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Siddaramaiah-Shivakumar photo-op in Delhi as Congress meets to decide leadership

New Delhi.(Agency)

>The two senior Congress leaders reached Delhi after they were summoned by the party high command for discussions on the long-simmering power tussle in Karnataka.

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and his deputy DK Shivakumar struck a united pose in Delhi on Tuesday amid growing buzz over a possible leadership change in the state. The two senior Congress leaders were summoned by the party high command for discussions on the long-simmering power tussle in Karnataka, an issue the leadership has so far avoided addressing publicly. Party sources said the Congress leadership wants to settle the matter and end the persistent infighting and public bickering between the two camps in the state. However, before reaching the Congress Headquarters at Indira Bhawan, both Siddaramaiah and Karnataka's number 2, DK Shivakumar remained tight-lipped about the discussions and the likely outcome when confronted by reporters outside the venue. When asked about ongoing speculation surrounding the meeting and possible



leadership discussions, Siddaramaiah remarked, "It is always there". Party MP and Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, general secretary KC Venugopal, party spokesperson Randeep Sujrewala also reached Indira Bhawan for further deliberations to find a way to break the deadlock that has been at the centre of Karnataka politics for a little over a year now. Several ministers believed to be close to the Chief Minister, including Satish Jarkiholi, G Parameshwara and HC Mahadevappa, also travelled to Delhi, adding to political buzz around the visit. The development comes as the Congress government completed three years in office on May 20, triggering renewed debate within the party over leadership arrangements and ministerial representation. Speaking to reporters on Monday, Siddaramaiah confirmed that he had been invited to Delhi by the party leadership but said he was unaware of the agenda.

Jain Community Unites Against Alleged Blackmailers; Police Action Begins Over Fake Photos and Rumor Campaigns

Mahanagar Metro Desk / Pawan Mekan

Mandsaur. The historic city of Mandsaur is preparing to witness one of the grandest Chaturmas events in Jain religious history, with multiple revered Jain Acharyas scheduled to stay in the city simultaneously for the holy observance. The spiritual atmosphere across the region has intensified as devotees from across Madhya Pradesh gather under the guidance of respected saints including Acharya Shri Ashoksagar Surishwarji Maharaj Saheb, Shri Sagarchandra Sagar Ji Maharaj Saheb, and Shri Somaychandra Sagar Ji Maharaj Saheb. Organized by the entire Mandsaur Jain Shri Sangh, the Chaturmas has generated extraordinary enthusiasm among followers. However, amid the devotional preparations, controversy has emerged over what community members describe as a deliberate attempt to disturb the religious event through misinformation, fake content, and alleged blackmail tactics. Allegations Against Self-Styled Activists and "Blackmail Syndicate" According to members of the Jain community, certain individuals allegedly posing as journalists and social activists have been spreading misleading narratives and defamatory material on social media platforms. Names including Hardik Hudiya, Jagat Parekh, Vikram Bafna, and Kalpesh



Singhvi have surfaced in discussions surrounding the controversy. Community representatives allege that these individuals have been attempting to create unrest by circulating edited photographs, fabricated claims, and unverified accusations aimed at disrupting the Chaturmas and damaging the reputation of Jain saints. Claims of Extortion Plot Behind the Controversy Sources associated with the Jain Sangh further claim that the controversy was part of a larger pressure and extortion strategy allegedly designed to intimidate organizers and religious leaders. It is alleged that threats of reputational damage and disruption of the event were being used to create fear within the community. However, organizers say the plan failed after the Jain community united in support of the saints and demanded strict action against those responsible for spreading misinformation. Fake Images and Mis-

leading Reports Allegedly Debunked The controversy reportedly intensified after certain claims and photographs were circulated online and allegedly pushed to sections of the media. Community members state that subsequent verification exposed several of the circulated materials as manipulated or fake. According to Jain Sangh representatives, internal reviews and discussions within the community found no evidence supporting the allegations being spread online. Organizers say the saints involved have received complete support and "clean chit" from the Sangh. Popularity of Sagar Community Said to Be Trigger Behind Campaign Several community members believe the controversy is linked to growing popularity and influence of the Sagar community within Jain religious circles. They allege that rival interests are attempting to create divisions within the Jain community by targeting

respected saints and religious institutions. Questions are now being raised within community circles regarding who may be orchestrating the campaign from behind the scenes and whether larger vested interests are involved. Police Action and Community Response With tensions rising, police authorities have reportedly begun examining complaints related to fake content, online defamation, and alleged blackmail activities. Community leaders have called for strict legal action against anyone found guilty of spreading fabricated material intended to disturb religious harmony. The broader Jain community across Madhya Pradesh has largely come together in support of the Chaturmas organizers and saints, emphasizing unity and restraint amid the controversy. Editorial Position Community voices have strongly condemned attempts to malign religious leaders through unverified claims and manipulated digital content. Many have demanded social and legal accountability against individuals involved in spreading misinformation targeting religious sentiments and communal harmony. Despite the controversy, preparations for the historic Mandsaur Chaturmas continue with heightened participation and support from Jain devotees across the region.

Annamalai attacks Vijay as Tamil Nadu CM faces his first big test

New Delhi.(Agency)

It seems the honeymoon period is over, and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay is facing his first big test. Within 15 days of the TVK-led coalition government taking charge, Tamil Nadu witnessed two brutal crimes against minors. Opposition leaders, including BJP's Annamalai, are targeting CM Vijay over the murder of a 17-year-old boy near Meenakshi temple in Madurai, and the rape-cum-murder of a 10-year-old girl in Coimbatore.

A TVK minister's response to the Coimbatore rape-cum-murder and jovial police officers ahead of a media briefing, videos of which went viral, on the crime added fuel to the fire. The barrage of attacks forced Vijay to use a fast-tracked Pocco case to defend his government.



Former Tamil Nadu BJP President K Annamalai slammed the TVK government led by CM Vijay over the two grisly crimes. Annamalai claimed that the new government was "yet to emerge from its celebratory mood".

"Drug peddlers, sexual assaulters, and murderers have a free pass in Tamil Nadu. The State police seem to have learnt no lessons from the past, and the new TVK government is yet to emerge from its celebratory mode and confront the grim realities unfolding on the ground," Annamalai posted on X. Annamalai's post came on Monday (May 25) after a minor, A Gubendran, was stabbed to death by a gang of five at the Madurai Corporation's shopping complex in the Meenakshi Sundareswarar Temple.

Punjab's Mukh Mantri Sehat Yojana strengthens high-risk maternal and newborn care, benefits thousands of families

New Delhi.(Agency)

Punjab is significantly strengthening high-risk maternal and neonatal healthcare through the Mukh Mantri Sehat Yojana, ensuring that complicated deliveries and critical newborn care are accessible to families without financial burden.

A major study based on India's National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) survey found that nearly one in every two pregnancies in the country is high-risk. Factors such as poor education, poverty, short gaps between pregnancies, previous birth complications and caesarean deliveries increase dangers for both mother and baby. Researchers say women from vulnerable backgrounds face the highest risks, highlighting the urgent need for stronger maternal healthcare and awareness programmes. The Sehat Card has emerged as a critical support mechanism for women requiring surgical intervention during childbirth due to complications such as prolonged labour, maternal health conditions, fetal distress and previous caesarean deliveries. According to official data received from the State Health Agency (SHA), as on May 25, a total of 7,300 maternity and neonatal care cases were treated under the scheme with expenditure amounting to Rs 7.04 crore. Of these, 5,300 were high-risk caesarean deliveries accounting for Rs 6.37 crore, reflecting the growing role of the scheme in supporting high-risk pregnancies and emergency obstetric care across Punjab. Speaking about personal experience, beneficiary Deepika, a 28-year-old woman from Patiala who faced pregnancy complications including anaemia, shares that she underwent a successful caesarean delivery fully covered under the Sehat Card. Her husband Manoj shared that they were very happy that the procedures went smoothly and stress free with the cashless card.



Jaishankar calls for 'trusted, transparent' partnerships in Indo-Pacific region at Quad meet

•In his opening remarks at the Quad foreign ministers' meeting, Jaishankar called on the members to work towards ensuring maritime security and promoting economic

New Delhi.(Agency)

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Tuesday called for "trusted and transparent" partnerships among the Quad members to bring peace and prosperity to the Indo-Pacific, while also stressing that the region must remain a driver for global growth and stability. In his opening remarks at the Quad foreign ministers' meeting in New Delhi, Jaishankar also called on the member countries to work towards ensuring maritime security and promoting economic choices in the region. The meeting was attended by US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Australian Foreign



Minister Toshimitsu Motegi, with Jaishankar presiding over it. The Quad meeting came amid rising global concerns over China's increasing military

focus will clearly be on the Indo-Pacific, which is the specific limit of the Quad," the external affairs minister said in his televised opening remarks. "At the global level, we have to address issues like supply chain resilience, connectivity choke points, manufacturing and resource concentrations and gaps in critical infrastructure. Each one of them offers a new argument for more partnerships," he said. Jaishankar, without elaborating, also talked about specific "concerns" facing the Indo-Pacific. "This will require enhancing strategic confidence, ensuring maritime security, promoting economic choices, and fostering a

And that is best done by promoting trusted and transparent partnerships," he said. The external affairs minister added, "As maritime democracies, pluralistic societies and market economies, we share the responsibility towards a free and open Indo-Pacific. The region must remain a driver for global growth and stability." Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong called for making the Quad as strong and as effective as possible. We are determined to continue the momentum of the Quad, and we want a peaceful, stable, prosperous Indo-Pacific, she said. Rubio said the areas in which the Quad has been working together became more relevant because of recent events

News box

Fight in Gurgaon after man mocked by colleagues over 'accent'

GURGAON.(Agency)

A late-night gathering among colleagues in DLF Phase-III allegedly turned violent after two men mocked the way a colleague spoke and abused him, leaving a 24-year-old grievously injured on May 21.

Police said the victim, Aditya Raj Pandey, who is from Bihar and currently resides in DLF Phase-III, works at a business process outsourcing (BPO) firm in Sector 48. He was allegedly assaulted by Uday Sansanwal and Nikhil Sansanwal inside a rented room in U Block following an argument while they were drinking.

According to the complaint, Pandey went to meet his friend Ansh Tyagi at a colleague's room around 2am. "When Pandey arrived, Tyagi, the two accused, and a woman were already present there and drinking. All of them are colleagues," an officer said.

During the interaction, the accused allegedly made fun of Pandey's accent and way of talking and began abusing him. When he objected to the remarks, the confrontation turned violent. Pandey alleged that Uday first slapped him, following which both accused repeatedly punched and hit him on the face and head. "His friends intervened and separated them. Before leaving, the accused allegedly threatened to kill Pandey," the officer added.

Police said Pandey later lost consciousness and was taken to a private hospital by his friends. The medico-legal report noted a scalp injury along with swelling near both eyes. "The report also mentioned the smell of alcohol from the victim's mouth," the FIR stated. Following verification of the complaint and inquiry at the spot, DLF Phase-III police registered an FIR under sections 117(2) (voluntarily causing grievous hurt), 351(3) (criminal intimidation) and 3(5) (common intention) of BNS against the two accused.

Malibu Towne Country Club gets OC after years, reopening likely

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

The Country Club of Malibu Towne has received its occupation certificate (OC) after two years of waiting, finally paving the way for its reopening following its closure in 2024. The township's license had expired in 2020 and was renewed six years later in Jan 2026, enabling the builder to apply for the club's OC.

Authorities confirmed that all pending paperwork, payments, and corrective measures that caused the club to be sealed are now complete. Malibu Towne, home to nearly 10,000 residents, can finally expect key amenities, including its swimming pool, to reopen.

The 204-acre township in Sector 50, developed in the mid-1990s, depended on the club for facilities such as a swimming pool, garden areas, spaces for community events and social gatherings. The OC application was submitted by the builder, Malibu Estate Pvt Ltd (MEPL), towards the end of Jan 2026. The township licence had expired earlier in 2020, and authorities had advised the builder to first secure renewal of the township licence before applying for the club's OC. Subsequently, the licence was approved by DTCP, Chandigarh, on Jan 9, 2026, after which the builder formally submitted the OC application to DTP, Gurgaon.

"This positive outcome is the result of sustained follow-ups and multiple meetings over the past several months involving MEPL and department of town and country planning and help of Ward Councillor Kuldeep Yadav," said Vijay Shiv Nath, Chairman of Malibu Towne RWA's Federation. The township's compliance issues date back to 2020, when DTCP rejected its completion certificate for failing to develop community sites within the stipulated deadline of Nov 2020. Of the 16 approved community sites, only 11 were constructed as per norms.

Twelve shanties and four cars destroyed in Vasundhara slum fire

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

A fire broke out in the slums of Vasundhara Sector 3 on Monday, reducing 12 shanties to ashes. Four cars parked nearby were also gutted in the fire. Locals and fire department officials rescued nearly 30 people and over a dozen cattle. Chief fire officer Rahul Pal said the locals informed them about the fire at 3pm. Flammable material present in the cluster caused the fire to spread rapidly and within moments, the fire engulfed 12 shanties and vehicles parked nearby. Before the fire tenders arrived, the people from the shanties untied the cattle and moved them out. "At least six LPG cylinders stored in the shanties exploded one after another, inciting terror among the residents. More than 10 fire tenders controlled the fire within one and a half hours. The exact cause of the fire has not been determined yet.



We are investigating the reasons behind the blaze. But it might have been caused by a short circuit," he said. A source said following a shortage of LPG cylinders, the people in the slum had shifted to cooking on wood-fired chulhas and high flames from one such chulha caused the fire. Another fire broke out at LN Electronics Company, located next to NH 24, around 4.30pm. High flames from the company's premises could be seen from a distance. Fire department officials evacuated the employees from the factory that manufactured fans. The CFO said more than 20 fire engines from Ghaziabad, Noida and Meerut called to douse the flames. During filing of the copy, efforts were still underway to put out the fire.

Spat in MCM as deputy mayor rebukes Manesar mayor over inspections

GURGAON.(Agency)

A bitter power struggle erupted within MCM on Monday, with senior deputy mayor Praveen Yadav launching a scathing attack on Manesar mayor Inderjeet Kaur Yadav over the inspection of vehicles deployed for door-to-door waste collection.

Praveen accused Inderjeet of converting an official inspection exercise into a "social media trial" aimed at gaining political mileage rather than ensuring accountability in sanitation operations.

He alleged that the mayor "misused govt machinery" and disrupted the inspection for "personal interests". The mayor did not respond despite multiple attempts, and MCM Commissioner Pradeep Singh too could not be reached for comment.

Addressing mediapersons, the senior deputy mayor alleged that the MCM commissioner constituted a committee to inspect the waste collection vehicles, but the process was derailed on Sunday when the mayor arrived at the site



accompanied by nearly 200 supporters.

"The inspection was meant to be conducted by the authorised committee and officials. Instead, it was reduced to a spectacle. No one was allowed to speak, and the sole objective appeared to be finding faults for publicity," Praveen alleged. He claimed that individuals

accompanying the mayor misbehaved with him and municipal officials during the inspection and even issued threats. "The entire exercise was carried out in an arbitrary and personalised manner, completely bypassing institutional procedures," he said. The controversy has now taken a serious turn with

Woman returning from BEd exam dies after falling from auto in Gurgaon, FIR against driver

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A 27-year-old woman from Bihar, who had come to Haryana to appear for a BEd examination, died during treatment after falling from a moving autorickshaw near Hasanpur on Saturday evening.

The deceased, Preeti Kumari, was a resident of Khajuri village in Bihar's Araria district. According to a complaint lodged by her brother, Abhishek Kumar, at Badshahpur police station, she had travelled to Haryana to appear for the examination at Govt College Bissar Akbarpur in Nuh. After the exam, she was coming to Gurgaon in an autorickshaw bearing registration number HR55AG2597. The complainant alleged that around 5.50pm, when the auto reached near the HP petrol pump at Hasanpur before the SPR traffic signal, passengers asked the driver not to drive rashly and at high speed. Despite repeated warnings, the driver allegedly continued driving recklessly.



The complaint said that due to the excessive speed, Preeti fell from the moving auto onto the road and suffered a severe head injury. The front wheel of the auto also purportedly detached during the incident.

Passers-by took Preeti to Ayushman Hospital near Hero Honda Chowk for treatment, while the driver allegedly fled

the spot after the accident.

Abhishek stated that he received information about the accident around 8.30pm on Saturday. He said he then contacted his neighbour, Sandeep Kumar, who works in the city, to assist with her treatment. On doctors' advice, she was later shifted to Safdarjung Hospital in Delhi for advanced treatment.

Abhishek and other family members travelled from Bihar to Delhi on Sunday. The same day, Preeti died during treatment. The complainant alleged that the accident occurred due to rash and negligent driving by the auto driver despite repeated objections from passengers. Following the complaint submitted on Monday, police registered a case under sections 281 (rash driving), 125 (act endangering life or personal safety of others) and 106 (causing death by negligence) of BNS at Badshahpur police station. The investigation was handed over to ASI Yogesh Kumar.

