



Come back with 118 signatures: Governor sends Vijay back for 2nd consecutive day

Tamil Nadu Governor Rajendra Arlekar on Thursday again rejected TVK chief Vijay's claim to form the government, asking him to return only after securing signatures of 118 MLAs to prove majority support.

Tamil Nadu.(Agency)

Tamil Nadu Governor Rajendra Arlekar on Thursday turned down TVK chief Vijay's proposal to form the government for the second consecutive day. Vijay met the Governor again today at Raj Bhavan to stake claim to form the government, but the Governor asked him to return only after securing the support of 118 MLAs, sources said. According to sources, the Governor told Vijay that TVK still fell short of the required numbers and asked him to come back with signatures of 118 MLAs before any swearing-in process could take place. "Please come with 118 signatures. Prove that

TVK has majority and then the oath can happen," the Governor is learnt to have told Vijay. Sources said the Governor insisted on written support to ensure that the government remains stable and does not collapse after formation.



On the previous day as well, Vijay had met the Governor with the backing of 112 MLAs to stake claim to form the government.

Although Vijay secured support from the Congress, which has five MLAs, he orally informed the Governor that he had the party's backing and sought more time to shore up the numbers further, according to sources. However,

Governor Arlekar reportedly told him that the numbers were insufficient and asked him to return with the support of 118 legislators, triggering a fresh round of political efforts.

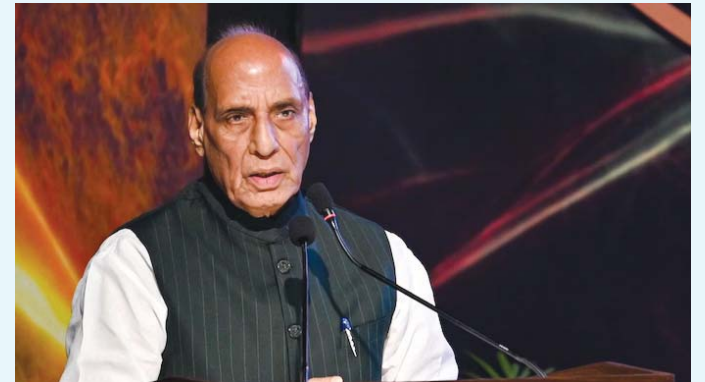
Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) chief Thol Thirumavalavan on Thursday urged Governor Arlekar to invite Vijay to form the government and allow him to prove his majority on the floor of the House. Speaking to regional media, Thirumavalavan alleged that the BJP was interfering in Tamil Nadu politics and creating confusion. He said Vijay, as leader of the single largest party, should be allowed to take office and prove majority in the Assembly later.

"Now, the BJP, or Amit Shah and Modi, are interfering in Tamil Nadu politics and creating confusion. TVK has been chosen as the single largest party by the people. Therefore, he should be allowed to take office. That is the guidance provided by the Constitution," he said.

The Tamil Nadu unit of the Communist Party of India also urged the Governor to act according to the Constitution and said it was "inappropriate" to ask Vijay to prove his majority before the swearing-in ceremony.

India forgives nothing: Rajnath Singh salutes defence forces as Op Sindoor turns one

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and the Indian armed forces paid tribute to the valour and sacrifices of soldiers as Operation Sindoor completed one year, reiterating India's resolve against terrorism.



New Delhi.(Agency)

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and the Indian Air Force on Thursday paid tribute to the valour and sacrifices of the armed forces as Operation Sindoor completed one year, with the military reiterating India's resolve against terrorism. In a post on X, Rajnath Singh said, "On the anniversary of Operation Sindoor, we salute the valour and sacrifices of our armed forces, whose courage and dedication continue to safeguard the nation. Their actions during the operation reflected unmatched precision, seamless jointness and deep synergy across services, setting a benchmark for modern military operations."

Calling the operation a symbol of India's preparedness and resolve, the Defence Minister said, "Operation Sindoor stands as a powerful symbol of national resolve and preparedness, showing that our armed forces are always ready to act decisively when it matters most. It also stands testament to India's steady advance towards achieving Atmanirbharta, enhancing capability while reinforcing resilience."

Marking the first anniversary of the operation, the Indian Air Force posted a video with the message: "India forgets nothing-India forgives nothing." The IAF said, "Precise in action, eternal in memory—Operation Sindoor continues."

The Indian Army also released a fresh video commemorating the operation and asserted that "India will track, identify and punish terrorists and their backers." The video opened with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address in which he said, "India will identify, track and eliminate terrorists and their backers," describing it as the country's "national resolution".

Operation Sindoor was launched on May 7, 2025, in the aftermath of the Pahalgam terror attack that killed 26 people. In response, Indian armed forces carried out strikes on terror bases in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK). During the operation, India destroyed nine major terror launchpads linked to Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammed and Hizbul Mujahideen in Pakistan and PoJK. Indian armed forces killed over 100 terrorists in the action. Pakistan responded with drone attacks and shelling, triggering a four-day conflict between the two neighbouring countries. India retaliated by destroying radar installations in Lahore and radar facilities near Gurjanwala.

Abhishek Banerjee plotted it, we will answer: Arjun Singh on Suvendu aide's killing

Suvendu Adhikari's personal secretary, Chandranath Rath, was allegedly shot dead late Wednesday night in North 24 Parganas district, in what investigators suspect was a planned and targeted attack.

New Delhi.(Agency)

The political temperature in West Bengal escalated dramatically on Thursday after BJP leader and former MP Arjun Singh accused Trinamool Congress General Secretary Abhishek Banerjee of orchestrating the killing of Chandranath Rath, a close aide and personal secretary to senior BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari. Rath was allegedly shot dead late Wednesday night in Madhyamgram in North 24 Parganas district, in what investigators suspect was a planned and targeted attack.

The murder has further intensified the already volatile post-election atmosphere in the state, where sporadic violence and political clashes have



continued since the BJP's sweeping electoral victory ended the TMC's 15-year rule. Launching a sharp attack on Banerjee, Arjun Singh

alleged direct political involvement behind the killing. "Abhishek Banerjee has orchestrated this murder. They want to send a message that even though they are not in power, they are still a force to be reckoned with over you, news agency ANI quoted Arjun Singh as saying. "They are fools; they will get their answer," he warned.

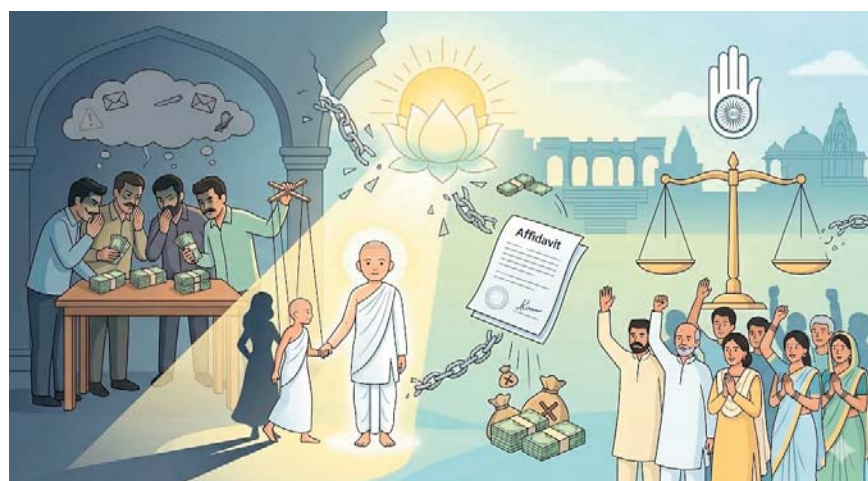
"If this is post-poll violence or done by Abhishek Banerjee is a matter of investigation. This is a planned murder where a sharpshooter did the job. Abhishek Banerjee has some police officials who do this only. This is Abhishek Banerjee's doing," Arjun Singh reiterated his claims on Thursday. No reactions with regard to the above allegations.

MAHANAGAR METRO EXCLUSIVE

Biggest Blackmail Conspiracy Hatched Under the Cover of Religion: Alleged Syndicate Behind Plot Against Jain Monk Exposed

Pawan Mekan (Group Editor)

Ahmedabad: A shocking truth has emerged from Idar that has shaken the entire Jain community. This is not just a story of allegations, but of an organized network allegedly trying to extort crores of rupees by targeting the image and reputation of Jain saints. Mahanagar Metro News today brings an in-depth exposé of the alleged "syndicate" and the conspiracy behind the case. How the Conspiracy Was Allegedly Planned The entire controversy revolves around Jain monk Rajtilak Sagarji Maharaj. According to sources and developments in the investigation, a carefully planned attempt was allegedly made to trap the monk in a so-called honeytrap case, leading to the registration of an FIR against him. The matter initially created panic and outrage within the Jain community. However, as police began a deeper investigation into the allegations, several inconsistencies reportedly surfaced, causing the entire narrative to collapse under scrutiny. Investigators allegedly found indications that the objective behind the case was to create pressure and extract huge sums of money



through blackmail. Affidavit Reveals Alleged Financial Motive The biggest twist in the case came during the judicial proceedings, when complainant Kiran Harshadbhai Doshi and his wife reportedly submitted an affidavit before authorities. According to the affidavit, the complainants allegedly admitted that the entire episode was orchestrated for financial gain. Following detailed investigation and legal proceedings, Jain monk Rajtilak Sagarji Maharaj was reportedly found innocent and free from the allegations. Sources connected to the matter claim that this

was not an isolated incident but part of a larger alleged blackmail racket. Names such as Jagat Parekh, Vikram Singhvi, Hardik Hudiya, and Vikram Bafna have allegedly emerged as key figures linked to the conspiracy. The alleged syndicate is accused of attempting to defame members of the Jain community and use fabricated controversies for monetary extortion. Massive Anger in Jain Community After the facts reportedly came to light, anger and concern spread across different sections of the Jain community. Community representatives have described the

incident as a direct attack not only on a saint, but also on the faith, dignity, and reputation of the Jain religion itself. Demands for a fair investigation and strict legal action against all those allegedly involved have intensified. Many within the community are now calling for authorities to identify the complete network behind the alleged racket and ensure strong punishment for the guilty. Mahanagar Metro's Stand Mahanagar Metro News remains committed to exposing the alleged syndicate and bringing the truth before the Jain community and the public. The investigation and judicial process, according to available documents and claims, have helped separate facts from allegations. The case has raised serious concerns about how faith and religious institutions can allegedly be misused for blackmail and extortion. The purpose of this report is to present the developments and facts surrounding the matter so that such incidents are not repeated in the future. While supporters of the monk see the developments as a victory of truth, many believe the real battle against the alleged conspirators has only just begun.

Bihar cabinet expansion: Nitish Kumar's son, 31 lawmakers take oath as ministers

New Delhi.(Agency)

The cabinet expansion of the Samrat Choudhary-led government in Bihar took place on Thursday in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and senior national leaders of the NDA coalition. As many as 32 MLAs from the ruling coalition took oath as Bihar ministers today. Former Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar's son Nishant was among the ministers who were sworn in.

Of the 32 MLAs, 15 are from the BJP, while 13 belong to the JD(U). Two MLAs from Chirag Paswan's LJP(R) are expected to get cabinet berths. One MLA each from Jitan Ram Manjhi's HAM and Upendra Kushwaha's RLM are also on the list of ministers. Besides PM Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, BJP national president Nitin Nabin, and other senior leaders also attended the swearing-in ceremony. Samrat Choudhary took oath as Bihar Chief Minister on April 15, the first from the BJP to hold the post. He was named Bihar CM after Nitish Kumar quit the post following his election to the Rajya Sabha.

Here is the complete list of Bihar ministers

Ministers from the BJP:

1. Vijay Kumar Sinha
2. Dilip Jaiswal
3. Ram Kripal Yadav
4. Nitish Mishra
5. Mithilesh Tiwari
6. Kedar Gupta
7. Rama Nishad
8. Pramod Chandravanshi
9. Lakhindra Paswan
10. Sanjay Tiger
11. Engr. Kumar Shailendra
12. Ramchandra Prasad
13. Nandkishore Ram
14. Shreyasi Singh

News box

Ragpicker dies in late-night fire at slum cluster

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A 40-year-old man was charred to death in a fire that broke out in a in a slum cluster on Tuesday night. The incident happened around 1am in Sector 53. Robin Das, a native of West Bengal, had been living in Gurgaon for several years and working as a ragpicker. Police said the blaze was confined to a single hut.

“The charred body was recovered from the debris and sent for post-mortem. Preliminary assessment indicates the fire may have been triggered by a short circuit or possibly a lit bidi. The victim was a chain smoker,” an officer said.

Das was alone in the hut when the fire broke out. His daughter and son-in-law, who live nearby, rushed to the spot after hearing his cries for help. By the time they reached, the flames had engulfed the hut and he was found charred under the debris. Police said further inquiry is underway to ascertain the exact cause of the fire.

Three killed as car collides with truck

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Three people, including a revenue official with Haryana State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation, were killed in a head-on collision between a truck and a car near Mokaldas village on Pachgaon-Jamalpur Road on Wednesday evening.

The victims, Kuldeep (40), a patwari with HSIIDC, Naval Singh (68), a retired Army havaldar, and



Samay Singh (70) a farmer, were all residents of Pukharpur village. They were returning from Jamalpur in a Maruti Brezza when Kuldeep, who was driving, collided with a truck on the single-lane road around 6 pm. The impact mangled the car, trapping all three inside. Local residents and passers-by pulled them from the wreckage and rushed them to a nearby hospital, but doctors declared all three brought dead. While the truck driver fled the scene, police seized the vehicle. A case has been registered at Bilaspur police station under BNS sections 106 and 281 and the bodies sent for autopsy.

Bank staffer shot at outside Gurgaon home, gunpowder burns eye



Gurgaon.(Agency)

A 42-year-old Bank of America employee was shot at by an unidentified man outside his home in Laxman Vihar on Wednesday evening. While the bullet missed him, gunpowder from the shot burned one of his eyes, police said.

Rajat Rastogi had just returned from work and stepped out of his car outside his house on street number 4 around 6 pm when the attacker, who appeared to have been waiting for him, approached from behind on foot and fired. As the bullet struck a nearby wall, the shooter abandoned the weapon, a country-made pistol, at the spot and fled.

Residents heard Rastogi's screams and alerted the police control room. Personnel from Sector 9-A police station, Sector 4 police post and local crime branch teams rushed to the spot. Rastogi was taken to Kalyani Hospital in Sector 14 and later referred to the civil hospital, where he is undergoing treatment.

CCTV footage near the scene captured a well-built man in a white printed T-shirt, believed to be the suspect. Police have also recovered the pistol.

Rastogi told police he has no known enemies. His cousin Deepak said neither Rajat nor his wife, who works with TCS, had any disputes with anyone. “We are all shocked,” he said.

Investigators, however, believe the attack was pre-meditated. “It does not appear to be a case of robbery. Prima facie, the shooter had a personal grudge. The motive and the source of the weapon will be established once he is arrested,” a senior officer said.

Police are questioning family members and neighbours. A case under the Arms Act is likely to be registered. Sub-inspector Narvir, in-charge of Sector 4 police post, confirmed the bullet hit the wall and that only one round was fired.

Over a year on, footbridges on Sohna Road yet to rise beyond foundations

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Construction of footbridges at Sheetla Mata Mandir, Sector 14 market and CD Chowk on Sohna Road has seen little progress, with only foundations visible at the sites despite more than a year after the work was started. The delay has affected commuters and residents who are forced to walk along the main carriageway. The projects, conceived in 2024 to improve pedestrian safety at busy crossings, have lost early momentum. The initial tender for four bridges was floated in June 2024 but had to be scrapped in July after bids were rejected during technical evaluation. It was retendered in Aug and the project was eventually granted in Dec, with a completion timeline of 18 months.

However, on the ground, work remains at a preliminary stage. At Sheetla Mata

Mandir, the foundation has been laid and the area haphazardly barricaded, but no further construction has taken place. A similar scene was visible at Sector 14 market and CD Chowk, where work has not progressed beyond initial groundwork.

Commuters said unfinished structures and barricades have made daily travel harder. With no functional footbridges, pedestrians are forced to walk on the main road and dodge fast-moving traffic. Shopkeepers in the area also said the delay in construction has hurt their business.

“There has been no work for the past four months. The shops are suffering because customers are unable to access them. At times, police restrict road crossing during heavy traffic, making it

impossible for pedestrians to cross. There seems to be no proper planning,” said Ghanshyam Saini, a shopkeeper on



Sheetla Mata Road.

Aparna Gaur, a commuter in Sector 14, echoed Saini's sentiments. “People are compelled to walk on the main road and cross through speeding vehicles, which is extremely risky. Any delay in such

projects puts safety at stake. At this pace, it does not seem the work will be completed anytime soon,” she said.

