interior ministry says the majority of those who entered the Spanish territory in North Africa have already returned to Morocco. "We are relentless against

those who break the law," Spanish Interior Minister Fernando Grande-Marlaska told journalists in Ceuta on Saturday. Questioned how this massive border breach could have happened given the heavy security on both sides of the border and

whether Morocco posed a threat to Ceuta, Marlaska defended the Government in Rabat. "The events require an evaluation by Spain and Morocco," he said. But it was the cooperation with its neighbours that allowed Spain "to revert the situation in 24 hours."

"Morocco is not a threat to Ceuta, or to the rest of Spain. It is a reliable partner," Marlaska emphasised.

After days of chaos and streets packed with people who had hoped for a better life in Spain, residents of Ceuta woke up on Saturday to an uneasy calm.

Even so, security in the autonomous city of 84,000 remained bruised. "Life in

this city has been disrupted as a result of the border incident," said Ceuta's President Juan Jesus Vivas.

"The return of people has begun satisfactorily but the process must be completed," he said. "The city has not yet returned to normal."

In the Moroccan city of Tangier, about 75 kilometres (46 miles) west of Ceuta, the main railway station was busy with people returning from Ceuta or the border. Some slept on the ground, exhausted, as passersby watched from a distance.

"I tried to cross, but I failed. I stayed near the border with Ceuta for two days, but I couldn't find anything to eat," said Abdalah, an aspir-

ing migrant who asked that his last name not be published out of fear of retaliation for trying to cross illegally. On the road leading to the Moroccan town of Fnideq, which borders Ceuta, many migrants were seen walking toward the fence, some barefoot, apparently hoping to try their luck. Taxi drivers and bus operators were refusing to take them, fearing retaliation from authorities.

Police officers were deployed along the road, stopping and checking every vehicle heading toward Fnideq. But some who made it to Ceuta were determined to stay. Among them was Mohamed Hatri, a 23-year-old Moroccan.

Seaweed smothers coastlines from Caribbean to Mexico



ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Puerto Morelos

Swaths of seaweed are blanketing the beaches and coastlines of the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico, suffocating shorelines and snuffing out marine life while spooking visitors in areas that depend heavily on tourism.

Some 27 million metric tons of self-sustaining sargassum have been recorded in the Atlantic, Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico in July, according to a report released by the University of South Florida's Optical Oceanography Lab.

The prickly seaweed covers miles of coastline, releasing a foul smell as it rots onshore.

This year marks the first time that scientists have observed sargassum growing in large quantities in areas including the Caribbean and

Gulf of Mexico, instead of being swept into those areas by ocean currents.

The algae usually reproduces asexually as it travels from Western Africa, said Brian Barnes, a marine scientist and research assistant professor at the University of South Florida. "None of this is normal," he said. "Every year is a little bit of a new story." The Great Atlantic Sargassum Belt has been growing since 2011, dumping an increasing amount of seaweed along coastlines in the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico. Experts have said that agricultural runoff, warming waters and changes in wind, current and rain could be factors. The sargassum that began reproducing in the region earlier than usual this year stems from a record 40 million metric tons reported last year.

Russia hits Kyiv with ballistic missiles, killing at least 9

VASILISA STEPANENKO ■ Kyiv

At least nine people were killed and 22 civilians injured in the Ukrainian Capital Kyiv after Russia launched an intense barrage of ballistic missiles and drones overnight into on Saturday, authorities said.

A five-story residential building in the city's Solomianskyi District was damaged by falling debris and a fire broke out. Rescue workers evacuated 35 people from the upper floors of the building and two people died, with eight reported injured including two children, according to Ukraine's State emergency service.

In the Darnytskyi District of Kyiv, seven people were killed and another 14 injured after the attack caused fires and damage to houses, vehicles, an administrative and non-residential building, the emergency services said. Elsewhere, emergency workers extinguished a



fire in a non-residential building in the capital's Shevchenkivskiy district. There was no additional information about earlier reports by the district mayor that people were trapped in another residential building. Damage to commercial and residential buildings was reported in two other city districts.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has pressed the United States and

other Western partners over Ukraine's need for more Patriot anti-ballistic missile defense systems to counter missile attacks from Russia.

The Ukrainian leader late Friday said he spoke to US Vice President JD Vance and discussed a meeting with President Donald Trump earlier this week in Washington, which Zelenskyy described as "positive and productive." "The Russian air strikes on our country continue and air defense, specifically interceptors for Patriot systems against ballistic missiles, remains a top priority," Zelenskyy said in a post on Telegram.

At a NATO summit in Ankara in July, Trump said the US would give Ukraine a license to make Patriot systems but he appeared to move away from that commitment on Friday during a Cabinet meeting at the presidential retreat in Camp David, Maryland, saying he had not

yet made a final decision on the matter. On Saturday's attack on Kyiv came just two days after a large-scale Russian ballistic missile and drone attack across Ukraine killed 10 civilians and wounded more than 50 others and saw a Russian missile enter Polish airspace.

From a basement shelter where she was taking cover as a second air alarm sounded for another wave, Liudmyla Nakonechna, 64, described how she was woken by loud explosions at 1.30 am.

"I ran into the corridor and was standing there when the bathroom door was blown off its hinges and struck me in the leg," said Nakonechna, whose health is poor after undergoing cancer treatment. "I heard the sound of shattering glass. My balcony was covered in glass and it was completely blown apart, while the windows in my bedroom were also blown out," she said. (AP)

50 terrorists arrested in Pakistan's Punjab province



M ZULQERNAIN ■ Lahore

50 terrorists belonging to multiple outlawed organisations were arrested in Pakistan's Punjab province in over a two-month crackdown, police said on Saturday.

According to a statement issued by the Punjab Police's Counter Terrorism Department (CTD), 419 intelligence-based operations were conducted across various districts of the province in response to heightened terrorism threats.

The arrests were part of efforts to dismantle hostile networks, and further investigations are ongoing, it said.

The CTD said the 54 arrested individuals belonged to various terrorist groups, including Islamic State, Al-Qaeda, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, Sipah-e-Sahaba.

The CTD seized explosives, 12 improvised explosive devices, 42 detonators, 98 feet of safety fuse wire, banned stickers, banned literature and cash from their possession during the operations. (PTI)

F-35B stealth fighter crashed in California, says US Marine

KONSTANTIN TOROPIN/
GABRIELA AOUN ANGEIRA
■ San Diego

The US Marine Corps says the pilot of an F-35B stealth fighter is expected to live after ejecting from the jet before it crashed in California.

The jet went down near the Miramar air base in San Diego. "The pilot ejected, was transported to a local medical facility in stable condition for evaluation and treatment of non-life-threatening injuries," the Marine Corps said in an updated statement. Aerial video from a news helicopter showed a plume of black smoke rising from the wreckage in a dirt field, with multiple military and firefighting vehicles and people standing nearby. What appeared to be white flame retardant covered the ground, and at least one person was spraying the wreckage with a fire hose.

Wade Lott saw the crash as he drove to work at a concrete company just south of the flight line.

"It just blew up, it was crazy," said Lott, 36, who watched from his truck as two jets descended toward the runway together.

The first landed without incident, but the second suddenly began slowing down, almost as if it were trying to hover, Lott said. When the jet was about 100 feet (30 m) above the ground, the pilot ejected and their parachute deployed as they rose about 200 feet (61 m) into the air just in time. "The jet hit the ground right next to another plane," said Lott. "It plowed into the runway and just blew up."

Candace Hadley, a spokesperson for San Diego Fire, said firefighters were on scene to respond to a vegetation fire that sparked near the crash site. She referred additional questions to Marine Corps Air Station Miramar. (AP)



People celebrating atop a boat on one of the Dutch capital's historic canals, during the Canal Parade, the most popular event of the Pride Amsterdam festival

AP

Nirav joins chess club at London prison, court told

ADITI KHANNA ■ London

Nirav Modi, wanted in India to face trial in connection with a \$2 billion Punjab National Bank (PNB) fraud and money laundering case, has joined the chess club in his south-west London prison, a UK court was told this week.

The 55-year-old jeweller is lodged back at HMP Wandsworth – where he was originally held following his arrest in March 2019 – before being moved to HMP Thameside and then HMP Pentonville, causing significant disruption to ongoing civil court claims unrelated to the extradition proceedings.

At a hearing on Friday concerning the sale of a luxury apartment in central London linked with the businessman and held in a trust, it emerged that his scheduled appearance via videolink had been called off. "It is his decision not to



attend," said Master James Brightwell, presiding over the case at the Chancery Division of the High Court in London.

The prison officer informed the court that Nirav Modi had been aware of the hearing but had chosen to "join the chess club". His legal team said that as they were seeking an adjournment in the

matter, it had not been necessary for their client to attend. The case involves Trident Trust Company (Singapore) Pte Limited as the claimant, seeking to sell its apartment asset in Marylebone area of central London.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) successfully argued in March 2024 for the proceeds from the sale of 103 Marathon House to be placed in a secure account after all "pressing liabilities" of the trust have been cleared.

The hearing this week sought the "court's blessing" for the sale to proceed at a lower than previously estimated price due to fluctuations in the London property market. Master Brightwell agreed to adjourn the matter until September, with directions for all parties involved to be given sufficient time to present their evidence. (AP)

Thousands of migrant kids in US face deportation risk as aid ends

REBECCA SANTANA/VALERIE GONZALEZ ■ Harlingen

Advocates warn that tens of thousands of migrant children who came to the United States alone could lose legal representation in immigration court and increase their risk of deportation as the Trump administration allows a contract with legal services providers to expire.

The Trump administration did not immediately respond to a request for comment on why it was allowing the contract to expire. But it comes as the administration has redoubled its efforts to achieve its policy of mass deportations, and after migrant children became a target for removal from the country during the first year of President Donald Trump's second term in office.

As part of the expiring contract, the legal groups can enter Government-funded shelters and give presentations to children about their legal rights, and directly represent the children as they go through immigration court proceedings.

But as that contract ends, the providers say it's



unclear what will happen come Monday or whether they'll be able to visit their clients in the shelters where they live. "We have no understanding of what's going to happen to those children come next week. We don't know if they're going to have legal representation.

The Government as of yet has not identified who will take over this representation," said Melissa Lopez, the executive director of Estrella El Paso, during a news conference earlier this week. (AP)

Venezuelans watch new round of talks between Govt, Opposition with cautious optimism

JORGE RUEDA ■ Caracas

Venezuelans are watching the start of a round of US-backed talks between the ruling party and the Opposition on Saturday with cautious optimism after several previous negotiations failed to bring reconciliation.

The latest talks follow the January capture of then-President Nicolas Maduro by US forces, and will focus on strengthening democracy and restoring rights after nearly three decades of socialist rule.

The talks will be led by members of Venezuela's overwhelmingly pro-Government National Assembly and a group of ex-Opposition lawmakers who previously attempted to oust Maduro. US officials say they will have a facilitating role. "I hope these people (the Government)



finally understand that we won't move forward with the usual arbitrary actions; they must respect agreements," said Soraida, a 58-year-old homemaker. "Both sides need to make concessions for the good of the country."

Saturday's meeting comes nearly seven weeks after a gathering in Caracas between National Assembly chief Jorge Rodriguez – the brother of Acting President Delcy Rodriguez – and former lawmaker Dinorah Figueroa, who briefly returned to Venezuela after nearly eight years in exile.

In 2023, Figueroa was selected to represent opposition lawmakers from the 2015 National Assembly, which was widely regarded as Venezuela's last democratically elected institution. She has said the priority is to develop an insti-

tutional agenda that transcends the interests of Venezuela's political groups, as proposed by the Trump administration.

After US forces captured Maduro and his wife, the Trump administration proposed a three-phase plan for Venezuela comprising stabilisation, recovery and democratic transition. On Friday, the US State Department said Washington had no intention of dictating how Venezuela's election would be run and that it understood the complications of trying to prepare for a vote while still recovering from devastating earthquakes.

"We are there to help facilitate, not dictate, a reconciliation process through which the will of the Venezuelan people can be expressed," the department said.

The department said it would

encourage all political parties to transition from protest movements to political parties and open media, an honest and transparent electoral council and security of polling places. "This will take time and patience," it said.

Negotiators have said they will call for national unity in the aftermath of the two powerful earthquakes that struck the country on June 24, leaving more than 5,500 dead according to the latest official report.

