

Won't allow our soil to be used against India, Myanmar President assures PM Modi

New Delhi.(Agency)

President Min Aung Hlaing told Prime Minister Narendra Modi that Myanmar's territory would not be used against India's security interests. The talks also centred on trade, energy, infrastructure and wider bilateral cooperation.

Myanmar President General Min Aung Hlaing, who is on a four-day visit to India, has assured that his country's territory will not be allowed to be used against New Delhi's security interests. In a briefing on Monday, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said the President conveyed his assurance during talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"The Prime Minister reaffirmed India's support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Myanmar. Both sides underscored the importance of preventing the misuse of sovereign territory for activities inimical to their security interests. The President of Myanmar, in particular, reiterated the

assurance that Myanmar's territory would not be permitted to be used against India's security interests," Misri said. Aung Hlaing is on a four-day visit to India from May 30 to June



2 at the invitation of PM Modi. The visit has focused on strengthening cooperation in technology, energy, infrastructure, trade and security. On Monday, PM Modi and the Myanmar

President held wide-ranging discussions aimed at deepening bilateral ties across multiple sectors. In a post on X, the Prime Minister said he had a "productive meeting" with Aung Hlaing and expressed appreciation that India was chosen for the Myanmar leader's first foreign visit since assuming office last month. PM Modi also noted that it was particularly significant that Aung Hlaing began his visit from Bodh Gaya, describing it as receiving the blessings of Lord Buddha.

The Prime Minister said the two leaders reviewed the full spectrum of India-Myanmar relations and reaffirmed the importance of bilateral ties. He emphasised that Myanmar occupies a key place in India's "Neighbourhood First", "Act East" and Indo-Pacific policies.

How a signature forgery row has pushed Trinamool to breaking point

A forged signature row over the Leader of the Opposition post has triggered expulsions and secret meetings in the Trinamool Congress. The controversy, which comes on the back of deepening dissent within the party, has intensified the buzz of a vertical split.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Will Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress meet the same fate as Shiv Sena in 2022 and face a split? Rebellion within a party after an election loss is not uncommon, but the speed of the turmoil within the TMC suggests a split may be imminent. At the heart of the buzz is the forged signature row linked to the appointment of the Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly. The TMC was quick to expel two MLAs over the issue. But the move appears to have deepened the crisis as the expelled MLAs - Ritabrata Banerjee and Sandipan Saha - later held a late-night, secret meeting with some legislators.



That the development came a day after 60 of the 80 newly elected TMC MLAs skipped a meeting at Mamata Banerjee's residence does not augur well for the party. Taken together, the events have brought the

TMC to a crossroads as the party faces its greatest internal crisis since its formation in 1998 as a breakaway faction of the Congress.

WHAT IS THE FORGED SIGNATURES ROW?

But how did matters escalate so quickly? Ever since the election rout a month ago, a section of TMC leaders, including MPs and MLAs, have been publicly turning on the leadership. The anger has been specifically directed at Mamata's nephew and MP Abhishek Banerjee, the de facto second-in-command. From the party's election campaign to the choice of candidates, everything had Abhishek's imprint.

On Monday, Chief Minister Suvenud Adhikari, once Mamata's right-hand man, stirred a hornet's nest after he said two TMC MLAs lodged a complaint over the forgery of their signatures in a letter endorsing Sobhandeb Chattopadhyay as the Leader of the Opposition. A CID probe was ordered into the alleged scandal.

Chennai man who confronted drug dealers dies after assault; AIADMK slams Vijay

Chennai.(Agency)

On Monday, Chief Minister Suvenud Adhikari, once Mamata's right-hand man, stirred a hornet's nest after he said two TMC MLAs lodged a complaint over the forg A gang allegedly surrounded Vishnu and assaulted him with beer bottles, a hammer and other heavy objects. He was rushed to a hospital for treatment but later succumbed to his injuries. Police have launched an investigation into the incident.