A senior GMDA official, however, said that civil works at the sites have largely been completed and fabrication is underway. “The only issue currently is the procurement of steel, as suppliers are facing disruptions due to the crisis in West Asia. Efforts are being made to address this, and the FOBs are expected to be completed by June-end,” the official said.

The FOB planned at CD Chowk is part of a larger effort to improve pedestrian connectivity along the busy NH-248A corridor, particularly the stretch between Subhash Chowk and Vatika Chowk, which sees heavy footfall due to malls, offices and residential clusters.

Signature cuisines under UP scheme: Soya chaap in Ghaziabad, cake in Noida

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

UP cabinet has assigned soya chaap and pickled chillies to Ghaziabad and bakery items to GB Nagar under its ‘one district, one cuisine’ (ODOC) initiative. It approved Rs 150 crore for the scheme to promote district-specific cuisines across the state. First announced by chief minister Yogi Adityanath in Dec last year and launched by Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Lucknow on Jan 24 during Uttar Pradesh Day celebrations, the scheme was formally cleared by the state cabinet on Monday.

Modelled on the ‘one district, one product’ (ODOP) initiative, ODOC aims to promote local delicacies through branding, packaging and marketing, covering 208 vegetarian cuisines across 18 divisions and 75 districts. Officials told TOI that entrepreneurs will receive a 25% subsidy on branding and packaging, with financial assistance of up to Rs 20 lakh per beneficiary.

Among the other signature cuisines are Agra's petha, Mathura's peda, Meerut's gajak, Lucknow's makhana malai, Varanasi's tiranga barfi, and regionally popular Ayodhya's khurchan peda and jalebi, Barabanki's chandrakala, Banda's sohan halwa, Shravasti's imarti and Jalaun's gujhiya. Sought-after sweets in small towns such as Baghpat's ghevar, Lalitpur's doodh ka halwa, and Kushinagar's lal khorma also figure in the list. Jaggery made in different districts of western UP, too, is on the chart.

The samosa districts are Prayagraj, Kanpur Nagar, Gorakhpur, Varanasi and Jhansi, whereas districts famous for mouth-watering chaat include Lucknow, Varanasi, Prayagraj, Kanpur Nagar, Kasganj (moth ki chaat variant) and Gorakhpur.

Food critics, however, have questioned the selections, noting neither dish carries strong historical ties to either district.

Gunmen pull off daylight cash van heist at Crossings Republik, flee with Rs 20 lakh

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

Three armed men fired several rounds and robbed a cash-laden van from outside an ATM kiosk near a petrol pump in the Crossings Republik area on Wednesday afternoon. Police recovered the abandoned van on the Delhi-Meerut Expressway near Masuri police station, about 10 km away, but by then the accused had fled with around Rs 20 lakh it was carrying.

According to police, five employees of India1, a financial institution, had left their office that morning carrying Rs 25 lakh to load into ATMs along their route. By 1 pm, they had loaded cash into more than 3 machines and stopped near an HP petrol pump in Crossings Republik to load cash into another machine.

Like clockwork, four staffers went to the ATM



kiosk with cash, roughly 50 metres from the van, and the driver sat inside the van. Once they had finished loading cash at the ATM, the staffers sat outside the kiosk for lunch. In a matter of minutes, the three men approached the parked vehicle. “They

pointed weapons at the van driver and ordered him to open the gate. When he refused, one of them fired in the air. They overpowered him, threw him to the ground, and drove off with the van,” DCP (city) Dhawal Jaiswal said.

The employees immediately dialled 112 to alert cops. Police alerted all nearby stations, including those in Noida and Delhi, and shared the van's number plate. The vehicle was traced to the DME near Masuri within 30 minutes.

The criminals had by then emptied it. Jaiswal said it could be a planned heist. “The accused appear to have conducted reconnaissance over several days, tracking the van's route and crew. We are also examining the possible involvement of employees,” he said.

GMDA nod to prosecute 3 engineers for death of youth on flooded Gurgaon road

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Last monsoon, a 22-year-old man fell into an under-construction stormwater drain along Hamilton Court Road. He couldn't spot the danger that lay under his feet because the road was flooded and there were no barricades to warn people.

Nearly 10 months later, GMDA has granted permission to police to prosecute three of its engineers for the negligence that claimed Naresh Bhatt's life. The trio held responsible for the lapses were subdivisional engineer Jagdish Chandra, whose services were terminated in Jan this year, and two junior engineers — Rajhans and Mohd Iqraar Hussain — engaged on contract through the Haryana Kaushal Rozgar Nigam.

On July 12, Naresh Bhatt was found dead in the waterlogged drain just a



few hundred metres from his rented accommodation in Sushant Lok-1 after a frantic three-day search by his family. On the night of July 9, when intense rainfall left several city roads inundated, Bhatt was walking back from work when he fell into the open drain and drowned. Bhatt had recently moved to the city from Nepal and was working at a café.

Bhatt's father, Ramdutt, had alleged gross negligence and demanded strict action. “My son died after drowning

in a drain which has been under construction for a long time. There was no signboard or any safety precautions. I want the strictest action against GMDA officials and the contractor responsible for my son's death,” he had said when the incident happened last year.

After the incident, a case under BNS sections 106 (death by negligence) and 3(5) (common intention) at DLF police station at Sector 29 and sought GMDA's permission to begin prosecution.

“We found that the drain site had not been barricaded. A case was registered against personnel of GMDA and the contractor. Also, lapses were found on part of sub divisional engineer and junior engineer,” a police officer said. “After reviewing the findings, the GMDA CEO has approved action.

HPV vaccination coverage doubles to 12% in 10 days in Haryana, Gurgaon at 10%

Gurgaon.(Agency)

The city has recorded a rise in HPV vaccinations, with cumulative doses crossing 1,600 and coverage reaching about 10%. This comes as the state's overall coverage doubled from around 6% on April 23 to 12% by May 4 during a 10-day review that had flagged slow progress. According to UWIN data, 27,227 adolescents aged 14–15 have been vaccinated across Haryana against a target of 2.26 lakh.

The city administered 111 doses in a day, indicating a gradual pickup. Karnal and Yamunanagar continue to lead the state. Karnal reported 261 vaccinations a day and has reached a cumulative 4,525 doses, or 37% coverage. Yamunanagar logged 182 doses and stands at 3,326 (35%). Kurukshetra also posted strong daily numbers, administering 180 doses and taking its total to 1,404.

Among NCR cities, Faridabad has administered 1,503 doses, or 7% coverage, while Nuh stands at 1,351 (7%). Panchkula, Panipat and Rewari

are in the 11–15% range. In contrast, Jind at 3%, Hisar at 4% and Jhajjar at 4% continue to lag, pointing to uneven uptake across the state.

Health officials said the campaign is being intensified through schools and field outreach, backed by daily mobilisation and district-level monitoring. As reported on April 23, Haryana had achieved only about 6% coverage (13,580 doses), nearly two months after the campaign began on Feb 28.

At a state steering committee meeting, officials identified vaccine hesitancy, misinformation and gaps in beneficiary identification, especially among out-of-school girls, as major reasons for the slow start. Weak inter-departmental coordination in the initial phase was also flagged.

Gurgaon mirrored that early trend, with only 709 doses administered against a target of 16,228. At the time, several districts, including Jhajjar, Jind and

Charkhi Dadri, remained in low triple digits, while Karnal and Yamunanagar had performed relatively better.

After the review, departments were



directed to intensify mobilisation. Schools were made central to the rollout, with teachers identifying eligible girls and facilitating consent. ASHA and anganwadi workers were assigned to map out-of-school adolescents, while urban local bodies and panchayats were asked to widen

outreach in slums, construction sites and rural areas.

“We have requested DCs, schools, panchayats, local bodies and women and child development department to step up mobilisation. We are witnessing improvement, but much more needs to be done. There are various myths associated with this vaccine. It's safe and helps prevent cervical cancer. We will keep a close watch,” said Dr Virender Yadav, director, NHM, Haryana.

Officials said the recent increase in daily vaccinations reflects better coordination and stronger ground-level efforts, though maintaining the momentum will be crucial as the three-month campaign window nears its end. Nearly all cervical cancer cases are linked to HPV infection. India records an estimated 79,000 new cases and 35,000 deaths each year, underscoring the importance of early vaccination. With limited time left in the campaign window.

Pune cop held taking bribe to 'protect' businessman from arrest

The case traces back to March 7, 2026, when Kaspate allegedly accepted Rs 5 lakh from a businessman facing a non-bailable warrant (NBW) issued by a Hyderabad court in connection with a cheque bounce case.

Pune . (Agency)

A police constable working posted at the Koregaon Park police station in Pune was arrested by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Wednesday after he was caught accepting a bribe of Rs 1.5 lakh – the latest in a series of corrupt demands linked to a cheque bounce case being heard in a Hyderabad court.

The accused, Ganesh Shahaji Kaspate (40), was apprehended at approximately 2.08 pm near Boat Club Road, Pune, in a trap operation conducted by the ACB.

The case traces back to March 7, 2026, when Kaspate allegedly accepted Rs 5

lakh from a businessman facing a non-bailable warrant (NBW) issued by a Hyderabad court in connection with a cheque bounce case. In exchange, the constable reportedly assured the businessman that he would not be arrested and that the matter would be handled.

On May 1, 2026, Kaspate approached the same businessman again – this time claiming that the warrant had been issued again – and demanded Rs 2.5 lakh to continue protecting him from arrest. Since the



businessman was unwell, his employee met Kaspate on his behalf. The constable repeated his demand of Rs 2.5 lakh to the employee, which was later negotiated

down to Rs 2 lakh.

Following which, the employee filed a formal complaint with the ACB, Pune, on May 5. A verification operation conducted the same day, in the presence of official witnesses, confirmed the demand. Kaspate reportedly acknowledged during the verification that he had previously accepted Rs 5 lakh in the same matter and was now seeking an additional Rs 2 lakh, subsequently reduced to Rs 1.5 lakh.

Acting on this, the ACB set a trap the following day. On May 6, Kaspate was

caught red-handed while accepting Rs 1.5 lakh in front of Sulaks Kalpataru Garden Society, near the Pan Shop, Boat Club Road. According to the ACB, Kaspate did not go quietly. At the time of his arrest, he allegedly bit the complainant on the chest and attempted to flee while physically obstructing members of the trap team – charges that significantly aggravate his case. A case is being registered against Kaspate at the Koregaon Park police station under Section 7 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, and Sections 132 and 115(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

Short news

Lured On Gay Dating App, Bengaluru Civil Engineer Looted, Stabbed

Bengaluru . (Agency)

A 27-year-old Bengaluru engineer's quest to find a partner using a 'gay dating app' led him straight into the trap of criminals, who stabbed him, forced him to disclose his UPI password and looted him.

The civil engineer, a resident of Chikkajala, had been using the Grindr dating application - which describes itself as a dating service for the 'GBTQ' community - for the past three years to interact and socialise with people. According to the First Information Report (FIR) registered at Yelahanka Police Station, the victim received a phone call from a person he had connected with on the dating app, asking him to come to Palanahalli Gate near Bagalur Road for a meeting. He travelled to the location on a bus.

As he reached the spot, he was accosted by four men who escorted him towards Jayamuni Layout near Northgate Company. They started verbally abusing him and threatened to expose his dating app activities to his family and friends.

The men took him to a secluded area near the Canadian School in Venkatala. One of the attackers threatened him with a knife and asked him to hand over his mobile phone and UPI password. The attackers stabbed him with a knife in the head, wrist, rib area, abdomen, and neck.

The Yelahanka Police have registered a robbery case under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.

Per the FIR, the gang used his UPI password to transfer money from his SBI bank account to their accounts. While the FIR mentions a transfer of Rs 16,000, police later stated that approximately Rs 15,000 had been transferred to another PhonePe account.

No "Bacterial Infection" Found In Mumbai Family Watermelon-Deaths

Mumbai.(Agency)

The initial report submitted by the microbiology department of a Mumbai-based state-run hospital has said no "bacterial infection" was detected in the bodies of four family members, who died after consuming watermelon recently, officials said on Wednesday. The Dokadia family, residents of Ghari Mohalla on Ismail Kurte Road, had hosted a get-together of relatives on the night of April 25. At around 1 am (on April 26), hours after the guests had left, Abdullah Dokadia (40), his wife Nasreen (35), and daughters Ayesha (16) and Zaineb (13) ate pieces of a watermelon.

They suffered severe bouts of vomiting and diarrhoea in the early hours of April 26 and were rushed to a local hospital before being referred to the government-run J J Hospital where all four died during treatment.

After the incident, Mumbai police, forensic experts and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) officials visited the house and had collected samples of every food item that constituted the family's last meal, including 'chicken pulav', watermelon, water, and other foodstuffs, and sent them to the Forensic Science Laboratory for analysis.

After the post-mortem of the deceased, their viscera was preserved for chemical analysis.

As the probe is underway, the microbiology department of the state-run J J Hospital has submitted its initial report to the police. "As per the report, no bacterial infection has been detected so far in the bodies of the victims. No bacteria was found in their blood," the official said. The exact cause of the death will be known once the forensic science lab submits its report, he said.

3 dead after boat carrying family of 9 capsizes in UP amid heavy rain

Hamirpur. (Agency)

Three people, including a woman and two girls, have died after a boat carrying nine people capsized in the Yamuna river in Uttar Pradesh's Hamirpur district late Wednesday night. Three children are still missing, while rescue teams continue search operations at the site. Officials said six people had gone missing after the boat overturned, while three people were rescued from the river.

According to officials, all the victims had attended a wedding ceremony at the house of Deshraj Nishad in the village. After the function, the group crossed the Yamuna river by boat to eat wood apple, cucumber and watermelon on the other side of the river. Vishnu Nishad, along with

his wife and seven children from the family, boarded the boat to return home after collecting watermelons and



muskmelons. During the journey back, the boat lost balance in the middle of the river and capsized, throwing all nine occupants into the water.

Vishnu Nishad and one child managed to

swim to safety, while local fishermen rescued another child. The remaining passengers went missing in the river. Police

and administrative officials rushed to the spot after receiving information about the accident and launched a rescue operation on a war footing. Teams from the district administration, NDRF and SDRF are carrying out rescue efforts, while divers are searching the river for the missing children.

Officials said three bodies have so far been recovered from the river, including those of a woman and two girls. Three children are still missing. Authorities have appealed to people to stay away from the riverbanks as rescue operations continue amid difficult conditions.

Arrest grounds in Marathi lead to release of POCSO accused who didn't understand it

Mumbai. (Agency)

A Mumbai sessions court has ordered the release of a man accused in a POCSO case, citing serious procedural lapses in his arrest, including failure to communicate the grounds of arrest in a language he could understand. The accused, Aniruddha Vijaykumar, was produced before the City Civil and Additional Sessions Court in Dindoshi on May 4 in connection with a remand application. The case, registered by Powai Police Station, is being heard by a designated Fast Track Special POCSO ((Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) Court.

Defence counsel Kushal Mor argued that



police violated provisions of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, which require that grounds of arrest be communicated in a language understood by the accused and that family members be informed. He told

the court that the accused, a native of Mangaluru, did not understand Marathi, yet the arrest grounds were provided only in that language.

The court agreed, observing that obtaining a signature on a document the accused may not have understood cannot be treated as valid compliance. It also noted lapses in informing the accused's family.

Referring to Supreme Court rulings in Vihaan Kumar vs State of Haryana and Mihir Rajesh Shah vs State of Maharashtra, the judge ordered his release on a personal bond of Rs 30,000 and issued a show-cause notice to the investigating officer.

Mother's relentless two-year battle cracks Dehradun hit-and-run case



Dehradun . (Agency)

A mother's two-year-long pursuit of justice has finally led to a breakthrough in a hit-and-run case in Dehradun, with police arresting the dumper driver accused in connection with her son's death. The case, which dates back to February 2024 in the Premnagar area, was first highlighted by sister channel Aaj Tak, showcasing how the victim's mother gathered evidence on her own to seek justice.

According to officials, Lalita Chaudhary, a resident of Dalanwala, had filed a complaint on February 19, 2024, alleging that a speeding dumper had hit her son, who later succumbed to his injuries during treatment. Initially, the police registered a case against an unknown driver but later filed a final report in court citing lack of sufficient evidence.

Refusing to give up, the victim's mother approached the Dehradun SSP and demanded a reinvestigation. Acting on the SSP's directions, Premnagar police sought the court's permission for further probe, which was granted.

During the renewed investigation, police revisited old evidence and examined new leads, eventually tracing the dumper involved in the incident. The probe revealed that the vehicle was being driven by Dal Bahadur at the time of the accident. The accused has now been arrested. During questioning, the driver reportedly said he had informed the vehicle owner after the accident and was subsequently reassigned to another vehicle. Police are now searching for another accused who has emerged during the investigation.