Despite the failure of four previous dialogue processes – between 2017 and 2024 – a large majority in Venezuela expect a positive outcome, given the country's unprecedented political situation following the ousting of Maduro and US influence in the Rodriguez administration. (AP)

BRIEFLY

Indian cyclists fail to qualify in men's sprint



Indian cyclists failed to make the cut in the men's sprint qualifying event with Rojit Singh Yanglem emerging as the best-placed at 22nd at the Commonwealth Games on Saturday. While Rojit Singh came up with a timing of 10.297 seconds, Ronaldo Singh Laitonjam ended 24th after clocking 10.331 seconds and David Beckham Elkatohchoongo finished 25th in 10.488 seconds. Australia's Leigh Hoffman topped the qualification with a time of 9.361 seconds, ahead of Trinidad and Tobago's Nicholas Paul (9.603) and compatriot Nijsane Phillip (9.630). (PTI)

Gold for para shot putter Soman Rana; Chitravel, Prabhu clinch silver, bronze



Indian para shot putter Soman Rana clinched gold, while triple jumpers Praveen Chitravel and Selva Prabhu Thirumaran bagged silver and bronze respectively as the country enjoyed a productive day at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow on Saturday. Competing in men's F57 event, Rana, an Asian Para Games silver medallist in 2022, hurled the globe for a season's best 13.40m to stand on top of the podium. Compatriot Shubham Juyal (season's best 13.28m) pocketed silver, while Cameron's Cedric Azamdzi (12.57m) took home the bronze. Earlier, Chitravel set the tone for the day with an excellent effort in men's triple jump. (PTI)

India wins fifth boxing gold in Glasgow CWG

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Glasgow

India won their fifth gold medal in the Commonwealth Games boxing competition but Olympic medallist Lovlina Borgohain settled for a silver here on Saturday. Lovlina lost to Emma-Sue Greentree of Australia in the women's 70kg final in a split 1-4 verdict. Earlier, Indian boxers Jaismine Lamboria, Preeti Pawar, Sakshi Chaudhary, Arundhati Choudhary and Priya Ghanghas won gold medals in their respective categories, while Jadumani Singh settled for a silver. Arundhati beat Chantelle Reid of England in the women's 70kg final in a unanimous 5-0 verdict. Preeti claimed the gold with



India's Lovlina Borgohain, in blue, competes against Australia's Emma-Sue Greentree in the women's 75kg final boxing bout at the 23rd Commonwealth Games (CWG), in Glasgow, Scotland, Saturday. Jaismine clinched the yellow metal with the same scoreline against Northern Ireland's Michaela Walsh, who was the defending champion in the women's 57kg. Sakshi then beat Ruby White of England in women's 51kg final 5-0 to win

Mary Kom's story inspired Pakistan's first female CWG boxing medallist Fatima

APARAJITA UPADHYAY
■ Glasgow

India's MC Mary Kom has inspired generations of home-grown boxers, but the six-time world champion's influence has travelled well beyond the country's borders, reaching Pakistan's first female Commonwealth Games medallist, Fatima Zahra. The 22-year-old signed off with a historic bronze medal in the women's 60kg event here, becoming the first Pakistani woman boxer to stand on a Commonwealth Games podium. Growing up in Sargodha in Pakistan's Punjab province, Fatima had few female boxing role models to look up to in her own country. She instead found one across the border in Mary Kom. "I am inspired by India's Mary



Kom," Fatima told after securing her bronze medal. For Fatima, it was not just Mary Kom's achievements but the story behind them that resonated. Born into a poor farming family in rural Manipur, Mary Kom overcame financial hardship, social resistance and limited resources to become one of the greatest boxers of all time. She secretly pursued boxing in her early years, balancing training with work in the fields before going on to win six world championship titles, an Olympic bronze medal, Asian Games and Commonwealth Games golds, and five Asian Championships. The 2014 Bollywood biopic based on Mary Kom's life left a lasting impression on a then 10-year-old Fatima. "I used to watch the film made on her life. When I started boxing I used to watch that movie and train.

I have a lot of respect for her and inshallah one day I will become like her. I hope I can meet her," Fatima said. Like Mary Kom, Fatima also had to battle opposition at home before she could chase her dreams. "My background is not that strong. My basic coach taught me everything," she said. "My family was against boxing. They would not let me go for training but I fought with them and continued training." Years later, the resistance has turned into unwavering support. "And now they are more tense than me for my fight and competition," she said with a smile. Fatima hopes her breakthrough medal can encourage more Pakistani girls to challenge stereotypes and take up sport instead of being confined to household responsibilities. (PTI)

Tejaswin becomes first Indian to win a decathlon medal in CWG with bronze

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Glasgow

National record holder Tejaswin Shankar overcame a long-standing knee injury and scripted history as he became the first Indian to win a decathlon medal in the Commonwealth Games, clinching a bronze here on Friday. Tejaswin collected a total of 7976 points in the gruelling 10-event discipline competed over two days. He was competing despite having with a chronic patellar tendinitis (jumper's knee) which led to his pulling out from the men's high jump event earlier in the Glasgow Games. A heartbroken Tejaswin was in tears after being forced to withdraw from the high jump event following his opening attempt after the flare-up of the long-standing issue. It was his second CWG



medal after the high jump bronze in the 2022 edition in Birmingham. His national record stands at 8057 points. "I don't know if it was adversity or not. But I do know that the competitiveness in me is alive, and in these conditions and environment, I got the kick and the competitiveness," he said. "I feel good to be in that position where I want to chase something but it is not guaranteed (to get success or not). I feel I am an adrenalin junkie ... I was enjoying the challenge, when I was standing for the 1500m (the last of the 10 events).

Ajaraie's brilliant hat-trick inspires NorthEast United's title defence with a commanding victory

TONY DAS
■ Guwahati

Defending champions NorthEast United FC began the Guwahati chapter of the 135th IndianOil Durand Cup in emphatic fashion, registering a commanding 6-0 victory over Bodoland FC in the opening Group F fixture at the Indira Gandhi Athletic Stadium on Saturday. Returning talisman Alaaedine Ajaraie stole the show with a brilliant hat-trick, while Lalrinzuala Lalbiaknia, Redeem Tlang and Antonio Moyano also found the scoresheet as the Highlanders made the



perfect start to their title defence. All 43 matches of the 135th IndianOil Durand Cup will be broadcast LIVE on the Sony Sports Network and streamed live on SonyLIV. NorthEast United head coach Juan Pedro Benali lined

his side up in a 4-4-2 formation, pairing Ajaraie with Lalrinzuala in attack, while Bodoland FC head coach Vikash Panthi opted for a 4-2-3-1 system with Robinson Blandon Rendon leading the line. The Highlanders immediately

stamped their authority on the contest, dominating possession and dictating the tempo. Ajaraie looked lively from the outset, creating the first opportunity with a teasing cross from the left that Macarton Louis Nickson controlled before shooting straight at goalkeeper Birkhang Daimary. NorthEast came close to opening the scoring in the eighth minute when Jithin MS made a surging run down the left before cutting the ball back for Lalrinzuala, whose deft flick found Mohammed Arshaf in space. The midfielder, however, blazed his effort over the crossbar from a

promising position. Jithin and Lalrinzuala continued to interchange fluently, stretching the Bodoland backline, although defenders Gaurav Bohara, Urjoy Brahma and Didwm Hazowary stood firm to deny the defending champions an early breakthrough. Bodoland had their moments as well. Midfielder Rituraj Mohan produced an excellent sliding challenge to stop Ajaraie from cutting inside, while winger Wanshwadame Diengdoh's effort took a touch off his own teammate before rolling harmlessly wide. NorthEast continued to pile on the pressure with their

high defensive line and sustained spells of possession. Ajaraie twice threatened from free-kicks, first forcing Daimary into spilling the ball before recovering just ahead of Lalrinzuala, and later drawing another impressive save as the goalkeeper punched away a powerful effort destined for the top corner. Despite their dominance, the Highlanders had to wait until first-half stoppage time to break the deadlock. After Bodoland surrendered possession inside their own half, Ajaraie displayed sublime composure inside the penalty area, cushioning the ball

before calmly rolling a left-footed finish beyond the advancing goalkeeper to give his side a deserved lead. NorthEast went into the interval ahead after controlling 58 per cent of possession while registering nine shots, including five on target, compared to Bodoland's two attempts, none of which tested Gurmeet Singh. Bodoland began the second half brightly, winning an early corner and showing greater attacking intent. Substitute Manabir Basumatary impressed with some strong tackles, while Rituraj Mohan and Diengdoh looked to probe Highlanders'

defence from right. However, NorthEast soon regained control and doubled their lead in the 58th minute. Mohammed Arshaf threaded an excellent through ball into the path of Jithin on the right, whose low cross into the six-yard box was turned home by Lalrinzuala from close range. Ajaraie grabbed his second just nine minutes later after Macarton Louis Nickson's delivery caused confusion inside the Bodoland penalty area. A defensive misjudgement left the ball loose, and Moroccan forward reacted quickest before lifting his finish over Daimary to make it 3-0.

Indians seal all singles semifinals spots at Commonwealth TT Championships

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ New Delhi

India stamped its authority on the penultimate day of the Commonwealth Table Tennis Championships, with all eight paddlers storming into the men's and women's singles semifinals at the Thyagaraj Stadium here Saturday. The women completed a clean sweep to set up an all-Indian semifinal lineup, while the men also occupied all four semifinal spots after overcoming stiff overseas and domestic challenges. Top seed Manush Shah was



stretched to six games by Australia's Aditya Sareen before prevailing 11-6, 11-8, 2-11, 13-15, 11-8, 11-5. Payas Jain emerged victorious in the standout all-Indian quarterfinal, edging Harmeet Desai 8-11, 12-10, 12-14, 12-10, 11-6, 11-9 in a gripping six-game contest.

Ankur Bhattacharjee fought back twice to defeat Australia's Nicholas Wen Zheng Lum, while Manav Thakkar recovered from a slow start to beat England's Connor Alexander Green. Earlier, the Indian women ensured themselves four medals by sweeping the quarterfinals. Syndrela Das produced the biggest upset of the day, rallying from a game down to eliminate top-seeded Australian Yangzi Liu 10-12, 11-9, 12-10, 11-8, 7-11, 11-8. Second seed Sreeja Akula outclassed England's Tin-Tin Ho, Ghorpade thrashed Australia's Constantina Psihogios 4-0.

Tanvi enters Taipei Open final, Unnati loses

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Taipei City

Young Indian shuttler Tanvi Sharma stayed on course for her maiden BWF World Tour title, producing another commanding display to outclass Chinese Taipei's Huang Yu-Hsun in straight games and enter the women's singles final of the Taipei Open Super 300 on Saturday. The 17-year-old from Punjab, who finished runner-up at last year's US Open Super 300, outclassed World No. 24 Yu-Hsun 21-17 21-11 in a one-sided semifinal that lasted just 33 minutes. It could have been a dream final between two Indians



but Unnati Hooda suffered a 15-21 18-21 loss to world No. 21 Thuy Linh Nguyen of Vietnam in the other women's singles semifinal. Tanvi, the Junior World Championships silver medallist, will take on the Vietnamese sixth seed in Sunday's title clash.

Tanvi, who was part of India's gold medal-winning squad at the 2024 Badminton Asia Team Championships, has enjoyed a rapid rise over the last two years. Besides finishing runner-up at the Odisha Masters Super 100 and Guwahati

Masters Super 100 in 2025, she has won the Bonn International in 2024 and the Denmark Challenge in 2025. Tanvi displayed her repertoire of attacking strokes, repeatedly unsettling Huang with her steep cross-court smashes and disguised pushes to the back court. In the opening game, from 3-3 it was 7-6 as Huang tried to stay within touching distance for most of the contest. Tanvi, however, maintained a slender lead throughout, moving from 14-10 to 17-11. The local player narrowed it down to 15-17 before Tanvi raised her intensity at the closing stages to seal the

opening game comfortably. The Indian's ability to finish rallies quickly denied Huang any rhythm, with the home shuttler struggling to cope with the pace and angles her rival generated. In the second game, Huang drew level at 9-9 but Tanvi tightened her game and produced precise strikes from the back court while mixing deft drops at the net. She reeled off 12 of the last 14 points to wrap up the contest with a near-flawless finish. In the other match, Nguyen took control midway through the opening game after the two were locked in an intense battle in the early exchanges.