The killing triggered a political row, with AIADMK General Secretary and former Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami targeting Chief Minister Vijay over his government's handling of crime and drug-related issues. "Is murder the response in

this government if someone dares to question the spread of narcotics? Is this what they call change?" Palaniswami said in an X post.

Referring to Vijay's recent remarks, he added: "In this situation, the present Chief Minister, while speaking in Tiruchirappalli yesterday, expressed frustration that baseless allegations are being made against him." Palaniswami also questioned the government's reliance on administrative measures to tackle the issue.

Mahanagar Metro Mega Exposé | Dark Face Behind the Khaki Uniform?

Controversial Gujarat University Police Station Officer Allegedly Running a Bootleggers' Network from a Private Office

Mahanagar Metro Desk / Pawan Mekan

Ahmedabad. Serious allegations have surfaced against a police employee attached to the Gujarat University Police Station, raising disturbing questions about accountability and integrity within the Ahmedabad Police Department. The individual, popularly known in local circles as "Giri" and allegedly functioning as a powerful middleman, is accused of operating an extensive network of bootleggers and illegal businesses from a private office located near the Vadaj Police Outpost rather than performing his official duties. According to sources, the officer reportedly conducts daily meetings with bootleggers, illegal liquor operators, and other individuals linked to criminal activities from this privately operated office. Allegations suggest that large-scale financial transactions involving unlawful businesses are being coordinated through this network, prompting concerns about possible misuse of official influence and abuse of authority. Local residents and sources claim that the Gulbai Tekra area has emerged as a hotspot for various illegal operations. Reports



indicate that chemically adulterated country liquor is being openly sold in the locality, raising fears of a potential hooch tragedy in the future. Concerns have also been expressed regarding the alleged cutting and redistribution of imported liquor consignments, unauthorized liquor supply chains, and organized prostitution rackets allegedly operating under the cover of spa centers. The allegations have triggered widespread speculation regarding the role of local law enforcement agencies. Residents

claim that illegal activities of such magnitude could not continue without some form of protection or negligence. Public discussions have increasingly focused on whether the priority of certain officials has shifted from maintaining law and order to facilitating alleged extortion and protection networks. A major question being raised is why key enforcement agencies, including the Police Control Branch (PCB), Crime Branch, and DCP Squad, have not taken visible action despite repeated allegations. Sources

claim that the alleged network enjoys protection from influential figures within the system, making enforcement action difficult. The controversy has intensified with claims that the accused police employee possesses assets worth several crores of rupees, including luxury vehicles, premium real estate, and lavish residential properties. Critics argue that a thorough investigation is required to determine whether these assets are proportionate to the officer's known sources of income. Public attention is now focused on the State Home Department and senior government officials. Citizens and activists are demanding an independent and transparent investigation into the allegations. They argue that if illegal liquor operations continue unchecked and a major tragedy occurs in the future, accountability must be fixed on all those responsible for allowing such activities to flourish. Authorities have not publicly responded to these allegations at the time of publication. The claims mentioned above are allegations made by sources and concerned individuals. Their accuracy can only be determined through an impartial investigation and official findings.

Final push that made Annamalai plan BJP exit, form new party

Dynamic IPS officer-turned-politician K Annamalai is planning to quit the BJP and launch a party. While his exit might appear to be sudden, it comes amid a series of developments ahead of the 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections. Here's what might have been the final push.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Former Tamil Nadu BJP chief K Annamalai is on the verge of leaving the party and launching a political outfit, according to sources. For several years now, Annamalai had been spearheading the BJP's campaign in Tamil Nadu and was seen as the party's future in the southern state. Behind Annamalai's sudden exit lie years of struggle marked by competing ambitions, uneasy alliances, electoral setbacks, and a growing disconnect between his and the central leadership's plans. The developments ahead of the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections this year might have been the final push for the IPS officer-turned-politician.