Animal bite cases on rise, anti-rabies vaccinations crossed 42k last year

Gurgaon.(Agency)

More than 42,000 people received anti-rabies vaccines at govt health facilities in the city in 2025, indicating that animal bite and exposure cases remain alarmingly high. According to data accessed by TOI, 42,613 people were administered anti-rabies vaccines between Jan and Dec 2025 — around 117 cases every day, or nearly five people every hour. This marks a steep rise from 2024, when the city recorded just over one dog bite case per hour. In the first four months of 2026 alone, another 16,897 people received anti-rabies vaccines — around 141 cases daily, or nearly six every hour. The figures dwarf those from previous years. The city reported 2,612 dog bite cases in 2021 (roughly seven a day); 3,464 in 2022 (around nine a day); 5,259 in 2023 (about 14 daily); and 10,067 in 2024 — nearly 27 cases every

day. The highest monthly count in the latest dataset was Jan 2026, with 4,618 vaccinations, followed by Feb (4,339) and Dec 2025 (4,291). Doctors at govt hospitals said dog bite and animal scratch cases are reported almost daily in emergency wards. "Children between 5-14 years are the most vulnerable, especially boys, because they play outdoors and may not recognise warning signs in stray dogs. Elderly people are also at risk due to slower reaction times," said Dr Satish Koul, principal director and unit head — internal medicine, Fortis Gurgaon. "The biggest mistakes are not washing the wound immediately with soap and water, ignoring small scratches, applying home remedies like turmeric or oil, and delaying or skipping the anti-rabies vaccine," he added. Experts said the rising numbers reflect gaps in animal birth control (ABC) programmes and poor

stray dog population management. Though MCG has no official population estimate, activists said numbers have grown sharply due to inadequate sterilisation drives. Chetna Joshi, founder of Kaali Welfare Foundation and a member of the Animal Welfare Board of India, said two of the three MCG-linked sterilisation centres were operating without mandatory approvals under the ABC Rules, 2023. "One centre is run by TACO animal welfare centre under CSR support, while the other two — at Garhi Harsaru and Baliawas — are operated by Maa Baglamukhi Sewa Samiti under an MCG tender, without the requisite certificate of project recognition," she said, adding that records cited by authorities pertain to TACO's work, not Bagulamukhi's. "MCG needs a certificate of project recognition to legally operate these centres.

allegations surfacing against the mayor's husband, Rakesh Yadav. The agency associated with the waste collection work has also alleged that Rakesh demanded a "partnership" or share in the operations, charges that are likely to further deepen the political storm within the civic body. Praveen claimed that the decision to inspect the vehicles was formally approved during a meeting of the MCM along with councillors, and a committee had been assigned the task of submitting a report to the commissioner. "The focus should have been on transparency and improving sanitation services for residents. Instead, the mayor sidelined public interest and turned the exercise into a political event," he alleged.

The escalating confrontation between the mayor and the senior deputy mayor exposed sharp divisions within the Manesar civic body, raising concerns over governance, administrative functioning and political interference in municipal operations.

Warm nights on rise as min hits 31.2 degrees in Gurgaon

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Intense heat continued to tighten its grip on the city, and the little respite after sundown also seems to be dwindling. Monday brought one of the season's warmest nights, with the mercury settling at 31.2 degrees Celsius — 4.5 degrees above normal and only the second time this season the minimum has breached the 30-degree mark. The reading meets India Meteorological Department's definition of a "warm night", declared when the minimum temperature departs between 4.5°C and 6.4°C above normal during heatwave conditions. A departure beyond 6.4°C earns the grimmer tag of "severe warm night".

The pattern is not an aberration, and night temperatures over the past week have remained stubbornly elevated: 28°C on May 19, 29.8°C on May 20, 32.6°C on May 21, 28.5°C on May 22, 28.6°C on May 23 and 27.5°C on May 24 — a sustained stretch that meteorologists said signals prolonged heat stress.

IMD data placed the city among the highest night temperature recordings in Haryana, with the state's average minimum rising a further 0.9°C from the previous day. The concern with warm nights goes beyond discomfort. Meteorologists warn that elevated overnight temperatures prevent the body from recovering from daytime heat exposure, amplifying the risk of heat-related illness — particularly for children, the elderly and those who work outdoors. City observatories recorded maximum temperatures between 41.6°C and 42.7°C on Monday, as dry weather prevailed across Haryana. Sirsa remained the hottest spot in the state at 46.2°C, with temperatures broadly running up to 3.2°C above normal. IMD has issued a heatwave-to-severe-heatwave warning for several districts, including Gurgaon, through May 27. A few parts of south Haryana also reported unusually high night temperatures — Mandkola in Nuh recorded a minimum temperature of 31.9 degrees Celsius, while Jhajjar recorded 31.4 degrees Celsius and Palwal 31.2 degrees Celsius. Northern districts offered more relief — Rohtak reported the state's lowest minimum at 23.4°C, followed by Karnal at 25.1°C, Hisar at 25.9°C and Ambala at 27.8°C.

Land handed 2 years ago, cemetery still lack an approach road

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Nearly two years after land was allotted for a Catholic burial ground in Sector 58 near Ghata village, the cemetery still lacks a proper approach road. A 75-metre stretch leading to the site remains unpaved, forcing ambulances and mourners to navigate a dusty, uneven track to reach the facility. The same stretch also serves Anjuman Bagiya, a Muslim graveyard established in 2004 near the cemetery site. People visiting the kabristan, managed by Haryana Anjuman Charitable Trust, also rely on the partially unpaved road for access. Residents and church representatives said the situation worsens during the monsoon, when the stretch becomes waterlogged and nearly inaccessible. They added that repeated representations to authorities have failed to yield a solution. Access is further hindered by congestion around Banjara Market, where roadside parking and heavy crowds create bottlenecks for ambulances carrying bodies to the cemetery. "The stretch leading to the burial ground remains unpaved, dusty and uneven, making it challenging for ambulances and mourners to reach the site, especially during funerals. We have raised the issue with civic authorities



multiple times, but no permanent solution has been provided so far," said Fr Thomas Blessin. The land for the burial ground was allotted by HSNP in 2016 after Delhi Catholic Archdiocese requested a separate burial facility for Catholic Christians in the city in 2012. Although possession of the land was handed over to the church in June 2016, the site remained inaccessible for years due to encroachments and resistance from

locals, which also delayed construction of a boundary wall. In Nov 2023, the church approached Punjab and Haryana high court seeking directions for removal of encroachments and possession of the allocated land. HSNP subsequently carried out an eviction drive in 2024 and cleared the site before handing it over for the establishment of the burial ground.

Church representatives said that while the land has now been secured and the burial

ground is operational, the absence of basic infrastructure such as a paved approach road continues to create difficulties for the community.

"Every time a vehicle passes through the stretch, thick dust rises because the road is still unpaved. People attending funerals, especially elderly family members, have to walk on uneven ground to reach the cemetery. Even ambulances struggle to move smoothly on the kaccha patch. It is difficult to understand why such a basic approach road has still not been constructed despite the burial ground being operational," said a member of the Catholic community. An HSNP official said an 18-metre-wide road with a planned length of around 175 metres was proposed to provide access to the cemetery. "Of this, nearly 100 metres has already been paved, while work on the remaining 75 metres is stalled due to pending litigation in the high court. The estate officer-II has been directed to actively pursue the matter for an early resolution. At present, we are unable to construct the remaining stretch and any attempt to do so also faces resistance from locals. More than 100 land-related cases in the city have already been resolved, and efforts are underway to address this issue as well as the earliest," the official said.

2 days after government order, 1 detention facility opens in Bengal, another on way

3 alleged illegal Bangladeshis housed at the Murshidabad centre, picked up from nearby areas

Kolkata. (Agency)

Within 48 hours of the West Bengal BJP government ordering establishment of holding centres in all districts across the state for essentially Bangladeshis and Rohingya, a detention facility was opened in Murshidabad, while preparations are on to set up another in Malda. A senior district police officer told The Indian Express that three people suspected to be illegal immigrants from Bangladesh had already been brought to the Murshidabad centre. Both Malda and Murshidabad border Bangladesh. In an order dated May 23, the Bengal Home & Hill Affairs Department had ordered all district magistrates to set up 'holding centres' for illegal Bangladeshi and Rohingya in their areas in the state. The three-storey building in

Bahadurpur near the Lalgola market in Murshidabad where a detention centre has now been opened also holds an office for fishermen, a bank and a community hall used for marriage and other purposes.

Police and administration inspected the building a day before it was announced as a 'holding centre' on Sunday. Police and civic volunteers have been appointed to man it.

Sources said the three alleged Bangladeshis brought to the centre had been picked up from Bhagabangola and Lalgola Police Station areas. The police officer said: "Proper arrangements have been made for food and water. Further investigation is on regarding the three." In Malda, a holding centre is being prepared in a government



building meant for training of Self Help Groups, in English Bazar town's Chandan Park area. Work is on to install CCTVs, and sources said that 12 policemen, three civil defence personnel and three civic volunteers will man the centre. A cook will also be provided.

In its May 23 order, the state government had laid down "the procedure to be

followed for deportation of Bangladeshi / Rohingya apprehended for staying illegally", including "setting up of Holding Centres in districts for apprehended foreigners as well as for the released foreign prisoners awaiting deportation / repatriation in accordance with the MHA guidelines". Before that, on May 20, Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari said the government will follow the "detect, delete and deport" system for illegal Bangladeshis in Bengal. State officials said that this was in line with the directive issued by the Centre on May 2, 2025, on the procedure for deportation of illegal Bangladeshis and Rohingyas, which the previous Trinamool Congress government led by Mamata Banerjee had stalled.

The government notification said that after suspected illegal residents have been identified, an enquiry would be conducted, with the name, parentage, residential address, details of near relatives and other information to be sent to the authorities concerned of the areas where they claim to belong, with a report expected within 30 days. During this period, the suspected person is to stay at the holding centre. If no report is received within 30 days, the Foreigners' Registration Officer is authorised to take necessary action to deport the suspected Bangladesh or Myanmar national. In case the report confirms that they are illegal migrants, police are to capture their biometrics, and the BSF or Coast Guards ensure their deportation.

Short news

Tirumala temple sets new darshan record with pilgrim footfall of 98,058

TIRUMALA. (Agency)

A record number of devotees thronged the Tirumala temple on Sunday, with 98,058 pilgrims having darshan of Lord Venkateswara. The figure, officials clarified, is an exact head-to-head count thanks to the Integrated Command Control Centre (ICCC), which uses face identification technology to record and store photographs of each devotee. This ensures that the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) now maintains highly accurate data compared to earlier estimates.

For perspective, the highest single-day darshan count in the past was 1,01,256 in 2016-17, but that figure was based on compartment capacity calculations rather than individual identification. With AI-driven systems now in place, officials say the numbers being reported are precise and verifiable.

Additional Executive Officer Ch Venkaiah Choudary, who supervised the arrangements, said nearly 1.75 lakh people were present in Tirumala on Sunday, including those inside rooms, locker halls, PAC complexes, and on the streets.

At the closing time of darshan (2 a.m. Monday), another 26,000 devotees were still waiting outside.

"We achieved this record without any untoward incidents, thanks to the coordinated efforts of DyEOs and staff from Temple, Annadanam, Reception, Parakamani, VGO and other wings," he said. Sunday also saw a record in tinsure services, with 49,234 devotees offering their hair, while laddu sales touched 4.2 lakh.

Plus-I seats increased in Kerala, temporary batches to stay

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. (Agency) The government has issued orders for continuing temporary Plus-I batches that were allocated and shifted in the previous years and also permitted marginal seat increase, as the higher secondary admission process commenced on Monday. A marginal seat increase of 30% has been



allowed in government higher secondary schools and 20% in aided schools in Thiruvananthapuram, Palakkad, Kozhikode, Malappuram, Wayanad, Kannur and Kasaragod districts. An additional 10% will be allocated to aided schools on demand.

In Kollam and Thiruvananthapuram, 20% marginal seat increase has been permitted in government and aided schools. In Alappuzha district's Ambalapuzha and Cherthala taluks, marginal seats increase of 20% has been allowed in both schools. In Ernakulam, 20% marginal increase in seats has been approved in all government and aided schools in five taluks except Kothamangalam and Muvattupuzha.

As many as 313 temporary additional batches sanctioned in previous years will continue this year too. The submission of Plus-I applications began on Monday.

Punjabi singer Harbeer Sohal held, 5 kg heroin recovered from his Thar, was 'courier' in drug racket operated from abroad: Khanna Police

Ludhiana. (Agency)

Punjabi singer Harbeer Singh Sohal has been arrested following the recovery of 5.1 kg heroin and Rs 1.50 lakh cash from his vehicle, a senior Punjab Police officer on Monday said. The singer was allegedly a "courier" in a drug supply racket allegedly being operated by handlers based in Australia and Canada, said Khanna SSP Darpan Ahluwalia.

Harbeer was earlier arrested by the Mohali police in an extortion racket in 2022, Ahluwalia said, adding the fresh action against him comes following an investigation into a March 7 drug trafficking case.

SSP Ahluwalia said Doraha police had arrested one Akshay Kumar, 22, a resident of Shimlapuri in Ludhiana, following the recovery of 301 grams of heroin from his possession on March 7. Following interrogation, additional 268 grams of



heroin, 10 grams ICE (methamphetamine), 30 live cartridges, Rs 10,750 in drug money and a car were recovered. "During Akshay's questioning, it was revealed that the narcotics had been procured from Vishal, 25 and Sanjeev Kumar alias Sunny, 35, both residents of Shimlapuri in Ludhiana. All three accused were jointly supplying drugs at different locations. Based on this disclosure, accused Vishal and Sanjeev were nominated in the case and Vishal was subsequently arrested,"

NDPS accused escapes Kerala police custody from Rajdhani Express at Vadodara

AHMEDABAD. (Agency)

A drug peddler being escorted by Kerala Police to Delhi dramatically escaped from custody at Gujarat's Vadodara railway station after allegedly pushing two policemen and disappearing from the Rajdhani Express in the middle of the night. Despite a massive search operation across railway stations, the accused is untraceable.

The accused has been identified as 36-year-old Mohammad Hanifa Abubakar, a resident of Kozhikode, Kerala, who was arrested in a narcotics-related case registered under the NDPS Act.

According to the complaint lodged at the Vadodara Railway Police Station, the police team boarded the Rajdhani Express from Kozhikode railway station



on May 22 to take the accused to Hazrat Nizamuddin railway station in Delhi.

The train halted briefly at Vadodara station on May 23. At around 12:30 am, the accused sought permission to use the washroom. Police Head Constables Binoy and Anish escorted him to the toilet area.

After returning from the washroom, Hanifa

stood near the washbasin pretending to wash his hands. Within seconds, he allegedly shoved both policemen forcefully in the chest, catching them completely off guard.

The impact caused Head Constable Binoy to fall to the ground, while the accused seized the brief window of confusion to sprint towards coach B/4 before disappearing from sight.

As panic spread inside the moving train, Head Constable Anish immediately chased the accused through the coaches, while injured officer Binoy alerted the rest of the escort team.

A frantic search operation was launched. The train staff were informed immediately, and surveillance checks were initiated. However, despite repeated searches, the accused could not be located.

36-year-old man held for sexually assaulting minor daughter in Odisha

JAGATSINGHPUR. (Agency)

Western Odisha continued to reel under severe heatwave conditions on Sunday with mercury crossing 45 degree Celsius in six towns across the region.

Titilagarh in Balangir district recorded the highest maximum temperature at 45.8 deg C. Boudh and Bhawanipatna followed closely at 45.6 deg C and 45.4 deg C respectively. Sambalpur registered 45.3 deg C, while Sonepur and Balangir recorded 45.2 deg C and 45 deg C respectively. Eight other towns recorded temperatures above 40 deg C, bringing normal life to a complete standstill.

Although coastal Odisha witnessed relatively lower temperatures, high humidity levels caused dries.

Taking serious note of the matter, the department reiterated that contractors must suspend works during the restricted hours to safeguard labourers from heat-related illnesses.

The engineer-in-chief (EIC) instructed the chief construction engineers and superintending engineers across all zones to ensure strict compliance of the order. The directive also mandated contractors to provide adequate shade facilities or rest shades along with safe drinking water and first-aid arrangement for workers at construction sites. During inquiry, the girl disclosed that she had been subjected to repeated acts of sexual abuse and exploitation by her father on previous occasions as well.

Police said continuous raids and searches were conducted to apprehend the accused. A police team also went to Hyderabad after being tipped off about his presence there.

The investigation revealed that the accused's brother, Pratap, worked as a security supervisor in Hyderabad. He reportedly gave Prasanjit shelter in Hyderabad. Later, the duo went to Pratap's in-laws' place in Jankia.

Tirtol SDPO Ajay Kumar Das said a police team raided Jankia and apprehended both Prasanjit and Pratap on Sunday. The accused duo was produced in court and remanded in judicial custody on Monday.

Attappadi Madhu lynching case: Family to appeal acquittal of key accused

The High Court enhanced the sentence awarded by the Mannarkkad trial court from seven years' imprisonment to life imprisonment for 12 accused in the sensational Attappady mob-lynching case.

PALAKKAD. (Agency)

The family of tribal youth Madhu, whose brutal lynching in Attappady shocked Kerala and the country, broke down with mixed emotions after the Kerala High Court enhanced the sentence of 12 convicts to life imprisonment in the mob murder case on Monday. While expressing relief and happiness over the tougher punishment, Madhu's mother Malli and his elder sister Sarasu said they were deeply disappointed by the acquittal of first accused Hussein and would move an appeal against the decision.

"We are happy with the judgment. Many people stood with us during this fight. Alone, I could never have carried this forward," Malli told reporters, her voice

trembling with emotion.

She thanked all those who supported the family, including the government, for standing by them through the long legal battle. "At the same time, we never expected the first accused to be let off. I don't know why he was acquitted," she said. Sarasu also said the family would continue the legal fight to challenge the acquittal.

The High Court enhanced the sentence awarded by the Mannarkkad trial court from seven years' imprisonment to life imprisonment for 12 accused in the sensational Attappady mob-lynching case. The court was considering appeals filed both by the accused seeking acquittal and by the state government seeking



enhancement of punishment. The state had approached the High Court demanding stricter punishment following repeated requests from Madhu's family, who maintained that the original sentence

did not reflect the gravity of the crime. Madhu, a mentally challenged tribal youth from Attappady, was attacked and humiliated by a mob in February 2018 after being accused of stealing food items. Images of the starving youth being tied up and assaulted had sparked outrage across the country and became a symbol of mob violence and social injustice faced by tribal communities.