UEFA says it has lost confidence in Infantino after failed private equity plan for WC

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Nyon (Switzerland)

UEFA says it has lost confidence in FIFA President Gianni Infantino and that "no option should be off the table" as it will pursue a full review of his now abandoned plan to sell stakes of the World Cup to private equity investors. Infantino was forced to scrap the plan early Saturday after his senior adviser who sat on a White House panel resigned and Asia's soccer body joined Europe and North America in opposing it. Infantino had proposed creating a \$20 billion company to run the World Cup with private investors, but drew backlash that grew every

day since Tuesday's announcement. "We must identify those responsible and hold them to account," UEFA said on Saturday. "No option should be off the table. The current FIFA leadership has not only lost UEFA's confidence but also that of many other members of the football family." The governing body of European soccer, headed by Aleksander Ceferin, issued its blistering statement hours after FIFA announced it was withdrawing its private equity plan. "We cannot keep going on like this with secret schemes on fast-track timescales, cooked up by faceless individuals and of dubious benefit to the game," UEFA



said. "It is right that, in the coming days and weeks, UEFA will work with its associations and in close cooper-

ation with other confederations to reflect on how this happened and devise a plan to make sure that it cannot

occur again." UEFA's 55-member nations agreed to boycott the World Cup and all other FIFA competitions over Infantino's plan on Thursday. North America's CONCACAF and the Asian Football Confederation also said they opposed the plan. Infantino's senior adviser, Carlos Cordeiro, a former Goldman Sachs banker who represented the soccer body on the White House Task Force for the World Cup, resigned on Friday and urged other senior FIFA staff to speak out. "I cannot stand by while FIFA considers selling a stake in the World Cup," Cordeiro said in a statement, just hours after FIFA insisted: "Nobody is selling football."

Hours later, FIFA chief operating officer Kevin Lamour issued a statement to The Associated Press, saying FIFA staff were deceived by Infantino's lack of openness in planning the sale over recent months and that the project must not continue. Infantino has proposed spinning off FIFA's commercial businesses - including World Cups and Club World Cups for men and women - into a \$20 billion subsidiary with 20% owned by private investors. The "anchor investor," described by FIFA, is a New York-based investment firm created by Joshua Kushner, the younger brother of U.S. President Donald Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner. (AP)

With 7 medals, para team delivers best CWG show

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Glasgow

Indian para sports athletes scripted history in the Glasgow Commonwealth Games as they equaled the haul of all the previous editions put together, winning seven medals, including one gold and silver on the concluding day in Glasgow on Saturday. The 28-member Indian para sports contingent ended their campaign with seven medals - 3 gold, 2 silver and 2 bronze. There is no Indian event in para sports on Sunday. It is the best ever performance for Indian para sports in the Commonwealth Games. Since the introduction of



para-sports in the CWG in 2002 edition in Manchester, India have won a total of seven medals - one gold, two silver and four bronze. Before Glasgow, the 2022 Birmingham Games was the most productive one for Indian para sports with Bhavina Patel and Sonalben Patel winning a gold and a bronze respectively in para table tennis.

Chopra wins javelin throw silver in CWG, bronze for Yashvir

APARAJITA UPADHYAY
■ Glasgow

Indian javelin throw superstar Neeraj Chopra was not at his best under testing conditions but still delivered a silver medal while Yashvir Singh fetched a surprise bronze with his last throw in the Commonwealth Games here on Friday.

The 28-year-old Tokyo Olympics champion produced a season's best throw of 85.83m in his second attempt, which was good enough for a second place finish. His effort on Friday was just a shade better than the 85.69m he had come up while finishing fourth at the Doha Diamond League on June 19, his only other event

this season. The 24-year-old Yashvir on his debut at Games stunned one and all with a personal best 85.41m throw in his sixth and final attempt as Indians finish 2-3 on the podium.

His earlier personal best was 83.72m. He was at seventh spot after the penultimate round with his third attempt measuring 81.33m before producing a memorable 85.41m throw to join Chopra on the podium. Sri Lankan star Rumesh Tharanga Pathirage won the gold as expected with a best throw of 89.75m which he recorded in his second attempt.

The near-90m throw was noteworthy as the athletes were competing under cold



and windy conditions. He is the lone javelin thrower this season to have breached the 90m mark. He has a personal and season best throw of 92.62m which he had record-

ed while winning the Rome Diamond League title in June. Chopra had returned from a lower back injury that has troubled him since September last year. The

injury delayed his return until the Diamond League in Doha. It was his second Commonwealth Games, having won a gold in the 2018 edition in Gold Coast.

He indicated that he was still not at his full fitness but slowly getting there.

"I can't say fitness is like before. But I'm getting there slowly. There is still time for the Asian Games. I will compete in Diamond League before that. There will be more improvement. Will improve slowly," Chopra said after his event. Chopra said his comeback from injury has been satisfactory. "Although we always want the national anthem to play but I did my season best and comeback is going okay, there are other competitions as well. I am happy," he said.

"The weather was better than yesterday. It was good in the starting but later it became cold and there was

wind. "I also had a one go throw only, I thought it will go further but it didn't fly. I thought I could have pushed myself further. I'm trying to get into my rhythm. I am not able to do that well in these conditions, I like hot weather ... (I'm) Indian blood."

For Yashvir, sharing the podium with Chopra was a happy moment for him.

"I am happy that I could do my personal best and also get a medal in such conditions," he said. The third Indian in the fray, Rohit Yadav finished seventh with a best throw of 81.56m. Interestingly, athletes from the Indian subcontinent swept all the men's javelin throw medals in the Games. However, Pakistan's defending champion and

reigning Olympic gold medalist was eliminated after three rounds with a best distance of 77.41m. Reigning world champion Keshorn Walcott of Trinidad and Tobago finished sixth with 82.55m.

Chopra opened with a 80.97m before his second round throw of 85.83m which was his best of the day. His third and fourth attempts measured 81.29m and 80.73m respectively while his last two throws were fouls.

He led the 12-athlete field briefly but Pathirage sent his spear to 89.75m, just one-fourth of a metre short of the coveted 90m mark, in his second attempt to snatch the lead, which he held till the end. Ironically, all of his five other attempts were fouls. (PTI)

Unnati bags bronze, India's record CWG haul in judo rises to four medals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Glasgow

Indian judoka Unnati Sharma clinched the bronze medal in the women's 63kg event to continue the country's historic run at the Commonwealth Games here on Saturday.

Unnati defeated South Africa's Skye Knoester by ippon, wrapping up the contest in just 1 minute and 7 seconds with a decisive move, hooking her leg to unbalance Knoester before throwing her cleanly onto her back to earn an ippon — the highest score in judo — and seal the bout instantly.

The Indian had earlier gone down to Australia's Saya Middleton in the semifinal



but bounced back strongly to secure a place on the podium with an emphatic victory.

The bronze was India's fourth medal in judo, continuing the country's best-ever Commonwealth Games campaign in the sport.

The historic run was led by Harsh Singh (men's -60kg)

and Asmita Dey (women's -48kg), who became India's first-ever Commonwealth Games judo gold medallists with twin titles on Saturday. Yamini Mourya added a silver in the women's -57kg category, giving India their record haul.

India will have a chance to

add to their record tally on the concluding day on Sunday, with Ishroop Narang (women's -78kg), Avtar Singh (men's -100kg) and Yash Ghangas (men's +100kg) all in medal contention.

In the final bout of the day, India's Harsh Tokas narrowly missed out on a bronze medal in the men's -81kg judo, losing to Australia's Keishin Ochi by ippon.

The contest began cautiously, with both judokas receiving a Shido for passivity within the opening 18 seconds. Tokas picked up a second Shido midway through the match as neither fighter was able to gain a clear advantage.

With 43 seconds remaining, Ochi seized his opportunity, executing a quick throw that sent Harsh onto his back to score an ippon and seal the bronze.

Tokas earlier suffered a narrow 0-1 defeat to Cyprus' Odysseas Georgakis, who clinched the bout with a yuko. Tokas though bounced back by winning against Peniamina Percival in the repechage.

It was also the end of the road for Inunganbi Takhellambam (women's -70kg) and Karanjit Singh Maan (men's -90kg), who could not cash in on the chance they got through repechage rounds.

Karanjit lost the men's -90kg last-eight clash to Canada's Guillaume Gaulin, conceding the defeat by

ippon after defeating New Zealand's Elliott Connolly by ippon in three minutes and 29 seconds. He later lost the repechage round to home favourite Scott Cusack.

Inunganbi lost to Canada's Charlie Thibault by ippon in three minutes and 23 seconds after conceding a yuko earlier in the contest.

She faced England's Jemima Yeats-Brown in the repechage contest but could not utilise the opportunity to her advantage.

Earlier, Unnati opened her campaign with a dominant Round of 16 victory over Eswatini's Lamulela Magagula, sealing the contest by ippon in just one minute and 39 seconds after scoring two successive waza-ari.

India drawn with Maldives, Pak in SAFF Championship 2026



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ New Delhi

Defending champions India have been drawn with Maldives and Pakistan in Group B of the SAFF Championship 2026, following the draw conducted in Thimphu, Bhutan, on Saturday.

The 15th edition of the sub-continental football tournament will be hosted in Dhaka from November 4-17. Chasing a record-extending 10th SAFF championship title, India will begin their campaign against Maldives on November 5 before taking on Pakistan on November 11.

Hosts Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Bhutan are placed in Group A.

In the event that FIFA's suspension of the All Nepal Football Association is lifted by September 1, Nepal will be included in Group A.

If the suspension stays, the SAFF Championship 2026 will go ahead with six teams.

The top two teams from each group will qualify for the

semi-finals, with Group A winners meeting Group B runners-up and vice-versa.

The semi-finals will take place on November 14, and the final will be on November 17. India have a splendid head-to-head record against both their group stage opponents.

The Blue Tigers have won 16 of the 25 meetings against Pakistan, drawing seven and losing only two.

Their last face-off was in the SAFF Championship 2023, with India securing a dominant 4-0 win. Against Maldives, India have a record of 13 wins, two draws and three losses in 18 encounters. The last meeting was in a friendly in March 2025 when the hosts clinched a 3-0 win in Shillong.

India have won the SAFF Championship on nine previous occasions — 1993, 1997, 1999, 2005, 2009, 2011, 2015, 2021, and the last in 2023, when the Blue Tigers defeated guest side Kuwait in a memorable final in Bengaluru.

Haeran Ryu takes 1-shot lead after 2 rounds of British Women's Open

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Lytham St Annes (England)

Haeran Ryu birdied Number 18 to complete a 2-under 69 for a one-shot lead after two rounds of the British Women's Open on Friday as the South Korean star pursues a third consecutive major victory.

Ryu overcame a tough start — including a double bogey on the par-3 5th — to tally five birdies and reach 7 under overall at Royal Lytham & St. Annes.

Shiho Kuwaki of Japan was one shot back after her 70, and overnight leader Jeeno Thitikul and Yealimi Noh were tied for third, both two strokes behind Ryu.

"I'm just trying to have fun on the course because this

course is (very) stressful," Ryu said, citing "a lot of bunkers" plus windy conditions. Not since Inbee Park in 2013 has anyone claimed three straight majors. Ryu won the Women's PGA at Hazeltine and closed with 60 to win the Evian Championship. "There are a lot of great players in here, so that's why I just want to think about my golf," she added. "Because this is a major, nobody knows what comes up." Thitikul, still in pursuit of her first victory at a major, brought a two-stroke lead over Kuwaki and Ryu into day two but made three bogeys in her 73.

"I'm not hitting like as close to the pin as yesterday," Thitikul said. "Maybe the pin position was kind of hard,



too." Kuwaki led after her birdie on 16 and following

Thitikul's second bogey of the day — on the par-5 11th

when the Thai star's putt for par didn't drop.

Noh bounced back from a double bogey on the par-4 Number 4 with back-to-back birdies in her 70. Thitikul, one of only two players to have been Number 1 in the women's world ranking without ever having won a major, had a bogey-free 64 in the first round but didn't give herself a good birdie opportunity Friday until the par-3 12th, where she rolled in from six feet to regain a share of the lead at the time on 6 under overall.

With Kuwaki in the clubhouse, Thitikul then fell a shot back on the 14th when she misjudged a birdie putt before missing from four feet on her second putt, ending with her third bogey.

Thitikul limited the damage, though, on the 15th when she saved par with a long putt.