Annamalai has turned down all offers made by the BJP's central leadership, sources told India Today TV said on Tuesday. He will be floating a party that will oppose the Dravidian model of politics and have a more

nationalistic approach, the sources said.

Annamalai's decision to quit the party is said to have been shaped by developments surrounding the BJP's alliance with the AIADMK and concerns over the party's efforts to project itself as not being opposed to the Dravidian political tradition. He met the BJP's national president, Nitin Nabin, and the party's general secretary, BL Santhosh, on Tuesday in New Delhi and sought an amicable parting from the BJP.

It was the "Singham" of Karnataka Police, Annamalai, who gave the BJP its most ambitious phase in Tamil Nadu in decades. The former IPS officer transformed the party's visibility and political relevance in a state where it had long struggled to gain a foothold. Yet, despite the surge of Annamalai's fame and growing vote share of the party, the BJP remained largely in the margins of power

electorally. Yet, the same leader who became the saffron party's most recognisable face in Tamil Nadu eventually seemed like he was sidelined by his own party. Now, his next



move is still a suspense, and there are speculations that he might start a non-political movement or float his own political party in Tamil Nadu. The reason, many political experts believe, lies in the BJP's growing conviction that it could not take on

the DMK alone in the 2026 Assembly elections, and this decision hurt Annamalai. As the decision was announced to ally with the AIADMK, one of the two Dravidian giants, Annamalai stepped down as the state BJP president. The party ignored the fact that its vote share had grown considerably under Annamalai's leadership. "In Tamil Nadu, the BJP has sacrificed its day after tomorrow for a tomorrow just as uncertain," said satirist and columnist Kamlesh Singh in a post on X in April 2025.

In the 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly election, the BJP contested as a junior partner of the AIADMK. Though it won a seat, its vote share, which had climbed to over 11%, dropped to less than 3%. Several AIADMK MLAs, willing to support the C Joseph Vijay-led TVK government, were seen as keen to dump the BJP.

News box

250 cops crack down on Nuh-Raj racket behind 60% bike thefts

Gurgaon.(Agency)

In a sweeping operation, around 250 police personnel — backed by two SWAT teams — raided multiple locations in Nuh last week to smash a cross-border racket believed to be behind 60% of the city's stolen bikes. Police said the network stretched from Gurgaon into Nuh and parts of Rajasthan, funneling motorcycles worth more than Rs 1 lakh into the grey market for as little as Rs 4,000-6,000.

The coordinated raids were carried out in Jamalgarh village in Punhana block and Pachgaon in Tauru tehsil, which police described as major receiving and disposal hubs for stolen motorcycles lifted from Gurgaon. Four suspected receivers were arrested, several others were detained for questioning, and eight stolen motorcycles were recovered. "There are several receivers operating from these villages. Stolen motorcycles are brought here, their chassis and engine numbers are tampered with, and they are then sold at throwaway prices," a police officer said. Police said the racket was both organised and deeply entrenched. Of the roughly 2,000 motorcycles stolen from the city every year, about 1,200 end up in the Nuh region through theft-and-disposal chains. The buyers, officers said, are often daily wage labourers in the hilly areas of Nuh and adjoining Rajasthan, where cheap motorcycles find ready demand.

Explaining the modus operandi, an officer said gang members would travel to the city on genuine motorcycles or by auto-rickshaw, scout for targets, and strike quickly. "One member would identify motorcycles parked on roadsides or outside houses. Hero bikes, especially Splendor and Deluxe models, were preferred because of their demand in the grey market," he added. The eight recovered motorcycles were stolen in 2025-26 from Shivaji Nagar and Manesar, police said.

Among those arrested were Rashid (30), alias Rassi, and Anish (24), alias Suma, both from Pachgaon. All eight motorcycles were seized from their possession. Police said Rashid is wanted in 13 vehicle theft cases in the city, while Anish has been booked in three cases, including two of vehicle theft and one under the Arms Act.