2,000-passenger casino vessel can't sail into Goa's Mandovi river just yet, Bombay HC says

Residents and activists have challenged permissions granted to Delta's new 112-metre vessel, arguing it could worsen navigational congestion, damage the Mandovi's ecology and affect fisherfolk livelihoods

Panaji. (Agency)

The High Court of Bombay at Goa barred the entry of a new casino vessel in the Mandovi river in Panaji, observing that the vessel shall not sail into the Panaji port without the prior permission of the court and without obtaining all the required certifications.

The petitioners – the association 'Enough is Enough', Sudip Tamankar and Harish Madkaikar – had filed a public interest litigation and sought directions to set aside various permissions granted to M/s Delta Pleasure Cruise Company Pvt Ltd to replace the vessel 'M.V. Royale Flotel', which had a passenger capacity of 70, with the company's new vessel 'M.V. Deltin Royale' with a passenger capacity of 2000 in the Mandovi river. The petitioners also sought to restrain the new vessel from being moored in the Mandovi.

In an interim order on Wednesday, a Division Bench of Justices Amit S Jamsandekar and

Valmiki Menezes said: "Considering that, as of today, the vessel does not possess a certificate of survey, we deem it appropriate to direct that the vessel in question shall not sail into the Panaji Port, i.e., in the river Mandovi, without obtaining all the required certifications. Further, even if such certificates and requirements for sailing of the vessel into the Panaji Port are obtained, the vessel shall not sail into the Port without prior permission of this court".

During the proceedings, the counsel for Delta Pleasure Cruise Company Pvt Ltd told the court that the new vessel will not be able to come to the Mandovi river till the monsoon sets in and the vessel is at present berthed at Mormugao Port Trust.

The court also took note of the statement by the Secretary, Department of Home, in the

affidavit filed by the government, stating that "in the event the government of Goa decides to permit casino operations in the



new vessel which is subject matter of this petition, the government of Goa would first place such decision before this court, before issuing any order to the respondent no. 3 [Delta]...to that effect."

"Taking note of said statement, we are assured by the government of Goa that the

order amending the licence issued to M.V. Royale Flotel, which was for 70 passengers, would not be amended in favour of the new vessel, M.V. Deltin Royale, without first placing the decision of the government before this court," the court said.

People across Panaji and nearby areas are opposing the entry of a new 112-metre-long and 28-metre-wide vessel in the Mandovi river, arguing that such a mega casino vessel would gravely impact the ecology and environment of the river and impact the livelihood of fisherfolk who operate along its coast. In the petition, the petitioners said that despite Secretary (Ports) flagging in a file noting in 2021 that new vessels may create further navigational hazards due to clustering of vessels, which would create a bottleneck at the mooring position, an NOC had been granted to bring in a new vessel.

Op Sindoor enforced our red lines

ONE year ago, on the night of May 6-7, 2025, India carried out precision strikes on nine terrorist targets in Pakistan, including the headquarters of Lashkar-e-Taiba at Muridke and of Jaish-e-Mohammed at Bahawalpur. This came in response to the horrific massacre of Indian tourists in Pahalgam by terrorists linked to Lashkar-e-Taiba. Code-named Operation Sindoor, it marked a new phase in India's resolve to enforce its counterterrorism red lines. The crisis escalated as Pakistan launched hundreds of drones into Indian airspace. As the fighting continued, the Indian Air Force carried out damaging strikes on Pakistani airbases at Chaklala, Rafiqui, Rahim Yar Khan, Sargodha, Bholari and Jacobabad on the night of May 9-10. On May 10, Pakistan's Director General of Military Operations called up his Indian counterpart with a request for a ceasefire, which was accepted. Operation Sindoor lasted only 88 hours, but its brevity should not be confused with limited significance. It offers important lessons for how the Indian military should prepare for the next crisis with Pakistan. Four imperatives stand out.

The first is an intense and compressed battle cycle. Operation Sindoor demonstrated how quickly a crisis can escalate, both vertically through the expanding use of force and horizontally across a wider geography. While the operation was largely confined to the land and air domains, the next crisis could extend to the maritime domain, with naval forces playing a more active role. The geography of conflict will also expand into the digital realm, with cyber operations targeting critical infrastructure. In such a conflict, war will no longer unfold in a neat sequence. Intelligence, targeting, precision strike, air defence, drone warfare, escalation management, diplomatic outreach and information operations will occur almost simultaneously. This demands a high state of military readiness as the side that enters the crisis with prepared options will enjoy a decisive advantage over the side that improvises under pressure. This is also where jointness will be tested. In a short, high-intensity conflict, delays caused by service silos can become strategic vulnerabilities. What is essential is integrated planning, common target folders, interoperable communications, shared situational awareness and pre-agreed escalation options. Jointness, therefore, must not be treated as a fashionable slogan but the fundamental operational grammar of the compressed battle cycle. Second, new technologies are no longer lessons to be drawn from distant wars but are already present on our battlefields. Operation Sindoor was described as South Asia's first drone war. In the year since, we are seeing a much greater induction of drones in the inventories of both militaries. Drone warfare will be central in the next conflict. Future crises are also likely to see greater use of long-range standoff weapons and precision missiles, allowing air forces to strike without crossing borders. Because such attacks are launched from a distance and viewed on screens far from the battlefield, they can appear controlled, clinical and almost risk-free. That makes them politically attractive. But this perception is dangerous. When both sides believe they can strike from afar without paying an immediate price, the threshold for using force may lower, and escalation can become faster.

Third, information warfare is no longer a sideshow, but a central theatre of conflict. In Operation Sindoor, even as kinetic strikes were being carried out, a fierce parallel battle of perceptions unfolded across television screens, media outlets and social networks. The information space was flooded with fake news, exaggerated claims, misinformation and disinformation.

State verdicts redraw India's political map

After the defeat of the TMC and the DMK, the

The verdict in the four states (Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal) and Puducherry has resulted in a change in governments in three states (West Bengal, Kerala and TN) and the retention of the governments in two states (Assam and Puducherry). These verdicts will have deep implications for national politics. They indicate that for winning elections, parties need a combination of factors: leadership, party workers on the ground, strategy of political mobilisation, picking up the right issue to connect with the voters, work done by the government and a credible promise to voters. The results indicate that welfare schemes or freebies alone may not guarantee the victory for a party. These victories have helped the BJP form the government in one more state and the party has moved ahead in establishing its political dominance. The defeat of two strong regional parties which had posed strong resistance to the BJP -- the Trinamool Congress in West Bengal and the DMK in Tamil Nadu -- raises the bigger question about the future of regional parties in Indian politics in the coming years.

It also raises the question about the path ahead for the INDIA alliance partners since two of its strong allies, the TMC and the DMK, are not as strong as they were before the elections. This fact is important as from INDIA alliance's point of view, two important states -- UP and Punjab -- go to the polls early next year and other states like Uttarakhand, Goa, Manipur, Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh having elections later. The NDA retained power in Assam and Puducherry, where it was the incumbent party. Not only did the NDA register a massive victory in Assam, winning 102 of the 126 seats, the BJP alone managed to get a majority, winning 82 seats with a 37.8% vote share. Considering that the incumbent governments lost power (Kerala, TN and West Bengal), this is a significant achievement for the ruling NDA alliance in these two states. While many factors contributed to the victory of the NDA alliance in these two states, it should be seen as an endorsement of the work done by the ruling NDA alliance in these states. The defeat of the LDF government in Kerala, the DMK alliance government in TN and the TMC government in West Bengal is a clear sign of strong anti-incumbency due to increased dissatisfaction of the voters with the governance in these states. One should not forget that the TMC was in power in West Bengal for 15 years while both the LDF in Kerala and DMK alliance in TN were in power for the last one decade. But there is no thumb rule of anti-incumbency if a party has been in power for very long. We have seen governments being in power for very long periods. The Left front had been in power in West Bengal for a long 34 years (1977-2011). The BJP has been in power in Gujarat since 1998, the Sikkim Democratic Front ruled Sikkim



for 25 years ((1994-2019) and the Biju Janata Dal was in power in Odisha for 24 years (since 2000) before being defeated in 2024. But a big negative swing of votes against the TMC in West Bengal, the DMK alliance in TN and the LDF in Kerala is a sign of dissatisfaction with the incumbent parties in these states. In Bengal, the TMC vote share declined by 8.2%. In TN, the DMK alliance vote share declined by 13.9% while in Kerala, the vote share of the LDF declined by 7.6%.

Impact on national politics

The victory in Bengal is extremely significant for the BJP as the party had faced strong resistance from the TMC in the past. This victory has also helped the BJP in expanding its political wings. Now, the BJP, either alone or with allies, is the ruling party in 22 states. These states account for nearly 78% of the country's population. This is not a small achievement for the BJP which had governments only in seven states when it formed the government at the Centre in 2014. In 2014, the Congress, either alone or with its allies, was in power in 14 states while the regional parties were in power in seven states.

Twelve years later, in 2026, the Congress and its allies have governments in six states while the regional parties have governments in three states. It is also important to note that except for Jharkhand, where the Jharkhand Mukti Morch, along with its allies, is in the government, none of the INDIA alliance partners are in government in any other state. Not that the parties can't play an important role in politics while being in the opposition. They can. But there is a huge difference in the morale of leaders and party workers when in government and in opposition. The Congress has lost elections in Assam, but there was very little hope for the party in Assam. In Bengal, it was almost a non-entity while in TN, it was a junior partner in the DMK alliance. But the victory in Kerala is important for the Congress for two reasons. One, the party will have a government in one more state. So these elections add to the tally of Congress's own governments. Second, after the defeat of the TMC and the DMK, the Congress's victory could help the INDIA alliance settle the question of who should lead the alliance, a question which keeps popping up now and then. At least for a few years.

Heat and storms: Region grappling with a volatile climate cycle

The region is grappling with a volatile climate cycle, with early heat stress followed by erratic storms

A shower of hailstones in May in parts of Punjab, including Chandigarh, is a clear indication that shifting weather patterns are becoming the norm across North India. Unseasonal rain and high-velocity winds have once again exposed the fragility of the region's farm economy. Coming as wheat procurement peaks, the damage is not in the fields alone but also in mandis, where vast quantities of grain lie in the open, vulnerable to moisture and spoilage. For farmers, this is a cruel post-harvest blow: the crop is sold, but its value is suddenly uncertain. Procurement at MSP has expanded, but storage and logistics have not kept pace. Agencies such as the Food Corporation of India continue to rely on inadequate covered facilities, while delayed lifting leaves grain exposed to the elements. Temporary fixes



— tarpaulin sheets and ad hoc stacking — are no substitute for modern, weather-resilient infrastructure. The region is grappling with a volatile climate cycle, with early heat stress followed by erratic

storms. Such swings also threaten the upcoming paddy season, where soil conditions and power-dependent irrigation will be critical. Meanwhile, wind damage to rural power lines has added another layer of uncertainty ahead of peak agricultural demand. Soaring temperatures are already pushing up power demand and straining water resources. In the hills of Himachal, the same weather pattern carries different risks, including landslides, disrupted tourism and potential harm to horticulture, particularly fruit crops at a sensitive stage.

The region, heavily dependent on agriculture, stands particularly vulnerable. What is needed is a coordinated, forward-looking approach. State governments must invest in climate-resilient agriculture, strengthen localised forecasting systems and ensure that advisories actually reach farmers in real time. Inter-state coordination, too, is essential, given the shared ecological and economic landscape.

Dent in Muslim vote bank hurt TMC

Some Muslims in Bengal seem convinced that voting for 'secular' parties will not protect them

WHEN Mamata Banerjee returned to power in 2021, with over 48.5% votes for the Trinamool Congress (TMC), it was clear that she had ridden a wave of support from West Bengal's Muslim voters. The BJP had garnered a vote share of 38%, almost all of which would have come from the state's 70% Hindu population. It meant that the TMC would have, at best, got 30% of its votes from Hindus and the remaining 18.5% from Muslims. This suggested that nearly 70% of the Muslim voters backed Mamata in 2021. This time, when the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls disenfranchised 27 lakh living, breathing voters in West Bengal, the TMC alleged that this was meant to target its supporters. The evidence indicated that Muslims might have been disproportionately affected in the final exercise, and it is highly likely that these people would have voted for the TMC in previous elections.

Despite SIR removing dead and living voters, the actual turnout was much higher than in 2021. Nearly 35 lakh more people voted in 2026. Both the BJP and TMC saw this as a sign of their impending victory. The BJP argued that the Election Commission of India (ECI) had made voting safe and people had come out in larger numbers to defeat the incumbent. The TMC claimed that the high turnout was because voters, especially Muslims, wanted to defeat the partisan SIR process.

Some of the highest turnouts were recorded in the very seats most affected by SIR deletions. One reason for this was that the number of voters had fallen, reducing the denominator. But several political pundits, and reporters on the ground, argued that Muslims had come out to vote in larger numbers because they were scared that a BJP victory would endanger their very existence as citizens of India. The general consensus was that the TMC's share of Muslim votes would rise further, as Muslims

had consolidated behind the party, most likely to keep the BJP out of Bengal. Some West Bengal watchers calculated that if another 15-16% of Muslims were to vote for Mamata, her overall vote share would rise by 5 percentage points, counteracting any potential slide in Hindu votes. As it turned out, the TMC's vote share slipped by 7.5 percentage points. If one assumes a Muslim consolidation behind Mamata, then it would follow that there was a drop of 10-11 percentage points in Hindu votes for the TMC. But a closer look at the voting pattern in the seats with high Muslim population punctures this picture. There are at least 32 seats in Bengal where Muslims account for more than 50% of the electorate. The estimate by pollsters is higher — 38-42 seats — but these 32 are on most lists. The TMC had won all 32 in 2021, and got an unassailable 57.7% vote share. This time, its vote share in these constituencies dropped to 41.4% — a massive decline of 16.3 percentage points. Was this because of the deletion of Muslim voters during the SIR process? That didn't affect the final turnout in these seats, which was 4.9 lakh — 7.6% higher than in 2021. Neither did the TMC lose its votes entirely to the BJP. In fact, the BJP's vote share in these seats rose by only 4.6 percentage points, from 22.1% in 2021 to 26.7%. If we assume that most of these were Hindus who had voted for the TMC last time, then there's still another 11-12% of the TMC's votes — mostly Muslim — which went to others. The largest chunk moved to the Congress and the Left-ISF (Indian Secular Front) combine. These three parties had fought together in 2021 and polled 15.9% of the votes in these 32 seats. This time, their combined vote share — although they fought

separately — rose to 23.3%. That's a gain of 7.4 percentage points, and most of this would have been Muslim votes that switched from the TMC. This points to a growing acceptance among Muslims, in these seats, of the ISF led by Pirzada Naushad Siddiqui of the Furfura Sharif shrine. The TMC also lost votes to

Murshidabad on the BJPticket.

This time, he contested the elections as his own party's candidate. Just a few weeks before voting, the TMC alleged that it had caught Kabir in a sting operation, asking for money to get Muslim voters to back him. Although Kabir denied it, many believed that this was

enough to defang the AJUP factor. The reality turned out to be very different. The AJUP won two of these 32 seats, and took away 3-4% of the TMC's Muslim votes.

It is tempting to put this down to Muslims being fed up of 'appeasement' and 'vote bank' politics. The truth could be much more worrying. Even though Siddiqui and Sharif claim to represent everyone, the thrust of their rhetoric is sectarian. Their success suggests that a section of Muslims have moved towards parties which focus only on their concerns as Muslims. That is where they feel safe, at a time when they are being threatened not just with disenfranchisement but also losing their citizenship. Even when they know that parties like the AJUP and the ISF cannot fight the BJP at the state level, they are willing to vote for them in places where Muslims are in majority. This is an unexpected

collateral damage of the SIR process. A section of Muslims in Bengal appears to be convinced that voting for the so-called 'secular' parties will not protect them — they have to organise through overtly 'Muslim' parties. This is an unfortunate descent into ghettoisation that West Bengal had evaded till now.



Humayun Kabir's Aam Janata Unnayan Party (AJUP). Kabir was part of the Trinamool till last December, when he was suspended for planning to build a 'Babri Masjid' in Bengal. Back then, the TMC had accused him of trying to cause communal polarisation in cahoots with the BJP. Indeed, Kabir had joined the BJP in 2018 and even fought the 2019 Lok Sabha elections from

Get your dog a manicure!



what it is
People giving their dogs nails a manicure and getting nail art done on them.
How it started
The trend picked up in Japan a couple of years ago and is now sweeping social media timelines.
How it's done
It's best to take your pooch to a nail artist who specializes in working with pets as they don't stay still for long and their nails are much longer and narrower than a human's. You can get pretty much anything basic done for your dog, like different patterns or glitter. Make sure that the nail polish used is safe for dogs

Everyday changes in your routine can 'save the sparrow'



The dwindling numbers of sparrows have been a cause of concern for environmentalists in the city. Fondly referred to as 'chuiu tai' in Maharashtra, on account of World Sparrow Day, here's looking at small changes you can make around that will help save them...

They love mud. With all the cement and concrete around us, societies need to encourage on having more of gardens where most sparrows find their livelihood. With worms, insects and seeds around, it's a healthy habitat for them.