"I definitely ... get frustrated sometimes," Thitikul said. "I get really frustrated when I three-putt on 14 and then I end up on like the bunker on 15. I was like so frustrated out there." Thitikul has been overlooked during the LPGA major season dominated by Ryu and Nelly Korda, who have split the four majors. Korda, who replaced Thitikul at No. 1 in April, won the first two majors and Ryu won the next two.

Kuwaki had three straight birdies early in her round but sandwiched them with bogeys. She dropped another shot on the 15th. Korda trails by six shots after her 68 on Friday.

One-Day Cup: Kuldeep Yadav gets Stokes' wicket, Ashutosh bags fifer

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ London

India left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav played a prominent part in Yorkshire's victory over Durham in the One-Day Cup, dismissing former England captain Ben Stokes at the Clifton Park ground. After having Stokes (12) caught by George Hill, Kuldeep (10-1-23-2) also accounted for England white ball specialist Colin Ackermann (26) as Yorkshire skittled Durham for a lowly 165 in 48.1 overs.

James Wharton (68 not out) and Sam Whiteman (52 not out) made fifties as



Yorkshire overhauled the target in 41 overs.

In another match, all-rounder Ashutosh Sharma (5/51) grabbed his maiden five-wicket haul in List A cricket as Hampshire defeated Essex by three wickets at the Chelmsford county

ground. Ashutosh's regular strikes helped Hampshire to restrict a free-rolling Essex to 317 in 49 overs. In reply, fifties by James Fuller (58 not out), skipper Nick Gubbins (53) and Tom Prest (51) helped Hampshire to go past the target in 47.4 overs.

Indian cyclists finish at back in men's 4000m individual pursuit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Glasgow

India's challenge in the men's 4000m individual pursuit ended in the qualification stage as both Dinesh Kumar and Harshveer Singh Sekhon finished towards the bottom of the standings, while Australia underlined its dominance in the event at the Chris Hoy Velodrome during the Commonwealth Games here on Friday.

Dinesh was the better-placed of the two Indians, finishing 17th among 23 riders with a time of 4:29.267 (average speed 53.479 kmph), more than 25 seconds behind Australia's Oliver Bledbyn, who topped the qualification in a



Commonwealth Games record time of 4:04.132 (58.984 kmph). Harshveer ended 19th after clocking 4:35.524 (52.264 kmph).

Dinesh began cautiously, covering the opening 1000m in 1:11.875, before significantly improving his pace over the next two kilometres with

splits of 1:05.175 and 1:04.379. However, he was unable to sustain the momentum and slowed in the final kilometre, clocking 1:07.838.

The qualifying session was dominated by Australia, which placed three riders in the top four. Bledbyn, the reigning Olympic team

pursuit champion from the Paris Games and a silver medalist in the team pursuit at the 2025 UCI Track Cycling World Championships in Santiago, carried his impressive form into Glasgow by setting the Games record.

He edged compatriot Conor Leahy, who qualified second in 4:04.147, by just 0.015 seconds to set up an all-Australian gold medal race.

The bronze medal contest will feature Matthew Bostock of the Isle of Man, who qualified third in 4:04.700, against Australia's James Moriarty, fourth in 4:05.677.

In the 4000m individual pursuit, the two fastest riders from the qualification round advance to the gold medal race, while the third

and fourth fastest qualifiers compete for the bronze medal.

Australia will now be assured of at least two medals in the discipline after its commanding display in qualification.

The Indian cyclists endured a disappointing outing in the men's keirin competition, finishing well down the order in the tactical, high-speed qualifying heats, with the country's leading sprinter David Beckham emerging as the best performer among the three from the country.

Competing in Heat 3, the 22-year-old Beckham finished fifth, clocking +0.780 seconds behind heat winner Daniel James Barber of Australia.

A WC banner makes the Falkland Islands a cultural obsession

ISABEL DEBRE
■ Buenos Aires

It took a World Cup to transform a remote cluster of islands that's home to more sheep than people into a cultural juggernaut.

A decision by Argentina's players to unfurl a banner about the disputed Falkland Islands after defeating England in the World Cup semifinals carried a historical cause onto the T-shirts, bedroom walls and Instagram feeds of a new generation. In the weeks since, the image that has endured from the tournament in soccer-crazed Argentina hasn't been of Lionel Messi. It's been the crudely painted sign reading:

"The Malvinas are Argentine." The South Atlantic archipelago, known in Argentina as the Malvinas, is claimed by both Argentina and Britain, which fought a 10-week war over the territory in 1982.

The banner spawned a marketing bonanza in Argentina, appearing on stickers, tote bags, sneakers, artwork and soccer jerseys. It was draped over bars, painted onto subway walls and tattooed onto calves and forearms. Thousands of Argentines downloaded "Malvinas Sans," a typeface modeled on the banner's hand-painted lettering. Colorful murals of the islands and of war veterans popped up across the country.

"The World Cup is now



over, and yet people are still talking about the Malvinas because the Malvinas somehow became part of the World Cup," said Edgardo Esteban, an author and veteran of the war. "Kids in

schools are asking me, What's this Malvinas thing? Now there's a passing of the torch." None of Argentina's players had been born when the country's military dictatorship invaded the Falklands in

1982, holding the islands for 73 days before British forces recaptured them in a war that killed 649 Argentine and 255 British troops.

But they grew up in a country haunted by the humiliation of that ill-fated invasion, widely seen as a desperate bid for popularity by the weakened junta that fell a year later. As Argentina emerged from the trauma of the brutal dictatorship, many veterans and families of conscripts killed in the war felt their sacrifices had been sidelined by a nascent democracy that sought to distance itself from the disaster.

"As veterans, we spent a long time feeling silenced, forgotten, pushed aside," Esteban said. (AP)

Navneet Singh and Dinesh Kumar lose to England in lawn bowls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Glasgow

The Indian duo of Navneet Singh and Dinesh Kumar's dominant run at the Commonwealth Games lawn bowls competition came to an end as they lost in tie-break to England's Nick Brett and Jamie Walker in the men's pairs sectional play on Saturday.

England won the opening set 4-3 while the Indians took the second set 4-2, forcing the match Section B, Round 5 match into tie-breaker where the combo of Dinesh and Navneet went down 0-1, the result halting



their excellent run in the sporting extravaganza.

The Indian men's pairs duo put on a dominant display in

Section B, securing four consecutive victories to position themselves on the brink of knockout stage qualification.

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“WE MUST FORCE THE GOVERNMENT TO STOP THE BIRD
MIGRATION. WE MUST SHOOT ALL BIRDS, FIELD ALL OUR
MEN AND TROOPS... AND FORCE MIGRATORY BIRDS TO
STAY WHERE THEY ARE”
—VLADIMIR ZHIRINOVSKY

Canada permanent residence was never a door-to-door promise



SURJIT SINGH FLORA



A CANADIAN STUDY PERMIT
ISN'T A PERMANENT
RESIDENCE DOCUMENT. A
COLLEGE LETTER ISN'T A JOB
OFFER. A POST-GRADUATION
WORK PERMIT ISN'T A
GUARANTEE THAT A GRADUATE
WILL QUALIFY FOR PR

hours, and no assured PR outcome. It should also explain what happens if the student can't find qualifying employment or if the immigration rules change before graduation.

This is where the system failed many students. The business rewarded volume. Families were asked to make life-changing payments before they understood how fragile the pathway could be. Some families sold land. Others mortgaged homes or took high-interest loans. For them, a Canadian file wasn't paperwork. It was the family's savings, social standing, and hope for a better future.

A failed application could leave a family with debt and no clear way to recover the money. A fraudulent application could create a second problem, immigration enforcement, even when the student didn't know how the documents were prepared. Words such as "guaranteed visa," "guaranteed job," and "guaranteed PR" should have stopped the process immediately. Authorized representatives can advise clients and submit applications. They can't control Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, provincial governments, or employers.

Canada created the immigration rules. It issued study permits. It approved designated learning institutions. But Canada didn't send officials into Punjab or Gujarat to assure parents that every student would get permanent residence.

In many cases, private intermediaries made that promise because they wanted fees, commissions, or both. That fact doesn't clear Canadian institutions of responsibility.

Colleges accepted international tuition and benefited from recruitment systems that brought students across the world. Regulators and government agencies had information about enrollment, complaints, labor shortages, and immigration applica-

tions. The public question is whether they acted quickly enough when the warnings became difficult to ignore.

The case linked to Brijesh Mishra, an agent associated with Education Migration Services in Jalandhar, showed how damaging false college letters can be. News reports connected the case to hundreds of Indian students, with around 700 students facing fears about removal from Canada.

The Canada Border Services Agency filed criminal charges against Mishra in June 2023. The charges included unauthorized representation, counselling misrepresentation, and communicating false information. In May 2024, reports said he received a three-year Canadian prison sentence after pleading guilty to immigration offenses.

Some affected students said they trusted their representatives and didn't know their admission documents were forged. That claim required investigation, not automatic dismissal. A student may have paid an agent to handle admissions, forms, and communication with a college without understanding what was uploaded in the student's name. That doesn't erase the need to examine the application. It does mean the investigation must identify who created the false document, who knew about it, and who received payment.

Gujarat has also seen complaints alleging promises of Canadian visas, jobs, and PR. Reported allegations involved sums of about Rs 31 lakh, Rs 26.86 lakh, Rs 25 lakh, and Rs 4.25 lakh. Those figures are allegations, not court findings. Still, they show the scale of potential damage when migration is marketed as a guaranteed product. Police raids on 17 consultancy firms in Ahmedabad, Gandhinagar, and Vadodara over document irregularities added to public concern.

The loss can be brutal: vanished savings, loan repayments, delayed education, removal proceedings, and future immigration difficulties. Families can also lose years. A student may spend time in Canada trying to repair a file, find a new program, or respond to a removal notice. During that period, loan interest continues and the family may have no reliable answer about what happens next. International students shouldn't be blamed as one group. Each case needs evidence.

A student who knowingly bought fraudulent papers must face legal consequences.

A student misled by an agent deserves a fair review.

Canadian authorities have shown why individual review matters. IRCC reviewed 108 cases connected to fraudulent college admission letters. Many students reviewed were found to be genuine, and some received temporary resident permits.

Overseas agents, Canadian consultants, colleges, provincial authorities, IRCC, and the CBSA all have duties. A college should know who recruits in its name. A consultant should know who works under or beside the firm. Regulators should follow the money, not only the student at the end of the chain.

The College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants, or CICC, regulates Canadian immigration consultants. Anyone paying a Canadian consultant should check that person's status through the CICC public register.

IRCC also warns people against websites and representatives promising entry to Canada, high-paying jobs, or guaranteed results. A license allows a consultant to provide paid advice. It doesn't make the outcome certain.

Licensed consultants may also remain responsible for agents acting on their behalf. Hidden partnerships make enforcement harder, but they shouldn't become an excuse for weak scrutiny.

Colleges should publicly list authorized recruitment partners and disclose commission arrangements. Consultants should disclose every overseas agent involved in a file.

Students should receive written notice that admission doesn't guarantee work authorization, a job, or PR. Agencies should preserve application records. Investigators should examine document preparers, payment trails, and everyone who earned money from a fraudulent application.

The student shouldn't be the only person whose records are available. If an agency collected millions from applicants, its contracts, bank transfers, advertisements, and communications should be part of any serious investigation. Fraud complaints can go to local police, the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre, the RCMP, or relevant Indian authorities. The crisis can't be dismissed by claiming students expected too much from Canada. Many expectations were shaped by a commercial chain that sold uncertain routes as near-certain outcomes.

There is a counterargument: adults who borrow money and sign applications should understand that no immigration result is guaranteed. That is true, but it doesn't excuse false advertising, forged documents, hidden fees, or undisclosed risks. Personal responsibility and institutional responsibility can exist at the same time.

Canada didn't personally promise permanent residence to every Indian family. But Canadian colleges, consultants, and regulators had a duty to control the system that profited from those promises. Families need documents, written terms, and verified credentials before paying an agent. They should ask which institution will issue the credential, what work authorization may follow, which immigration programs could apply, and what happens if PR isn't available. Canada permanent residence must be treated as an immigration decision, never as a product on sale.