Woman on her way home from work hit by bike in Gurgaon, dies

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A 55-year-old woman died during treatment after she was allegedly hit by a speeding motorcycle near Ghamroj toll on the Sohna-Gurgaon road on May 28. Bhondsi police on Sunday registered a case against an unidentified rider. The deceased, Bhagwati, was a native of Agra in UP and worked as a security guard at a private company in Badshahpur. She lived in rented accommodation in Ghamroj village with her younger son. According to a complaint lodged by her elder son, Akash, Bhagwati was returning home after completing her duty shift when the accident occurred around 7.30pm, shortly after she crossed the toll. Akash alleged that the motorcycle rider was speeding and driving rashly when he struck Bhagwati from behind. She fell on the road and sustained serious injuries. Passers-by shifted her to Ayushman Hospital near Hero Honda Chowk. After being informed about the accident, Akash reached the hospital, where his mother allegedly told him that a motorcycle had hit her from behind while she was walking home. As her condition worsened, family members shifted her to the civil hospital in Sector 10, where doctors declared her dead on Sunday.

Following the death, Akash approached Bhondsi police station and submitted a written complaint along with the medico-legal case documents. After preliminary verification, police registered a case under sections 281 (rash driving) and 106(1) (causing death by negligence) of BNS.

Safai workers protest over Rs 5k insurance fee



Noida.(Agency)

A group of sanitation workers on Monday protested outside Noida Authority office in Sector 6, alleging that they are being made to pay Rs 5,000 a year for medical insurance. The workers said the Authority had earlier told them it would bear the insurance cost, but has now decided to pay only half the amount, with the remaining Rs 5,000 being deducted from the workers' salaries.

Noida has around 4,800 sanitation workers. Last month, the Authority signed a contract with SBI General Insurance to provide medical insurance coverage of Rs 5 lakh annually to workers and up to five dependent family members, against an annual premium of Rs 10,000. Previously, the Employees' State Insurance Corporation had stated that ESI facilities are available only to employees earning up to Rs 21,000 per month. However, following a recent salary revision, sanitation workers' wages reached this threshold, making them ineligible for ESI and related medical benefits. "There is inflation and a price hike, and we are unable to afford medical services for ourselves and family members. The workers have been demanding medical insurance facilities for a long time. Last month, Noida Authority said that it has decided to provide medical insurance to workers and their family members. However, now the workers are told that of the Rs 10,000 annual premium, Rs 5,000 will be given by Noida and the remaining Rs 5,000 will be deducted from workers' salaries," said Vinod Makoda, a sanitation worker.

12 new air stations to fill pollution monitoring gaps in Haryana

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Haryana has started the process of installing 12 new air monitoring stations to improve pollution surveillance in districts with limited monitoring coverage. The state pollution control board has issued bid documents for the supply, installation, commissioning and five-year operation and maintenance of the stations, out of which five will be installed in Charkhi Dadri and Mahendergarh each, one in Rewari and another in Jhajjar. Haryana currently has 32 Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAAQMS), of which HSPCB operates 29. The additional stations are expected to improve spatial coverage and generate more localised pollution data. CAAQMS provide round-the-clock measurements of key pollutants, including PM2.5, PM10, sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, ozone and carbon monoxide, besides recording meteorological parameters such as temperature, humidity, wind

speed and wind direction. The data generated by these stations are used for calculating the AQI, identifying pollution hotspots and assessing compliance with environmental norms. Environmental experts have long pointed to gaps in Haryana's monitoring network, particularly outside major urban centres. Several districts have limited real-time air quality data despite concerns over mining activity, industrial emissions, vehicular pollution, road dust and agricultural residue burning.

The addition of 12 new stations is expected to significantly improve pollution surveillance and provide a more representative picture of local air quality conditions. Officials said a denser monitoring network would enable authorities to identify pollution hotspots more accurately, assess the effectiveness of mitigation measures and undertake targeted interventions instead of relying on district-wide averages. The selected agencies will be



responsible not only for installation and commissioning but also for operation and maintenance of the stations for five years to ensure uninterrupted data generation and minimise downtime.