· Have you witnessed sparrows fluttering their wings up and down, tossing mud on their bodies? Well, that's because house sparrows love mud bathing. This is a technique to dust off ticks, parasites and other worms from their bodies and maintain hygiene. Remember, more the mud, more the number of sparrows.

Associate professor and vice-principal of a suburban college, Dr Parvish Pandya, a naturalist says, "Remember the good old days when women of the house would sit on the parapet cleaning grains - getting rid of stones and bad quality of grains? This was a healthy practise considering this is exactly what sparrows needed. The stomach lining and the stones (kankad, as we know it) helps in pulverising the grains." Due to improved quality of grains available in the market, this practise has gone down drastically. However, you can still do your bit by keeping some grains and water in a bowl on your window.

· You can also build an artificial nest for them. Sujit Narwade, project scientist with Bombay Natural History Society says, "One can use a cardboard box (with lid, please affix it firmly onto the box), cut a hole of about 5-8 cm diameter on the side. Else, you can take a wide (about 15-20 cm diameter) PVC pipe and cut it to a length of about 50 cm and make a hole on its side. You can suspend this homemade nest box from the ceiling of your porch or balcony, but ensure that the nest box is not accessible for predators like crows or domestic cats and protect it from rainfall."

Should parents go easy on their

Children

once they become adults?

- Unlike most cultures, in India, children continue to live with their parents well into adulthood, meaning that the parenting doesn't really end.
- Parents should stand down and let their adult children make their own life decisions.

The parents of a young woman recently committed suicide after she eloped with a man from a different caste. The man was arrested by the police and charged with abetting the suicides, despite the woman telling the cops that she was under no duress. What's worse, her family members have blamed her for her parents' deaths, and debates on local TV channels have all placed the blame on her. While this case stands out because of the extreme measures taken by the parents, it is not uncommon for young adults to feel pressured when it comes to making important choices, such as choosing a life partner. Unlike most cultures, in India, children continue to live with their parents well into adulthood, meaning that the parenting doesn't really end.

But shouldn't parents stand down and let their adult children make their own life decisions? And how fair is it to impose your decisions and choices on your children? Psychosocial therapist Dr Shreedevi feels that differs from person to person, but adds that if parents are supportive of their children leaving town to pursue studies or a job, then why be so stringent when it comes to decisions dealing with their personal lives? "Children today are sent to hostels to study and even go to different cities on work. Parents are OK with this, but the support doesn't continue when it comes to very personal choices, like picking a life partner. One needs to take a step back and let their kids learn independence when their child is old enough to get a job." She adds that a child elopes when he/she is unable to reach out to their parents or is scared of their reaction, and that support is all that any child wants.

Dr Shreedevi adds, "I feel that in this case, the

parents chose the family's status over the happiness of their child, which is not right. The young lady's actions are a reflection of how her parents brought her up, so you can't blame her."

Chandni Daulatramani, a 27-year-old fashion blogger, says that she can understand parents' emotions, but they must also understand that they cannot put emotional pressure on their kids. "People in India, especially, put a lot of emotional pressure on their children; they want them to be a certain way, and forget that their kids are individuals. Parents need to start realizing that their children, after a certain age, are adults and have the free will to make their own decisions. Emotional blackmail is not acceptable because it becomes very difficult for children to say no. I am from

Kol kata and my parents want me to go back there and be with them, but I want to stay back in Bengaluru. I feel selfish for doing this, but I have to do this for myself. Parents can't impose their opinions on their kids. Perhaps, our parents didn't have too many choices and were forced to do certain things, but that doesn't mean that they have to push that onto their kids. I get where they are coming from, but times are changing."

Echoing a similar sentiment, fitness expert Waniha Ashok, who has a 28-year-old son and a 25-year-old daughter, feels that it is

about time that parents started accepting change and stopped fearing society. She says, "I was aghast when I saw the news. It's a culture shock for parents, but they have to accept that things will change, and they have to go with the flow. Back in the day, love marriages were taboo, but



Healthy bathroom habits that parents must teach their kids



If your child is one, it's time you started telling him/her how important it is to be clean and hygienic. Healthy bathroom practices are as important as eating the right food and going to bed on time. Here are three habits kids need to cultivate...

Wash hands

Did you know that not washing hands before eating can lead to infections, and at times, even diarrhoea? Get your kids to wash their hands with soap or a hand wash for at least 30 seconds. Rinsing well and dabbing the hands on a clean towel are also equally important. Washing after

for two minutes after every meal will keep oral problems at bay."

Flush and then clean

If you have already potty trained your child, teach them how to flush as well. Gauri Ambekar, a kindergarten teacher and mother of a three year old, says, "We must teach kids how to wash after relieving themselves, especially their private parts. The routine should also include wiping water off the toilet seat, tossing the used tissue in the bin and washing hands and feet before coming out."

using the bathroom, before eating and after playing will help prevent children from contracting infections.

Brush regularly

Babies start teething when they are six months and by the time they are one, their dental system is almost developed. Dr Mrinalini Iyer, child specialist, says, "Teach them why it's important to brush their teeth after every meal. Start by using your index finger and pressing their gums to aid circulation. As they grow older, educate them on the right way to brush — clean the outer surfaces of upper and lower teeth, then the inner surface. Move to the chewing part and then the tongue. Brushing

Your child more likely to wet bed if you did as a kid

The chances of bed-wetting by a child increases by 50-75 per cent if their parents had the same problem in their childhood, leading paediatricians said. The likelihood of a child exhibiting nocturnal enuresis (bed-wetting) is about 50 per cent if one parent had the same problem in the early years.

That probability jumps to 75 per cent if both parents could not control their bladder while sleeping during their childhood.

If none of the parents had wet the bed as a child, the chances that their child will wet the bed drops to 15 per cent.

"Parents have to understand that bed-wetting is mostly genetic apart from many other reasons," said Kanav Anand, a paediatric nephrologist at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital here.

"In bed-wetting children, the level of arginine vasopressin, a hormone that decreases the production of urine by the kidneys, goes down during sleep,

causing the bladder to fill slowly," Anand said.

About 85 per cent of children develop complete bladder control by five years of age. More boys tend to wet bed than girls up to the age of 12 years.

Many a times the children either have a smaller urinary bladder or do not

realise that their bladder is full, Anand said, adding that consulting a paediatrician in such situations is helpful.

The health experts also said that constipation and some symptoms of attention deficit hyperactivity

disorder (ADHD) may be linked to bed-wetting in children, so it is important for the parents to check with a paediatrician.

P.K. Pruthi, a Delhi-based paediatric nephrologist, said sometimes mental stress, such as caused by sexual abuse or death in the family, becomes the cause of bed-wetting among children.



Bullying is so damaging that it can have a negative impact on a victim. Parents need to know whether they are raising a monster.

Rachana Iyer's journey to oust her molester -an athletics coach at a premier school in Bengaluru -had been tough. However, despite the resistance that she met with, the then 17-year-old student had stood her ground and sought justice for herself. But while she expected the fight for justice to provide her with closure, it was, in reality, only the beginning of an abominable journey which she vividly recalls even a decade later. "The coach in question was excellent at his job, and his exit had bothered those who were looking forward to learning from him." While Iyer attempted to put the incident behind her, the repetitive taunts hurled at her from her classmates tugged at her

wounds before they could heal. "Often, a group of guys would gather together and pass lewd comments on the molestation," she reveals.

Iyer's business partner, Rohan Sabharwal, with whom she founded the innovation social enterprise, CraYon Impact, which hopes to encourage conversations around the subject, has also been a victim of Bullying as a teenager. "Grade 9 seems like a haze," he confesses adding, "Bullying was the norm and we were thrashed with hockey sticks and horsewhips by our seniors for everything. I've stayed up through most nights penning notes for my seniors and serving as their alarm clock, even getting beaten up if I woke

Are you Raising a Bully?

them up a few minutes late. We were like slaves, wrapping their clothes, and making their beds every day."

Several studies have spoken about the long-term effects of being bullied, either as a child or adult. Iyer, for instance, loathed any kind of physical intimacy for several

person. "In such a situation, the child desires to place authority over someone else, in order to find his own identity."

ANEASYPREY

Weakness, in any form, always makes for an easy target, says Dr Madhuri Singh, consulting psychiatrist and family counsellor at Nanavati Hospital. "Such kids react to being bullied in a way that the dominating individual desires, making the latter repeat the behaviour, with increased assertiveness," she says. Often, children who stand out from the crowd due to

normal."

WHAT CREATES A BULLY

Shattering the popular notion that children of dominating parents tend to be shy and introverted, Valliappan says, "Kids who have been bullied by their parents, tend to be the biggest bullies themselves."

Lulla adds, "Kids who're intimidated by an adult figure, especially their parents, often terrorise others because they grow up believing that this is accepted behaviour."

Valliappan further adds that children who are bullied by other kids, also tend to dominate those weaker than them, thus making bullying a vicious circle. "Working parents, who spend lesser time with their children, tend to miss the subtle cues that could be indicative of a dominating nature. If a child is bullied by his peers, and grows aggressive with others in the process, it's critical for parents to recognise this change and connect with the kid."

PARENTS CAN HELP

Parents, says Sabharwal, always make their kids aware of the expectations they harbour for them. "To confess to such hopeful parents that you are being bullied is extremely difficult for the children, who never wish to disappoint them," he says. Valliappan offers a solution. "The best way to bridge this gap is to encourage a healthy conversation with the child daily."

She adds that children always exhibit subtle cues which indicate that they are being bullied. "They might be unusually quiet, or unreasonably agitated all the time, especially with their parents. And while we may shun the behaviour as a 'phase' we should stop turning a blind eye to it," she informs. Dr Singh adds that boosting a child's confidence goes a long way in enhancing his/her self-esteem.

"Often children submit to the demands of others when they are made to believe that they're incapable of making the right decisions. Parents must give children the freedom to live freely, and make informed decisions, which can go a long way in crafting their identity," she concludes.



specific characteristics (like a physical trait) may also be perceived poorly by their peers, which in turn can make them a victim of bullying.

CURBING A DOMINATING BEHAVIOUR

Valliappan says that an open dialogue, which addresses the reason for a child's behaviour and attempts to understand what she wishes to achieve via the bullying, can bring about a change in behaviour. "It is, however, crucial for the person initiating the conversation to avoid taking an authoritative tone while dealing with the child." Stressful life situations - like parents' separation or divorce - could make a child more aggressive and prone to bullying. "Often, kids tend to bully others when they find themselves in situations that aren't considered 'ordinary'," says Bhavna Lulla, a former preschool teacher of 15 years. "In such circumstances, it's crucial for the child to know that the scenario isn't common, but



year s, and this in turn affected her relationships. **AN UNINTENTIONAL Bully?**

Yet, both Iyer and Sabharwal do not hold their bullies entirely responsible for the trauma they faced. "Ninety-nine percent of bullies are apologetic about their behaviour later," informs Sabharwal.

Reshma Valliappan, a mental health activist, adds that most bullies are unaware of the fact that their actions can be detrimental to another individual. Low self esteem, says Valliappan, fuels the desire to control another

Why every couple must go on a Babymoon



Many millennial couples are taking off on a mini vacation before becoming parents so they can spend some 'us' time before welcoming your baby. Take a cue from our Bollywood stars - while Shilpa Shetty and Raj Kundra went to London and Switzerland, Imran Khan whisked his wife Avantika Malik to Europe. Vivek Oberoi and Priyanka Alva flew off to Bali and Europe,

and Rani Mukerji and Aditya Chopra vacationed in Europe. More recently, Shahid Kapoor and Mira Rajput babymooned in Maldives. If you are also in the family way, you should plan such a trip right away. We give you some solid reasons why you must do so...

Strengthens your bond

Since the idea is to spend quality time together, you are not generally in a hurry to do things. Maitri Ravikumar, an investment banker who has just returned from her babymoon in Sri Lanka, says, "We planned the vacation because this is my first pregnancy and I was feeling anxious most of the time. So, we chose to take off on a trip so that we could spend time with each other. The whole babymoon was centred around us, and not the destination. So, we chose not to do any of the touristy things. We had lazy breakfasts and spent our afternoons gazing out of the room's window. Since we have visited the place earlier, it was a nostalgic feeling. It reaffirmed our belief that are indeed made for each other."

Relax and rejuvenate

We won't be exaggerating if we said that nine months of pregnancy is the most peaceful period of motherhood. For, you might have to prepare yourself for a big battle once the child is born. Dr Arjun Shirodhkare, psychologist and family counsellor, says, "You need to rest and enjoy the simple things of life when you are expecting. This is not only good for the baby in the womb, but also for the would-be mother. You don't have to worry about responsibilities when you are in your babymoon. Once you become a mother, you will be too busy feeding, changing diapers and raising the little one. So, getting time alone with your husband becomes a difficult task."

Gives you time to catch up on sleep

Manasi Rishikesh, a brand manager who is in her last trimester, says she learnt a valuable lesson from her sister-in-law. "She hasn't slept properly in the last six

months because she is always feeding her newborn. So, I decided I would catch up in advance. Though I am on my maternity break, I somehow end up waking up early and going to bed late. Now, my husband and I are going to Goa for a week, and the only thing on my agenda is to laze on the comfortable bed for as long as I can," she smiles.

Plan for the future

If you still haven't charted your game plan for life post-delivery, do it when you are on your babymoon. Dr Shirodhkare adds, "Many couples utilise this time to decide on how much time they are taking off from work once the baby is born, plan their budget and sort out their finances."

When is the right time?

The second trimester is the best time to take off on a babymoon. Raghu Dixit, a

pregnant women. He adds, "The itinerary usually includes live performances, relaxing spa massages and gourmet dining options. We ensure there's medical facility available on board before suggesting options to the couples. We also advise them against embarking on a cruise if the woman is prone to nausea."

Head to a resort: Does the idea of lingering on the bed and sipping on fancy drinks appeal to you? Then, head to resorts that offer special couples treatments and maternity massages.

Soak in the beach: Many couples opt for beach stays because they love the idea of letting the waves wash their feet and the balmy air calming their senses.

For the adventurous you: If you



gynaecologist, says, "Usually, hormonal imbalances, morning sickness and other signs of pregnancy would have lessened by the fourth month. So, plan your getaway between the fifth and seventh month so that you are back home in time."

Some popular getaways

If you are sold on the idea to go on a babymoon, here are some interesting options you can consider.

Sail on a cruise: Prashanth Trivedi, a tour organiser, says he gets several requests from couples to help them book slots on a cruise liner that has exclusive facilities for

are someone who loves thrill, then adventurous destinations like Goa or Las Vegas can be an option. You can enjoy the nightlife, spend time shopping and catch up on sleep in the day.

Keeping up with heritage: Many couples prefer visiting destinations that has a rich history so that they can explore the monuments in their own pace and also spend some quality time together.

One-day babymoon: If you can't afford a long leave, spend the weekend by booking a room in a star hotel and while away your time enjoying its luxury.

India to help Nepal with cheap fertiliser even as PM Balen raises Lipulekh dispute

Nepal, under PM Balen Shah, has revived its push over the contested Lipulekh Pass. At the same time, India, which is absorbing soaring global fertiliser costs, is helping Nepal by supplying urea and DAP at below-market prices. New Delhi is providing Kathmandu a crucial economic lifeline at a time when Nepal is facing a fertiliser shortage ahead of the planting season.

New Delhi.(Agency)

With the US-Iran war having driven up the price of fertilisers, an essential input in modern agriculture, India is reportedly stepping up to provide its Himalayan neighbour, Nepal, with fertilisers at below global prices, even as it is paying double the price to acquire the same.

This comes even as Nepal, under the leadership of Prime Minister Balen Shah, is raising up a diplomatic stink over the Lipulekh Pass, used by the pilgrims of the Kailash Manasarovar yatra. The pass has always been Indian territory, since the days of the British Raj, but Nepal has claimed it for three decades. According to a report in the Nepal-based paper, The

Kathmandu Post, the government on Monday granted in-principle approval to the Agriculture Inputs Company (a state-owned enterprise responsible for supplying the nation's farmers with inputs like fertilisers) to procure 80,000 tonnes of chemical fertiliser from India under a government-to-government (G2G) arrangement.

NEPAL FACES FERTILISER SHORTFALL AHEAD OF PLANTATION SEASON

This deal comes as Nepal faces a shortfall of fertiliser supplies ahead of the country's plantation season. While the government had projected a requirement of 250,000



tonnes of chemical fertilisers, it only had 171,000 tonnes in stock, with further contracts for 94,450 tonnes from private tenders unlikely to materialise, The Kathmandu Post reported.

Speaking to the paper, Ram Krishna Shrestha, joint secretary at the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, stated that given the current global prices of chemical fertilisers, "It is beyond the government's capacity to fully subsidise fertiliser at current global prices, as it would require nearly Rs 80 billion".