Surjit Singh Flora is a veteran journalist and freelance writer based in Brampton Canada

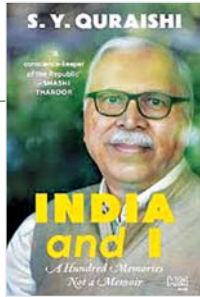
NEW ARRIVALS

India and I: A chronicle of Quraishi's memories

TEAM AGENDA

Public lives are usually captured in heavy, chronological autobiographies. Dr SY Quraishi shatters that predictable format in *India and I: A Hundred Memories, Not a Memoir*. Instead of sweeping histories, the former Chief Election Commissioner delivers a deeply personal mosaic of one hundred self-contained moments. Each memory is crafted in exactly two pages.

Javed Akhtar describes these vignettes as "short films," noting they form a portrait of India no single narrative could capture. Meanwhile, Shashi Tharoor calls the collection an "urgent, vital book" that pushes readers to build upon the dreams of the nation's founders. Quraishi proves the real story of a country hides in small, overlooked interactions like a split-second decision, a career-altering meeting, or a quiet chat revealing the true nature of power. He takes readers far beyond sterile bureaucratic corridors. The episodes seamlessly transition from his nostalgic childhood in Old Delhi and a distinguished Indian Administrative Service career to global observer missions in war-torn Sri Lanka and Myanmar. Through candid, insightful prose, Quraishi maps encounters with Nobel laureates alongside conversations with a humble gardener. He balances political intrigue within Delhi's highest power circles with insider accounts of landmark electoral reforms.



Author: SY Quraishi
Publisher: Hachette India
Price: ₹699

WEEKLY MOON SIGN FORECAST | 2 - 8 AUGUST

Clearing Confusion, Taking Initiative and Finding Stability

Dr Shanker Adawal
Astrologer, Author & Researcher

This forecast is based on your Moon Sign (Janma Rashi), which often reflects day-to-day emotional and instinctive patterns more closely than general Sun-sign readings.

Moon Watch

The Moon's quiet message for the week ahead. The week moves from detached observation towards emotional understanding and timely action. Avoid forcing an early conclusion; what appears uncertain may become easier to handle.

Weekly Overview

The week opens under the Aquarius Moon, encouraging observation, fresh thinking and some emotional distance. Pisces then deepens intuition, though assumptions may need checking. As the Moon enters Aries, decisions and movement gather speed. By the weekend, Taurus restores a steadier rhythm, helping practical matters and personal priorities settle into place.



Aries (Mesh): Friends, professional contacts or future plans may bring useful ideas during the opening days. Midweek feels quieter, and unfinished thoughts may need attention before action begins. Once the Moon enters Aries, confidence rises and delayed work can move again. The weekend turns focus towards finances and practical priorities. Take initiative, but leave room to review the details.

Taurus (Vrishabh): Professional expectations may remain active at the beginning of the week, though not every discussion needs an immediate response. Pisces encourages reflection on friendships and long-term plans. Midweek may feel faster as pending matters begin moving. By the weekend, the Moon enters Taurus, bringing emotional steadiness and clearer personal priorities. Your calm approach may quietly influence others.



Gemini (Mithun): Learning, travel plans or discussions about the future may hold your attention early in the week. Professional responsibilities become more noticeable as the Moon enters Pisces, so keep communication simple and clear. Midweek supports teamwork and fresh contacts. The weekend may encourage a slower pace, allowing you to review recent decisions before taking on another commitment.

Cancer (Karka): Shared responsibilities, finances or an unresolved personal matter may require closer attention during the opening phase. Pisces broadens perspective and may bring helpful advice through an experienced person. As Aries energy develops, career matters gather pace and visibility increases. By the weekend, friends or professional networks may offer practical support. Avoid carrying every concern alone.



Leo (Simha): Partnerships and close relationships may require patience at the beginning of the week. Midweek brings deeper emotional understanding, though it is better to ask than assume. The Aries Moon restores confidence and supports travel, learning or future planning. By the weekend, professional priorities become clearer. A thoughtful decision may carry more weight than a dramatic statement.

Virgo (Kanya): Routine work, health priorities and unfinished responsibilities may occupy the early days. As the Moon moves through Pisces, relationships and shared decisions require greater sensitivity. Midweek could bring financial discussions or matters involving trust. The weekend broadens your outlook and supports learning or planning. Keep expectations realistic, especially where others are also adjusting.



Libra (Tula): Creative work, personal interests or family activities may provide useful relief from routine. Pisces turns attention towards work habits and practical organisation, making small corrections worthwhile. As Aries energy develops, partnerships become more active and direct conversations may be necessary. By the weekend, financial commitments or shared responsibilities deserve a careful and balanced review.

Scorpio (Vrishchik): Home, family matters or personal comfort may remain important during the opening days. Pisces supports creativity and warmer emotional expression, helping some relationships feel easier. Midweek brings greater activity in work and routine matters. By the weekend, partnerships move into focus and practical cooperation becomes necessary. Listen carefully before deciding what the other person intends.



Sagittarius (Dhanu): Communication, paperwork or short journeys may keep the opening days busy. As the Moon enters Pisces, home and family concerns may require more emotional attention than expected. Midweek encourages creativity, confidence and social activity. The weekend returns focus to health, routines and practical work. A simple plan will be easier to follow than an ambitious one.

Capricorn (Makar): Financial priorities and practical responsibilities may need careful handling at the beginning of the week. Pisces improves communication and may help clear an old misunderstanding. Midweek turns attention towards home, family or personal arrangements. By the weekend, creativity and lighter social moments bring relief. Progress may feel modest, but it is likely to be more dependable.



Aquarius (Kumbh): With the Moon beginning the week in Aquarius, ideas, independence and personal priorities become stronger. Pisces then shifts attention towards money, values and emotional security. Midweek brings quicker conversations and movement, but impatience may create confusion. By the weekend, home and family matters settle into a more manageable rhythm. Choose clarity over cleverness.

Pisces (Meen): The opening phase may feel inward-looking, giving you time to observe before becoming involved. Once the Moon enters Pisces, intuition strengthens and personal concerns become easier to understand. Midweek turns attention towards finances and practical decisions. By the weekend, communication improves and useful discussions may reopen. Trust your instincts, but support them with facts.



CJP protest...

Millennials debated politics on Facebook and television. Today's young organise through reels, memes, stitched videos and digital communities that often command greater trust than conventional newsrooms. Every smartphone became a camera, an archive and a broadcasting station. Politics no longer travelled only from party headquarters to television studios and then to citizens. It travelled horizontally, creator to creator, page to page and reel to reel. That transformation is perhaps the most enduring legacy of the past month's protests. It signalled not merely a revolt over examinations, but the arrival of a generation that has chosen to participate in politics on entirely new terms.

The emergence of this new political culture also exposed the limitations of the ruling establishment's response. For more than a decade, the Bharatiya Janata Party has set the benchmark for political communication in India. It recognised the electoral potential of television before its opponents, mastered WhatsApp as a campaign tool and built one of the country's most sophisticated political communication machines. Yet every political strategy eventually encounters a generation whose instincts it struggles to understand. For the BJP, that generation appears to be Gen Z.

This is not because young Indians have suddenly become ideological opponents of the government, but because they inhabit an entirely different information ecosystem. They are influenced less by television studios and WhatsApp forwards than by creators, peer networks and digital communities where authenticity matters more than choreography and satire travels faster than carefully curated messaging. The challenge before the ruling party is therefore no longer simply one of commu-

nication. It is one of credibility.

If the resignation of the Education Minister reflected the movement's political success, the weeks that followed revealed the State's continuing discomfort with youth-led dissent. Instead of sustaining a national conversation on examination reforms and institutional accountability, attention increasingly shifted to the conduct of individual protesters.

In Parliament, concerns were raised that young people were being detained, questioned and investigated across Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Bihar, Assam and Maharashtra. Questions were also raised regarding the number of students detained, the number placed under investigation, whether social media accounts were being blocked or scrutinised and whether assurances that peaceful protesters would not be targeted were being honoured in both letter and spirit. The demand was not merely for restraint but for transparency through a detailed state-wise statement from the government.

The conversation soon moved beyond the streets and into the digital sphere. Several young protesters, particularly women, found themselves at the centre of intense online targeting. Personal details were circulated, workplaces were contacted and individual social media posts were amplified to discredit the larger movement. One of the most striking examples was that of 15-year-old Ruchika Singh, who publicly apologised after an abusive slogan directed at the Prime Minister drew nationwide attention and legal scrutiny.

The episode quickly became less about a teenager's words and more about the political spectacle surrounding them. Equally troubling were attempts by sections of the political establishment to personalise the movement. Remarks by BJP MP Kangana Ranaut targeting young

FROM AGENDA COVER

"Hindu women" protesters as "gutter generation" shifted attention away from the substantive concerns they were raising and towards their character and conduct. A movement that had begun with demands for examination reforms was increasingly being judged through the actions of individual protesters rather than through the institutional failures that had brought them together.

Democracies do not become stronger by reducing an entire movement to its most provocative clip. Their larger responsibility is to understand the grievance that produced the anger rather than merely prosecute its vocabulary. It is easier to investigate a slogan than to repair an institution.

Rachit Seth is the founder of Policy Briefcase which provides Parliamentary Research & Communications support. He is a Former National Media Coordinator of the Indian National Congress

A movement built...

Platforms must do their share. X has had community-driven fact-checking in India since 2024. Instagram, where the youngest users are, still has nothing of the kind here. Meta's own Oversight Board said in March that community notes are no substitute for fact-checking, warning in particular about elections and moments of crisis. The government and the courts should require Meta to build a working system for India before the next flare-up, not after it. Forwarding something you have not checked is not a neutral act. Amplification is authorship.

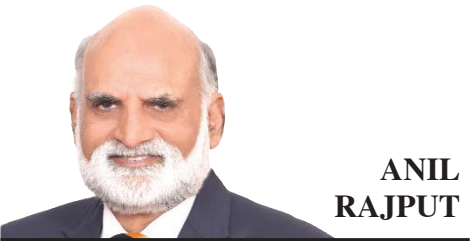
The question was never whether Indians should be free to speak. It is whether those who speak to millions will accept the responsibility that has always come with an audience of that size.

Vikas Pandey (Sankritayan) is a Social Media activist, runs a Noida based software company

“OOD NUTRITION CREATES HEALTH IN ALL
AREAS OF OUR EXISTENCE. ALL PARTS ARE
INTERCONNECTED”
— T COLIN CAMPBELL

GANGAUR

The sacred flavours of Gauri’s homecoming



ANIL
RAJPUT

In Rajasthan, spring enters courtyards through folk songs, appears on palms in patterns of mehendi, travels through bazaars in processions of colour and takes edible form in delicately shaped gune, syrup-laced ghevar and meals prepared for reunion, worship and farewell. Gangaaur is often described as a festival of marital devotion, but its meaning is wider than a prayer for domestic happiness. It celebrates fertility, renewal, companionship and feminine creativity, as well as the enduring relationship between a woman’s marital home and her maternal family. Its cuisine reflects these ideas. Food is moulded like jewellery, sent as affection, offered before it is eaten and shared after restraint, turning the kitchen into one of the festival’s most important sacred spaces.

Gangaaur, also known as Gauri Tritiya, is celebrated on Chaitra Shukla Tritiya, the third lunar day of the bright fortnight of Chaitra. This year, it was observed on 21 March, while in 2027 it will fall on 9 April. In Rajasthan, the festivities traditionally begin after Holi and unfold over approximately eighteen days, culminating in the principal worship and ceremonial farewell of Gauri. The name Gangaaur brings together “Gan”, associated with Isar or Shiva, and “Gaur”, referring to Gauri or Parvati. Married women worship the divine couple for marital harmony, family well-being and prosperity, while unmarried girls traditionally pray for a worthy partner and an auspicious future. Yet Gangaaur extends far beyond household worship, filling courtyards, streets, lakesides and village squares with songs, decorated images, processions and a shared celebration of spring, feminine creativity and community life.

The story at the heart of Gangaaur presents Gauri as both goddess and beloved daughter. In Rajasthani tradition, she is imagined as visiting her maternal home after Holi, remaining there through the celebration before Isar arrives to take her back. Her departure on Gangaaur carries the tenderness of a daughter’s vidai, which explains the festival’s mixture of joy and wistfulness. Women fashion or decorate clay and wooden images of Isar and Gauri, offer water, flowers, sacred grass and food, and sing songs in which the divine couple is addressed with the familiarity of family. The rituals transform distant divinity into an intimate presence within the household.