HC'S OBSERVATIONS

Madhu's death stands as a painful reminder of the continuing distance between constitutional ideals and lived reality of many among the most marginalised sections of society. The near-total collapse of eyewitness testimony is not a minor aspect.

Universe: How Vagdevi merged into Saraswati

The goddess we call Saraswati today begins as Vagdevi, the Goddess of Speech, identified primarily with the Vedic deity Vac. Her earliest stories foreground the immense power, and sometimes the deceptive nature, of the spoken word. These are found in ritual Vedic texts known as the Brahmanas.

When the Gandharvas stole the sacred Soma, the gods offered Vac as a young woman to trade for it. A competition followed: the Gandharvas recited the Vedas, but the gods sang and played the veena. Vac chose music over recitation, returning to the gods and establishing her eternal link with the instrument. This myth quietly explains how a speech-goddess acquired her veena.

In another tale, Vac disputed with Mind, or Manas, over who was superior. Prajapati ruled in favour of Mind, declaring that Speech merely imitates and communicates what Mind has already understood. Offended by this subordinate status, Vac refused to serve as oblation-bearer, which is why Prajapati's rituals are performed in a low voice today. In the Sautramani ritual, Vac acts as divine physician, restoring Indra's faculties and manly energy after he becomes ill from drinking too much Soma. In yet another myth, Vac hid in the waters and then the trees; when the trees gave her up, she was distributed into four wooden objects that sing: drums, lutes, axles, and reed-pipes, explaining the origin of musical instruments themselves. Over time, Vac merged into Saraswati, and the figure we recognise today emerged as a composite, assembled over centuries from distinct religious streams. Three separate iconographic traditions converged, each carrying its own theological cargo. Jain Saraswati carries no musical instruments. Instead, she holds accounting beads and books, embodying the Jain code of knowledge, record-keeping, and disciplined learning. This form reflects the Jain emphasis on precise transmission of doctrine and the sanctity of the written word. Saraswati here is the guardian of scriptural memory, not the patron of song. Buddhist Saraswati appears armed. Her weapons mark her as a defender, a fierce protectress of the Dharma. In the Sutra of Golden Light, she figures as the Eloquence Talent Deity, or Vagishvari, granting memory and flawless speech to those who preach the Law, ensuring sacred knowledge never goes extinct. The weapons signal that speech itself is a kind of combat, that preserving teaching requires force.

Saraswati with the veena, the form most familiar today, originally belonged to courtesans, singers, and dancers. She was the goddess of performers, music, and the embodied arts. Only later were these distinct goddesses drawn together into a single figure. Crucially, the idea of Saraswati as goddess of the Vedas emerges only later, in the Mahabharata. The earlier Saraswati was the Jain custodian of beads and books, the Buddhist armed defender of speech, the courtesans' patron of music. The Vedic-knowledge identity is a subsequent layer, retrofitted onto an already plural figure. What we now call Saraswati is less a single goddess than a confluence whose seams the unified iconography conceals. It is from Jain traditions that the practice of linking goose and peacocks with Saraswati began. The Shvetambara sect said the goddess of speech, Shurta-devi, rides a goose that can separate milk and water from a mixture, indicating discrimination. The Digambara sect said the goddess of knowledge, Gyan-devi, rides a peacock, the symbol of male pride and humbles it.

The forest is burning, but men want to talk about one tree

Why does women's suffering provoke such visceral hostility online?

A woman dies by suicide. Before her body is even cold, men begin dissecting her character online like vultures circling carrion. Was she manipulative? Did she file false cases? Did she "destroy a good man"? Did she deserve sympathy at all? It is a question that deserves compassion when asked in good faith. Male suicide is real. Male loneliness is real. Men suffer under impossible expectations of masculinity, financial pressure, emotional repression, and social isolation. India's suicide statistics clearly show that men form a large percentage of deaths. That should concern all of us. But here is what is deeply disturbing: many online MRAs do not stop at asking for empathy for men. They demand the erasure of women's suffering in exchange for it.

The moment violence against women is discussed, the conversation is hijacked. Not expanded. Hijacked. A woman speaks of abuse — "What about false cases?" A woman speaks of rape — "Men get raped too." A woman dies by suicide — "She probably drove someone else to it." This is not advocacy. It is retaliation. And retaliation is not justice. The National Crime Records Bureau data paints a horrifying picture of what Indian women endure. In 2022 alone, India recorded over 4.45 lakh crimes against women. The single largest category — nearly one-third — was cruelty by husbands or relatives. Read that again. Not strangers in dark alleys. Not cinematic monsters. Husbands. Families. Homes. The very institutions women are told will "protect" them.

Thousands of women continue to die in dowry-related violence every year. NCRB-linked reporting shows over 6,000 dowry deaths annually — roughly 18 to 20 women every single day. And those are merely the women whose deaths entered the system. For every woman who files a case, there are countless others who are silenced by shame, fear, financial dependence, children, family pressure, or the simple exhaustion of surviving daily humiliation. This is the forest. This is the inferno women are talking about. But online, many MRAs point to a few cases involving abusive women or alleged misuse of laws and scream: "See? Women are the real oppressors."

A few trees are indeed diseased. Some women are cruel. Some manipulate systems. False accusations do exist and innocent men should absolutely be protected under law. Any humane society must care about that.

But to use isolated incidents to dismiss systemic violence against women is intellectually dishonest. It is like standing before a city consumed by wildfire and angrily pointing at one burnt matchstick in a sink. Why does the mention of women's suffering provoke such visceral hostility online? Because for many men, empathy has become transactional. They believe acknowledging women's pain somehow diminishes male pain. That



feminism stole attention that belonged to them. That women speaking openly about abuse is an accusation against all men. And so the response becomes punitive. Punish the woman who speaks, who leaves. Punish the woman who dies. Especially the woman who dies.

That is what horrified me most while reading the comments under discussions around female suicide cases. The sheer inability to allow a dead woman even basic dignity. Men who claim society ignores male suffering were themselves mocking a woman who clearly reached a point of unbearable despair.

No nuance. No grief. No humanity. Just contempt. Even more chilling was the hostility toward women trying to defend her. As though compassion itself were now a political act deserving punishment.

This is what online misogyny has become: not merely disagreement with feminism, but active resentment toward female vulnerability. A woman cannot even die quietly anymore. She must submit her corpse for public cross-examination. And this culture has consequences.

Women reading these comments internalise something terrifying: If I speak, I will be mocked. If I leave, I will be hated. If I die, they will still come for me.

What kind of society does that create? Certainly not one where men heal, because here is the truth: patriarchy harms men too. The same system that teaches women to tolerate abuse teaches men to suppress emotion. The same culture that burdens women with unpaid care burdens men with financial worth. The same rigid masculinity that silences female victims also silences male depression. But feminism did not create this system. It named it. And perhaps that is what truly enrages people. Not that women suffer. But that women are no longer suffering silently. We can hold two truths at once: men deserve mental health support, and women face widespread systemic violence. One reality does not erase the other. Compassion is not a limited resource. But if your empathy for men requires the humiliation of women — especially dead women — then what you are defending is not justice. It is power.

Room for dignity : Care for parents is a legal duty

The Punjab and Haryana High Court's verdict emphasises that inheritance may be negotiable, but humanity is not

THE Punjab and Haryana High Court's ruling directing a son to provide his elderly mother a room, separate bathroom and basic amenities in the family home is more than a legal order. It is an indictment of a society increasingly failing its parents. Invoking the timeless dictum "matru devo bhava", the court reminded citizens that filial duty is not merely cultural ornamentation but a legal and moral obligation. The facts of the case are deeply unsettling. An elderly woman had to seek judicial intervention simply to secure a habitable corner in the house built by her late husband. That a mother should be compelled to fight her own children for shelter and dignity reflects the erosion of the joint family ethos that once defined Indian society. The high court was justified in rejecting the son's plea and imposing costs upon him. Courts across the country are increasingly confronting disputes involving abandoned or harassed parents. In several rulings, tribunals and high courts have ordered eviction



of abusive children, upheld parents' rights over self-acquired property and reinforced the Maintenance and

humanity is not.

Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007. At the same time, the judiciary has carefully balanced welfare concerns with property rights, ensuring that the law is not misused in family feuds. The larger concern, however, cannot be addressed through courtrooms alone. India's rapidly ageing population, urban migration and shrinking family structures are creating conditions where many senior citizens face loneliness, insecurity and economic dependence. Legal safeguards are essential, but social attitudes matter even more. A civilisation that reveres motherhood in scripture cannot abandon mothers in practice. Providing elderly parents with respect, care and security should not require judicial enforcement. The high court's verdict rightly emphasises that inheritance may be negotiable, but

Your Lordship, an apology may work

— To err is human, to admit it is divine

May I, a humble member of the Blatta (Oriental) genus of cockroaches, may be so bold as to express my utter stupefaction at your recent statement in open court in which you termed unemployed youth, RTI activists, media personnel and social media activists "cockroaches" and "parasites"? Posterity will record these uncalled-for and demeaning words as the nadir of judicial propriety and gravitas. Kindly allow me to explain why. It appears, from what is available in the public domain, that you were at the time dealing with the issue of proliferation of lawyers with dubious degrees. Your desire to identify and weed out such elements from the legal profession is understandable, and even commendable, and should be supported by all. But your subsequent "leap of hubris", not faith, was totally unwarranted and a step too far even in these dismal times when the vocabulary of public discourse has plumbed new depths. The contemptuous characterisation of our youth and civil society is something we have come to expect from our politicians, but not from the senior-most judicial officer in the country, the custodian of the letter and spirit of the Constitution, whose every word is engraved in time, the beacon and conscience keeper of the nation.

Which is why, My Lord, it pains me to say that your unfair and insensitive obiter dicta has dimmed the glow of the beacon. It has at one fell swoop insulted and humiliated these sections of society, cast on them aspersions which are neither true nor justified and, even more dangerous, exposed a heart of darkness in the country's judicial anatomy which does not bode well for a liberal democracy. Your Lordship's subsequent "clarification" does not dispel the apprehensions your comments have generated. A democracy remains healthy not only on the basis of institutions of the state, but on the shoulders of a

vibrant civil society and non-state actors. These participants — activists, NGOs, social media, RTI applicants, fact-checkers — are the benign bacteria in our body politic that maintain our immune systems, keep in check those organisms that would destroy us, and ensure that democracy and a liberal order survives. By castigating them in such derogatory language, My Lord, you have exposed a side of the higher judiciary we did not imagine existed. It has left us confused, apprehensive and fearful.

Are you aware, your Honour, there are 28 million educated unemployed youth in the country, and an additional 100 million who have stopped looking for jobs? (The Wire). As many as 67 per cent of the unemployed youth today are graduates, as compared to 32 per cent in 2004 (Azim Premji University State of Working India Report, published in Deccan Herald).

This worsening position is not due to the indolence of these unfortunate youngsters, but because of faulty government policies in education, industrialisation and economic "growth" which promote inequity, concentration of wealth and capital intensive projects, and have decimated the MSME sector. They deserve our empathy, not an elitist condemnation.

Finally, My Lord, heed the power of language and choose carefully the patois you employ. For, language is a double-edged sword, it can soothe or it can wound, it can demean or it can dignify, it can sustain or it can destroy, it

can be a peacen or it can be a dog-whistle. It is dangerous to employ words loosely. History is replete with instances where carefully chosen words have preceded, and laid the ground for, mass persecution, ethnic



cleansing, even genocide. The killing of a million Tutsis in Rwanda was preceded by a campaign that classified them as "inyenzi" which, coincidentally, means cockroaches; in Hitler's Germany, the Jews were called parasites and rats; the Zionists later termed the Palestinians "vermin" and "animals". Nearer home, minorities from Bangladesh are stigmatised as "termites" and protesters as "andolanjeevis". All such

branding is invariably followed by dehumanising of entire sections of society and their persecution on a large scale. It is possible your unfortunate vocabulary may have the same effect in India, for your words feed into

the executive's own narrative: the segments of society you have, perhaps unwittingly and unintentionally, vilified are precisely the ones the government of the day considers its enemies and obstacles to its authoritarianism. It may now be emboldened to move against them even more aggressively, confident that it now has your institution's support. That would be a disaster, an opening of the floodgates that shall eventually consume all the pillars of democracy, including the one over which Your Honour presides. At the end of the day, Your Lordship, this unnecessary disparagement of the youth, civil society activists and social media may lead to a loss of credibility in the institution you head, in its ability (or even willingness) to confront an authoritarian executive, to protect the rights of the minorities, and to uphold the letter and spirit of a liberal and inclusive Constitution. A democracy cannot long survive such a loss. Which is why, sir, you may consider a more explicit retraction and withdrawal of the statement made by you, not just a clarification. An apology to the nation at large will go a long way in restoring the confidence of the citizenry in an institution which is, after all, the last bastion of rights and liberty. To err is human, to admit it is divine.

With profound regards and my own humble apologies for intruding on your valuable time, I remain, Your Lordship,

There might be a surfeit of food shows on TV but they will never replace the good old cookbooks, says chef Milind Sovani, who has, in his three-decade-long career, served Bollywood stars like Amitabh Bachchan, Madhuri Dixit and Sanjay Dutt - and created awareness about Indian cuisine in Singapore where he worked for 13 years.

"In the time of internet and TV, printed cookery books are facing a challenge of existence...but, no, things are not all that bad yet. We have to accept the forces of change, but still there are many positives in owning and using cookery books - and of course writing them too," Sovani told us in an e-mail interview.

"Cooking with the help of a cookery book in the kitchen is always the best help around. You can keep it on your table, you do not require electric connections, or WiFi and the like. You can always mark some points on them, make earfolds for important pages, make small notes on them for your future reference and pass them down to the next generation or even share them easily with friends," added Sovani, who has worked with establishments like New Delhi's Hotel Samrat and Hotel Jaipur Ashok.

Then, books are always handy to keep, loan and borrow and have good mobility.

This apart, "in a country like India, where internet or TV signals are not widely or easily available, books can be of great help in any place and location. The visual charm of using a cookery book, which is attractively and artistically printed with appetizing photos, is always a delight. Coffee table books also look good on your book shelves," Sovani maintained. Elaborating on the theme, Sovani said: "While cooking using a cookery book, your imagination is also at work and you tend to draw from the experience and skill of the writer. Books can be handed over from one generation to another, especially books rich in traditional and regional cooking for newly-wed brides. Books are a rich source of history tradition and culture too.

"Lastly, but most importantly, I feel cookery books are more trusted than the cookery shows on TV or internet recipes. As these books are written by experts or chefs, they are also considered more authentic and



accurate too," Sovani explained.

Now, he is penning an autobiography to inspire others with his journey. Writing a book on his life has been on the mind of the 52-year-old for the last five years, but it was in 2012 when he returned to India from Singapore that he gave it a serious thought.

"I have been working on it for a year and half now. I want to share with readers, especially youngsters, about the journey of a chef, the hardships faced and the sweet success moments. I wish to do this to inspire people and also spread awareness among the masses. Recipes... anyone can write, but the experiences I have and can share are unique," Sovani said.

To be available on stands after six months, the book "will be a very good read for everyone".

"It covers stories of my celebrity interactions, glorious moments, mega banquets, international experiences, my cookery tips, guidance to aspiring chefs and more," he said. The chef often travels to Singapore as he has his own consultancy firm, Hospitality Innovations Pvt Ltd, which works for innovations in restaurants and cuisines. He was even honored with the 'Culinary Trail Blazer of Singapore' award by 'Michelin Star Guide' for his work of transforming the image of Indian cuisine from a mundane, ordinary five-to-seven-dollar-cuisine to a modern high-end one.

Asked how one can popularize Indian food in other

countries, he said: "Firstly, you need to be honest with your roots and have in-depth knowledge of Indian cuisine.

"Secondly, understand the market need of that country, the current perceived image of Indian cuisine and how you can develop the taste buds of the local population towards Indian cuisine. Open Indian restaurants which can offer good, healthy and modern food."

But, as of now, he has plans of increasing the number of branches of his restaurant April Rain, which has two outlets in Pune. "I plan to take this brand pan-India and the next outlet would surely be in Mumbai," said the Mumbai-based chef.

Two quick ways to cook corn



Hot corn tastes great in the monsoon. Here's how to cook with it in these two easy ways...

CORN SALAD

Yield:

Ingredients: Corn kernels - 1 cup Red bell peppers - 1 tbsp Onions and spring onions chopped - 1 tbsp each Chopped Kairi- ¾ tbsp Celery stalk, diced - 1 tbsp Cherry tomatoes - 5 Pineapple diced - 1 tbsp Parsley - 1 tsp Cilantro leaves - 1 tsp Basil - 3 leaves Avocado, diced - ½ each Olive oil - 1 tbsp Lemon juice - 2 tsp Black salt - to taste Tacos - 3 shells

Method: Blanch the corn in hot water with salt. Do not overcook it. Drain and set aside. Now, cut the onions, peppers, pineapple, kairi (raw mango), celery and avocado. Also dice the cherry tomatoes and add the herbs like basil, parsley and cilantro basil to the



vegetables. Season this. Add the lemon juice and olive oil. Toss it well and serve it in the shells with herb buttered rice on the side.