Currently, the price of urea and Diammonium Phosphate (DAP) is Rs 160 and Rs 162 per kg, respectively. In response, the Agriculture Inputs Company, moved to sign a G2G agreement with India's state-owned Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilisers

Limited to acquire 60,000 tonnes of urea and 20,000 tonnes of DAP at below market prices. The G2G deal comes as the current amount of Rs 28.82 billion, allocated by Nepal to import half a million tonnes of fertiliser via private tenders, is no longer enough as the global price of these inputs keeps increasing. The Kathmandu Post reported. The purchase is being made as part of an MoU signed between Delhi and Kathmandu in 2022, wherein India agreed to guarantee at least 30% of Nepal's annual fertiliser requirement, with volumes rising from 150,000 tonnes in the first year to 210,000 tonnes by the fifth year, reported The Kathmandu Post.

Delhi CM moots firefighting master plan, more stations and staff

New Delhi.(Agency)

Amid recent fire incidents across the capital, the Delhi government is preparing a comprehensive Fire Fighting Master Plan to prevent such tragedies and minimise loss of life and property.

CM Rekha Gupta has directed all departments to submit a detailed blueprint within 10 days, identifying causes, vulnerable zones, systemic gaps and preventive measures. She also stressed immediate public awareness efforts on fire safety. Treating fire prevention as a priority, the chief minister chaired a high-level meeting at the Delhi Secretariat on Wednesday. Officials reviewed the current fire safety situation, key challenges and long-term solutions. Gupta said all concerned departments must be more accountable, responsive and better equipped to eliminate negligence and administrative lapses.

Expressing concern over recent incidents, she warned that strict action would be taken against officials found negligent. "No laxity will be tolerated in matters related to public safety," she said.

She directed the Fire Department to enhance manpower, open new fire stations and procure modern equipment, assuring full budgetary support. Departments were also asked to analyse past incidents and develop a robust response framework to minimise casualties.

Gupta emphasised coordinated action, directing the MCD to curb illegal constructions and ensure clear access for fire tenders. Power officials were asked to inspect infrastructure regularly. She added that inputs from departments must shape an effective Master Plan, alongside awareness campaigns and mock drills across Delhi.

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CBI busts alleged 'cyber slavery' trafficking racket, raids multiple states

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has uncovered a suspected organised human trafficking network that lured Indian nationals to Southeast Asian countries under the guise of lucrative overseas employment, officials said on Wednesday.

According to investigators, victims were promised high-paying jobs abroad but were instead transported to scam compounds in countries such as Myanmar and Cambodia. These facilities, allegedly run by transnational cybercrime syndicates, have been described by authorities as hubs of "cyber slavery," where trafficked individuals are forced to engage in online financial fraud.

The probe has revealed that victims were subjected to strict confinement, with their passports confiscated upon arrival. Authorities also documented instances of physical abuse and psychological coercion. In several cases, victims were reportedly forced to contact their families in India to arrange ransom payments in exchange for their release.

As part of the crackdown, the CBI carried out coordinated raids at nine locations across four states, including Mumbai, New Delhi, Lucknow, Kashipur, as well as locations in the Gonda and Saharanpur districts of Uttar Pradesh. The raids followed an extensive nationwide inquiry during which statements from multiple victims were recorded.

Investigators have also conducted a detailed financial probe, including tracking cryptocurrency transactions, to identify and map the network's funding channels. Several electronic devices containing alleged incriminating evidence were seized during the searches.

One individual has been arrested in Lucknow for his suspected role in facilitating the trafficking operations. Preliminary findings suggest that agents involved in the racket received payments from operators of overseas scam compounds in return for supplying Indian nationals.

16% dip, still Delhi tops metro cities with 2.75 lakh criminal cases in 2024

New Delhi.(Agency)

Delhi recorded more than 2.75 lakh criminal cases in 2024, marking a 16 per cent decline compared to 2023. Despite this reduction, the national capital reported the highest number of cases among India's 19 metropolitan cities, which are defined as urban areas with populations exceeding 20 lakh.

The Delhi crime figures, revealed in the latest report of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), are 4.67% of the cases reported nationwide at 58.85 lakh in 2024. According to the data, the national capital had lodged 2,75,402 cases in 2024; 3,23,549 in 2023; and 2,98,988 cases in 2022. Meanwhile, neighbouring Ghaziabad reported 8,963 cases in 2024, which

was 2.9% lower than the cases lodged in 2023. The data showed that the city reported 9,227 cases in 2023 and 9,860 in 2022.

In 2024, the capital saw 13,396 cases



related to the crime against women and 504 cases of murder. The city also witnessed 5,580 cases of kidnapping and abduction, while 7,662 cases were reported about crimes against children, 1,833 cases of death by negligence, 82 cases of abetment to suicide, 1,090 cases of

grievous hurt, and 64 cases of crimes against foreigners.

The murder cases marginally increased in 2024, as compared to 2023, when 503 such cases were reported, while 501 cases were registered in 2022. There were 50 murder victims who were 18 years old or under it, while 15 were above 60 years old. The maximum number of victims was between the age of 30 and 45 years.

According to the NCRB, Delhi and Uttar Pradesh have provided the citizen friendly service of online registration of FIR under certain category of offences, like vehicle and other thefts. This feature may have increased crime reporting in these states. Consequently, these heads may have become incomparable with similar heads in other cities.

Delhi CM rolls out 13 mobile heat relief units for quick assistance during summers

New Delhi.(Agency)

CM Rekha Gupta on Wednesday flagged off 13 Mobile Heat Relief Units from the Delhi Secretariat to provide immediate assistance to people during the ongoing heatwave and extreme summer conditions. On the occasion, she also released a booklet on the government's 'Heat Action Plan 2026', outlining a detailed strategy to tackle rising temperatures and protect residents across the city.

The Chief Minister said the Delhi government is taking comprehensive, people-centric measures to address the growing threat of heatwaves and ensure timely relief and protection for citizens.

She said this year's Heat Action Plan has been implemented with extensive preparation and coordination, keeping

every section of society in mind. Special focus has been placed on protecting vulnerable groups such as daily wage labourers, construction workers, street vendors, the homeless, senior citizens, women and children. The government has also issued guidelines for outdoor and construction workers, advising institutions to halt labour activities between 1 pm and 4 pm and ensure adequate rest breaks. "Protecting the health of workers remains our top priority," she said.

To safeguard children, a 'Water Bell System' has been introduced in schools to encourage regular hydration, while outdoor activities during peak afternoon hours have been suspended. Hospitals and health centres have made special arrangements for heatstroke cases, with over 339 centres stocked with ORS, ice packs.



Pakistan renews proxy war in Punjab? 3 blasts in 10 days raise security concerns

New Delhi.(Agency)

Two IED explosions struck near the BSF headquarters in Jalandhar and Khasa Military Camp in Amritsar within hours on May 5. The blasts have prompted a statewide alert as investigators examine suspected ISI-linked hybrid terror networks.

Punjab witnessed two IED explosions within hours on the night of May 5, 2026, both occurring near sensitive installations—the BSF headquarters in Jalandhar and Khasa Military Camp in Amritsar. These incidents have triggered a statewide high alert and heightened security around border and defence sites, while also pointing to Pakistan ISI's alleged insidious plans for Punjab. Punjab DGP Gaurav Yadav called it an ISI plot to "keep the Punjab pot boiling". A string of three blasts in under 10 days, including the April 27 Patiala railway track IED attempt, has also pointed to serious security lapses.

A deeper probe shows that Punjab has been hit by a wave of hybrid terror-gangster incidents involving alleged ISI-backed modules, low-



level local operatives, and Khalistani extremists. These include the Gurdaspur cop killings in February, the Bhindi Saidan grenade attack in March, the Patiala railway attempt in April, and now the twin May 5 blasts.

While Bhagwant Mann's statement may have triggered a political slugfest, India Today has

learnt that central agencies had issued an alert regarding a likely attack on the BSF camp in Jalandhar around the first anniversary of Operation Sindoor on May 7. Hours later, a blast near a scooter at the BSF headquarters in Jalandhar injured one BSF personnel, who suffered splinter injuries to his thigh.

The Khalistan Liberation Army (KLA) claimed responsibility, while Punjab Police believe the outfit is a Sikh extremist organisation with alleged involvement of Pakistan-based gangster Shehzad Bhatti. Police said the attack was carried out in retaliation for the death of 19-year-old Ranjit Singh. The KLA labelled the attack "Operation Nawa Savair," calling it revenge for Singh's death in a controversial police encounter in Gurdaspur, Punjab, on February 25, 2026.

Srinivasan, Singh asked to leave Tata Education Trust

New Delhi.(Agency)

In a further escalation of the rift within the Tata Trusts — set to meet on Friday to appoint their nominees to the board of Tata Sons — vice-chairmen Venu Srinivasan and Vijay Singh have been asked to step down from the Tata Education and Development Trust (TEDT) at the end of their current term.

The decision follows a vote earlier this week in which trustees Mehli Mistry and JN Mistry opposed their reappointments to the little-known trust.

While the Tata Trusts did not officially confirm the development, a source familiar with the matter told on Wednesday that Siddharth Sharma, chief executive of Tata Trusts — which owns 66.4% of Tata Sons — has asked Srinivasan and Singh to relinquish their trusteeships by May 10, when their current terms end. The request was conveyed through separate emails sent earlier in the day, the source added.

Under the articles of association of the Tata Education and Development Trust, as well as the Maharashtra Public Trusts Act, 1950, appointments and reappointments of trustees require unanimity. In this instance, the opposition from the two Mistris effectively blocked the reappointments, prompting Sharma to ask Srinivasan and Singh to step down.

The trust had met on May 3 to consider their reappointments. While Srinivasan and Singh voted in favour of each other, Tata Trusts chairman Noel Tata did not cast his vote at the time, the source said.

The development marks a fresh flashpoint in the internal discord within the Tata Trusts, coming just days ahead of a crucial board meeting on May 8 that is expected to take a call on the reappointment of Tata Sons chairman N. Chandrasekaran for a third term.

Paytm turns profitable for first time, posts Rs 552 crore profit in FY26

New Delhi.(Agency)

Paytm on Wednesday reported its first-ever full-year profit, posting a profit after tax of Rs 552 crore for FY2026, a milestone that marks a significant turnaround for the payments company after years of losses that deepened following the regulatory shutdown of its banking arm in early 2024. The company reported revenue of Rs 8,437 crore for the full year, up 22% year-on-year, driven by market share gains in both merchant and consumer payments and a fast-growing financial services distribution business.

For the January–March quarter, operating revenue stood at Rs 2,264 crore, up 18% on a reported basis. Net profit for the quarter came in at Rs 183 crore, an improvement of Rs 370 crore year-on-year on a comparable basis.

The clearest growth story in the results was on UPI. Paytm's consumer UPI gross transaction value grew 46% year-on-year in Q4 FY26 — more than twice the industry growth rate of 21% — with the company gaining UPI market share every single month through FY2026. Monthly transacting users expanded by 50 lakh over the year to reach 7.7 crore.

On the merchant side, GMV growth accelerated from 24% in the December quarter to 27% in the March quarter. Subscription merchants reached 1.51 crore, with 27 lakh net additions over the year. Payment processing margins held above 4 basis points, helped by rising volumes in credit cards on UPI and EMI-based affordability products.

Reliance to shut refinery units for maintenance; Govt assures no supply disruption

New Delhi.(Agency)

Reliance Industries is likely to shut several units at its 660,000 barrels per day refinery for scheduled maintenance for three to four weeks, a petroleum ministry official said on Wednesday. Speaking at the daily inter-ministerial press briefing, Joint Secretary Sujata Sharma said all refineries undergo periodic annual maintenance, but the government ensures that shutdowns are staggered. According to the official, the shutdown will begin after Nayara Energy resumes operations later this month. Nayara's 400,000 bpd Vadinar refinery, which has been closed since early April 2026, is set to resume by mid-May.

“All refineries go for maintenance shutdown... we ensure it does not hamper production or impact people in the country,” Sharma said.

Reliance Industries operates the Jamnagar complex in Gujarat, the world's largest single-site refining hub, with a capacity of 1.24 million barrels per day. The company accounts for more than 70% of India's refined product exports and supplies fuel to markets including Europe and the United States.

According to reports, Reliance Industries plans to shut a crude processing unit along with several secondary units at the refinery for routine maintenance. The planned outage is expected to last between three and four weeks.

Meanwhile, crude prices in the international market fell below \$100 after U.S. President Donald Trump indicated a halt to “Project Freedom,” a naval effort to escort vessels through the Strait of Hormuz, suggesting progress toward a final agreement with Iran. Brent crude fell 10% to \$98 per barrel, while WTI dropped more than 12% to \$89. Reports suggested that the U.S. and Iran are discussing a one-page memorandum to pause tensions in the Hormuz region. At 17:56 PM IST, Brent was trading at \$101.4 per barrel, while WTI stood at \$93.65 per barrel.

Bought a car above Rs 10 lakh? You may be missing this tax credit

New Delhi.(Agency)

Buying a car worth more than Rs 10 lakh does not just mean a bigger EMI or higher insurance bill. It may also mean you have already paid an extra tax amount that many buyers either forget about or never claim while filing income tax returns.

Every time a customer buys a car priced above Rs 10 lakh, the dealer collects 1% TCS (Tax Collected at Source) and deposits it with the government against the buyer's PAN. The problem is that many people either do not notice this amount on their invoice or fail to check whether it has been credited properly in their tax records. As a result, several taxpayers may be missing out on a tax credit that could either reduce their final tax outgo or increase their refund at the time of filing ITR.

Under Section 206C(1F) of the Income Tax Act, car dealers are required to collect 1% TCS on the sale of motor vehicles priced above Rs 10 lakh.

This amount is collected from the buyer at the time of purchase and deposited with the government against the buyer's PAN number.

For example, if someone buys a car worth Rs 15 lakh, the dealer will collect Rs 15,000 as TCS.

IS IT A REFUND OR A TAX CREDIT?

This is where many buyers get confused. TCS is not a separate cashback or direct government benefit. It is treated as a tax credit, similar to TDS.

This means the amount gets adjusted against the buyer's final tax liability at the time of filing ITR. If the total tax already paid — including TCS, TDS and advance tax — is higher than the actual tax liability, the excess amount may come back as a refund. However, if tax liability is higher, the TCS amount simply gets adjusted against dues.

►WHERE CAN YOU CHECK THIS

AMOUNT?

►The TCS collected during car purchase usually appears in:



►Form 26AS

►Annual Information Statement (AIS) Since it is linked to the buyer's PAN, taxpayers can verify whether the dealer has deposited the amount correctly.

WHY MANY PEOPLE MISS IT Tax experts say many buyers are unaware that the extra amount collected during

vehicle purchase can later be adjusted while filing returns.

►In some cases:

►buyers do not check Form 26AS

►PAN details may not be updated properly

►or people simply forget to include the credit while filing ITR.

Some buyers who are not regular taxpayers may also not realise that filing returns is necessary to claim any excess tax paid.

WHAT SHOULD CAR BUYERS DO?

►People who purchased vehicles above Rs 10 lakh should:

►keep the purchase invoice safely

►ensure the correct PAN was shared with the dealer

►check Form 26AS or AIS before filing ITR

►and verify whether the TCS amount is reflecting correctly.

While filing returns, the amount should automatically appear under taxes already paid if it has been deposited properly.

Sensex, Nifty edge higher as softer crude lifts Dalal Street mood

New Delhi.(Agency)

Stock markets opened slightly higher on Thursday, extending gains from the previous session as easing crude oil prices and positive global cues supported investor sentiment. The BSE Sensex rose 27.75 points, or 0.04%, to 77,986.27 in early trade, while the Nifty 50 gained 19.30 points, or 0.08%, to trade at 24,350.25 around 9:30 am.

Markets were supported by optimism around a possible US-Iran peace deal, which has helped cool crude oil prices after sharp volatility in recent sessions.

Dr VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Investments Limited, said investors should continue tracking developments in the AI trade and the West Asia conflict.

“Despite the West Asia geopolitical tensions, the US market is at record highs and the AI trade is continuing

unabated. Two stocks in South Korea and one in Taiwan are powering the AI trade in these countries,” he said.

He added that continued foreign investor selling in India should be viewed in the context of global AI-driven market concentration.



OIL PRICES REMAIN KEY FOCUS

Brent crude was trading near \$102.10 per barrel, while WTI crude stood at \$95.87 in early trade. Oil prices had fallen sharply in the previous session after reports suggested that the US and

Iran were moving closer to a possible agreement to end the conflict. Lower crude oil prices are seen as positive for India, which imports a large part of its energy needs.

Cooling oil prices help reduce inflation pressures and improve the outlook for economic growth and corporate earnings.

AUTO STOCKS LEAD MARKET GAINS

Among sectoral indices, auto stocks led the gains in early trade. The Nifty Auto index rose 1.19%, making it the top-performing sector. Shares of Mahindra & Mahindra climbed 1.42%, while Maruti Suzuki gained 0.50%.