The history of Gangaaur cannot be reduced to a single founding moment. It grew through regional customs, royal patronage, household worship and the seasonal rhythms of western and central India. Rajasthan’s princely courts gave the public processions grandeur, but the festival’s continuity has always depended upon women in homes and communities. Jaipur’s ceremonial procession traditionally moves from the City Palace through the old city, while Udaipur’s Mewar Festival carries images of Gauri towards Lake Pichola amid music, decorated boats and public celebration. Beyond Rajasthan, Gangaaur is also observed in parts of Madhya Pradesh, especially Nimar, where the goddess is honoured as a powerful maternal figure and the conclusion of the festival may include collective worship and community meals.

Gangaaur also reveals the vital role of women as custodians of intangible cultural heritage. Although the festival is rooted in traditional ideas of marriage, fer-

tility and household well-being, its continuity depends upon a distinctly female world of knowledge, memory and collective participation. Women preserve not only the visible customs of worship, song, dress and food, but also the less tangible understanding behind them: when a ritual must be performed, how an offering should be shaped, which songs belong to each stage of the observance, and how meanings are adapted within different families and communities. Much of this knowledge is not formally written down. It is absorbed by watching mothers and grandmothers, joining group rituals, preparing food together and taking part in processions and seasonal gatherings. In this way, women do more than maintain inherited practices. They interpret them, renew them and decide how they will be transmitted. Gangaaur therefore gives women cultural authority within the household and the community, positioning them not simply as participants in tradition, but as its principal knowledge-bearers and the people most responsible for carrying it into the future.

The cuisine becomes one of the clearest expressions of this inherited knowledge, beginning with the festival’s most distinctive preparation, Gangaauri Gune. These crisp forms are made from wheat flour, refined flour or gram flour and shaped to resemble ornaments, discs, flowers or other auspicious designs. Sweet versions may contain jaggery or be coated lightly with sugar syrup after frying. The word gune is often connected with gehne, meaning jewellery, because the edible shapes are offered to Gauri as symbolic adornments. After worship, they are shared among women of the family, including mothers-in-law, sisters-in-law and other relatives. Flour becomes ornament, while shaping and sharing it become acts of devotion. Alongside them appear Besan ke Namkeen Gune, a savoury counterpart made by combining gram flour with turmeric, salt, carom seeds, cumin or crushed spices. The dough is rolled, cut or shaped by hand before being fried in a kadai until firm and golden. Their restrained seasoning distinguishes them from ordinary snacks, while their jewellery-like forms preserve the ritual association with Gauri. Some households prepare both sweet and savoury batches so that the ceremonial plate contains contrasting flavours, textures and colours.

The second great emblem of the Gangaaur season is Ghevar, whose intricate surface seems designed for a festival devoted to beauty and adornment. A thin batter of flour, ghee and chilled water or milk is poured repeatedly from a height into a deep kadai of hot ghee or oil, allowing each stream to set around the previous one and gradually form the sweet’s porous, honey-combed structure. Once crisp, the disc is drained and lightly soaked or coated with sugar syrup.



Ghevar is finished with thickened milk, saffron, pistachios and almonds, while Mawa Ghevar carries a richer layer of sweetened khoya. Ghevar is closely associated with Sinjara, the gifts traditionally sent from a married woman’s maternal home before the main celebration. Along with clothes, mehendi, ornaments and other festive items, the sweet conveys remembrance and affection across households. It is therefore more than a dessert. It becomes an edible expression of the continuing bond between a daughter and the home in which she grew up, even after marriage has taken her elsewhere.

That exchange of sweetness continues through Mawa Kachori, particularly associated with Jodhpur. This festive pastry encloses sweetened khoya, nuts and cardamom inside a crisp flour shell before being glazed with sugar syrup. Its contrast between brittle pastry and soft filling makes it especially suited to celebratory trays. Mohanthal, prepared by slowly roasting coarse gram flour in ghee in a heavy-bottomed vessel and setting it with sugar syrup, cardamom, saffron and nuts, offers a denser sweetness. Its characteristic grainy texture depends upon patient roasting and careful control of the syrup, making it a preparation through which culinary skill becomes visible.

A more rustic expression of celebration appears in Churma Laddoo. Wheat dough is baked or fried, crushed and combined with ghee, jaggery or sugar, cardamom and dry fruits before being shaped by hand. Dilkhushal, also known as besan chakki in parts of Rajasthan, is similarly built upon gram flour, ghee and sugar but cooked into a firm mass and cut into diamonds. These preparations create richness through the slow transformation of flour, fat and sweetener rather than elaborate decoration. Their ability to remain fresh also makes them suitable for gift trays, family visits and the steady movement of food between maternal and marital homes. The sweet sequence may conclude with dishes served warm. Malpua with Rabri combines shallow-fried pancakes, often flavoured with fennel, with thickened milk scented by cardamom and saffron. The edges remain crisp while the centre absorbs syrup and rabri. Kesar Mawa Kheer, made by gently simmering milk with rice or reduced milk solids, saffron and nuts,

provides a softer conclusion. Neither dish is an obligatory Gangaaur offering across every community, but both belong naturally to the larger festive table of Rajasthan and neighbouring regions. Gangaaur cuisine is not one fixed menu. Its sacred core is surrounded by family recipes, local preferences and dishes selected according to place, season and means. Once the fast or principal worship is complete, the savoury meal restores appetite through dishes that are substantial without losing their regional identity. Hing Kachori is filled with ground lentils seasoned with asafoetida, fennel, coriander and chilli, then fried until blistered and crisp. Its powerful aroma awakens the palate after restraint. Kanji Vada, particularly suited to the spring period following Holi, offers an entirely different sensation. Lentil dumplings are soaked in a mustard-spiced liquid and left to ferment, creating the sourness and pungency that balance the richer fried foods of the festive meal.

The main table often turns to Rajasthan’s mastery of gram flour. Govind Gatta elevates the familiar gatta into a festive preparation by filling or enriching gram-flour dumplings with khoya, paneer or nuts before simmering them in a spiced yoghurt gravy. The gravy must be cooked over a controlled flame and stirred carefully so that the yoghurt does not split. Pitod ki Sabzi begins with gram flour and buttermilk or yoghurt cooked into a firm mixture, spread, cooled, cut into diamonds and finished in a tempered gravy.

Papad Mangodi ki Sabzi begins long before it reaches the stove, with seasoned lentil paste shaped into small nuggets and dried under the strong Rajasthani sun for storage. When required, the mangodi is cooked with papad, spices, yoghurt or a light tomato base to create a dish of surprising depth from ingredients that can be preserved for months. Such preparations arose from practical necessity but became an essential part of Rajasthan’s culinary identity.

The relationship between cuisine and ecology becomes most visible in Ker Sangri, a dish shaped by an arid landscape where water was precious, rainfall uncertain and fresh vegetables highly seasonal. Dried ker berries and sangri beans, gathered from hardy desert plants, are soaked repeatedly, boiled and cooked with oil, chillies, coriander, cumin, dried mango or yoghurt until tangy and concentrated. The soaking softens the ingredients and reduces their natural sharpness, while slow cooking allows them to absorb the spices.

Panchkuta expands the same desert logic by bringing together five preserved ingredients, commonly including ker, sangri, kumatiya, dried gunda and amchur. Although the combination varies between communities, the preparation expresses a culinary culture built upon sun-drying, storage and careful use of what the land could sustain. Papad, mangodi, gram flour, millet, dried berries and fermented dairy were not merely substitutes used in times of shortage. They became the

basis of a distinctive cuisine that transformed ecological restraint into flavour and variety. During Gangaaur, these dishes connect the goddess’s associations with fertility and abundance to a tradition that defines abundance not as excess, but as resilience, preservation and respect for limited resources.

Traditional Rajasthani cooking methods are woven into nearly every part of this festive meal. Ingredients are dried beneath the sun, yoghurt gravies are simmered gently, milk is reduced slowly into khoya and rabri, and flour is patiently roasted in ghee until its aroma changes and its flavour deepens. Heavy iron, brass or thick-bottomed vessels help retain heat, while frying gives gune, kachori and ghevar the crispness needed for ceremonial sharing and storage. Fermentation sharpens kanji, and slow cooking allows dried ingredients to regain tenderness. These techniques conserve ingredients, limit waste and create the concentrated tastes that distinguish the region’s cuisine.

Bread and grain complete the savoury range. Khoba Roti is a thick wheat bread whose surface is pinched into decorative patterns before being cooked slowly on a tawa or over gentle heat and brushed generously with ghee. Its sculpted appearance is especially appropriate to a festival in which adornment carries ritual meaning. Rajasthani Dhokla with Kadhi, made from firm wheat dough rather than the soft Gujarati gram-flour preparation, is steamed or cooked and then broken into pieces to be eaten with tangy yoghurt kadhi.

Jodhpuri Kabuli adds a more elaborate note through layers of fragrant rice, vegetables, fried bread, nuts and warming spices. The ingredients are arranged and cooked together so that each serving reveals contrasting textures. Across the border in Madhya Pradesh, particularly in areas connected with Nimar and Malwa, Dal Bafla provides a fitting communal preparation. Wheat balls are boiled before being baked, giving them a softer centre than baati, and are then opened, enriched with ghee and served with lentils, chutneys and sometimes churma. Its generous, shareable character suits the family gatherings and community meals associated with regional Gangaaur observances. Beverages provide relief from the early summer warmth and balance the ghee-rich sweets and fried foods. Kesar Badam Thandai, blended from milk, almonds, melon seeds, fennel, pepper, cardamom and saffron, carries forward the cooling flavours associated with the season after Holi. Makhanjaya Lassi offers thick yoghurt churned with sugar and crowned with malai, while salted Chaas, flavoured with roasted cumin, mint and black salt, cools the palate during the savoury meal. Fermented Kanji may be served separately from the vadas as a sharp, mustard-scented drink. In some households, Kesar Doodh or Bael Sherbet provides a gentler alternative for children, elders and those breaking a fast.

To carry Gangaaur forward, future generations must inherit more than the sight of a procession or a date on the calendar. They should know why flour is shaped into jewellery for Gauri, how a stream of batter becomes the lattice of ghevar, why Sinjara travels from a daughter’s maternal home, how desert berries become a dish of celebration and why mangodi is dried long before it is cooked. They should also recognise the women whose knowledge keeps each practice alive. When children are invited to shape gune, stir mohanthal, learn a Gangaaur song and serve the first offering before eating, heritage moves from observation into experience. Gangaaur will endure when its cuisine remains cooked, shared and understood, allowing Gauri’s homecoming to nourish the cultural confidence of generations yet to come.

(The writer is Secretary, Cuisine India Society)

A delicious window into tea-shop culture

TEAM AGENDA

Some meals are about eating; others are about slowing down, sharing and discovering a culture one bite at a time. Burma Burma’s limited-edition PaukSe & Palata: Windows to Burma, running till August 31, falls firmly into the latter category. Inspired by Yangon’s lively tea shops, the menu brings together steamed buns, flaky flatbreads, curries, desserts and Burmese teas in an experience that feels both comforting and unfamiliar.

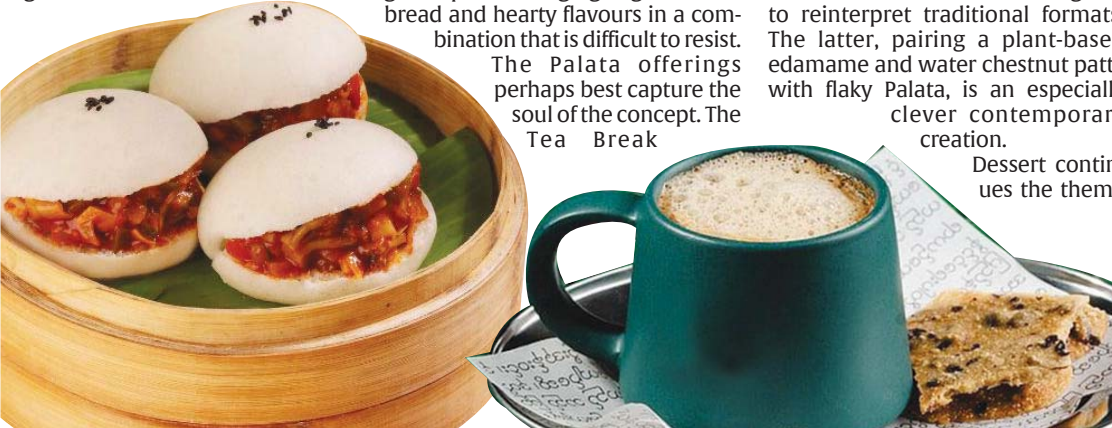
At the heart of the menu are PaukSe, soft, pillowy steamed buns, and Palata, the crisp, layered flatbread whose flaky texture carries echoes of South Asian culinary influences. In Burma’s tea shops, these breads are everyday staples, enjoyed alongside curries and fillings while conversations linger over endless cups of tea. The menu captures that spirit beautifully, giving these humble favourites a contemporary restaurant treatment without stripping away their character. The PaukSe selection is particularly appealing. The Tofu &



Scallion Twist is delicately spiced and flavourful, while the PaukSe Burger, with its crisp corn patty tucked inside a sesame-topped steamed bun, is an inventive meeting of familiar comfort food and Burmese inspiration. The Spicy Curry Palata adds another layer of comfort, while the Soya Keema Tacos and Palata Sando demonstrate the kitchen’s willingness to reinterpret traditional formats. The latter, pairing a plant-based edamame and water chestnut patty with flaky Palata, is an especially clever contemporary creation.