With the latest expansion, Haryana is expected to further strengthen its real-time air quality monitoring infrastructure as regulators increasingly focus on data-driven pollution management and source-specific interventions. HSPCB member secretary Yogesh Kumar said the state has also

been tasked with installing 23 monitoring stations across NCR districts by the end of Aug. "Five are being funded by GMDA, three by FMDA, 10 by HSPCB and three under the World Bank-supported Arjun project," he said. Officials said the two stations proposed in Rewari and Jhajjar are part of this NCR expansion programme. The three stations are being established under the Arjun project, which is the clean air project funded by the World Bank. They will come up in Gurgaon, Faridabad and Sonapat. These stations are expected to provide more advanced monitoring capabilities by helping authorities understand not only pollutant concentrations but also factors contributing to pollution episodes. "The Arjun project stations will provide additional information on pollution sources and reasons behind pollution levels, which will help in better planning and mitigation measures," Kumar said.

Gurgaon tops school infra rankings, Nuh at bottom

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

The district led Haryana in infrastructure, quality and standards of education in 2024-25, according to the central govt's Performance Grading Index for Districts of India (PGI-D), released by the education ministry in May. The district scored 375 out of 600 points, placing it in the Uttam 3 category (61-70%). This is an improvement from 354 in 2023-24 and 346 in 2022-23, both of which had placed Gurgaon in the Prachesta 1 category (51-60%). Four districts — Panchkula, Faridabad, Karnal and Jind — joined Gurgaon in the Uttam 3 category. The remaining 16 districts fell in the Prachesta 1 band. Nuh was the state's weakest performer, scoring 275, though it improved from 259 in 2023-24. It was the only district in Haryana placed in the

lower Prachesta 2 category. Despite the improvements, no district in Haryana has crossed the Uttam 3 threshold. The higher



grades — Uttam 2, Uttam 1 and Utkarsh — remain out of reach for every district in the state, reflecting scope for improvement across indicators. Nationally too, no district has achieved the Utkarsh or Uttam 1 grades.

Condo upkeep bills set to go up with labour code's higher wages mandate

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

In a season of rising costs, your monthly maintenance bill could be the next one to go up. This has nothing to do with the US-Iran conflict, but the newly implemented labour code. Across condominiums and gated societies, where most of the urban population in NCR lives, maintenance budgets are being reworked because of higher minimum wages that the new labour code stipulates. The expected increase in the bill, according to society managers, is around 20-30%, depending on the kind of staff employed.

For most societies, manpower — security guards, housekeeping workers, horticulture staff, electricians, plumbers, and lift operators — accounts for 70-85% of the maintenance budget, making the pay revision the single biggest cost escalation RWAs and AOAs have faced in years. Rising cost of diesel, on which

power backup that societies need runs, has reduced elbow room. Some societies have already revised CAM (common area maintenance) charges. At Emaar Palm Gardens in Gurgaon, the decision came after a general body meeting last week. "The revised wages increased our manpower costs by around 35%. We increased CAM charges from Rs 3.15 per square foot to Rs 4.37 per sq ft," said Sunil Sharma, RWA president. For residents, the revision translates to an additional Rs 2,500-3,000 per month.