Metal and media stocks also saw buying interest, with the Nifty Metal index rising 0.49% and Nifty Media gaining 0.48%. On the other hand, FMCG and IT stocks traded under pressure. Hindustan Unilever fell 0.79%, while TCS declined 1.18% and Tech Mahindra slipped 0.45%.

Zee files \$3 million lawsuit against Reliance-Disney joint venture

New Delhi.(Agency)

Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd (ZEEL) has filed a lawsuit against the Reliance-Disney joint venture in which it has alleging unauthorised use of its copyrighted music after licensing agreements expired. According to court documents seen by Reuters, the suit was filed in New Delhi on April 14 and it seeks \$3 million in damages.

ZEEL claims that the JV, now operating as JioStar, used its music content across its TV channels and streaming platform without valid licences. Zee said that it works were used at least 50 times after agreements lapsed in 2024 and

to copyright infringement,” said ZEEL while urging the court to restrain any ongoing usage.



to copyright infringement,” said ZEEL while urging the court to restrain any ongoing usage.

Zee and Reliance-Disney venture is yet to comment on the suit.

The dispute represents the newest clash between Zee and JioStar, the \$8.5 billion media joint venture created by Reliance Industries and Disney in 2024. It underscores growing tensions over content rights as India's media sector undergoes rapid consolidation.

The issue surfaced briefly in court on Tuesday, with the judge ordering JioStar to prevent any additional violations of Zee's content and to act within 15 days, according to a source familiar with the proceedings who spoke to Reuters.

DA hike: Why did bank employees get only 0.70% while govt staff received 2%?

A small DA hike for bank staff and a bigger one for government employees, has raised eyebrows. But is the difference unfair, or is there more to the calculation behind the scenes? Let us know here.

New Delhi.(Agency)

A colleague recently pointed this out over tea, “Government employees got a 2% DA hike, but bank staff only got 0.70%. Isn't that unfair?” It's a fair question. On the surface, the difference looks striking. But once you dig a little deeper, the story is less about inequality and more about how the system works.

SAME INFLATION, DIFFERENT

CALCULATION STYLES Both bank employees and central government staff get Dearness Allowance (DA) based on inflation. The common base? The Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers (CPI-IW).

As Adhil Shetty, CEO, Bankbazaar, explains, the gap comes from how this data is used. “Bank DA is revised quarterly and reflects incremental CPI-IW changes, so each increase is smaller. The central government DA is revised twice a year using a 12-month average, which aggregates multiple months of inflation into one adjustment.” In simple terms, bank employees get smaller, more frequent updates, while central government staff get fewer but larger jumps.

WHY BANK DA CHANGES FEEL SMALLER

The latest revision increased bank DA from 25% to 25.70% for May–July 2026—a 0.70% rise. It may look

modest, but it reflects only a three-month inflation movement. Central government employees, on the other hand, saw their DA rise from 58% to 60%, i.e., a 2% jump. But that figure



includes inflation trends accumulated over a longer period. Shetty puts it neatly: “Central government DA uses a 12-month average, which smoothens short-term fluctuations and leads to more stable adjustments.” So, while the number looks bigger, it's also covering a longer stretch of time.

DIFFERENT SYSTEMS, DIFFERENT TIMELINES

Another key reason lies in how pay structures are set. Government employees follow the Central Pay Commission framework, where DA is revised twice a year, i.e., January and July.

Bank employees, however, operate under Bipartite Settlements between the Indian Banks' Association and unions. This system allows for quarterly revisions. “Bank and central government employees sit under entirely different pay-setting structures,” Shetty explains, adding that this is what drives the difference in revision frequency.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR EMPLOYEES

For bank employees, the advantage is that their DA responds faster to recent inflation trends. Even if each increase is smaller, adjustments happen more regularly. For government staff, the benefit is larger, more visible hikes, but spaced out over time.

Short news

Man goes to meet dating app 'friend', gets robbed, four held in Bengaluru

BENGALURU.(Agency)

The Yelahanka police have busted a gang that used to target victims active on dating apps. The police zeroed in on the accused after a 27-year-old civil engineer was brutally attacked and robbed by four persons, including two minors whom he met through a dating app. The gang is said to have been involved in robbing eight dating app users. All the four have been arrested.

The incident happened near the Palanahalli Gate on Jayamuni Layout Road in Venkatala between 7 pm and 7.45 pm on May 1. The victim, a resident of Brindavan Layout in Chikkajala, gave his statements to the police at the hospital. The hospital had reported the matter to the police as it was a medico-legal case.

Ajith (name changed), in his complaint, stated that he had been using a dating app for the past three years. He had befriended a person on the app, and after a phone call went to meet the caller at Palanahalli Gate.

When Ajith went there, he saw four people who took him towards Venkatala Underpass and proceeded along Jayamuni Layout Main Road. The accused then started threatening him that they would inform his friends and parents, which would humiliate him.

They demanded money from him, abused and threatened him. One of them also snatched his mobile phone.

The four of them then took him to a deserted area near a private school and threatened him at knife point to reveal his UPI password. When Ajith attempted to escape, the accused restrained him and forcibly obtained his mobile password and transferred Rs 16,000 through UPI.

They then abandoned him along with the phone and fled the spot. His friend came to the spot and took him on a two-wheeler to a private hospital on Bagalur Main Road.

Kerala restaurants association's strike hits gig workers hard

KOCHI.(Agency)

Online food delivery partners were already a harried lot. And Wednesday's 24-hour statewide strike called by the Kerala Hotel & Restaurant Association (KHRA), to protest the sharp increase in commercial LPG prices, left them without any work — and lost earnings. Last week, LPG prices for 19kg cylinders were raised Rs 993, with the cost of a cylinder crossing Rs 3,100 in many parts of the state.

"Earnings have been lean for the past month," said Jiji Jomon, a Swiggy partner in Kottayam. "On Wednesday, nearly all restaurants had downed their shutters and those that functioned refused online orders. The only establishments working were the big food chains such as KFC and Subway, and those functioning inside hangout places and malls. Sitting out the strike has put a dent in our earnings, which had become meagre of late," she said.

According to her, gig work has begun to lose its sheen. "Unlike in the past, when a delivery person could make over Rs 25,000 a month, nowadays, our earnings have halved," said Jiji. She took up gig work attracted by its flexible work schedule and good earnings. CITU national secretary K N Gopinath echoed the views. "Things have been tough for gig workers for some time.

Cyber scam probe 'peels' laundering layer; money trail under Kochi police lens

KOCHI.(Agency)

What began as a Rs 25-crore online trading fraud case has now widened into a suspected money laundering investigation, with the Kochi City Cyber Police examining whether cybercrime proceeds were systematically routed into high-value investments across sectors, sources said.

The case took a decisive turn after the arrest of Satyanarayana Murthy, 36, and Tyson Raju, 34, who were nabbed from Hyderabad by a Kochi police team on May 2 and later remanded. Police are now moving to secure their custody for a detailed interrogation, expected to be crucial in mapping fund flow and identifying the larger financial network behind the fraud.

The case pertains to the cheating of an Ernakulam-based businessman through a fake online trading platform. Investigators estimate that around Rs 25 crore was siphoned off, of which nearly Rs 16 crore is believed to have moved through accounts and networks linked to the arrested persons.

Officials are now focusing on Murthy's financial footprint, who is believed to have developed a substantial business presence spanning mining, construction, and IT, with interests estimated at over Rs 300 crore. Investigators are probing whether proceeds of cyber fraud were used to build or expand these ventures through structured layering of funds. The inquiry includes tracing investments, asset acquisitions, and corporate linkages that may have helped integrate.

Water supply to be affected, shortage will be tackled through borewells: Ahmedabad civic body

Mumbai.(Agency)

THE ONGOING repair work at the Narmada canal, which began on Wednesday, will lead to water shortage at Kotarpur Water Works. This shortage of drinking water from Narmada Canal would be met through borewells, Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) authorities said.

As a pre-monsoon activity, Sardar Sarovar Narmada Nigam Limited commenced repair work of Reinforced Cement Concrete (RCC) lining of the canal on Wednesday. Thus, Sardar Sarovar Narmada Nigam Limited has started reducing the level as per the requirement to repair the damage to the canal lining. Owing to the repair work that will continue for ten days, the level of water will be

further reduced as per the requirement over this period.

This will lead to shortage of water received by Kotarpur Water Works leading to

meet this shortage borewells at the water works would be put to use for meeting the water requirement of the city, it added.

Every day, 1,100 MLD (million litre per day) of water is purified from the Kotarpur Water Treatment Plant and supplied to around 170 water distribution stations of the city's west zone, central zone, north zone, east zone and south zone. In which there will be a shortage of 50 to 60 MLD.

"Instead of the water obtained by gravity at Kotarpur, water will be supplied by running 100 per cent pump (standby) in the water pump house in the Kotarpur water works. Thus, there will be a shortage of 10 to 15 per cent in daily supply, which will be fulfilled by running the borewell at the water distribution station," an AMC official said.



deficiency in water distribution and shortage of water in the west zone, central zone, north zone, east zone, and south zone, the AMC said in a public notice. To

HC gives BMC 2-week ultimatum to pay maternity benefits to contractual doctor

Mumbai.(Agency)

Hearing contempt petition by a contractual doctor at KEM Hospital alleging failure of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) to follow court order, the Bombay High Court on Tuesday directed it to compute and release maternity leave benefits to her in an expeditious manner within two weeks. The HC had, in February, while setting aside the hospital's decision to deny benefits to the petitioner, said authorities should be "more sensitive" to deserving employees and see to it that the working woman does not have to compromise between her career and caregiving.

The court on February 27 had allowed plea by anaesthesiologist Dhanashri Ramesh Karkhanis, who was employed on a contractual basis as an Assistant Professor

(Anaesthesiology) at Seth G S Medical College and KEM Hospital.

The petitioner had sought setting aside of



October 2024 communication that rejected her claim for benefits under the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961.

Even as the hospital claimed BMC service rules did not apply to the contractual employee, the HC dismissed it and observed

the "objective of maternity benefits is to protect the dignity of motherhood" and to provide financial security to the woman and the child during the period she is unable to work.

Karkhanis has been employed at KEM Hospital since January 2022, with her contract renewed every year.

Following her most recent renewal in July 2024, she fulfilled the statutory requirement of completing 80 days of work within the previous 12 months and submitted her maternity leave request for six months in October 2024. Her application was denied. She gave birth in November 2024 and continued to pursue the statutory benefits she was entitled to. After attempting to return to work on April 7, 2025, she resigned the following day, stating that the lack of creche facilities, fixed nursing breaks, and uncertain working hours were the reasons for her decision.

Will support daughters' education: Families of 2 toppers

Ahmedabad.(Agency)

FOR THE family of 16-year-old Priti Jagdishbhai Shinol, Wednesday was a busy day, spent attending phone calls that came for Priti, congratulating her on her Class X result.

A student of Class X who secured 99.02 percentile, Priti is a student of PBD Joshi High School in Maninagar.

The youngest among four daughters, of whom two are married, Priti is ambitious and studious, says her father Jagdishbhai. The youngest among her siblings, Priti's brother, is in Class 7. "I expected this result but was not sure," an elated Priti said. Aiming to opt for medical stream in

Class XI to achieve her dream of becoming a heart surgeon, she did not skip her tuitions even on Wednesday.

inflation, but we manage somehow. I pay her tuition fee in instalments. I will support her in her education," he told The Indian Express.

Vijaykumar Sathwara (48) a construction labourer and his family of five residing in Khadia area or old Ahmedabad had a reason to celebrate for the second time this week. His younger daughter Drashti (15) secured 95.42 percentile and 90 per cent in Class X while the elder daughter Vanshika secured 87 percent in Class XII science stream, the results of which was declared by the Gujarat secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board on May 4.



Jagdishbhai, the breadwinner of the family that lives in Geeta Mandir area, works as an accountant at a private company in Kankaria area. "It gets tough in these times of

India's first prison child care unit at central jail in Karnataka

BENGALURU.(Agency)

Women facing prison sentences often have infants or young children who depend entirely on them. With little or no family support, these children end up living inside prison premises alongside their mothers, despite having committed no crime.

Addressing this concern, the Directorate of Child Protection (DCP) in Karnataka has established India's first Government Special Child Care Institution (GSCCI) within the women's wing of Parappana Agrahara Central Jail in Bengaluru—marking a first-of-its-kind child care facility in the country.

The unit was established with an aim to provide basic education to these vulnerable children up to the age of six years. The unit also provides a nurturing environment for their cognitive and emotional growth.

CV Sneha, Director, Directorate of Child Protection, Karnataka, informed that GSCCI has been allotted two teachers who teach everything to these children, right from the alphabet, numbers, rhymes, creative arts, and awareness on safe and unsafe touch.

In addition to this, they are exposed to awareness and personality development skills like table manners, greeting elders and teachers and more. Asha HK, DCP officer, District Child Protection Office, Bengaluru West (Anekal) said, "As per the Supreme Court and the prison manuals, children below the age of 6 years are allowed to stay with their mothers in prison. We ensure their protection, development and school readiness."

'Security threat': Day after freeing 50 stranded seafarers, Bombay HC allows shifting 3 ships to Gujarat yard

Mumbai.(Agency)

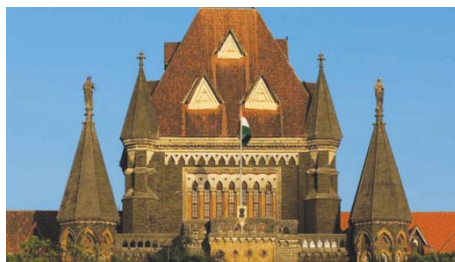
A day after it freed 50 crew members stranded on three vessels in the Arabian Sea, the Bombay High Court on Wednesday allowed the ships to be taken out to the Alang ship-breaking yard in Gujarat, citing "security threat" and "maritime obstructions".

The ships were detained for illegal fuel and bitumen transfers. A bench of Chief Justice (CJ) Shree Chandrashekhar and Justice Gautam A Ankhad was hearing pleas by owners of the ships Balboa Shipping, Star Management Shipping and Royal Princess Shipping, foreign companies registered in Panama seeking release of the vessels and sailing permission, while the police case continues. The three vessels, MT Asphalt Star, MT Stellar Ruby, and MT Al Jafzia,

were intercepted in February by the Indian Coast Guard and were detained by the Yellow Gate police station. They were alleged to have smuggled Iranian bitumen by using deceptive measures such as switching off their location systems, similar to practices undertaken by "shadow fleets" to transport sanctioned commodities by avoiding interception.

The bench was informed that another bench led by Justice Ravindra Ghuge on May 5 had ordered release of crew members stranded on detained vessels for nearly three months, observing that "for them life comes only once".

CJ Chandrashekhar-led bench was further told that after its March 17 order, the petitioners had obtained valuation reports



putting the cumulative value of the ships at 53.28 crore. However, advocate Jitendra Mishra, representing the Coast Guard and the Director General of Shipping, disputed the figures on instructions from officials present in court and claimed each vessel should be valued at around Rs 350 crore. Mishra argued that keeping unmanned ships in the high seas for long was hazardous to

security and maritime traffic and that they could be moved to Alang, as other procedures and resolution of disputes may take time.

The HC said that it was not inclined to go into all these disputes at present and noted, "as suggested by Mishra, the ships in question, shall be permitted to be taken to the Port at Alang Shipyard in Gujarat". "So, we are permitting removal and movement of the ship to a particular place that shall remain at all times under their (authorities) jurisdiction and control. This was your worry," CJ Chandrashekhar orally remarked. "At this stage, the court is concerned with security threat and maritime obstructions as indicated by respondent authority," the bench noted in its order.

NEWS BOX

Virat Kohli pays tribute to U-19 teammate Amanpreet Singh Gill after he dies at 36

New Delhi. (Agency)

Virat Kohli paid a heartfelt tribute to his U-19 teammate and former Punjab medium pacer Amanpreet Singh Gill, who died at the age of 36 on Wednesday, May 6. Gill's untimely death has left the cricket fraternity in mourning. Gill, a former Under-19 teammate of Virat Kohli, represented Punjab in six first-class games, claiming 11 wickets during his stint. He was also part of the Kings XI Punjab squad in the inaugural IPL season and later contributed off the field as a member of Punjab's senior selection panel. The reason



for his death is still unknown.

Kohli took to X to say he was shocked and saddened by Gill's passing and sent his condolences to the former pacer's family.

"Shocked and saddened to hear about Amanpreet Gill's passing. Sending prayers and strength to his family and loved ones. Rest in peace. Om Shanti," tweeted Kohli.

YUVRAJ, PBKS LEAD THE WAY WITH TRIBUTES FOR GILL

Indian legend Yuvraj Singh and Punjab Kings also sent their tributes to Gill. Yuvraj recalled his time sharing the dressing room with Gill and called him a hardworking cricketer who loved the game.