Corn broth

Yield:

Ingredients: Onions, chopped - 1 Leeks, chopped - ½ cup Celery, chopped - ½ cup Potatoes, diced - 1 cup Corn kernels - 2 cups Yellow peppers, chopped - ½ cup Garlic, chopped - 1 tbsp Vegetable stock - 1 litre Milk - a cup Parsley - 1 tsp Chives - 1 tsp Cream - ¾ cup Olive oil - 1 tbsp Butter - to taste

Method: Heat a pan and drizzle the butter into it. When it melts add some of the oil and the onions, chopped potatoes, leeks, celery plus the yellow bell peppers and corn kernels, taking care not to over cook it. Add the garlic and saute too. Add the milk and vegetable stock. Cook till the vegetables turn soft. Blend this and add cream plus the seasoning, as well as the chopped herbs. Serve hot with garlic bread.

Don't be scared by the word Gourmet.

Here we list some fancy ingredients along with easy ways to use them at your next party at home.

Vanilla Beans

The sweet aroma of vanilla can live up the most bland dish and that hold true even more for toothy desserts. You might have tasted vanilla in the form of artificial essences and now its turn to upgrade and treat yourself to the real deal. Even though a bit expensive vanilla beans can be used in desserts such as ice cream or waffle syrup and they will make you feel like you've seen heaven! Look for whole vanilla beans that are about 6 to 8 inches in length for best results. Glossy dark brown in colour and ever so slightly moist are the best ones.

Fish Sauce

Just the mention of fish sauce makes people rethink altogether. They probably imagine their dish soaked in fish liquid. The truth being much different, first fish sauce should be used in mild quantities. It is tangy in nature that adds zest to the preparations. Here are a few ways to include fish sauce in your food:

You can use a spoon of fish sauce in the marinade of a large chicken waiting to be grilled. Use a drop or two in pastas and salads. Be careful not to use more than required

as it may ruin your dish. For all Thai food lovers, a pinch of fish sauce can add a punch to your gravy.

Exotic Salts

You cannot even imagine any dish without salt. If normal salt can add such value to your food imagine what different gourmet salt can take the level of your food onto. Gourmet salt is mostly used to finish the dish and therefore sprinkled just before serving the dish. Some of the top gourmet salts are Black salt, Himalayan Pink salt, Sea Salt, Kosher Salt and Fleur de sel. Here are a few **useful tips:**



Gourmet products you must use in your kitchen

Flake salts do wonders to salads.

Japanese salts are ideal for fish preparations.

Hawaiian Black Salt makes meat even more delectable.

Flavored Vinegars

Well, this ingredient may not be considered as gourmet but can definitely add X factor that will turn an ordinary dish to extraordinary.

Balsamic Vinegar is best for Italian preparations. You can also whip it along with salad dressings and you're

good to go.

Wine Vinegar is also a result of fermented wine and does wonders to prep up a dish. Use it in sweet and sour dishes, pickles and even chutneys.



Food&Kids



Recipe: Thai mango basil salad with olive oil



Did you know that apart from tasting yumilicious, mango is rich in health benefits? It lowers cholesterol, fights cancer and clears skin too! So today Godrej Nature's Basket food consultant, Rushina Munshaw Ghildiyal gives us a easy to whip up and healthy mango basil salad recipe.

Thai Mango Basil Salad with Olive Oil

Prep Time: 15 minutes **Total Time:** 15 minutes **Serves** 2-3 as a Side Dish

Ingredients 1 medium bowl fresh lettuce, or a combination of mixed greens (1 semi-ripe to ripe mango) 1/2 to 1 cup cucumber, sliced 1/4 cup dry-roasted cashew nuts 1 tbsp Thai chillies, sliced fine

Basil Dressing: (serves 2 people; double recipe for 3 or

more) 15-20 basil leaves, or up to 25 if leaves are small 1 green onion, sliced (including green stem)

3 tbsp. fresh lime juice 1 tsp salt 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil 2 tsp. brown sugar or palm sugar 1 chilli

Method Rinse fresh greens and use salad spinner to dry. Place in a salad bowl. Add all the other vegetables.

Slice the mango on

Recipe: Chicken Dumplings

Here is a recipe to make the most delicious chicken dumplings at home.

Ingredients: 6 boned chicken breast with skin, 10 cups water, 1 tsp sage, 1 tsp poultry, 1/8 tsp ground basil leaves, 1 tsp salt and pepper.

Method: Put these ingredients in a large sauce pan to simmer over low heat, until the chicken is done. Then remove the chicken and remove the skin. While the chicken is cooking, make the dumplings.

Ingredients (for dumplings):

5 cups of all purpose flour, 1/2 cup shortening (or desi

ghee), 1/4 tsp salt, 1 beaten egg and some water.

Method (for dumplings):

Put flour into a mixing bowl and stir in salt. Work in shortening as you would when making pie crust, using two knives or a pastry cutter. Add egg, working it into the dough. Then stir in cold water 1/2 cup at a time, until the dough comes together and is at a stage where you will be able to roll it out. Lightly flour a surface and roll out the dough to a pie shell thickness (about 1/8 inch).

Using a pizza cutter, cut the dough into 1/2 to 1 inch squares. Finally, put the squares into the chicken



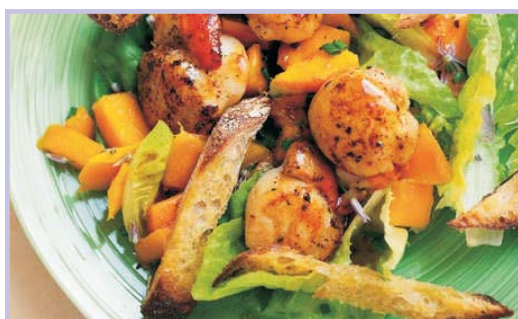
broth and cook until done (about 30 minutes). Return the chicken to the soup

with the dumplings to cook another 15 minutes or until you have a gravy texture.

After you get a gravy texture, it's ready to serve.

The king of fruits tastes great in any form. Be it mango curry, mango rice, mango chutney or even a salad.

either side of the stone and scoop out the fruit. Slice fruit up into cubes. Add mango cubes to the salad.



To make the dressing, place all basil dressing ingredients in a mini chopper, food processor or blender. Process to a coarse paste. Drizzle dressing over salad. Add nuts and toss again.

Variations of this Salad

Add cooked prawns, simply boiled or grilled

Add fried tofu, cut into cubes

Add grilled chicken

HMU Tip: Boiled eggs help in

muscle gain, improved eye sight, brain function and stronger bones. Add boiled eggs as a variation to this salad to increase your healthy quotient.



The heavy on chai patti, heavy on milk, boiled to milky-brown perfection liquid that we dunk our biscuits in every morning is a regular accompaniment with the morning paper for most of us, Indians.



That's how we like our tea - a cup full of flavoursome goodness that unofficially kickstarts the day. Of course, we have had our share of experiments with tea bags containing myriad herbal and fruit-infused flavours, but the customary chai, needless to say, remains an unrivalled favourite. And so, it took a very splendid, not to mention, equally enlightening tea-tasting session when I got introduced to "tea" and not chai.

An animated bunch of 15 tea-enthusiasts gathered in Gurgaon's Star Mall at Mridu Gupta's The Tea Room Co., where sommelier Anamika Singh waited in anticipation to unveil seven handpicked blends of Anandini Himalaya Tea, her own brand which was launched in the summer of 2012. Anamika spent her childhood amidst the tea estates of Darjeeling where she grew up to acquire the affinity and taste for tea from her father, Abhai Singh, a renowned tea specialist. She trained under him as an apprentice for several years to be able to master the nuances of different kinds of tea. Then, in 2000, she and her father decided to extend their love for producing tea to the quaint town of Dharamsala in Himachal Pradesh. And thus came into being the Manjhee Valley tea estate of which Anamika is a proud owner in the present day. Having spent 20 years in the tea industry, her expertise goes beyond tea manufacturing, blending and drinking to food

pairing.

The tea gardens of Manjhee Valley have been producing several kinds of tea -

Orthodox Tea (two long leaves and a bud), White Tea (hand plucked, sun dried and white in colour), Oolong, Handmade Needle Tea (hand rolled tea resembling needles), and Flowery Green (resembling flowers) to name a few.

All of their produce was being exported to European countries until Anamika launched her take on modern tea drinking with Anandini Himalaya Tea, a combination of seven blends comprising two black and five green teas. "I have introduced a mix of natural Himalayan flowers and herbs to begin with. Next year I plan to take in spices and later fruits," said she as the server greeted us with tall glasses of 'First

Flush Tea with Lavender Flowers and Lemon Grass'

ice-tea along with a colourful, summer salad, an ideal opening to the delightful tea tasting session which was to follow. "The first flush", Anamika explained, "is the prime time to pluck tea leaves. It begins in February and goes on till the month of April and mid of May." Between sips of fresh tea and bites of the salad, tiny porcelain saucers containing fragrant tea leaves were passed around the table for us to get to know the tea better.

Before long it was time for act two. Anamika infused for us 'Autumn Tea with Rose Petals and Lemon Balm' in a glass kettle containing warm water. Just sight of tea leaves and flowers dancing and swirling in the water was enough to make us crave a cup. Shot glasses were laid out and Anamika did the honours of pouring careful portions for everyone. This tea came accompanied with cheese sandwiches and nachos.

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Wisdom in a perfect cup of

Tea

An animated conversation of what makes green tea different from black tea ensued. "Both the teas come from same plant. The difference lies in the way they're manufactured. Green tea is semi-fermented where as black tea has no trace of fermentation", explained Anamika while she infused yet another blend into the kettle. This was 'Green Tea with Pomegranate Flowers and Himalayan Tulsi'; an intense and citric flavour that refreshed our palates evenly for the delectable cupcakes that came along with it.

"Tea is a palate cleanser," Anamika had said sometime in between the session but what lingered as a sweet aftertaste in the end were the energy, effervescence and wisdom infused in a perfect cup of tea!

Anamika Singh's Anandini Himalaya Tea bouquet comprises 7 blends:

1. First Flush Tea with Lavender Flowers and Lemon Grass
2. Green Tea with Rose Petals and Mint
3. Green Tea with Rhododendron and Himalayan Tulsi
4. Autumn Tea with Rose Petals and Lemon Balm
5. Green Tea with Chamomile and Rose Hip
6. Green Tea with Fire-Flame Bush and Mint
7. Green Tea with Pomegranate Flowers and Himalayan Tulsi

Anamika's secret of making a perfect cup of tea!

Before you begin, know the difference between "tea" and "chai". Tea is an "infusion" of tea leaves into warm water. Chai, on the other hand, is brewed or boiled along with milk and sugar.

Serves: 2 cups

You need: A wide-bottomed tea pot/pan. A wide and spacious pan allows the tea leaves to swirl effortlessly into the water. Try picking a borosil, glass or ceramic pan and avoid one made of steel, aluminium or iron. Pour in 2 full cups of water.

Temperature of water: The water should be boiled at 90 degrees heat. Tiny bubbles appearing on the sides indicate the water is ready. Take it off the fire and add two teaspoons of tea leaves. Cover it immediately with a tea cosy to keep the temperature of the water intact.

Keep a tea timer handy and let the infusion begin. Once ready, pour out the tea into the cups through a tea strainer.

Recipe: Sesame fish finger with hummus

Fish fingers are oh-so-popular; every wedding or party kicks off with a round of fish fingers to go with a host of roasted appetizers. But it can be quite monotonous the way fish fingers are typically served - thin strips of fried fish with the ubiquitous mint chutney. Simply break free of the old recipe and try out our new one that gives an interesting spin to the orthodox fish fingers making it more crispy and savoury.

Executive chef Deepak Dhanwariya of My Way or The Highway, a Mediterranean cuisine restaurant in Noida's Centre Stage Mall, tells us how to get this innovative fish

- Take one plate and spread sesame seed on it.

- Roll fish into sesame one by one.

- Heat oil in fryer, deep fry fish finger till golden brown.

- Serve with tartar sauce and salad.

You may want to substitute tartar sauce or salad with a bowl of hummus, and give a touch of the Middle East to your cooking. Here is a very simple way of making hummus, the perfect dip for many an appetizer, at home.

Hummus

Ingredients:

Chickpeas

Garlic

Green chilli

Lemon juice



preparation right.

Sesame fish finger (One portion)

Ingredients: Fish (sole/ Basa) 150 gms

Egg 1

Mustard powder 10 gms

Paprika powder 10 gms

Sesame seeds to coat

Lime juice 20 ml

Salt as per taste

White pepper a pinch

Oil for frying

Method: - Clean and cut fish in 6cm long finger shapes and keep aside.

- Make a marination in a bowl, mix egg, mustard powder, lime juice, salt, paprika powder, white powder, and whisk well till emulsion is formed.

- Put fish in the marination and let it stay for 20-30 minutes.

Coriander or parsley

Olive oil

Salt to taste

Yoghurt

Method: - Soak chickpeas in water overnight. Boil it and allow it to cool.

- Chop two cloves of garlic and green chillies, and together with lemon juice, 2 tbsp yogurt and salt as per taste add to the boiled chickpeas while retaining a bit of the stock. Then, put it in the mixer.

- Make sure the mix turns smooth with no chickpea granule sticking out.

- Pour out the mix in a bowl and add to it a tbsp of olive oil. Blend well.

- Sprinkle fresh coriander or parsley from the top.

...and the world's best fish finger dip is ready to be served.

Police won't forcibly vacate Delhi Gymkhana: Government to High Court amid row

New Delhi.(Agency)
The government on Tuesday assured the Delhi High Court that it would not forcibly take possession of the prestigious Delhi Gymkhana Club premises and would follow due process under the law if the club failed to vacate the land by June 5. The assurance came during a hearing on the plea by club members challenging the government's order directing it to vacate its 27.3-acre property at 2, Safdarjung Road in Lutyens' Delhi for defence and security-related purposes. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, told the court that June 5 was only the date given to the club to vacate voluntarily.

"We will not take possession except in accordance with law," Mehta said. "June 5 is when we have given them the option to vacate on its own. Suppose they don't, it's not that police will rush in and forcibly possession will be taken. The procedure under law regarding eviction of public

premises will be taken," he added. The court then asked if it could record the Centre's statement, to which Mehta replied in the affirmative. Senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, representing the club members, urged the High Court to either order status quo or record the government's assurance that no coercive action would follow. He argued the takeover order was "non-specific" and contradictory, citing vague references to "institutional needs", "defence" and "public infrastructure".

"A club running for 100 years can wait till July," Singhvi remarked. The Solicitor General, however, said the petitioners' real apprehension was that the Centre-appointed committee managing the

club could hand over possession. "The committee has already objected," Mehta would be offered an alternative site for its premises. Singhvi pushed back, stating, "My stand is simple -- don't take action pursuant to the order till the next date of hearing." After recording Solicitor General Tushar Mehta's assurance that any eviction would be carried out only in accordance with law and after prior notice, the court declined to pass interim directions in the case. It issued summons in the matter and directed the respondents to file their written statements within eight weeks. The matter will next be heard on July 28.

Meanwhile, another suit was filed before the High Court on behalf of the club's last elected governing body. Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the petitioners, sought an urgent hearing and requested that the matter be heard along with the connected case already listed

before the court.

WHY GOVT SERVED EVICTION NOTICE
On May 22, the Land and Development Office, under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, directed the club to hand over the property by June 5, invoking Clause 4 of the original lease agreement, which allows the government to reclaim the land for a "public purpose". According to the Centre, the land, located near the Prime Minister's residence and other high-security establishments, is required for "strengthening defence infrastructure, governance-related facilities and other critical public security requirements".

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‘Cockroach’ protest at MCD House meeting causes chaos

New Delhi.(Agency)
Three proposed multi-level parking projects in Delhi's New Friends Colony, Kalkaji and Jangpura were put on hold on Monday after the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) House meeting was adjourned amid opposition protests, delaying discussions on several key agenda items.

The meeting witnessed chaotic scenes as opposition councillors protested over the alleged NEET paper scam and displayed posters of cockroaches in symbolic support of the "rising popularity of the Cockroach Janta Party". While several listed items were cleared amid the disruption, a number of important proposals, including those related to the parking projects, could not be taken up and were deferred.

According to official information, the proposed parking facilities are expected to substantially increase parking capacity in the respective areas once completed. The New Friends Colony project is planned to accommodate 604 vehicles, up from the previously proposed capacity of 502. The Kalkaji facility is expected to accommodate 406 vehicles, compared to the earlier estimate of 376, while the Jangpura project is proposed to have a capacity of 308 vehicles.

Another proposal that could not be discussed concerned assigning the duties of licence inspectors to sanitary inspectors in their respective wards. The move was aimed at addressing manpower shortages and strengthening action against encroachments across the city.

Addressing a press conference later, Mayor Pravesh Wahi said the disruptions prevented discussions on several civic issues, including sanitation drives and the desilting of drains ahead of the monsoon.

"Attempts were made three times to hold discussions on drain cleaning, but Aam Aadmi Party councillors did not allow meaningful deliberations on this serious matter of public interest," he said.

Delhi traffic cops get AC in helmets, fans, ORS packets to fight heat

New Delhi.(Agency)
As Delhi continues to grapple with an intense heatwave, the Delhi Police has introduced special measures to protect traffic personnel who spend long hours managing congestion under the blazing sun.

To help officers cope with the extreme temperatures, the Traffic Police has begun distributing AC helmets, portable cooling fans, water bottles and ORS sachets to prevent dehydration and heat-related illnesses.

Officials said 10 AC helmets and as many portable fans have been provided to field staff on a trial basis. In addition, each traffic circle has received around 2,000 bottles of 750 ml water and 900 ORS sachets.

"We have also installed 20-litre water dispensers to ensure field staff have continuous access to drinking water during duty hours. Considering the harsh summer conditions, special arrangements have been made to safeguard their health and well-being while working outdoors," a senior police officer said. The officer added that a dedicated food van regularly moves across different locations to supply water whenever required.