Palata, topped with lentil curry, brown onions, mint and green chillies, has the easy, unfussy appeal of something made to be enjoyed between long conversations. The Sunday Curry Palata adds another layer of comfort, while the Soya Keema Tacos and Palata Sando demonstrate the kitchen’s willingness to reinterpret traditional formats. The latter, pairing a plant-based edamame and water chestnut patty with flaky Palata, is an especially clever contemporary creation.

Dessert continues the theme



with a playful touch. The Tea Shop Cream Puff, paired with Thai tea mascarpone, offers a refined finish, while the Nutty Banana Sundae, served over flaky Palata with banana, condensed milk and hazelnut spread, is delightfully indulgent.

No Burmese tea-shop experience would be complete without the drinks. The Pistachio & Saffron Pulled Tea and Cinnamon Spice Pulled Tea bring warmth and aroma, while chilled creations such as Sea Salt Honeycomb and Jasmine Rice & Brown Sugar provide a refreshing counterpoint. The house tamarind-infused cola adds yet another layer of fun.

What makes the menu work is that it does not merely borrow dishes; it recreates the social spirit of Burma’s tea shops, where food, tea and conversation are inseparable. PaukSe & Palata: Windows to Burma is therefore less a conventional limited-period menu and more a culinary invitation to slow down, share generously and take a passport-free journey through the flavours of Burma.

THE PISTACHIO & SAFFRON PULLED TEA AND CINNAMON SPICE PULLED TEA BRING WARMTH AND AROMA, WHILE CHILLED CREATIONS SUCH AS SEA SALT HONEYCOMB AND JASMINE RICE & BROWN SUGAR PROVIDE A REFRESHING COUNTERPOINT

Ayurveda: Reviving Ritucharya

GYANESHWAR DAYAL

For Ayurveda, the seasons are not merely weather changes. They alter the environment in which the human body functions. What suits the body in summer may not suit it in the rains or in winter. Ritucharya is an Ayurvedic concept that means “seasonal regime” It is derived from two Sanskrit words: Ritu (season) and Charya (conduct or routine). Ritucharya therefore advocates adapting food, physical activity, rest and other habits to seasonal conditions.

Modern life has steadily separated people from seasonal rhythms. Air-conditioning, processed food, sedentary routines and artificial lighting have made it possible to live much the same way throughout the year. Yet the human body remains part of nature. Ayurveda’s seasonal regimen begins with the simple recognition that the body must continually negotiate its environment. This makes Ritucharya particularly relevant today.

According to Ayurveda, the body’s doshas — Vata, Pitta, and Kapha — change with the seasons. To maintain health and prevent disease, one should adapt diet, exercise, sleep, clothing, and daily habits to each season. The objective of Ritucharya is to align human physiology with nature’s rhythms, thereby improving immunity, digestion, mental well-being, and overall health



while reducing the risk of seasonal illnesses. It is one of the foundational principles of preventive healthcare in Ayurveda and remains relevant even today as a holistic approach to healthy living. Kerala offers perhaps one of the most vivid settings in which to understand this idea. The state’s intense monsoon, humid climate, long coastline and rich plant diversity have helped preserve a distinctive Ayurvedic culture. This is where Ritucharya moves beyond the pages of classical texts. It becomes a way of life.

This is not simply an old custom being preserved for sentimental reasons. Kerala is increasingly attempting to explain Ayurveda to a new generation and to an international audience through a combination of public education, institutional development and tourism.

Kerala has also begun giving Ayurveda a stronger international platform. The first International Ayurveda & Wellness Conclave, held in Kozhikode on February 2 and 3, 2026, brought together more than 125 delegates from 34 countries. Discussions covered research, education, policy, wellness tourism and medical-value travel, with the objective of positioning Kerala as a global destination for Ayurveda and wellness.

And perhaps that is the real strength of Ritucharya. It reminds us of something that modern wellness culture is only beginning to rediscover—align with nature!



Free Yourself From Intoxication

AMMA (SRI MATA AMRITANANDAMAYI DEVI)

Today, Amma and her children joined Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi's launch of the Nasha Mukti Yuva for Viksit Bharat campaign. The youth movement encourages every citizen to choose a healthier, drug-free future through awareness, action, and community participation.

Amma's participation is led by her AYUDH youth movement, spanning Amrita University's 10 campuses, 86 Amrita Vidyalayam throughout the country, and 2800 villages reached by Amma's humanitarian initiatives across Bharat.

Children, the increase in the use of intoxicants among today's generation of youth is cause for alarm. It is gnawing away at society like some incurable disease. It is humankind's journey towards mere self-gratification that is leading to drink and drugs.

In truth, are we really getting any happiness from these intoxicants? Does happiness reside in cigars, cigarettes, marijuana or other intoxicants? When a dog chews a bone for too long, its gums start bleeding. Imagining that the blood is coming from the bone, it continues chewing it. This is exactly what we are doing when we strive to obtain happiness from intoxicants.

In truth, happiness is within us. The thinking that we can obtain bliss from intoxicants is just our imagination.

Amma remembers a story. Seeing a frail old man sitting happily on a swing in the garden in front of his house, swaying in pleasure, a passerby asked, "Uncle, you look really happy. What's the secret behind your happiness and health?"

"I smoke six packets of cigarettes daily, drink six cases of whisky every week, eat meat thrice daily, and never exercise," the man replied.

"Unbelievable!" declared the passerby. "By the way, how old are you?"

"Twenty six," said the man.

Intoxicants might help one forget everything briefly. But addicts do not



realise that intoxicants rob the body of vitality and destroy them. Their health is impaired and they age prematurely, leading to an early death. Instead of being an asset to their families and country, they ruin themselves and cause suffering to others.

There was a family that used to live happily. The husband fell into bad company and started drinking. With that, the peace and contentment that used to prevail in the family began to disappear.

He stopped going to work for many days, and on the days he went, he would arrive in a drunken stupor and quarrel with his colleagues. Finally, he lost his job. Having no money to buy drinks, he began harassing his wife for her jewellery, and when she resisted, he started beating her. Fearing further assaults, she handed it over; he sold it and spent the entire amount on drink.

He then began selling the pots and pans and other items in the house. One day, he started fighting with her for the small necklace around their baby's throat. That was the final straw. Unable to tolerate his behaviour any longer, the wife grabbed the baby and came to Amma. This is just one example. Amma sees and hears about many such incidents every day.

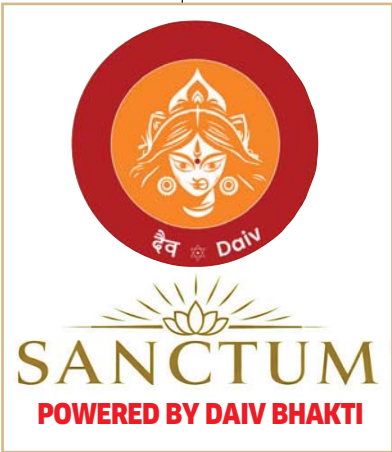
Children, everyone today thinks: "What did I gain?" That is not correct. Instead, we should ask ourselves, "What was I able to contribute to society?" Rather than shortening our lives by living

like beasts and thinking solely of our own happiness, live with an awareness of life's purpose. Having consumed what we really need, we should distribute the rest as alms.

It is only through spiritual thinking that we can move away from the narrow world of selfishness and suffering, and reach the expansive universe of selflessness and happiness. Only through spirituality can we realise that real happiness lies in loving and serving others.

If we grasp spiritual principles, there will be a revolution in our character and outlook. We will become compassionate towards our fellow beings. It will give us enough strength to free ourselves from the grip of intoxicants and other bad habits. Then, we will always be able to enjoy peace and contentment within.

(Sri Mata Amritanandamayi Devi, known simply as Amma, is a spiritual master and humanitarian who has given her darshan in the form of a motherly embrace to more than 4 crore people. Listening to the cries of the suffering, Amma leads an NGO that reaches across more than 50 countries, working in the areas of healthcare, disaster relief, education, gender equality, and environmental restoration)



Sports for Leadership

SADHGURU

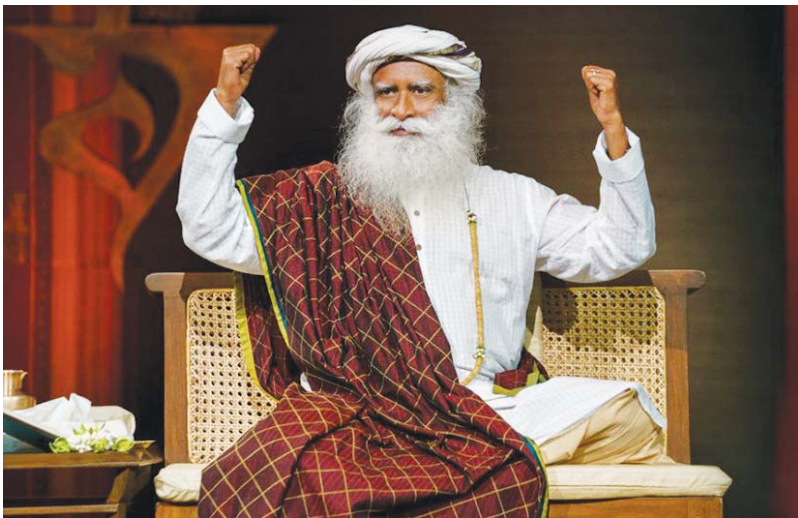
You may go to work half-hearted, you may live half-hearted, you may do everything in your life half-hearted, but a game is one thing you cannot do half-hearted. Unless you plunge yourself into it, there is no game; this is so for anybody. The moment they get into a game, knowingly or unknowingly they become 100 per cent participation. This is an absolute requirement for a leader. A leader learns to participate, that he does not hold himself back in anything, that he learns to give himself absolutely.

In many ways, sports sets the rhythm for every human being to become a leader in his own right. For example, another aspect which is most important for a leader that is naturally inculcated

by playing a game is the desire to win or achieve — you cannot play a game unless you develop a strong desire that you want to win. Without this there is no sport. At the same time, sports also sets this condition that you really want to win but you are willing to lose. If you lose, it is alright with you. This is most essential for a leader

that he goes out to achieve things. At the same time, when things do not happen, he will not become a bundle of frustrations.

Whenever you set big goals in your life, many things don't happen. For people who do not set big goals, they may believe that many things are happening in their lives but their things are



SPORTS CAN BECOME A TREMENDOUS TOOL IN BUILDING LEADERS. WE HAVE SEEN THIS IN OUR OWN EXPERIENCE WITH ISHA'S RURAL SPORTS PROGRAM AND VARIOUS OTHER PROGRAMS IN ALL OF WHICH SPORT IS AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT

happening because you are not aspiring for anything big.

So the very fundamentals of leadership is that you aspire to achieve certain things, to take people with you towards that goal, and if it does not happen, for whatever reason you will never become a bundle of frustration. These qualities which are most essen-

tial for leadership, are naturally inculcated by the very nature of the sport.

Sports can become a tremendous tool in building leaders. We have seen this in our own experience with Isha's Rural Sports program and various other programs in all of which sport is an essential component. We have seen how just because they are involved in a game, people are able to come out of their limitations and take on the leadership for that moment to handle a particular situation. This in itself sets them up as a leader.