"Deeply saddened to hear about Amanpreet Singh Gill's passing. Shared the dressing room in our early days, he was a quiet, hardworking cricketer who loved the game. My heartfelt condolences to his family and loved ones. Rest in peace Om Shanti," Singh posted on X.

PBKS paid tribute to their former player in a heartfelt post. "Deeply saddened by the passing of Amanpreet Singh Shergill, who proudly represented Punjab and was a part of the Punjab Kings family. Our heartfelt condolences to his family, friends, and the entire cricketing fraternity," Punjab Kings posted on their official Instagram account.

Gill featured in five Youth ODIs and a single Youth Test for India in 2007. In that lone longer-format appearance, he dismissed former Sri Lanka all-rounder Thisara Perera.

Resilient PSG edge past Bayern Munich to reach 2nd consecutive Champions League final

New Delhi. (Agency)

Defending champions Paris Saint-Germain survived a late scare at the Allianz Arena to book their place in the UEFA Champions League final, battling to a tense 1-1 draw against Bayern Munich on Wednesday night and sealing a dramatic 6-5 aggregate victory.

After the chaos and attacking fireworks of the first leg, the return fixture turned into a far more tactical and nervy affair, with PSG forced to dig deep under relentless Bayern pressure for long stretches of the contest. The French side could not have asked for a better start. Just three minutes into the match, Ousmane Dembele struck yet again, continuing his sensational European form. A perfectly weighted cutback from Khvicha Kvaratskhelia found Dembele in space, and the forward made no mistake, rifling his effort past Manuel Neuer to stun the home crowd and extend PSG's aggregate lead.

That early goal only intensified Bayern's urgency. The German champions poured forward almost immediately, pinning PSG deep inside their own half as they searched desperately for a route back into the tie. Michael Olise and Luis Diaz both came close with efforts from distance, but neither could find the precision required.

Despite Bayern's dominance in possession, it was Neuer who had to keep his side alive midway through the first half. The veteran goalkeeper reacted brilliantly to push away a dangerous header from Joao Neves, preventing PSG from tightening their grip on the tie even further.

At the other end, PSG goalkeeper Matvei Safonov produced a stunning save of his own just before halftime, denying Jamal Musiala from close range as Bayern's frustration continued to grow.

BAYERN ATTACKS, PSG STAY COMPACT

The second half followed a familiar pattern. Bayern pushed numbers forward with increasing desperation while PSG sat compact, absorbed pressure and looked dangerous every time they broke on the counterattack. As spaces began to open up late in the game, PSG nearly delivered the knockout blow through Desire Doue and Kvaratskhelia, but Bayern somehow stayed alive.

SRH vs PBKS: How did Hyderabad plot to stop Punjab's dangerman Priyansh Arya?

SRH vs PBKS: Pat Cummins

dismissed Arya with a well-

directed short ball as SRH

assistant coach James Franklin

revealed Hyderabad had

specifically planned around the

PBKS opener's preferred

scoring areas.

Hyderabad. (Agency)

Sunrisers Hyderabad assistant coach James Franklin revealed the detailed planning that went into dismissing Punjab Kings opener Priyansh Arya early, saying skipper Pat Cummins and the SRH bowling group had specifically targeted the batter's preference for the pull shot. Arya, who has emerged as one of Punjab Kings' most dangerous top-order batters this season, was undone by

Cummins with a short ball outside off stump during Sunrisers Hyderabad's commanding 41-run win in the IPL on

Wednesday. According to Franklin, the dismissal was far from accidental. "I think it was a little bit pre-planned. Obviously, the bowlers do a lot of work with Varon Aaron, our bowling coach," Franklin said after the match. "Sometimes, you don't necessarily have to bowl the ball the field is expecting. We saw the ball before that. He bowled a pretty good delivery, got good bounce on a similar line, and he obviously caught him off guard a little bit. He executed a similar delivery again and created the opportunity."

Bowlers exploited Arya's scoring preference

Franklin said modern T20 cricket demanded

a deep understanding of opposition batters' scoring patterns and tendencies, particularly in a high-scoring competition



like the IPL.

"You know the strengths and weaknesses of the opposition batters. Obviously, all our bowlers are well across it, and Pat was able to expose that, create an opportunity, and we got that first breakthrough," he

added. The tactical dismissal set the tone for a strong SRH performance as the hosts climbed to the top of the points table.

Earlier, Heinrich Klaasen and Ishan Kishan punished Punjab Kings' sloppy fielding to propel Hyderabad to an imposing 235 for four after PBKS opted to bowl first. Klaasen smashed 69 off 43 balls despite being dropped on nine, while Kishan survived two reprieves to hammer 55 from 32 deliveries.

Punjab Kings never truly recovered in the chase despite a sensational unbeaten 107 from Cooper Connolly. The left-hander fought a lone battle with seven fours and eight sixes, but lacked support from the other end as Punjab were restricted to 202 for seven. Cummins returned figures of 2 for 34, while Shivang Kumar also picked up two wickets to complete a comprehensive victory for Hyderabad.

Why Cooper Connolly's SRH hundred meant more than just runs: PBKS spin coach explains

New Delhi. (Agency)

Cooper Connolly came into the IPL without a lot of hype around him apart from his exploits in the Big Bash League. However, just like his idol Shaun Marsh did for the franchise during his time in the competition, Connolly has quickly established himself as a run-machine for Punjab. Bought for Rs. 3 Cr, Connolly has filled up the void left by Josh Inglis at No.3 and has scored 377 runs in 10 matches at a strike-rate of 171.36 and an average of 53.86. His latest outing saw him score a fighting 107 for PBKS in their loss to SRH. Speaking at the press conference after the game, the PBKS spin-bowling coach Sairaj Bahutule said that Connolly has a good head on his shoulders and tipped him for success with



the Australian team.

"He is somebody who's very positive and he's a great potential," Bahutule said in the press conference. "Definitely he'll play a long period for Australia. He's a very good allrounder in the making, fabulous fielder. And he's got a good head on his shoulders."

WHY WAS CONNOLLY'S KNOCK SPECIAL?

While Connolly doesn't get mentioned alongside the likes of Priyansh Arya, Prabhsimran Singh and PBKS captain Shreyas Iyer for their destructive batting, the southpaw played one of the best knocks of his career on Wednesday, May 6. But at the Uppal, Priyansh, Prabhsimran and Iyer contributed just 9 runs from 12 balls in the chase. Connolly fought till the very end. This ensured that the margin of the loss was less in the end and it didn't take a big toll on PBKS' net run-rate. Bahutule was happy to see how well Connolly has adapted to Indian conditions and playing in the IPL. "He's a team man," Bahutule said. "For today's conditions, we knew at some stage [that] it was a losing cause, but he just made sure that the momentum is on and see how we can get closer to the total."

Instagram models get more importance than us: Satwiksairaj Rankireddy



New Delhi. (Agency)

"I do not get support from my government (Andhra Pradesh), I do not get support from anywhere. I am all alone in this. I went a little crack on that day and I spoke out. I am not normally like this."

Somewhere between the spectrum of grief and irritation, India's badminton star Satwiksairaj Rankireddy vented his frustrations in an interview with India Today, a day after returning from India's Thomas Cup campaign. India beat Chinese Taipei to win the bronze medal in the tournament, before getting knocked out by France in the semi-finals. This was India's second medal finish in three editions of the tournament, the first one being a historic gold in 2022, a campaign that Satwik and his doubles partner Chirag Shetty were a huge part of.

A call that was scheduled to be for 15 minutes, turned into a 45-minute long chat where Satwik constantly spoke about how little the ecosystem offers to sports persons in India, who travel across the world in the pursuit of excellence and to make their country proud.

After returning to India, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy sparked a massive social media storm when he put up an Instagram story. The said story reflected the sorry state of affairs that is sports in India, where not a single member of the badminton association or the government went to the airport to receive the bronze medal-winning contingent, which had just returned from Denmark.

"Back home now. As usual, no one knows what happened over the past two weeks, and it seems like no one really cares," Satwik wrote on his story.

THE INVISIBLE CHAMPIONS

An aggrieved Satwik, who is part of the most successful doubles pair in the history of Indian badminton alongside Chirag, asked India Today if it was too much to ask for a little care from the citizens of the country, the officials and the sporting ecosystem. For a pair that has scaled the summit of the BWF rankings, the anonymity of an immigration queue becomes a jarring reminder of where they stand in the Indian sporting hierarchy.

David Warner charged with drunk-driving, admits he made a reckless, foolish decision

New Delhi. (Agency)

Former Australian cricketer David Warner has been charged with mid-range drink driving after allegedly recording a blood alcohol reading more than twice the legal limit in Sydney, according to Australian Associated Press.

Police stopped Warner on April 5 before taking him to a station in Sydney's eastern suburbs, where the 39-year-old allegedly returned a blood alcohol concentration reading of 0.104.

The former Australia opener and current Sydney Thunder captain in the Big Bash League did not appear in court on Thursday when the matter was first mentioned and adjourned until June 24. Outside court, Warner's lawyer Bobby Hill said the cricketer accepted responsibility for his actions and intended to enter a guilty plea at a later date. "He knows what he did was wrong," Hill said. "He accepts that was a

reckless decision, a foolish decision to get in his car instead of taking an Uber." Hill said Warner had consumed three glasses of wine at a friend's apartment on Easter Sunday before



deciding to drive.

"It's not a crime to have a glass of wine on the day of the lord's resurrection. In fact, some would consider that completely appropriate," he told reporters.

"His crime is, as I said, choosing a foolish plan A instead of a plan B."

The lawyer also claimed Warner consumed his last drink 11 minutes before he was stopped by police and alleged there was a 52-minute delay before the secondary breath test was conducted.

Hill said Warner was remorseful and expected to face the same punishment as any other citizen in New South Wales, the Australian state where Sydney is located.

"This case before the court is a reminder to everyone in the public about the dangers of self-assessments," Hill said. "I know David is looking forward to putting this matter behind him and focusing his efforts on re-contributing to those people in the community." The charge has also cast doubt over Warner's future as captain of Sydney Thunder.

"The allegations are of course concerning and we take them very seriously," Cricket NSW chief executive Lee Germon said after Warner's arrest.

RCB under pressure to push for top-two spot in IPL playoffs as LSG stand in their way

IPL 2026: RCB will look to

capitalise on a timely break and

pile more pressure on an unsettled

LSG side, with both teams heading

into a crucial IPL 2026 clash in

Lucknow.

Raipur. (Agency)

Defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru have the perfect opportunity to end Lucknow Super Giants' fading playoff hopes when the two sides meet at the Ekana Cricket Stadium in Lucknow on Thursday. With the playoff race entering its decisive

phase, RCB will know there is little room to ease off now. SRH's big win over PBKS on May 6 and the playoff schedule, announced on Wednesday, has only raised the stakes further, with the winner of Qualifier 1 set to enjoy a crucial break before the final.

That makes every point even more valuable, especially for a side like RCB that remains firmly in the hunt. Against an LSG side that has struggled for consistency and sits on the brink of elimination, Bengaluru have a chance not only to strengthen their own position but also deal a major blow to a direct rival.

CAN RCB TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THEIR BREAK?

Royal Challengers Bengaluru head into Thursday's clash with a valuable edge, having enjoyed a week-long break before taking on Lucknow Super Giants. At this stage of the tournament, that gap could prove



crucial. With teams juggling travel, fatigue and mounting pressure, RCB have had the rare luxury of time to reset, recover and regroup after their defeat to Gujarat Titans.

That break should allow Bengaluru to iron out the issues that led to their batting collapse in Ahmedabad, while also giving key players time to recharge ahead of a critical stretch in the playoff race.

It could also prove especially useful for players carrying minor niggles, with RCB likely to benefit from the extra recovery time after a packed run of fixtures. Against an LSG side coming off another draining defeat and still searching for answers, RCB will know this is a chance to strike with fresher legs and clearer minds. With the playoff race tightening, Bengaluru cannot afford to let that advantage go to waste.

CAN LSG FIGURE THEMSELVES OUT?

Lucknow Super Giants head into another must-win game still searching for clarity, particularly with the bat.

Since Josh Inglis returned to the side, LSG have leaned heavily on their overseas batting core, but the constant reshuffling has only added to the uncertainty. Inglis has been pushed up to open, Nicholas Pooran has been moved back to No. 3 and the middle order has continued to shift around them, leaving the batting unit without much stability.

Huma Qureshi

Dodges 'Shaadi Kab Hai' Question While Outing With Beau Rachit Singh

Huma Qureshi and actor-acting coach Rachit Singh have been in the headlines for quite some time, with reports circulating about their marriage. The duo was recently spotted together in Mumbai on Tuesday, May 5, when paparazzi questioned them about the ongoing rumours. Several photos and videos from their appearance are circulating online, where Rachit and Huma Qureshi are seen happily posing for the paparazzi together. As camerapersons stationed at the location asked Huma, "Ma'am, shaadi kab hai aapki?", she reacted with a smile while ignoring the questions completely. After posing for pictures together, the duo was seen leaving the location in the same car.

Huma Qureshi to marry Rachit Singh in 2026?

A source told Hindustan Times, "They are planning an October-end or November wedding as of now. The preparations have begun." The celebrations are expected to reflect Huma's personal style—simple, warm, and close-knit. Sharing more details, the source added, "Knowing Huma, she will have a good, intimate wedding and then throw a reception for the industry. Maybe not a lavish wedding, but something that only her close friends and family will attend, followed by a big reception. As of now, it is most likely looking like Mumbai."

Speculation about their relationship had been growing for a while. The two were spotted together at a screening of Thamma and later attended Sonakshi Sinha's wedding, which caught attention. Speaking about the proposal, a source had shared, "Huma and Rachit have been going strong for a while as a couple and, on Sunday, he proposed to her in an intimate setting, and she said yes. It was a close-knit affair that took place in the US. They are yet to decide when they want to

make it official by announcing it publicly."

What's Next For Huma Qureshi?

The actress is all set to captivate audiences in Geetu Mohandas's directorial Toxic: A Fairy Tale For Grownups. The film will see her taking on an antagonist role for the second time after Delhi Crime. The action thriller, headlined by Yash, brings together an ensemble cast including Nayanthara, Kiara Advani, Tara Sutaria, Rukmini Vasanth, and Sudev Nair.



'This One's Been Special': Akshay Kumar Wraps Up Kerala Schedule For Anees Bazmee's Next



Akshay Kumar has wrapped up the Kerala schedule of his upcoming film with director Anees Bazmee, and the actor marked the milestone with a heartfelt social media post. Sharing a cheerful picture with co-stars Vidya Balan and Raashi Khanna, Akshay treated fans with a new photo. While details about the film are still under wraps, the collaboration between Akshay Kumar and Anees Bazmee has already generated considerable buzz. Taking to his Instagram handle, Akshay Kumar shared the photo from the airport. He is seen posing with Vidya Balan and Raashi Khanna. "Keralam schedule wrapped! Nothing beats working with good people in a beautiful place. Big love to our director Anees Bazmee for the madness behind the camera and to my incredible co-stars Vidya, Raashii, Chota Rajpal and the entire crew! This one's been special," reads the caption. Fans immediately reacted. One of the fans wrote, "Can't wait for the movie". Another wrote, "Happy to see you raasi Khanna with akshay kumar."

Akshay Kumar And Vidya Balan Kick Off Kerala Schedule For Anees Bazmee's Next In April, the actor and Vidya Balan have officially kicked off the next schedule of their upcoming film with director Anees Bazmee, as the team heads to Kerala for an extensive shoot. The development was confirmed by Akshay himself, who shared a video on social media, giving fans a glimpse of the journey. Taking to his Instagram handle, Akshay Kumar shared a video from the runway where he is seen walking with Vidya Balan. Both are enjoying and talking as they get on the plane. He confirmed his next with Anees Bazmee's film, "Next stop: God's own country, the magical Keralam. Anees Bazmi's next is my fourth film with the ever fabulous @balanvidya and I hope the good luck charm of our jodi continues." Akshay Kumar and Vidya Balan have worked together in Heyy Baby, Mission Mangal, Bhool Bhulaiyaa.

As Pregnant Deepika Padukone Shoots Shah Rukh Khan's King, Ranveer Singh Slows Down And Looks After Dua



Ranveer Singh has kept a low profile despite the smashing success of Aditya Dhar-directed Dhurandhar and Dhurandhar 2. He has made fewer public appearances and has barely made any statements. All eyes are also on the actor as fans anticipate the announcement of his next film, Pralay. But where is Ranveer Singh? Reportedly, Ranveer Singh is taking it slow and spending time with his daughter, Dua, as Deepika Padukone resumes King's shoot.

Ranveer Singh Spends Time With Dua

A source close to the production of King said, "It's nice to see how supportive Ranveer Singh and Deepika Padukone are to each other. While Deepika has been busy shooting for King in South Africa, Ranveer, even after ground-breaking success and putting together Pralay, is spending time with his little Dua. While Dua's mommy is filming, he's taking care of her."