Officials say the initiative aims to ensure that personnel remain hydrated, protected and physically fit while carrying out duties on city roads. Officers have also been advised to take regular breaks and maintain adequate water intake.

A traffic policeman deployed on the field said the AC helmet provides considerable relief in the scorching heat. "It creates a cooling effect around the head by circulating cool air inside. It is far more comfortable than wearing a cap outdoors. The helmet weighs about 200 grams and can be worn continuously for four to five hours," he said. Another officer said the helmets and cooling fans are being tested for durability, long-term performance and maintenance before wider deployment.

The national capital's peak power demand has already crossed the 8,000 MW mark four times within six days thereby marking a sharp rise in May 2026 compared to previous years. According to SLDC data, Delhi's peak power demand touched 8,439 MW on May 25

Small hikes add up to big difference on monthly petrol bills: Car owners

New Delhi.(Agency)
Fuel price hike has become a matter of concern for city residents, with people complaining that rising petrol rates are now adding to the financial pressure already created by high electricity bills and increasing prices of daily essentials.

Petrol prices in Delhi were hiked by Rs 2.61 on Monday to Rs 102.12 and diesel by Rs 2.71 to Rs 95.2, marking the fourth fuel hike within just 11 days amid rising global crude oil concerns linked to the ongoing Iran conflict.

For many office-goers and families dependent on private vehicles, the increase is directly affecting their monthly budgeting.

Lalita Sharma, a resident of Janakpuri, rues, "The use of air conditioners and coolers during



summer adds to the electricity bills anyway. And now fuel prices are being hiked. Prices of items like milk and bread have also gone up. Middle-class families are honestly getting squeezed from all sides."

Pawan Kumar, another city resident, pointed out the sudden hike: "Just around two weeks back, filling 40 litres of petrol in my car used to cost around Rs 3,830. But now that the price has been hiked four times in less than two weeks, the same amount costs me nearly Rs 4,100."

Adding to that, Krishi Arora, another city resident, says, "Another fuel hike in just a few days feels unreasonable now. If the prices are to be hiked, they must be hiked once in a proper way."

Meanwhile, Karan Mehta, an EV car owner, feels, "Owning an EV feels less stressful now." Echoing that, Rhea Anand, another EV car owner, says, people are considering switching to EVs as the fuel situation remains uncertain.

Over 2.65L people served in summer through mobile units, cooling zones: Delhi government

New Delhi.(Agency)
Amid the scorching heat, the Delhi government's mobile heat relief units and cooling zones have reportedly emerged as a source of relief.

With special arrangements made across all 13 districts of the national capital through these zones for labourers, commuters and other needy people, approximately 2.65 lakh people have benefited. Discussing the situation, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Monday said, "During this period of extreme heat, the government is working on the ground with full sensitivity so that no person suffers because of the heat."

She said such initiatives reflect the government's spirit of public service and humanitarian approach.

operated under the supervision of the revenue department. Through mobile heat relief units, relief was provided to approximately 2.65 lakh people across all 13 districts of Delhi between May 6 and May 23.

During this period, around 1,13,900 litres of cold drinking water were distributed to protect people from heat and dehydration. In addition, more than one lakh ORS packets were distributed to help people avoid heatstroke and dehydration. To protect people from the harsh sun, 44,646 gamchas and 30,864 caps were also distributed.

Each zone has seating arrangements for 100 people.



The Delhi Government is continuously monitoring the situation and relief arrangements will be further strengthened as required, she added. The entire arrangement is being

Delhi government cuts travel expenses by 25 per cent

Decision made days after foreign visits of officers, staff curtailed to press austerity measures.

New Delhi.(Agency)
Days after restricting all official foreign travel for its personnel—including officers and staff members—until further notice, the Delhi government has issued a fresh directive to reduce the domestic travel expenses of its officials by 25%. The move is a part of the government's "austerity" measures in response to uncertain global fuel supplies affecting the country's economy.

A communication by the finance department to various government departments noted that austerity measures adopted by the Centre and the Delhi government are designed to curb unnecessary expenses and address fiscal imbalances caused, among other factors, by rising global oil prices and other economic pressures.

As part of this initiative, domestic travel expenses must be regulated so that each department stays within its allocated budget, reflecting the mandatory 25% reduction compared to the previous financial year, the order said.

Moreover, to promote fiscal discipline and ensure optimal use of public resources, officers are required to exercise caution when selecting air travel classes to remain within budgetary constraints.

The communication also emphasised that video conferencing should be effectively utilised for attending meetings and conferences, particularly when travel from distant locations is necessary. However, in cases of official emergencies, the restrictions may be relaxed with the approval of the CM or the finance minister.

The restriction will apply to all departments, autonomous bodies, local bodies, academies, boards, corporations, societies, and grantee institutions under the administrative control of the Delhi government.

The administrative secretaries or heads of the departments have been directed by the finance department to ensure strict compliance with the instructions. This comes days after the Delhi government on May 14 launched a 90-day campaign to build a more self-reliant and resource-conscious India. As part of the austerity push, all Delhi government departments except those engaged in essential public services have been implementing a two-day work-from-home system.

After Garib Nagar demolition, Mumbai's train-window gaze turns towards more slums

New Delhi.(Agency)
Days after bulldozers tore through Garib Nagar in Mumbai's Bandra East, calls for more slum demolitions across Mumbai have only grown louder. As Western Railway carried out another demolition drive between Goregaon and Malad on Monday to reclaim illegally occupied railway land under Bombay High Court directions, social media was flooded with videos shot from local train windows — of stretches of blue tarpaulin roofs in Wadala, Kurla, Dadar, Govandi and beyond. Many users tagged authorities and demanded that similar drives be carried out across the city, not just on railway land but also on BMC and government-owned plots.

Barely a week after authorities evicted over 1,500 people from Garib Nagar from over 400 two-three storey shanties,

Western Railways has reclaimed approximately 1,500 square metres of vital Railway land in the northern suburbs of Goregaon and Malad. A total of 36 hard encroachments and 24 soft encroachments were cleared through a coordinated operation.

When it comes to "urban clean-up" drives, there is always a contradiction at play. The videos from Garib Nagar struck a nerve not just because many saw the demolition as inevitable, but because they also laid bare the human cost behind Mumbai's idea of "order" — a city where slums and skyscrapers have long co-existed, often uneasily, but dependently.

As the earthmovers reduced homes to rubble under a Bombay High Court-

backed eviction drive by the Western Railway, the demolition of hundreds of homes also unleashed something else across Mumbai. It was anger for many, and a moment of applause for the rest. But perhaps the most revealing videos were shaky phone clips shot from local trains, zooming into slum clusters along tracks in Wadala, Dadar and Kurla.



"Next please", the captions read. An X user, Satish Pandita, said, "Mumbai, a world city, is reduced to City of Slums. Have a look at this video [a video taken from a local train], it is just a fraction [pointing at the slums in Wadala]. When will Mumbai be free from slums?"

Referring to Mumbai as "Slumbai", another person commented on a video shared by Indian Tech and Infra that showed sprawling slum clusters across Mumbai. "When I went to Mumbai, I was under the impression that slums were confined to Dharavi and that the rest of the city was modern. But slums are everywhere. I still can't believe the scale of it. And the sheer size of these settlements means they cannot simply be cleared overnight. It would take decades."

Tata Sons board meeting begins, leadership in focus

Mumbai.(Agency)

The board meeting of Tata Sons began on Tuesday amid heightened focus on the leadership and financial performance of several loss-making group companies. Members of the Tata Sons board were seen arriving at Bombay House ahead of the meeting. Discussions are likely to centre around the performance of the conglomerate's loss-making businesses and their future strategy. Moreover, individual companies are expected to make presentations on the state of their operations and the roadmap ahead. The meeting comes amid growing friction within the Tata group over the financial performance of some of its newer ventures.

Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran and Tata Trusts Chairman Noel Tata -- who is also a nominee director on the Tata Sons board -- met over the weekend to discuss the performance of group companies. The board meeting also comes days after the Maharashtra State Charity Commissioner directed Tata Trusts to defer a key board meeting following complaints alleging violations in the composition of the board of trustees of Sir Ratan Tata Trust (SRTT). Tata Trusts had said the order was ex parte in nature and applied only to SRTT. The trust said the directions issued by the Charity Commissioner were being examined. The earlier meetings of Sir Dorabji Tata Trust (SDTT) and SRTT, originally scheduled for May 8, were later deferred to May 16 amid legal challenges and governance-related deliberations. The meetings were expected to discuss issues related to Tata Sons, including a possible listing of the company, the reappointment of Chairman N Chandrasekaran and the role of certain nominee directors.

Rupee is falling but is it alarming?

Kolkata .(Agency)

Should we worry about the falling rupee? The situation looks concerning but not a crisis, provided GDP growth, investment, and external buffers remain sound. India's GDP growth remains the fastest among major economies of the world. The external buffer in terms of forex reserves is the fourth highest in the world. Private investment has increased. NIPFP's FY26 note says aggregate investment growth rose 9.4% in Q4 FY25 after 6.2% in the previous three quarters. However, it also mentions that private investor sentiment will remain muted in FY26. The muted response and uncertainty exist for almost all countries except the US, which is forcing capital to flow there. Tech disruption coupled with wars has added to the challenges. So why is the rupee falling?

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Historically, international trade has been known to create prosperity. However, there have been periods of protectionism. For instance, the Smoot-Hawley Act (1930) in the US and global retaliation led to the Great Depression of the 1930s. This was followed by the era of import substitution from 1950–70. Efforts were later made through the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) to enhance global trade and improve resource allocation and market access. The Uruguay Round negotiations (1986–94) led to GATT being replaced by the World Trade Organisation (WTO), established on January 1, 1995. This reflected a global resolve to increase international trade for better utilisation of resources and broader market access, creating prosperity for the world. Countries like China and India were capital-scarce and opened their doors to foreign direct investment (FDI). The IMF advised developing countries to open up to FDI and trade. Rich countries invested in poorer ones. Ironically, higher FDI inflows became an indicator of economic strength, even for developing economies.

Oil jumps as US strikes in Iran unsettle markets despite deal talks

New Delhi.(Agency)

Brent crude futures rose nearly 2% in early Asian trade on Tuesday after the U.S. military carried out strikes in southern Iran in what it described as defensive actions, keeping markets on edge as a deal to end the war eludes both sides.

Brent futures climbed \$1.40, or 1.5%, to \$97.56 a barrel as of 5:30 AM, after settling 7% lower in the previous session. US West Texas Intermediate crude fetched \$91.25, up slightly from Monday's last traded price but down \$5.30, or 5.5% from Friday's close. There was no settlement on Monday due to the US Memorial Day holiday. The US Central Command said it carried out strikes on targets in southern Iran including boats attempting to lay mines and missile launch sites, adding they were designed "to protect our troops from threats posed by Iranian forces."

Iranian media had reported on Monday that explosions were heard in Iran's Bandar Abbas and nearby coastal areas along the Strait of Hormuz. Tehran has effectively halted nearly all non-Iranian shipping into and out of the Gulf since the war began, choking off about a fifth of global oil and gas flows and driving prices up by 50% or more. Iran's top negotiator and its foreign minister were in Doha on Monday for talks with Qatar's prime minister on a potential deal with the U.S. to end the three-month-old war. Both Washington and Tehran said they have made progress on a memorandum of understanding that would halt the war and give negotiators 60 days to reach a final deal. Earlier, Nikkei reported, citing a Middle East diplomatic source, that Iran would clear mines from the strait within a 30-day window under the agreement, after which vessels from all countries could navigate freely and safely, with Tehran also ending transit fee collection. "Traders are betting heavily that a breakthrough will finally free up the long-paralysed tankers stuck in and around the Strait of Hormuz," said Tim Waterer, chief market analyst at KCM Trade. Ship-tracking data showed that three liquefied natural gas tankers passed through the strait in recent days, heading to Pakistan, China and India, along with a supertanker carrying Iraqi crude to China after being stranded for nearly three months.

India's real estate demand outpaces institutional investments: Report

Real estate-focused alternative investment funds recorded USD 14.5 billion in capital commitments between 2021 and 2025, but only USD 7.9 billion has been raised and USD 5.7 billion deployed, the report from Knight Frank India said.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Strong occupier demand in India's real estate market is increasingly outpacing institutional capital deployment, creating a widening supply gap despite an estimated USD 2.3 billion available as dry powder for future investments, a report said on Tuesday. Real estate-focused alternative investment funds recorded USD 14.5 billion in capital commitments between 2021 and 2025, but only USD 7.9 billion has been raised and USD 5.7 billion deployed, the report from Knight Frank India said. The pace of institutional capital deployment remains

insufficient to support supply creation, resulting in a widening gap between demand and future supply requirements. Ongoing capitalisation rates (cap rate) across major asset classes range between 2.60 per cent and 7.75 per cent, depending on asset type, risk profile and income stability.

Office assets remain a preferred segment for institutional capital, supported by stable income visibility with cap rates of 7.25 per cent to 7.75 per cent, marginally above the 10-year Government of India bond yield of around 6.6 per cent.

If the entire USD 2.3 billion of available dry powder were deployed solely to office development, it could create roughly 12.2 million square feet of new supply, meeting about 14 per cent of India's annual office demand of 86.4 million square feet recorded in 2025.

Apart from underscoring the growing gap

between occupier demand and institutional capital availability, the funding data also indicates the



opportunity that domestic and global capital have in India.

"The real opportunity, therefore, lies in bridging the capital gap... This imbalance is what makes India one of the most compelling real estate investment opportunities globally. Strong occupier

demand, improving transparency, and maturing investment structures are creating the foundation for long-term, institutional-grade growth," said Shishir Bajjal, International Partner, Managing Director and Chairman, Knight Frank India. The report noted that India's top eight office markets recorded 307.7 million square feet of transactions over the last five years, significantly higher than 236.1 million square feet of supply delivered in the same period.

Consequently, the market has transitioned into a demand-led cycle, with the supply-to-demand ratio declining from 1.40x in 2008 to 0.63x in 2025,

the lowest level recorded to date. A similar pattern is emerging in the warehousing sector, highlighting the challenge for Indian real estate increasingly linked to capital availability rather than occupier demand.

India's AI market may cross \$500 billion, reshape office demand: Report

New Delhi.(Agency)

India's artificial intelligence (AI) market is expected to surge more than 50-fold from over \$9 billion currently to upwards of \$500 billion in the coming decades, positioning the country as a major driver of office demand and workplace transformation in the Asia Pacific region, according to a report released on Tuesday. The report by Colliers India highlighted that AI-enabled workforces, demographic shifts, energy security, climate risks and changing global economic dynamics are reshaping office market strategies globally. India is emerging as a key AI and talent hub due to rapid digitalisation, rising adoption of AI technologies, strong government support and a large skilled workforce, it said. It further showed that India adds 2-3 million STEM graduates annually, accounting for nearly one-third of the global skilled talent pool. With a median age of around 29

years and a population exceeding 1.4 billion, the nation is well positioned to benefit from its demographic advantage as developed economies face shrinking talent pools. Moreover, major cities such as Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Delhi-NCR, Chennai, Mumbai and Pune rank



among the top technology talent acquisition markets in the APAC region. "India will continue to remain a preferred destination for global firms owing to competitive rentals, relatively

lower cost of living and availability of a large and relatively younger talent pool," said Arpit Mehrotra, Managing Director, Office Services, India, Colliers. The report noted that the continued expansion of global capability centres (GCCs), especially in areas such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, engineering and cloud computing, is expected to further strengthen office leasing demand in the country. On the sustainability front, Colliers said green-certified buildings currently account for nearly two-thirds of India's Grade A office stock.

In addition the country has more than 420 million square feet of Grade A office buildings that are over 10 years old and hold retrofitting potential, representing an investment opportunity of over \$5 billion, the report said.

LIC 1:1 bonus issue: What is the ex-date to buy shares?

Mumbai.(Agency)

Government-owned Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) has fixed May 29 as the record date for its 1:1 bonus issue. The deemed date of allotment of bonus equity shares will be June 1, 2026. The record & ex-date is 29 May 2026. As per the T+1 settlement cycle, investors' shares must be credited into their demat accounts by the record date i.e 27 May 2026. Since stock market are closed on account of Bakri Eid on May 28, the ex-date and record date have both been set for 29 May 2026.

LIC final dividend The LIC board recommended final dividend of Rs 10 per equity share of Rs 10 each (equivalent to Rs 20 per equity share pre-bonus issue basis). The record date for determining the eligibility of the investors for the dividend's payout is June 25. LIC Q4 income

LIC has reported a 723 percent growth in

its consolidated net profit at Rs 23,467 crore in the fourth quarter of the financial year 2025-26, compared with Rs 19,039 crore in the same period of the previous year.

The life insurance giant's net premium



income surged by 12 percent to Rs 1.65 lakh crore as compared with Rs 1.48 lakh crore last year. LIC said that the growth is driven by growth across renewal and single premium segments.

LIC said that the first year premium

posted a growth of 17 percent during the January and March quarter. Income stood at Rs 13,009 crore vis-a-vis Rs 11,103 crore income in the same period of the previous year. LIC added that renewal premium income rose 14 percent to Rs 82,233 crore in the quarter from Rs 79,425 crore in the same period last year.

Income from investments, a key earnings driver for LIC, shot up to Rs 1.09 lakh crore during the fourth quarter compared with Rs 93,443 crore in the corresponding quarter last year, which represents a robust growth of around 17 per cent. LIC reported total surplus of Rs 89,058 crore during the quarter compared with Rs 77,053 crore a year earlier. Surplus after share of profit from associates and minority interest stood at Rs 24,964 crore compared with Rs 20,271 crore a year ago.