So leadership and sports are very directly connected. All the fundamental qualities that are necessary for a leader are naturally brought forth when one learns to play a game.

(Ranked amongst the fifty most influential people in India, Sadhguru is a Yogi, mystic, visionary and a New York Times bestselling author. Sadhguru has been conferred the Padma Vibhushan by the Government of India in 2017, the highest annual civilian award, accorded for exceptional and distinguished service. He is also the founder of the world's largest people's movement, Conscious Planet- Save Soil, which has touched over 4 billion people)

Do you feel stuck in life?

You are stuck for a while, and then you come out of it anyway. If you were never stuck, you would never know what freedom is. You realize, "Oh, I was stuck. It was like a nightmare

GURUDEV SRI SRI RAVI SHANKAR

Watch your thoughts at the level of the mind when you are stuck. The same thought comes to your mind again and again. You wake up in the morning, and the same thought hits you; you drink your tea, and the same thought hits you; you sit at the dining table, and the same thought keeps bothering you. It is like a gramophone needle caught in a groove, repeating the same line instead of moving forward. You have to lift that needle and place it on the next groove.

You are so lucky to realize that you are stuck in life, doing the same things repeatedly-waking up, having breakfast, going out, shopping. Recognizing this monotony is itself a significant step. Being stuck indicates that you have already woken up from the slumber.

The mind tends to get stuck on one event, and then, after some time, it gets released. It is elastic, like rubber. It goes back and forth, trying and struggling to get rid of a particular thought. When the mind gets stuck in one place, that becomes the cause of worry.

You are stuck for a while, and then you come out of it anyway. If you were never stuck, you would never know what freedom is. You realize, "Oh, I was stuck. It was like a nightmare."

You know a nightmare is a nightmare only when you wake up. Even then, its impact lingers. Your heart is still pounding, and you are still perspiring. Instead of fighting with yourself, simply wake up and say, "I was stuck. It is okay to be stuck." The moment you look at it this way, that very moment becomes transformative.

A closed mind says, "This is how it is. I know it. That is it." An open mind says, "Maybe. Perhaps. I do not know."

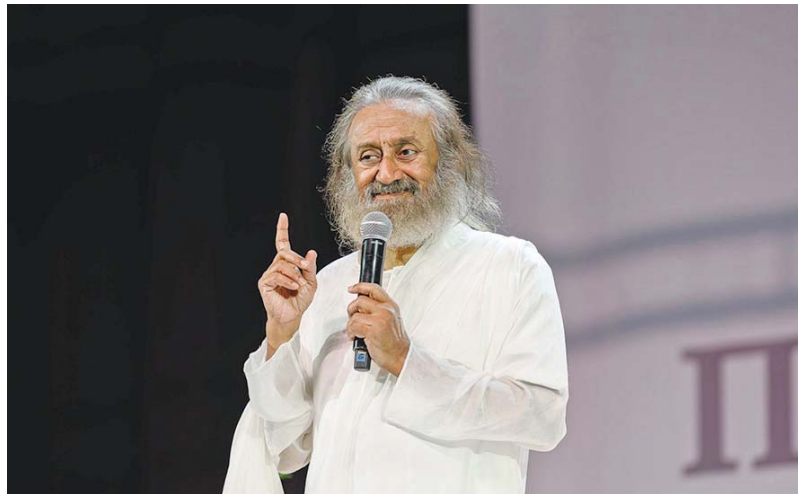
The moment you look at a situation and label it, saying, "I know this is how it is," that is the beginning of your problem. That's when you get stuck. Suffering is a product of limited knowledge. Staying open to "maybe" and "perhaps" is what allows that hold to loosen, makes you flexible.

When a cloth is pure white, even a speck of dust on it appears very big. In the same way, the more subtle and peaceful you become, the more small disturbances will stand out in contrast.

If you are stuck with a problem, know that you already have the capacity to face it. You already have answers, so the question appears in front of you. The first step is to stop eternalising the problem, so you stop attracting it further into your life.

Never tell yourself that you are always the one with problems, that you are always stuck, that you are simply unlucky, or that you always fall sick. Such statements become a seed, a sankalpa, planted deep in the mind. When you say, "I will never succeed," or "I cannot do this," you are planting that very seed within yourself.

These are the weeds we need to remove from the mind and replace with trust in ourselves. The moment you



“WHAT IS COMMITMENT? A COMMITMENT IS FELT ONLY WHEN IT OVERSTEPS CONVENIENCE, SINCE WHAT IS MERELY CONVENIENT IS NOT COMMITMENT AT ALL”

- GURUDEV

drop the judgments you carry about yourself, trust begins to grow on its own, and self-doubt gradually disappears.

Our mind has two choices. One, it can become like a photograph, retaining all the impressions and emotions. You click a photograph and the image stays on the film. Another is you become like a mirror. In a mirror, you also see the picture. But the moment you move, the picture disappears. The picture doesn't stick to the mirror. So the whole journey is from being a photograph to becoming a mirror, you don't let events and their memories stick in your mind.

A river needs two banks to flow. The difference between flood and a flowing river is that in a river, water flows in between the banks. During floods, the water is muddled and has no direction. Similarly, the energy in our life needs some direction to flow. If you don't give direction, it leads to confusion. Today most people are confused because there is no direction in life. When you are happy, there is so much life energy in you; but when this life energy doesn't know where to go, how to go, it gets stuck. When it stagnates, it rots! Just like the water has to keep flowing, in the same way, life has to keep moving. For life energy to move in a direction, commitment is essential.

What is commitment? A commitment is felt only when it oversteps convenience, since what is merely convenient is not commitment at all. At the same time, if you are too rigidly stuck in commitment, and it becomes inconvenient, you will feel frustrated and unable to fulfil it in the long run. Wisdom lies in striking a balance between convenience and commitment.

If you are stuck in a kind of spider's web created by your own decisions, know that there is another dimension to life. Make a firm resolve: Come what may, I am going to do it, I am going to come out of the illusions created by my own mind. No cobweb



IF YOU ARE STUCK IN A KIND OF SPIDER'S WEB CREATED BY YOUR OWN DECISIONS, KNOW THAT THERE IS ANOTHER DIMENSION TO LIFE. MAKE A FIRM RESOLVE: COME WHAT MAY, I AM GOING TO DO IT, I AM GOING TO COME OUT OF THE ILLUSIONS CREATED BY MY OWN MIND

can destroy you. After all, a cobweb is just a cobweb; it cannot destroy anybody.

When the mind is caught in a whirlpool, three things will carry you through: an unshakable faith that someone out there cares deeply for you, loves you, and will never let you down; your daily practice; and the spiritual knowledge you have already gained. These three-practices, knowledge, and faith-will help you through such moments.

This spiritual journey begins in recognizing the monotony of all the routine activities we do. Once you see it clearly, that very seeing becomes the doorway to being more creative, light-hearted and happier.

Be a Student Forever

Life never stops teaching; only we stop learning. Every sunrise carries a lesson, every failure hides a blessing, every stranger knows something we do not, and every moment quietly asks us to grow. Keep the wonder of a child and the humility of a seeker, for the heart that remains a student never grows old; it only grows wiser

DR SWAMI GYANANANDDAS

The day we believe we have learned enough is the day our growth quietly begins to die. Degrees may have an end, classrooms may close their doors, and examinations may finally cease, but the greatest education 'life' never declares a graduation ceremony. Every sunrise opens a new lesson, every encounter introduces a new teacher, and every experience writes another chapter in the curriculum of wisdom.

A person does not become great because he knows everything. He becomes great because he never stops learning. It is often said, "Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever." These words reveal one of life's deepest truths. Since tomorrow is uncertain, we should live each day with purpose and sincerity. Yet because the pursuit of wisdom has no finish line, we should learn as if every new day were another opportunity to become better, regardless of age.

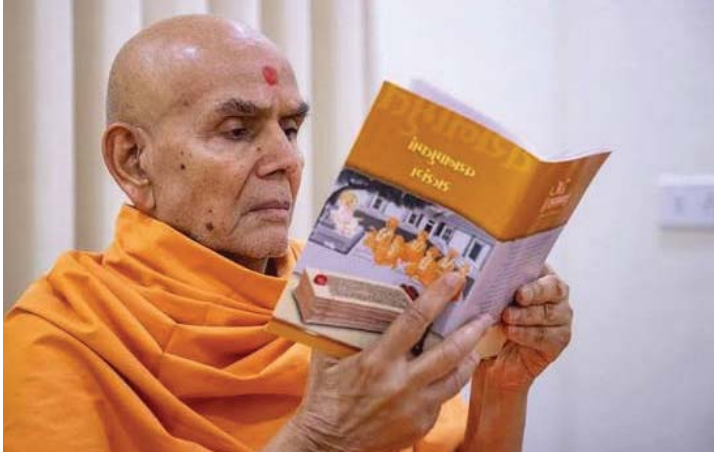
A classroom may educate the mind, but it cannot alone educate life. Beyond its walls lies nature, humanity's greatest academy, where life's deepest lessons are taught. Observe the tiny ant. Possessing neither strength nor stature, it carries loads many times heavier than itself. If its path is blocked, it does not complain to destiny or curse the obstacle. It simply searches for another way. The ant silently teaches that failure is never final unless we ourselves decide to stop walking.

Look at the sky. The sun arrives every morning without excuses. Clouds may hide it from our eyes, yet it never neglects its duty. It echoes that punctuality is not merely about keeping time; it is about keeping one's promises. The moon reminds us that imperfection is temporary. Some nights it appears as a delicate crescent; on others it shines in complete brilliance. Yet throughout its changing phases, it never loses its identity.

Similarly, the river inspires perseverance, flowing around every obstacle. The mountain embodies steadfastness, standing firm through every storm. Silence nurtures wisdom, for life's deepest lessons

are heard in moments of quiet reflection. Thus, our nature provides real-life lessons, if we wish to learn them.

Remarkably, our greatest teachers are not always scholars or philosophers. Sometimes they are children whose innocent curiosity challenges our assumptions. Sometimes they are labourers whose perseverance humbles our



A TRUE LEARNER NEVER COUNTS THE YEARS OF LIFE; HE COUNTS THE LESSONS THAT MAKE LIFE WORTH LIVING

complaints. Sometimes they are failures that reveal truths impossible for success to teach. Every person we meet knows something we do not know. Every experience carries a message that no book can fully explain.

History consistently honors lifelong learners. The wisest sages continued asking questions until their final breath. The greatest scientists remained fascinated by mysteries they could not solve. The finest artists never stopped refining their craft. Their greatness was not born from possessing all the answers, but from retaining the humility to keep seeking them.

Unfortunately, success often becomes the enemy of learning wisdom. Achievement whispers, "You have arrived." Wisdom gently replies, "The journey has just begun." The moment pride replaces curiosity, progress comes to a halt. A cup already full cannot receive fresh water. Likewise, a mind convinced of its completeness cannot receive new understanding.

Life changes every day. Technology evolves, societies transform, relationships



deepen, and challenges become increasingly complex. Yesterday's knowledge alone cannot solve tomorrow's problems. Those who stop learning gradually lose their ability to adapt and flourish. Therefore, lifelong learning is no longer merely a virtue; it is a necessity.

The attitude of a life-long student transforms every day into an opportunity to grow. Every experience enriches wisdom, every challenge deepens understanding, and every new lesson becomes a step towards excellence.

At ninety years of age, when most people would rely on memory accumulated over a lifetime, Mahant Swami Maharaj continued to learn with the enthusiasm of a young student. Memorizing the intricate verses of the newly composed Akshar-Purushottam Bhagwan Arti was no easy task, yet

he embraced it with remarkable humility and determination.

For several consecutive nights, while the world slept, he quietly woke at one, two, or even three o'clock in the morning to practice the verses. Careful not to disturb anyone, he softly whispered each line, patiently repeating it until it became firmly etched in his memory.

Though revered worldwide as a spiritual master guiding millions, he approached this task not as a guru who knew everything, but as a sincere learner eager to keep learning. His humility, discipline, and unwavering commitment transformed a simple act of memorization into a timeless lesson: true greatness lies in remaining a student throughout life. Mahant Swami Maharaj demonstrated that the spirit of learning never grows old; it only grows deeper.

Of course, a true learner never counts the years of life; he counts the lessons that make life worth living.

(Dr Swami Gyanananddas is a dedicated follower of the Swaminarayan tradition and has earned a PhD from MS University)