The insider also added, "He's being present and hands-on. Dua has been his lucky charm with 3 Ds (Deepika, Dua, Dhurandhar) changing his life. There are still a few days of shoot left, but after delivering Dhurandhar, Ranveer has chosen to be away from the spotlight, which is surprising."

Deepika Padukone, Shah Rukh Khan's Videos Leak From King Shoot

Meanwhile, Deepika Padukone, who is expecting her second child with Ranveer Singh, has decided to work through her pregnancy. She is currently in South Africa shooting for King with Shah Rukh Khan. Their visuals have previously been leaked online and have gone viral. The latest video shows the two actors filming a romantic sequence on a beach during sunset in South Africa.

In the clip, Deepika Padukone is seen in a white dress, while Shah Rukh Khan appears in a striped shirt paired with black trousers. The two were shooting by the water, with the scene suggesting a romantic moment between their characters. The setting and visuals point to a song or emotional sequence, although no official details about the scene have been released. Earlier, leaked photos showed Shah Rukh and Deepika walking hand in hand, possibly during a song shoot. In those pictures, Deepika wore a floral gown, while Shah Rukh appeared in a printed shirt with salt-and-pepper hair. Another video featured Shah Rukh standing on a staircase, turning back to offer his hand to Deepika during a break between takes.

Alia Bhatt

Begins Shooting For Sohum Shah's Tumbbad 2? Here's What We Know

In an exciting development for fans of the Tumbbad universe, Alia Bhatt is reportedly set to join the cast of its much-anticipated sequel, Tumbbad 2. According to a report by Pinkvilla, the actress has already begun shooting for the film and will be seen in a significant role despite a relatively short schedule. Sources suggest that Alia Bhatt has been roped in for a powerful character that will be filmed over an intensive 20-day shoot.

Pinkvilla quoted a source saying, "Alia has a power-packed role in Tumbbad 2. While it's a 20-day shoot, the character is extremely important and directly sets up the events of the third film. She loved the script, and it was a no-brainer for her."

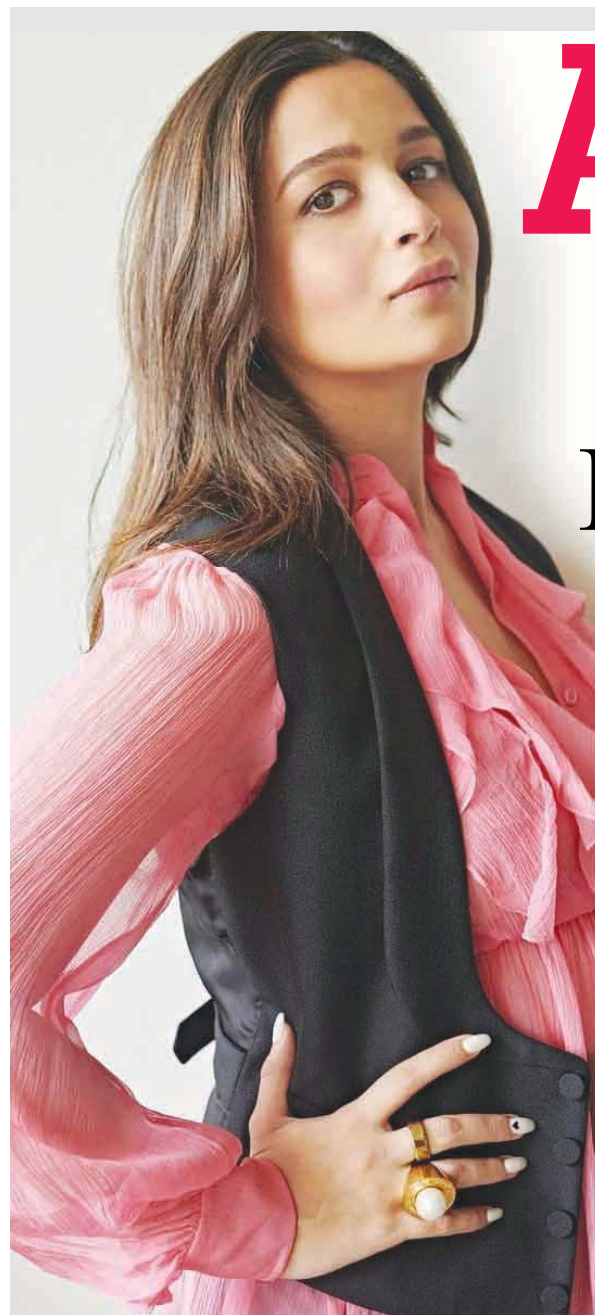
Earlier, Mid-Day reported that the makers have roped in Alia Bhatt for a cameo role in the folk horror film. Even though her screen time will be short, the report suggests that it is a very pivotal role in the story. A source told the portal, "The makers needed someone who brings gravitas and intrigue in a short screen time. Alia fit that space."

It is also being said that Alia

will shoot for the film on May 3 before heading to the US for the Met Gala on May 4. The source further added, "The shoot is tightly planned with an elaborate set constructed in Madh Island. Alia will shoot for two days in all. Since she is making an appearance at the Met Gala on May 4, the makers have brought a double for some patch scenes." However, the makers are yet to



officially announce her addition. Director Adesh Prasad's sequel is set to delve deeper into the dark, cursed mythology surrounding the deity Hastar, expanding on the eerie lore established in the first film. It will explore the dangerous consequences of awakening forces that were never meant to be worshipped, promising a more intense and unsettling narrative that builds on the original's haunting premise.



NEWS BOX

"Watcha Want Me To Do? Bust Out Crying": Epstein Note Before Suicide Attempt

World. (Agency)

Jeffrey Epstein's alleged suicide note has finally been revealed, in which the convicted sex offender and paedophile appears to claim that federal investigators "found nothing" against him after months of investigation. The unverified and undated note that was made public this week was first placed on the court docket in a case related to Epstein's former cellmate, who claimed he found it after the millionaire sex offender's first suspected jail suicide attempt days before his death. The barely legible note, which is not signed, appears to read, "They investigated for month -- found nothing!!!"

"So 16-year-old charge results!" the note appeared to read. "It is a treat to be able to choose one's time to say goodbye," it continued. "Watcha want me to do -- bust out crying!! NO FUN -- not worth it!!!"

History Of The Note

Few people had known about the note until Epstein's former cellmate, Nicholas Tartaglione, a former police officer serving a life sentence for killing four people, mentioned it last year on writer Jessica Reed Kraus' podcast. Last week, The New York Times reported that the note had been concealed from the public for almost seven years.

Tartaglione claimed he discovered the note in a book after Epstein was found on the floor of their cell at a Manhattan federal jail on July 23, 2019, with a strip of bedsheet around the financier's neck. That was about three weeks before Epstein was found dead in his cell in what authorities concluded was a suicide.

US District Judge Kenneth Karas in White Plains, New York, ordered the release of the note after The New York Times asked him last week to unseal it with other documents in a case involving Tartaglione. The Justice Department did not oppose the request.

Hantavirus Has 38 Strains, Only 1 Spreads To Humans: New Updates In Atlantic Cruise Outbreak

World. (Agency)

In their recent updates, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the South African health authorities have confirmed that the strain of hantavirus responsible for the cluster outbreak aboard cruise ship MV Hondius is the Andes strain. For those unaware, hantavirus is not categorised as an "easily contagious" virus in the same manner as seasonal influenza or other common respiratory ailments. Originating in rodents, the viral infection usually spreads to human only through direct contact. Human-to-human transmission is extremely rare, and this puts the recent updates on the Atlantic cruise ship hantavirus outbreak into a special, if somewhat medically alarming category.

"The preliminary tests show that, indeed, this is the Andes strain," South Africa's health minister Aaron Motsoaledi told a parliament committee yesterday. "And it happens to be the only strain out of the 38 that is known to cause human-to-human transmission. But as we said, we want to repeat again, such transmission is very rare and only happens due to very close contact between people." Unlike pathogens that transmit rapidly through casual social interaction, hantavirus typically requires specific environmental triggers to cross the species barrier. While scientists have identified dozens of hantavirus strains globally, only one specific variant has demonstrated the capacity for person-to-person spread. This distinction serves as the foundation of current health investigations, reinforcing the fact that the specific strain often dictates the level of public threat.

Russia is ramping up its attempts to kill opponents in Europe, intelligence officials say

World. (Agency)

When Vladimir Osechkin wants to take his children to school or go to the supermarket, he calls the police. The Russian activist has lived under protection since 2022 because French officials believe Russia is trying to kill him.

In April 2025, a crew of Russian men staked out Osechkin's home and the surrounding area in southwestern France for several hours, taking videos and photos in suspected groundwork for an assassination, according to court documents seen by The Associated Press that are not public. Several years earlier, Osechkin said, a red dot — which he thought was a laser sight for a gun — appeared on his wall. Elsewhere in Europe, Lithuanian officials disrupted a plot last year to kill a Lithuanian supporter of Ukraine and another against a Russian activist. Officials in Germany have similarly broken up two plots: one to target the head of a German weapons company supplying Ukraine, the other against a Ukrainian military official. Polish authorities arrested a man in 2024 in what they said was a plot to assassinate Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. And that same year, a Russian helicopter pilot who defected was killed in Spain — with Russian operatives the prime suspects.

While Russian officials have long been accused of silencing the country's enemies abroad, three Western intelligence officials from different countries told AP that a campaign of targeted killings has ramped up since President Vladimir Putin's 2022 invasion of Ukraine. The officials said Russia's security services are now more brazen in their choice of targets, going after Russian activists and foreign supporters.

Iran reviews US peace proposal as Trump says 'they want to make a deal'

Iran is reviewing a fresh US proposal to end the conflict that began on February 28, while both sides weigh a 30-day negotiation framework. The push has stirred market optimism, but deep differences over Tehran's nuclear programme and the Strait of Hormuz remain.

World. (Agency)

Iran is reviewing a fresh US peace proposal aimed at ending the conflict that began on February 28, even as major disagreements remain over Tehran's nuclear programme and control of the Strait of Hormuz.

US President Donald Trump struck an optimistic tone on Wednesday, saying

negotiations had made progress over the past 24 hours. "They want to make a deal. We've had very good talks over the last 24 hours, and it's very possible that we'll make a deal," Trump told reporters at the White House.

However, Trump had earlier warned that the US could resume bombing operations if talks collapsed, calling Iran's acceptance of the proposal a "big assumption". According to reports, the proposed one-page memorandum would formally end the war and trigger a 30-day phase of detailed negotiations between Washington and Tehran. The talks would focus on reopening shipping routes through the Strait of Hormuz, easing US sanctions on Iran, and placing restrictions on Tehran's nuclear activities.

However, it remains unclear how the emerging framework differs from the

14-point proposal submitted by Iran last week. Tehran has also not yet officially responded to the latest US proposal. Despite ongoing diplomatic efforts, Washington and Tehran remain divided



over several core issues, including Iran's nuclear programme and the future of the Strait of Hormuz — a strategic waterway that previously carried nearly a fifth of global oil and gas supplies. Iranian officials responded

cautiously to reports of a possible breakthrough. Iranian lawmaker Ebrahim Rezaei described the proposal as "more of an American wish-list than reality", while Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf mocked reports suggesting the two sides were close to an agreement.

Negotiations are reportedly being led on the US side by Trump envoy Steve Witkoff and Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner. If both sides agree to the preliminary framework, broader formal negotiations would begin immediately.

The possibility of a deal sent global oil prices sharply lower, with Brent crude briefly falling to two-week lows before recovering. Global markets also rallied amid hopes that the conflict, which disrupted energy supplies and shipping routes, could soon ease.

JPMorgan offered \$1 million to ex-staffer to settle assault claims before lawsuit

World. (Agency)

JPMorgan Chase offered USD 1 million to settle sexual assault, harassment and discrimination allegations raised by former investment banker Chirayu Rana before he filed a lawsuit that has since triggered intense scrutiny across Wall Street, according to a report by The Wall Street Journal. The bank's attempt to resolve the matter privately failed after settlement negotiations broke down, with the former employee reportedly seeking a larger payout. The lawsuit, filed in New York State Supreme Court and later refiled after being briefly withdrawn for corrections, accuses senior JPMorgan executive Loma Hajdini of sexual assault, coercion, racial harassment and workplace intimidation.

Rana, who initially filed the case under the pseudonym "John Doe," alleges that Hajdini abused her senior position within the bank's leveraged

finance division to pressure him into repeated sexual encounters and threaten his career prospects.

According to The Wall Street Journal, JPMorgan made the settlement offer earlier this year in an effort to avoid litigation. Two people familiar with



the negotiations told the publication that the bank offered USD 1 million, but the sides failed to reach an agreement.

Confirming the settlement discussions, JPMorgan spokesperson Brian Marchiony said, "We did try to reach an agreement to avoid the time and

expense of litigation and to support an employee who was being threatened with the very reputational harm now unfolding". He added, "We continue to believe these allegations have no merit, and new information raised as a result of the public filing only reinforces that conclusion". News agency Reuters separately reported that the bank reiterated it found no evidence supporting the allegations after an internal investigation involving multiple employees. According to Reuters, JPMorgan said the complainant declined to participate in the probe.

Rana's lawyer, Daniel Kaiser, disputed the bank's position. "In my 30-plus year career as an employment litigator I have never had an employer defendant make such a substantial offer if they truly believed the allegations to be a 'complete fabrication,'" he said, according to Reuters.

China Rolls Out J-35AE Stealth Jet As F-35 Rival, Pak May Be First Buyer

World. (Agency)

China has built a stealth fighter not just for its own forces but for foreign buyers eyeing a cheaper alternative to Western jets. The aircraft, an export-specific offshoot of the fifth-generation J-35 multi-role stealth fighter jet, is now being positioned as a direct challenger to the US-made F-35 Lightning II. Pakistan is likely to be the first in line to be a customer.

The timing is notable, landing almost exactly a year after Operation Sindoor triggered high-stakes aerial clashes between India and Pakistan.

While earlier glimpses of the J-35A

were limited to a scale display at the Paris Air Show, fresh visuals suggest China has moved beyond



prototypes. State broadcaster China Central Television recently aired footage of a fully assembled jet, serial number 001, emerging from a hangar during the "2026 May 1st

International Labour Day 'Heart to Heart' Special Programme".

The aircraft carried the branding of the Aviation Industry Corporation of China instead of air force markings, signalling its export role. According to the South China Morning Post, this is the first time a combat-ready export variant, labelled J-35AE, has been publicly shown in full form.

The J-35 programme marks China's second attempt at fielding a fifth-generation stealth fighter after the J-20.

Developed by the Shenyang Aircraft Corporation, the platform combines twin engines with internal weapons storage and advanced radar.

Israel bombs Beirut 1st time since ceasefire, says Hezbollah's Radwan chief killed

In a joint statement with Defence Minister Israel Katz, Netanyahu said the strike was ordered to "neutralize" the commander. Israeli media reported that the commander was killed.

World. (Agency)

Israel carried out airstrikes in Beirut on Wednesday for the first time since a ceasefire with Hezbollah took effect last month. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu confirmed the operation targeted a senior commander from Hezbollah's elite Radwan Force. In a joint statement with Defence Minister

Israel Katz, Netanyahu said the strike was ordered to "neutralize" the commander. Israeli officials later said that the Radwan Force chief, along with his deputy and several terrorists who were with them, were killed. However, there was no immediate confirmation from the military or Hezbollah. The strike marks a sharp escalation after the US-mediated ceasefire, which had halted Israeli attacks on Beirut.

Iran has demanded a pause in Beirut strikes to establish peace in the Middle East. The latest strike comes at a time when the US and Iran are inching towards progress in talks.

STRIKES CONTINUE ACROSS LEBANON

While the ceasefire remains formally in place, Israeli forces have continued operations in southern Lebanon. Lebanese authorities said Israeli attacks



across southern Lebanon and the Bekaa Valley killed at least 13 people during the day. In Khirbet Selim, two people were killed and one injured in a raid. Another two were killed in Tyre after a strike targeted a vehicle on the al-Haday road between Wadi Jilo and Tirdaba. In Siksiyah, five civilians were killed and 15 wounded in an airstrike.

Lebanon's Health Ministry earlier reported additional casualties in the town of Zelaya, including two women

and an elderly man. Israeli drones were also reported over Beirut again, after a period of absence following the ceasefire.

HEZBOLLAH STRIKES BACK

The Israel Defense Forces said Hezbollah launched explosive drones and rockets at Israeli troops in southern Lebanon, injuring two soldiers. The military also said it intercepted a hostile aircraft before it entered Israeli airspace and carried out further strikes on Hezbollah-linked sites. Hezbollah said it targeted multiple Israeli positions in response to civilian deaths. Diplomatic efforts between Israel and Lebanon are limited. Talks have continued at the ambassador level, but progress towards higher-level engagement appears slow. Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam said it was "premature" to expect any senior-level meetings.