How does fuel price revision impact small businesses?

Domestic petrol and diesel prices have increased by 22% and 27% respectively, remaining lower than global levels, said Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Petroleum, Sujata Sharma.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Petrol and diesel prices have seen fourth increase over the last 10 days. Oil marketing companies have raised the price of petrol by Rs 2.61 a litre and that of diesel by Rs 2.71 per litre in the recent round, taking the cumulative rise in petrol and diesel prices to nearly Rs 7.50 a litre after daily revisions resumed following a prolonged freeze. Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Petroleum, Sujata Sharma has said that as compared to global level, the price increase is in the range of 22 percent for motor spirit (petrol) and 27 percent for high-speed diesel (HSD). She also added that in India, the hike is much less. For petrol, it is 7.7 percent and 8.6 per cent for HSD. Sharma pointed out that even after taking all these steps, the oil companies were piling up losses of Rs 1,000 crore a day.

"After the price rise, it has reduced, but it is still slightly less than Rs 600 crore per day. The government has reduced excise duty on petrol and diesel by Rs 10 per litre, resulting in a revenue impact of Rs 14,000 crore," she said.

Impact on small businesses

Meanwhile, due to the narrow profit margins and small financial buffers, small businesses are disproportionately affected by an increase in fuel price. Smaller businesses also suffer from a double hit of skyrocketing daily operating costs and a corresponding decline in consumer demand. Tight pricing models are typical of small businesses. The cost to manufacture, package and ship items increases dramatically when fuel prices rise. This leads business owners to make impossible choices.

Suraj Mehta, Chief Strategy Officer, Hindustan National Glass and Industries Limited (HNGIL) told Zee Media, "The sharp rise in fuel costs over recent months has fed directly into the FMCG production cycle, and the pressure is most acute at the packaging layer just as the peak summer demand season begins. Energy costs have surged 35 to 40

percent, and at the peak of the disruption our industrial LPG allocation had fallen to around 20 percent." Our furnaces operate continuously at 1,400 to 1,500 degrees Celsius, and even a brief interruption in fuel supply creates serious safety risks



alongside immediate cost escalation. Glass packaging sits at the heart of the FMCG supply chain, and any squeeze on bottle availability ripples quickly into downstream output. We have taken a conscious call not to prioritise profitability in this period. We are absorbing 50 percent of the cost increase and have capped price hikes at 10 to 12 percent to protect our customers. We have also expanded our fuel buffer from 10 days to 25 days and are accelerating the

shift to piped natural gas, with pipeline connectivity now a key priority for stable and cleaner operations," Mehta added.

"The escalating volatility and sustained rise in global fuel prices represent a critical macroeconomic pressure point,

disproportionately impacting the small business sector. Unlike larger enterprises with substantial capital reserves and diversified supply chains, SMEs possess limited capacity to absorb sudden overhead inflation," Shankar Kumar, Founder & CEO of EZ Compliance told Zee Media.

Because fuel is a foundational input, price spikes trigger an immediate, compounding effect across operations.

"Direct logistics, freight, and distribution costs surge overnight, while secondary inflationary pressures compress the margins on raw materials. Consequently, small business owners face a precarious strategic dilemma: absorb the mounting operational costs at the expense of their baseline profitability and growth capital, or pass those expenses onto an already price-sensitive consumer base, risking customer attrition," he added.

Short news

Himachal Pradesh Gram Panchayat elections: Sirmaur tops polling in Phase 1 with 20.22% voter turnout

Shimla.(Agency)

Himachal Pradesh recorded 18.90 per cent voter turnout by 9.45 am in the first phase of Gram Panchayat elections across 1,293 panchayats on Tuesday, with Sirmaur district leading at 20.22 per cent. The lowest turnout of 14.21 per cent was recorded in the tribal district of Lahaul-Spiti, where polling is being conducted in 17 panchayats.

“Lower districts, including Kangra, Una, parts of Bilaspur, Sirmour, Baddi, and Nalagarh in Solan, witnessed early morning enthusiasm to avoid scorching heat and heatwave conditions,” an official said. State Election Commission (SEC) officials said that 16.10 lakh of the 50.79 lakh voters cast their votes in the first phase of the panchayat elections. The Gram Panchayat elections will be held in three phases, with the second phase on May 28 and the third on May 30. Voting for the first phase of the Panchayat elections in Himachal Pradesh began at 7 am on Tuesday, with long queues seen outside polling booths since early morning.

The SEC has introduced colour-coded ballot papers for different posts to avoid confusion among voters. While light green ballot papers are being used for the panchayat pradhan posts, yellow are for up-pradhan, and white for panchayat member. Other colours, including pink, will be used for Panchayat Samiti members and light blue for Zila Parishad members.

Medical negligence victim

Harshina gets compensation and job offer

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. (Agency) Bringing justice to Harshina Malayil Kulangara's fight against the alleged negligence of doctors at the Kozhikode Medical College that left her carrying scissors in her abdomen for five years, Chief Minister V D Satheesan has offered full support.

Satheesan, who had taken up her plight as Leader of Opposition, assured her of compensation and a job in their first meeting after he became chief minister.

Harshina also met Health Minister K Muralaeddharan, who promised her a job at the Kozhikode MCH. The government has also promised to fund her house repairs.

The incident dates back to November 30, 2017, when the surgical instrument was left inside her abdomen during a surgery. She developed pain later. The instrument was discovered during a CT scan at a private hospital. She then underwent another surgery at the MCH to remove it.

Harshina lived with the scissors inside her for five years, enduring severe pain. Her husband, M K Ashraf, had to wind up his business due to her ill health.

Congress leader and Wayanad MP Rahul Gandhi had also written to then CM Pinarayi Vijayan, requesting him to address Harshina's concerns. The authorities had initially denied her proper resolution, prompting her to launch a protest.

Dhanu Yatra archway collapses during storm in Odisha's Bargarh, two injured amid quality concerns

BARGARH.(Agency)

A prominent Dhanu Yatra archway at Thana chowk in Bargarh town collapsed during a norwester, leaving two persons injured and several vehicles damaged on Monday afternoon. The injured are Ajit Kumbhar and Sanjay Kumbhar, two rickshaw pullers. According to reports, strong winds along with heavy rain battered Bargarh town, causing widespread disruption and property damage. Amid the storm, the massive Dhanu Yatra gate erected at the busy Thana chowk suddenly crashed onto the road, triggering panic among residents and commuters in the area.

Ajit and Sanjay, who got trapped under the debris, were rescued immediately and shifted to the old district headquarters hospital. They were later shifted to a private hospital for treatment. Several vehicles parked near the gate were also damaged in the incident.

After receiving information, police and fire services personnel rushed to the spot and launched efforts to clear the debris. Authorities are assessing the extent of the damage caused by the gate collapse.

Meanwhile, the incident sparked a controversy over the quality of construction of the archway. Chairperson of Bargarh Municipality Kalpana Majhi reportedly lodged a complaint with police, alleging substandard construction of the archway. She also sought legal action against the officials who supervised the construction work.

Mayor, BJP netas seek blanket ban on Bakr Eid slaughter in all Mumbai housing societies

Mumbai .(Agency)

Days after the state government directed police to invoke the stringent Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) against cattle smugglers and illegal slaughterhouses, mayor Ritu Tawde and other Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) functionaries in the city asked the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) to issue a circular enforcing a blanket ban on goat sacrifices in housing societies and chawls during Bakr Eid. Muslim community leaders cautioned that such a circular could give rise to law and order issues. Earlier this month, BMC had granted permission for religious animal slaughter at more than 100 designated locations in the city. There has been no official response to the demand from the civic body. The three-day festival begins on Thursday.

Former MP Kirit Somaiya from BJP had a meeting with the mayor, civic standing



committee chairman Prabhakar Shinde, BJP's leader in BMC Ganesh Khankar and civic garden committee chairman Hetal Gala, following which each of the elected representatives sent a letter to BMC chief Ashwini Bhide to push for the ban demand. BMC already has stringent rules in place for religious animal slaughter. Qureshi jamats and community leaders called the latest push by BJP functionaries to prevent slaughter at even housing complexes that give NOCs a

“dog whistle”. “Precautions like covering the place of slaughter are taken. Preventing slaughter will infringe on citizens' rights to celebrate their festivals,” said Imran Babu Qureshi, national vice-president, All India Jamiatul Quresh. Asif Farooqui, Bandra resident and general secretary of Mumbai Congress, said were such a blanket ban to be enforced, it could allow anti-social elements to foment trouble. “BMC and police do not have the manpower to peep into every chawl and residential area to check whether animal sacrifice is happening there. How does it disturb outsiders if no society member objects to goat slaughter on the society premises?”

In a letter addressed to additional municipal commissioner Vipin Sharma, Somaiya said the matter had also been discussed at a joint meeting at Mayor's Hall on May 21, following which “civic authorities and political representatives reiterated the need to ensure that animal sacrifice does not take place in residential premises”.

Maharashtra topped in crimes against children in 2024, shows analysis of NCRB data

Mumbai . (Agency)

Maharashtra reported the highest number of crimes against children in 2024 even as girls continued to account for a disproportionately high share of missing children cases, an analysis of the latest National Crime Records Bureau data by Child Rights and You (CRY), an NGO, has revealed.

In 2024, Maharashtra registered 24,171 cases of crimes against children, followed by Uttar Pradesh (22,222), and Madhya Pradesh (21,908). The state also recorded a crime rate of 66.9 per lakh children, while Madhya Pradesh led the list with 76.2.

Nationally, nearly 1.9 lakh cases were logged, averaging over 514 a day, a sharp rise from 89,423 in 2014.

As per the report, Maharashtra also topped in kidnapping and related crimes against children under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the Indian Penal Code, with 12,994



cases.

The findings further showed that Maharashtra reported 3,495 missing children cases in 2024, while the total active missing children pool stood at 5,540, including unresolved cases from previous years. At 2,057, girls accounted for a larger share of the state's 3,495 missing kids.

Despite the large number of cases,

Maharashtra recorded significant tracing and recovery efforts during the year, with the overall recovery rate at 67.5%.

At the national level, the number of missing children rose to nearly 1.5 lakh in 2024 from around 1.4 lakh the previous year, marking a 6.2% rise. Girls accounted for 76% of all missing children nationally, while 16-18 formed the largest affected age group.

Girls accounted for a larger share of missing children in the state. Of the children reported missing during 2024, 2,057 were girls and 1,438 were boys. The broader active pool included 3,165 girls, 2,372 boys and three transgender children. Despite the large number of cases, Maharashtra recorded significant tracing and recovery efforts during the year. A total of 3,737 children were traced or recovered in 2024, including 2,123 girls, 1,611 boys and three transgender children. The overall recovery rate stood at 67.5 per cent.

Indian Navy to assume full control of Visakhapatnam airspace from July 9 amid Bhogapuram integration

VISAKHAPATNAM.(Agency)

From functioning as a wartime Royal Air Force airstrip during the Second World War to evolving into a strategically significant joint-use civil and naval airport, Visakhapatnam's aviation ecosystem is now entering a major transition phase.

According to recent Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP) Supplements issued by the Airports Authority of India (AAI), the Indian Navy will completely take over as the designated “Controlling Authority” for the restructured Visakhapatnam airspace from July 9, as the upcoming Alluri Sitarama Raju Greenfield International Airport (Bhogapuram) is integrated into India's eastern Air Traffic Service network.

However, the notifications also clarify that existing civil Air Traffic Service (ATS) routes transiting through the restructured Temporary Reserved Areas (TRA) will continue to remain available for civilian flight planning, subject to operational clearances and

airspace activation protocols.

Following its opening for civil aviation in 1962, the Indian Navy commenced operations at the airfield in 1972. Ownership formally transferred to the Navy in 1986, leading to its commissioning as INS Dega in 1991.



Despite commercial expansions, including a new runway in 2007 and a passenger terminal in 2009, mounting airspace congestion between civil and military flight profiles has necessitated this separation.

According to AAI AIRAC Supplements 88-108/2026, Bhogapuram is

engineered to function not merely as a civilian diversion, but as a fully scalable aviation node capable of supporting high-capacity airline traffic. The restructuring introduces the new BHZ DVOR/DME navigational facility and establishes four tiered Bhogapuram Control Areas (CTA-1 through CTA-4). CTA-1, designated as Class D airspace with a base limit of FL155/5500 FT AMSL, will anchor the aerodrome's immediate approach control.

Bhogapuram Airport designed for scalable & high capacity operations

To redistribute traffic and bypass naval zones, the surrounding airway architecture has been fundamentally overhauled. Five new ATS routes including V40, V50, V63, W32, and W89, have been introduced. Meanwhile, existing corridors including V9, W29, W41, W47, and W90 have been modified. Crucially, the J26 airway has been rerouted via the BHZ beacon toward ENVUK.

Panic in Hampi as locals oppose shifting of temple elephant Lakshmi

HAMPI.(Agency)

Tension prevailed in the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Hampi on Tuesday after the Forest Department initiated steps to shift Lakshmi, the 36-year-old elephant attached to the famed Virupaksha Temple, triggering emotional protests from residents, devotees and tourist guides.

More than 500 locals gathered near the temple premises and strongly opposed the move, claiming the elephant had become an inseparable part of Hampi's cultural and spiritual identity over the years. Protesters raised slogans demanding that the elephant should not be taken away from the heritage town under any circumstances.

The situation briefly turned chaotic when forest officials arrived with a lorry to transport the elephant. Heavy police deployment was made in the area as angry locals blocked the movement of officials. Vijayanagara Superintendent of Police (SP) S Jahnavi and senior officials remained present at the spot to prevent any untoward incidents.

According to Forest Department sources, the decision to shift Lakshmi was taken considering the elephant's advancing age, recurring injuries and health-related complications. Officials reportedly planned to move the animal for specialised care and monitoring.

However, the move drew an emotional response from the elephant's mahout Rajanna, who broke down before officials and pleaded with them not to separate Lakshmi from Hampi.

Methodology differences leave heatwave casualties uncounted in Telangana

HYDERABAD.(Agency)

Data from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) reveals that Telangana recorded 116 heat stroke and sunstroke deaths in 2024. However, the state's Heatwave Action Plan 2026 places the deaths at just 10 for the same period.

This discrepancy of 106 deaths highlights the lack of a uniform national framework for tracking extreme heat fatalities.

The gap stems from two different tracking methods used by central and state agencies. The NCRB compiles its figures directly from police records. Any death reported to local police and noted as heat-related automatically enters the national database maintained under the Ministry of Home Affairs. In contrast, Telangana's official count follows a restrictive, multi-

layered verification framework.

A senior health department official, speaking to on the condition of anonymity, explained: “For a death to be formally recognised as heat-related by the state government, medical certification is mandatory. In many cases, a post-mortem examination must confirm heat stroke as the primary cause of death.” According to the official, deaths occurring outside institutional medical systems often enter police records but may never be formally classified under the state's heatwave mortality database.

The official explained that if a person collapses due to heat exposure while working outdoors and dies at home, the police may record the death as heatstroke



based on field observations.

However, unless the case passes through hospital documentation and subsequent verification by the Disaster Management department, it may not be included in the government's final heatwave tally.

“Patients admitted to hospitals with confirmed heatstroke and who later

succumb are more likely to be officially counted under the state protocol,” the official added.

Public health experts warn that such layered procedures often exclude the most vulnerable sections of society, including agricultural labourers, outdoor workers, elderly residents, homeless populations and people living in informal settlements.

The issue becomes more striking given Telangana's extensive heat-monitoring infrastructure. According to the Heat Wave Action Plan, prepared by the Revenue (Disaster Management) Department, the state currently operates 1,091 automated weather stations that generate hourly data on temperature, humidity, wind speed and wind direction.

NEWS BOX

Arshdeep Singh on social media clean-up? PBKS star wipes out over 200 Insta posts



CHENNAI. (Agency)

India pacer Arshdeep Singh appears to have carried out a major social media reset, deleting most of the content from his Instagram account amid intense scrutiny and backlash over his recent online activity.

The left-arm fast bowler's Instagram profile saw a dramatic reduction in posts over the past 24 hours, with his overall count dropping to just 44. Notably, the majority of the remaining posts appear to be limited to brand endorsements and promotional collaborations, suggesting a deliberate cleanup of personal and casual content. Social media storm after controversial clips

The sudden move comes in the aftermath of multiple controversies that triggered widespread criticism across social media platforms. One of the biggest flashpoints involved a Snapchat video in which Arshdeep was seen addressing Mumbai Indians batter Tilak Varma with a racial remark, sparking outrage among fans. The clip quickly circulated online, drawing sharp criticism and calls for accountability. Another video that generated discussion allegedly showed his Punjab Kings teammate Yuzvendra Chahal smoking an e-cigarette during one of Arshdeep's video logs. While the clip also went viral, it added to the growing scrutiny around the pacer's social media presence. As criticism mounted, Arshdeep became the target of trolling and backlash, with many users questioning his conduct and judgement online. As of now, his only recent significant post is one which is captioned saying, "Sabar. Shukar. Punjab." (Patience. Gratitude. Punjab). Punjab Kings' disappointing end The social media developments come at a difficult time professionally as well, with Punjab Kings enduring a painful end to what had once looked like a dream IPL campaign. Punjab began the season in sensational fashion, putting together an eight-match winning streak and emerging as one of the strongest contenders for a play-off berth.

Samardeep Singh Gill beats Tajinderpal Singh Toor, clears CWG shotput mark



NEW DELHI. (Agency)

Madhya Pradesh's Samardeep Singh Gill delivered the standout performance on the final day of the National Senior Federation Competition, upsetting seasoned campaigner and national record holder Tajinderpal Singh Toor to clinch gold in the men's shot put event on Monday.

Two-time Asian Games champion Toor started strongly, opening with a throw of 20.07m and looking poised to control the contest. However, 25-year-old Gill produced a decisive effort in his fourth attempt, sending the shot to 20.46m to move ahead of the experienced Punjab thrower.

Toor, who holds the national record of 21.77m, attempted to respond but could not find the required distance, with his final throw measuring 20.06m. Gill's winning effort not only secured him the top spot on the podium but also saw him breach the Athletics Federation of India's Commonwealth Games qualifying standard of 20.36m for Glasgow. The men's 400m hurdles also produced encouraging results, with two athletes crossing the CWG qualification mark. Karnataka's Yashas P claimed gold with an impressive time of 49.00 seconds, while Santhosh Kumar T of NCOE Trivandrum finished a close second in 49.06 seconds. Both performances were good enough to meet the required standard.

In the men's javelin throw, Maharashtra's Shivam Lohakare continued to underline his potential with a gold medal-winning throw of 81.71m. While it was enough to secure first place, he narrowly missed the Commonwealth Games qualification mark of 82.61m. The final day of competition offered a glimpse of India's growing depth in athletics, with several emerging names making a strong case for bigger stages ahead.

Full Results

Men: 200m: Animesh Kujur (Odisha) 20.64 secs, Jishu Prasad (Kerala) 20.98 secs, Abhay Singh (Reliance) 21.01 secs.

5,000m: Shivaji Parashuram (Karnataka) 14:14.43 secs, Vinod Singh (Madhya Pradesh) 14:15.50 secs, Deepak Bhatt (Uttarakhand) 14:17.72 secs.

Why pay the same for IND vs AFG and IND vs AUS? Bilateral cricket gets a reality-check

JioStar's Uday Shankar issued a blunt reality check to cricket administrators, warning that bilateral cricket faces a pricing crisis due to audience burnout and a lack of market competition.

New Delhi. (Agency)

If you did not think franchise cricket was taking over, there might be all the more reason to believe it might be the case. The vice-chairperson of JioStar, the leading broadcaster for cricket in India, has now questioned cricket's decision-makers on why they should be investing in bilateral cricket, especially ones that do not involve high-profile teams. In an interview with Variety, Uday Shankar gave cricket administrators a blunt reality check about how they price their media packages, arguing that sports bodies are on the verge of pricing themselves out of their most profitable market. "Why should you really expect JioStar to pay the same

value for a match between India and Afghanistan, India and Bangladesh, or India and Sri Lanka that I pay for a match between India and England or India and Australia?" Shankar asked, signalling a massive shift in how media companies calculate their investments. The warning comes as the aggressive bidding wars that historically bloated the value of cricket broadcasting rights finally begin to cool down. Broadcasters are no longer willing to absorb flat-rate premium fees for lesser-watched bilateral tours, choosing instead to focus on long-term profitability and viewer data. Historically, media giants engaged in fierce, multi-way tug-of-wars, overpaying for content simply to block rivals from gaining a foothold in the market. Today, that defensive corporate spending is being replaced by strict fiscal discipline.

Furthermore, the industry dynamics that drove the historic 2022 price surge are highly unlikely to repeat. The mega-merger of Viacom18 and Disney's Indian operations into JioStar has effectively removed the primary source of competitive tension from

the market. With the biggest bidding rivals now operating under the same umbrella, the aggressive auction wars that previously bloated cricket rights are officially a thing of



the past.

The Dilution of Per-Match Value

Adding to the friction is an impending stagnation in future media rights. Projections reportedly indicate that the next broadcast cycle post-2027 will hold flat at around 5.4 billion US Dollars. While this technically matches the current deal's headline value at current exchange rates, it actually represents a 13 percent decline on a per-match basis.

La Monf's last dance: Gael Monfils bids emotional first-round adieu to Roland Garros

New Delhi. (Agency)

The curtain fell on a true icon of French tennis, and it went down exactly the way he lived his entire career: with pure showmanship, raw emotion, and an absolute refusal to go quietly.

Playing in his 19th and final Roland Garros before his retirement at the end of the 2026 season, Gael "La Monf" Monfils turned back the clock one last time on Court Philippe-Chatrier. Down two sets to his 25-year-old countryman Hugo Gaston, the 39-year-old veteran dug deep into his magical reserves. Pumping his fist towards his wife, Elina Svitolina, and riding an electric wave of chants from the Parisian crowd, Monfils clawed his way back to force a deciding fifth set. While the fairy tale ended in a heartbreaking 6-2, 6-3, 3-6, 2-6, 6-0 defeat as his physical tank hit empty, Monfils left the clay with his head held incredibly high, leaving behind a legacy of joy, acrobatic brilliance, and a

unique bond with the fans that tennis will struggle to ever replace.

LOST THE GAME, ENDED UP WINNING HEARTS

That has always been the definitive story of Gael Monfils, and his final bow at Roland



Garros was no different. The heartbreaking scoreline of his gruelling five-set defeat was instantly eclipsed by a thunderous standing ovation. Past midnight on Court Philippe-Chatrier, thousands of fans stayed in their seats for an emotional farewell ceremony.

Taking the microphone, Monfils looked up at the stands with visible goosebumps, expressing how the unique and powerful connection he built with the Parisian crowd over two decades gave him chills every single year, thanking them from the bottom of his heart. The most profoundly moving moment of his speech came when he turned to his wife, Ukrainian tennis star Elina Svitolina, who was watching through tears. Just days earlier, Svitolina had published a touching letter to their daughter Skai, calling Gael the ultimate magician who taught her that life is about the feelings you inspire rather than the numbers on a scoreboard. Holding the microphone, Monfils bared his heart to her in front of the stadium:

"I would like to thank my wife because, without her, I maybe wouldn't still be here tonight. We've been together 8 beautiful years. You have supported me, raised me, loved me, and you gave me the greatest gift for our daughter. I love you."

FIFA World Cup 2026: Mexican President says 'no issue' hosting Iran team after US declines

Iran's team will now stay in Tijuana, near the US border, while continuing to play its matches in the United States during the tournament, which will be jointly hosted by the US, Mexico and Canada.

NEW DELHI. (Agency)

Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum on Monday said her country has "no issue" hosting Iran's national football team during the FIFA World Cup 2026 after the side shifted its training base from the United States to Mexico amid ongoing geopolitical tensions. Speaking at a press conference, Sheinbaum revealed that FIFA had

approached Mexico after the United States authorities said they did not want Iran staying in the country throughout the June



11-July 19 competition, even though Iran is scheduled to play three Group G matches there. Iran's team will now stay in Tijuana, near the US border, while continuing to play its FIFA World Cup 2026 matches in the United States during the tournament, which will be jointly hosted by the US, Mexico and Canada. "The United States

doesn't want the Iranian national team to stay overnight in the United States," Sheinbaum told reporters on Monday, as per ESPN.

According to the Mexican president, FIFA representative then asked Mexican authorities, "Can they stay overnight in Mexico?" "And we said, 'Yes, no problem. We have no issue with that,'" she added.

Iran's football federation had earlier announced that the team's planned base in Tucson, Arizona, had been shifted to Tijuana due to the prevailing situation involving Iran, the United States and Israel.

FIFA later confirmed the change in the team's base camp arrangements. Iran side will face New Zealand in Inglewood, California, on June 15, Belgium on June 21 at the same venue, and Egypt in Seattle on June 26.

Sheinbaum said Mexico was continuing to work closely with FIFA to finalise operational and logistical arrangements ahead of the tournament.

The FIFA World Cup 2026 will be the first edition of the tournament to feature 48 teams.

Cricket boards have attempted to generate higher total revenues by bloating the calendar, but an expanded match schedule only dilutes individual game value. Broadcasters are realising that running more inventory does not nearly translate into more advertisement dollars, especially when the quality of that inventory is compromised by low-profile fixtures.

The Viewer's Perspective

Compounding the crisis for cricket administrators is growing viewer saturation. The cricket calendar is relentlessly packed; a home men's T20 World Cup is a massive event on its own, but it must now compete for mental bandwidth with a sprawling IPL season. This non-stop barrage of premium tournaments leaves fans with no room to breathe, completely eroding the novelty of the sport. When high-stakes World Cups and marquee franchise leagues run concurrently, low-profile bilateral series simply become background noise. Viewers are burnt out, and broadcasters are realising they cannot monetise an audience that is actively tuning out.

Yash Dayal breaks silence after missing IPL 2026, refutes RCB's statement



New Delhi. (Agency)

Yash Dayal has finally broken his silence over his absence from the ongoing IPL 2026 season, publicly contradicting the explanation earlier offered by Royal Challengers Bengaluru Director of Cricket Mo Bobat. The left-arm pacer, who played a crucial role in RCB's maiden IPL title-winning campaign in 2025, said that opting out of the tournament was not his personal decision.

Speaking on the Talk with Manvendra podcast, the 28-year-old revealed that the decision to stay away from IPL 2026 was taken by the authorities and not by him individually. Dayal also admitted that watching RCB matches from home has been emotionally challenging, adding that he misses being around the team and the dressing room atmosphere.

"Obviously, if you are sitting outside. When I watch them on television, sometimes I just get up. But then it is my team, and they haven't removed me. They kept me on the retain list and didn't get me a replacement. They probably think that I am an important part," Dayal said. "The other thing is that my opting out of this season wasn't my personal decision. The statement could be controversial, but the decision is always made by the authority. I don't know what was the reason was behind RCB's decision. I miss them a lot. I don't know if the team misses me, the fans will say that," Dayal added.

WHAT RCB HAD SAID ON YASH DAYAL?

Before the season began, Mo Bobat confirmed that Yash Dayal would miss the tournament, while reiterating that Royal Challengers Bengaluru continued to support the left-arm pacer and had retained him despite the circumstances. Bobat described the matter as personal and emphasised that Dayal remained under contract with the Bengaluru-based franchise. "So, just to confirm that Yash will not be joining up with the squad. As you know, he is going through a personal situation currently, and just to clarify, we've been very supportive of Yash to date and that's reflected in the fact that we retained him when we had the opportunity to either retain or release players.

Singapore Open 2026 live streaming, draw: PV Sindhu, Lakshya Sen lead India's campaign

India enter the Singapore Open 2026 with a blend of proven stars and emerging prospects aiming to make an impact on the BWF World Tour. The tournament offers both a test of resilience and an opportunity to reset momentum ahead of a packed season.

Las Vegas. (Agency)

India's badminton contingent enters the 2026 Singapore Open with renewed focus on ending title droughts and finding consistency as the prestigious Super 750 event begins on Tuesday. Led by Lakshya Sen and PV Sindhu, the Indian squad features a strong mix of experienced names and emerging talents across singles and doubles, all aiming

to make a mark at one of the season's key stops on the BWF World Tour.

The tournament arrives at a crucial juncture in the calendar, where players are not only competing for ranking points and prize money but also building momentum ahead of the second half of the season. For India, it represents both an opportunity and a test - opportunity to convert potential into podium finishes, and a test of resilience after a mixed run of results marked by injuries, early exits, and occasional flashes of promise from the younger crop. Lakshya-Sindhu lead India's push for revival

Reigning Commonwealth Games champion Lakshya Sen will spearhead the men's singles challenge as he looks to bounce back from a disappointing first-round exit last week at the Malaysian Masters. The Indian shuttler, who claimed the Australia Open title last November and finished runner-up at the All England earlier this year, has shown glimpses of top form but will be aiming for greater consistency. He opens his campaign

against China's Lu Guang Zu in what is expected to be a stern early test. In women's singles, two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu begins her campaign against Indonesia's fifth seed Putri Kusuma



Wardani. Sindhu has endured a challenging phase following injury setbacks in 2025, which have disrupted her rhythm and led to inconsistent results on the BWF World Tour. However, her quarterfinal finish at the Thailand Open suggested signs of a gradual

return to form, and she will be looking to build on that momentum in Singapore.

Young Indian shuttler Ayush Shetty continues to attract attention after a breakout season that included a runner-up finish at the Asian Championships and a key role in India's bronze medal-winning Thomas Cup campaign. He faces Canada's Victor Lai, last year's World Championships bronze medallist, in a tough opening-round contest that will test his rising credentials at the elite level. The spotlight will also be on India's seasoned campaigners, Kidambi Srikanth and HS Prannoy, both of whom are aiming to rediscover consistency at 33. Srikanth, a former world No. 1, faces a familiar opponent in Loh Kean Yew, the 2021 world champion, in a rematch of their recent Thailand Open encounter, which the Indian won. Prannoy, meanwhile, has been handed a difficult opener against Indonesia's Jonatan Christie, a match that will demand peak performance from the experienced Indian.



Rakul Preet Singh

Wants To Do 'Meaty, Meaningful Roles'; Says 'I Don't Want To Be Repetitive'

Rakul Preet Singh is currently enjoying the success of her recently released film *Pati Patni Aur Woh Do*, which starred her opposite Ayushmann Khurrana alongside Sara Ali Khan and Wamiqa Gabbi. As the film continues to enjoy a good run at the box office, Rakul recently opened up about the kind of cinema and characters she now wants to explore moving forward. Rakul is not someone who does movies just for the heck of it; rather, she wishes to portray roles that leave an impact. Rakul Preet Singh doesn't want to be repetitive in the kind of roles she picks. In an interview with Femina, the actress candidly shared, "I want to do meaty, meaningful roles, and I want to challenge myself with every film. I don't want to be repetitive or do films just for the sake of doing them. Every role I take up should leave some kind of impact, and I think that's where I am right now."

The actress further revealed the genres she deeply wishes to explore in the future. Talking about her dream project, Rakul said, "I'd love to do a historical or a proper love story. Those are two genres I haven't really explored yet."

Rakul Preet Singh is overwhelmed with gratitude following the positive response to *Pati Patni Aur Woh Do*. Taking to her Instagram handle, Rakul recently shared a video in which she was seen visiting a theatre with Ayushmann Khurrana and Sara Ali Khan. The actress thanked fans for their love. "Heart is so full seeing all of you laughing, smiling, and enjoying our film. We truly made this one for families, and nothing makes us happier than seeing you all give it so much love. Toh aaiye aur dekhiye humari film... bhai, behen, bacche, buzurg, pati, patni... aur woh do bhi. Arre woh do matlab apne do bacchon ke saath! Lots of love," read the caption.

Meanwhile, reviews for the new film have been mixed. CNN-News18 Showsha gave the film 3.5 stars in its review, which read, "At 1 hour and 57 minutes, *Pati Patni Aur Woh Do* is like a ride at a local fair – nothing too snazzy and expensive but still fun, for the most part. And then there are the histrionics. This is a film that thrives on excess – excess pandemonium, excess coincidences, excess screaming, excess melodrama and, at times, excess confidence in its own absurdity."



Ranveer Singh Faces Boycott From FWICE Amid Don 3 Dispute, Future Projects To Be Stalled?



Film body Federation of Western India Cine Employees (FWICE) has announced a non-Cooperation Directive (NCD) against Bollywood actor Ranveer Singh after Farhan Akhtar raised a grievance against the 'Dhurandhar' actor following his exit from "Don 3".

FWICE issued a statement saying, "Considering the conduct displayed towards the Federation and the stakeholders associated with the project, the office bearers of FWICE have resolved to issue a Non-Cooperation Directive (NCD) against Mr Ranveer Singh."

They went on to add, "FWICE remains open to meeting with Mr Ranveer Singh to hear his side of the matter and to take the issue forward towards arriving at an amicable and final resolution in the interest of both parties."

Ranveer was roped in as the lead for the third instalment in the popular 'Don' franchise. However, he later decided to drop out of the project, just a few days before the film was expected to go on the floor.

Makers, Farhan Akhtar and Ritesh Sidhwani, informed FWICE that they have faced a loss of approximately Rs 45 crore towards the pre-production. After Farhan complained to FWICE, they issued several communications to Ranveer asking him to appear before the Federation.

Finally responding to FWICE, Ranveer stated that "FWICE would not be the appropriate forum for the complainants to raise their grievances and further stated that the issues raised were contractual in nature and would require adjudication before the appropriate legal forum."

In the meantime, it was previously reported that Ranveer had offered to return his signing amount of Rs 10 crore to Excel Entertainment, and in order to make up for the pre-production amount lost by the banner, he had also reportedly offered a stake in his next film, titled "Pralay" for now.

Varun Dhawan Reacts As Fan Dances For GF During Main Tera Hero Re-Release: 'WTF Is Going'



Varun Dhawan's *Main Tera Hero* has returned to theatres as part of the David Dhawan Film Festival, which is celebrating the filmmaker's legacy by bringing some of his popular entertainers back to the big screen. The 2014 comedy, directed by David Dhawan, featured Varun in one of his early mussy comic roles alongside Ileana D'Cruz, Nargis Fakhri, Arunoday Singh, Anupam Kher, Rajpal Yadav and Shakti Kapoor.

Varun Dhawan Reacts To Viral Main Tera Hero Theatre Video

As the film returned to cinemas, several videos from screenings began circulating on social media. One particular clip caught everyone's attention, showing a young man turning the theatre into his own Bollywood stage as he danced for his girlfriend while *Palat* played on screen. The moment quickly went viral, with many users calling it a full filmy main-character moment. The video also reached Varun Dhawan, who reshared it on his Instagram Stories. Reacting to the clip, Varun wrote, "Hai Jawani Toh Ishq Hona Hai is releasing on June 5, but why is my algo filled with this. Very humbled."

In another Instagram Story, while sharing yet another video from the screenings, the actor hilariously wrote, "Wtf is going."

About Main Tera Hero

Main Tera Hero released in 2014 and marked one of Varun Dhawan's early collaborations with his father David Dhawan. The film, known for its slapstick humour, colourful songs and loud comic energy, became a popular commercial entertainer at the time.

Its theatrical return as part of the David Dhawan Film Festival has now introduced the film's playful energy to another round of audiences, with social media turning some of the screenings into viral moments.

Varun Dhawan's Upcoming Film

Meanwhile, Varun is gearing up for the release of *Hai Jawani Toh Ishq Hona Hai*, also directed by David Dhawan. The romantic comedy is scheduled to release in theatres on June 5.

Juhi Chawla's

Son Arjun Mehta Graduates From Columbia, Joins Elite Phi Beta Kappa Society

Juhi Chawla is beaming with pride as her son Arjun Mehta recently graduated from Columbia University. The actor shared glimpses from the convocation ceremony on Instagram, where she was joined by her husband Jay Mehta and daughter Jahnvi Mehta.

Juhi Chawla Shares Pictures From Son Arjun's Convocation

In one of the pictures, Juhi is seen posing with Arjun, who wore Columbia University's signature light-blue graduation robe and cap along with a tie. Another video showed Arjun joyfully throwing his cap in the air with his batchmates, while one of the pictures captured him receiving his degree on stage from the dean and professors. Sharing the happy moment, Juhi wrote, "Columbia '26 anddd initiated into the elite Phi Beta Kappa Society ... many congratulationsssss Arjunnn!! Chalo ... ab chutti."



For those unaware, the Phi Beta Kappa Society is among the oldest and most respected academic honour societies in the United States. Founded at the College of William & Mary in 1776, it recognises exceptional academic achievement in the liberal arts and sciences and is offered to students with outstanding grades and academic excellence.

Juhi Chawla's Daughter Jahnvi Also Graduated From Columbia

This is not the first time the Chawla-Mehta family has celebrated a Columbia University graduation. In 2023, Juhi's daughter Jahnvi Mehta also graduated from the university.

Juhi has previously spoken about her children and their relationship with her film career. The actor once revealed that Jahnvi and Arjun are rather embarrassed to watch her films, especially her older romantic roles.

Speaking to The Times of India in 2020, Juhi shared that her husband Jay Mehta had once encouraged their children to watch *Hum Hain Rahi Pyaar Ke*. However, Arjun asked whether the film had romance in it. When Juhi told him it was a romantic comedy, he refused to watch it. She recalled, "Actually, they are very embarrassed to see my films, especially the earlier ones."



NEWS BOX

"Good Deal Or No Deal": Top US Diplomat On Pact With Iran After US Strikes

DHAKA. (Agency)

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said on Tuesday that a deal with Iran was still possible despite new American strikes that cast doubt on their fragile ceasefire. "There were some talks going on in Qatar today, so we'll see if we can make progress. I think it's a lot of talking back and forth going on about specific language in the initial document, so it'll take a few days," Rubio told reporters in Jaipur during a visit to India. "The president's expressed his desire to make it. He's either going to make a good deal or no deal," he said. The strikes came as top Iranian negotiators arrived in Doha for the latest round of talks to end the months-long conflict, which had prompted Iran to blockade the Strait of Hormuz, a crucial artery for global energy exports. Rubio told reporters that "the straits have to be open".

"They're going to be open one way or the other, so they need to be open. What's happening there is unlawful, it's illegal, it's unsustainable for the world, it's unacceptable."

Quad Foreign Ministers Meet In Delhi To Revive Group After Trump Tension

world.(Agency)

Foreign ministers from the US, Japan, India and Australia are meeting in New Delhi as the Quad grouping seeks to revive momentum after a high-profile clash between President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The four nations are expected to focus on maritime security, supply chains, critical technologies and Indo-Pacific coordination, according to the Japanese Foreign Ministry. The ministers "will exchange views on advancing Quad cooperation" and discuss recent developments in the Indo-Pacific, India's Ministry of External Affairs said ahead of Tuesday's meeting. The Quad, formed to counter China's growing influence in the Asia-Pacific region, has been beset by tension after Trump last year raised tariffs on Indian goods to 50% due to purchases of Russian oil, which was subsequently lowered after talks. Secretary of State Marco Rubio has been visiting India over the past few days in a bid to bolster the relationship, which has suffered after Trump claimed to have brokered a ceasefire between India and Pakistan last year - an assertion PM Modi rejected. The Quad grouping's leaders have not met since 2024, raising fears that it has lost some of its earlier traction. The meeting also follows talks last week between Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping to stabilise ties, even as Beijing continues to pressure Taiwan and assert its territorial claims throughout the region. "It is important for the US to sustain and maintain regional mechanisms and institutions to ensure that further strategic drift in the region is avoided," said Meera Shankar, India's former ambassador to the US.

The grouping gained prominence during Trump's first term as part of a tougher US stance on China, though his preference for bilateral deal-making raised questions about Washington's commitment to allies and defense partners in Asia. The meeting takes place as the US and Iran are inching close to a deal to extend ceasefire and reopen the Strait of Hormuz, a crucial waterway that is key to energy supplies to most Asian countries, particularly India.

Woman Sent To Portugal's Toughest Prison After Children Abandoned In Woods

World.(Agency)

A French mother has been sent to Portugal's most notorious women's prison after she and her partner allegedly abandoned two young children in the



woods, according to The Metro. Marine Rousseau, aged 41, and stepfather Marc Ballabriga, 55, are accused of leaving Barthelemy, five, and Zacharie, three, near Alcacer do Sal in Portugal. Rousseau, who works as a sexologist, was taken to Tires Prison in Lisbon for pretrial detention on Saturday.

According to news reports, the couple blindfolded the children and told them to find a buried knife hidden in the ground. They claimed it was a game to find a hidden toy. When five-year-old Barthelemy dug up the knife and removed the blindfolds, their parents had disappeared. Also Read | Parents Arrested After Children Found Abandoned In Portugal, 1,300 Miles From Home The frightened boys were left with only a change of clothes, two bottles of water, biscuits, a pear and an orange. They were found wandering rural roads at 7pm on Tuesday by a local couple, Eugenia and Artur Quintas, who described the children as terrified and screaming. At Tires Prison in Lisbon, Rousseau is in solitary confinement and cannot speak to other inmates. The prison, which often features in crime documentaries, holds around 450 inmates and houses serious offenders including murderers and child abusers. The facility does have a nursery for pregnant prisoners, a school, and craft areas.

Ballabriga has been sent to Setubal Prison. He is a former French police officer and also faces charges of aggravated assault.

Is Beijing the world's 'living room'? China is enjoying the global stage, but there are limits to its influence

World.(Agency)

In recent weeks, the back-to-back state visits to Beijing by Russian President Vladimir Putin and US President Donald Trump have put China in the global spotlight.

For some international analysts, the summits showcased China as a "stabilising force capable of hosting two major rivals within days", a "broker between the big powers" and a "pillar of global stability". To others, the visits highlighted how China is becoming an "indispensable global power" and President Xi Jinping a "world leader to be reckoned with and courted". Chinese analysts, meanwhile, noted that over the past six months, numerous other world leaders have visited Beijing, including those from France, Britain, Canada, South Korea and Germany. Crucially, some leaders returned after long gaps. It was the first visit in eight years by a UK prime minister, for example. And the first visit in nine years for a Canadian, South Korean and American leader. With all these visits happening one after another, Chinese media described the Chinese capital as an

international "living room" that provides stability in a turbulent world. Another headline read, "The world is entering 'Beijing time'".

Russian President Vladimir Putin, right, and Chinese President Xi Jinping shake hands during a welcome ceremony at the Great Hall of the People, in Beijing, China, on Wednesday, May 20, 2026. Russian President Vladimir Putin, right, and Chinese President Xi Jinping shake hands during a welcome ceremony at the Great Hall of the People, in Beijing, China, on Wednesday, May 20, 2026. Photo | AP

Beyond the optics While this has undeniably been a big moment on the global stage for Beijing, these interpretations miss three important points. First, it is unclear whether world leaders are visiting China because of proactive Chinese diplomacy or as a way of gaining leverage in dealings with the Trump administration. For example, when Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney visited Beijing in January, it was widely interpreted as a response to Canada's structural dependence on the US and the

volatility of the second Trump administration. Some media said he was playing the "China card" to negotiate better terms with the US. Second, Beijing sets a



high "entry price" for visits to its "living room". Occasionally, these summits have been linked to major policy shifts by visiting dignitaries. When Trump visited Beijing, for instance, he backtracked on earlier calls to block Chinese nationals from buying farmland in the US and to impose limits on the number of Chinese students at US universities. Chinese media highlighted the negative reactions these concessions got from Trump's MAGA base

and other Republicans in the US. Similarly, Carney's visit to China resulted in a trade deal reducing tariffs on made-in-China electric vehicles to 6.1% for the first 49,000 cars annually. In late 2024, Canada had imposed a 100% tariff on Chinese EVs. Months later, during the 2025 election, Carney called China the biggest threat "from a geopolitical sense". Carney's concession on electric cars drew criticism back home. Politicians warned it would invite a "flood of cheap made-in-China electric vehicles", without guarantees of investment in Canada's economy. Finally, these visits by foreign leaders have clearly not changed China's core foreign policy positions. The appeals of European leaders did not, for example, change Beijing's material support for Russia's war in Ukraine. Nor did they reduce China's large trade surplus with the European Union. Similarly, Beijing did not agree to assist the Trump administration on Iran, despite Trump's praise for Xi's leadership and his decision to pause a weapons sale to Taiwan.

North Korea launches unidentified projectile into Yellow sea: Seoul

SEOUL.(Agency)

North Korea launched an "unidentified projectile" into the Yellow Sea off its west coast on Tuesday, South Korea's military said. "The North has fired an unidentified projectile into the West Sea," Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement, referring to the body of water between the Korean peninsula and China. It followed another launch by the North on April 19, in which it fired multiple short-range missiles in what state-media described as a demonstration of cluster bomb warheads. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has focused on expanding his nuclear and missile arsenals since nuclear diplomacy with US President Donald Trump collapsed in 2019.

Trump has repeatedly expressed his desire to resume talks with Kim, but

Pyongyang has so far ignored the overtures and urged Washington to drop demands for the North's nuclear disarmament as a precondition for talks. Kim has taken an increasingly



hardline stance toward South Korea, which he has declared his country's permanent and most hostile enemy while diplomacy is stalled and tensions

rise over his nuclear ambitions.

The launch came hours after South Korean President Lee Jae Myung during a Cabinet meeting called for stronger efforts to advance the country's military. He emphasized artificial intelligence and drone capabilities and the potential acquisition of a nuclear-powered submarine, an issue that has been part of his diplomacy with Washington.

Lee did not specifically comment on the threats posed by North Korea, but stressed the importance of South Korea demonstrating the "resolve to take responsibility for and protect our own security ourselves," saying such a posture would also strengthen the country's alliance with the United States.

Why 40 per cent of people are avoiding the news, according to a psychologist

TEGUCIGALPA.(Agency)

During several recent conversations, people have told me that they've stopped checking their phones in the morning. Not because nothing was happening, but because everything was. They described the feeling as standing under a waterfall of perpetual bad news. This experience is far from an isolated one. According to Reuters Institute's 2025 Digital News Report, 69 per cent of Canadians at least occasionally avoid the news now. Globally, 40 per cent report they at least sometimes or often do the same, the highest figure ever recorded. People shared consistent reasons for this: the news put them in a bad mood, they felt overwhelmed and powerless to act. As a researcher in developmental psychology, focusing on social development and psychological well-being, I argue that news fatigue is not laziness, weakness or a generational decline in civic interest. It's the predictable response of a human brain meeting an environment

it was never designed to navigate. Wired for bad news Long before smartphones or even the printing press, our cognitive architecture was shaped



by a single problem: stay alive long enough to reproduce. Our ancestors whose attention drifted past the rustle in the grass left fewer descendants than those who froze, looked and listened.

The brain that paid attention to threats was the brain that survived. This is the foundation of what psychologists call the negativity bias, one of the most replicated findings in cognitive science. Across decades of research, the human mind has been shown to weigh

negative information more heavily than positive, attend to it faster and remember it longer.

A predator nearby mattered more than a beautiful sunset. The cost of missing a real threat was death, while the cost of overreacting was a few minutes of wasted vigilance. The asymmetry made this bias adaptive.

Here is the problem: the human brain has not changed since then. We are the same species as we were thousands of years ago. What's changed is the size of the world it's asked to scan for threats. Scanning the whole world

For most of human history, the threats our nervous system processed were local. A neighbouring tribe. A drought. The illness of a child we personally knew. Information about distant places would barely arrive, and if it did, it was mainly irrelevant. In 2026, the same neurological system is being asked to absorb a war in one region, a financial shock in another, a climate disaster in a third and a violent crime in a fourth, all before lunchtime.

Rubio says US ready to mediate as Moscow steps up Kyiv threats

ANGELES.(Agency)

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Tuesday Washington remained ready to mediate in the war between Russia and Ukraine, after Moscow threatened new strikes on Kyiv. Russia's warning, including a call for foreign diplomats to flee the Ukrainian capital, marks a fresh escalation in the more than four-year war, with Moscow vowing "systematic" attacks on Kyiv, including on "decision-making centres". Rubio's offer came after Russia battered Ukraine over the weekend, including firing its Oreshnik hypersonic missile, and following a phone call with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov. "Every time you see these big strikes from one side or the other, it's a reminder of why this is a terrible war that's now gone on longer than the Second World War, and it needs to come to an end," Rubio told reporters during an official visit to India.

"The US stands ready and prepared to help to whatever we can to help facilitate the end of this war, and hopefully the opportunity will present itself at some point," Rubio said. An overnight Russian strike killed a 45-year-old man in Odesa, regional official Sergii Krasnylenko said on Telegram early Tuesday.

Russia's weekend barrage, involving dozens of drones and missiles killed four people and caused widespread damage across the Ukrainian capital.

Among the weapons Russia used was its Oreshnik hypersonic missile, which can travel 10 times the speed of sound and is capable of carrying nuclear warheads, according to Moscow. The strikes followed Russian accusations that Ukraine hit a vocational school in the Russian-occupied Lugansk region, killing 21 people. Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered his military to retaliate. "Under the current circumstances, the Russian Armed Forces are starting to launch systematic strikes against Ukrainian military-industrial facilities in Kyiv," Russia's foreign ministry said in a statement. "The strikes will target both decision-making centres and command posts ... We are warning foreign citizens, including personnel of diplomatic missions and international organisations, to leave the city as soon as possible," it added.

Lavrov relayed the warning to Rubio in a phone call on Monday, urging him to evacuate US diplomats, Russia's foreign ministry said. When asked, Rubio told reporters on Tuesday that Russia had "sent a notice to all the embassies", not just the US mission.

Not going anywhere

Russia had already called on foreign citizens and diplomats to evacuate Kyiv earlier this month, when it threatened massive strikes on central Kyiv if Ukraine disrupted a military parade on Red Square. Western diplomatic missions in the city have rebuffed both warnings, spokesperson for France's foreign ministry said Monday: "

Democrats feud over stock trading as they sharpen anti-corruption case against Trump

Rep. Colin Allred has denounced Rep. Julie Johnson for trades involving companies like Palantir, a data analytics firm with ties to President Donald Trump's administration.

DALLAS.(Agency)

After three terms in the US House and two unsuccessful campaigns for the US Senate, Colin Allred said he's heard plenty about voters' suspicions that politicians are just trying to make a buck in Washington.

"What about the stock trading in Congress? What about people getting rich in Congress?" Allred said they ask him regularly. "And I have to say to them, you're absolutely right about that, too. We need to be better." He's challenging Rep. Julie Johnson in the Democratic runoff for a

Dallas-area House seat on Tuesday, and he's one of several candidates trying to harness populist anger over congressional stock trading. Allred has denounced Johnson for trades involving companies like Palantir, a data analytics firm with ties to President Donald Trump's administration. Johnson said her trades were handled by a financial manager, and she accused Allred of being "only out for himself." She pointed to financial disclosures that showed Allred's wealth nearly doubling during his own time in Congress, although Allred said his assets were in a blind trust and the money came from his wife's income as a partner at a law firm. "To be clear, the sum total I made on that trade was only \$90," Johnson said of her Palantir stock. "My opponent is trying to make it seem like it was hundreds or thousands." The bitter campaign is emblematic of broader debates within the Democratic Party over the role of money in politics. Long a refrain of strident progressives and good-government reformers, accusations that political rivals are self-dealing or bought by special

interests have become a mainstay of Democratic primaries. The heightened criticism of lawmakers' personal wealth comes as the party looks to sharpen its anti-corruption message against Trump and to develop a platform for overhauling



Washington if Democrats take power in the midterms. Some are tracking congressional stock trading

Trump campaigned on a promise to "drain the swamp," capitalizing on Americans' disdain for the Washington establishment. Now that his family is profiting while he's back in the White House, Democrats are eager to regain the upper hand on an issue

that could prove potent with voters.

"The difficulty is that right now, no party has the mantle on anti-corruption," said Daniel Lobo-Lewis, a political consultant in Washington. "Many voters outside of the beltway see both parties as corrupt, because they see all politicians as bought by the donors or by their own self-interest." Lobo-Lewis and Nico Agosta founded the Political Integrity Project last year to track stock trading and corporate donations involving members of Congress. The organization asks candidates to sign an "integrity pledge" to refrain from trading stocks or accepting corporate donations while in Congress and vow not to work as a lobbyist after they leave office. So far, about 90 challengers and seven sitting lawmakers have taken the pledge. "If we want to, in any way, start rebuilding trust in our political institutions, it starts with no-brainer changes like this that have an approval rating above and beyond any other issue we could imagine," Lobo-Lewis said. Congress has yet to enact a stock trading ban for its members.