At Prateek Wisteria in Noida's Sector 77, charges have already been revised upward by 60 paise over the existing rate of Rs 2.7 per sq ft. In Ghaziabad, Orange County in Indrapuram circulated a note to residents on Monday explaining that maintenance charges had remained unchanged for nearly 17 years. "Compliance with revised statutory wages is not optional but a legal

obligation. The association has explored all possible ways to minimise the burden on residents, including reassessing vendor quotations, negotiating service charges, and reviewing PF and ESI components," the note read. The society has not yet revised the charges. At Skytech Magadh in Vaishali, where charges have been frozen at Rs 2 per sq ft since 2012, the AOA is considering a hike to Rs 3 per sq ft, subject to resident approval at a general body meeting later this month. Several other AOAs said they are looking at cost-cutting options and assessing their workforce to bring down costs. "While some upward revision is likely, our objective is to arrive at the most optimised and resident-friendly solution. We will place our recommendations before residents in the coming months," said Kavita Kumar Rajesh, AOA president of Exotica Fresco in Noida's Sector 137.

Haryana's average maximum temperature on Monday was 7.4 degrees Celsius below normal. The state's average minimum temperature increased by 1.8 degrees Celsius but remained 3 degrees below normal.

Several districts continued to remain substantially cooler than normal. Karnal recorded a maximum temperature of 29.8 degrees Celsius, nearly 9.8 degrees below normal, while Chandigarh recorded 32 degrees Celsius, around 7.2 degrees below normal. Hisar recorded 36.6 degrees Celsius, Rohtak 34.3 degrees Celsius, Narnaul 34 degrees Celsius, and Bhiwani 34.5 degrees Celsius.

The cooler weather follows a spell of thunderstorm activity across Haryana triggered by a western disturbance. Gurgaon witnessed gusty winds and thunderstorms on Saturday evening, bringing down temperatures across the region.

Condo upkeep bills set to go up with labour code's higher wages mandate

Gurgaon:.(Agency)

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Rajesh, AOA president of Exotica Fresco in Noida's Sector 137. Eventually, AOA and RWA members say, they might have no other option but to increase CAM. At Gurgaon One, former RWA president Saket Singh said a hike was inevitable, with the impact in his society working out to nearly Re 1 per sq ft — charges had to move from around Rs 4 per sq ft to nearly Rs 5 per sq ft. Most RWAs, he said, had already exhausted conventional cost-cutting options. "Most have shifted to LED lighting and optimised electricity consumption. There is very little room left for further cuts without affecting services. You cannot compromise on safety, housekeeping or essential maintenance," he said. In Greater Noida West, Arihant Arden is looking to offset electricity costs in common areas by commissioning a 500 KWp (kilowatt peak) solar system this week — touted as the first of its capacity in a residential society in NCR. "The estimated additional monthly burden after the wage hike for maintenance staff is approximately Rs 5.31 lakh — Rs 2.97 lakh for security services and Rs 3.34 lakh for housekeeping. While we have called a general body meeting and will seek approval to increase maintenance by 25 paise per sq ft. The solar panels are expected to help cut electricity costs,"

said AOA president Nishith Chaturvedi. According to Praveen Malik, RWA president of Gurgaon's Rising Homes, the cost burden becomes clearer when broken down by society size. "A society with 700-800 flats could easily employ around 100 workers. So, if a security guard's salary has increased by around Rs 3,000 per month, in societies employing 50 guards, the additional expenditure alone can run into nearly Rs 1.5 lakh every month," he said.

Manoj Prasad, former AOA president of Logix Blossom County, Sector 137, Noida, added that the extent of the impact would also depend on each society's existing cost structure. "Some key considerations include whether the present CAM collection is sufficient to absorb the wage increase, whether any surplus can be utilised to offset the hike, and if not, what additional amount may need to be collected from residents," he said. With CAM charges at Rs 1.83 per sq ft, unchanged since 2018, Prasad said manpower optimisation and staffing rationalisation remained viable alternatives before costs were passed on to residents. At Gaur Grandeur, Sector 119, and RG Residency, Sector 120, the AOAs are holding off for now. "We are exploring options to absorb the new minimum wage costs."

716 abortions among girls below 19 in Mumbai in 2024-25: RTI data

RTI data shows contraceptive failure cited in nearly 94% of abortion cases

Mumbai. (Agency)

At least 716 abortions were recorded among girls below the age of 19 in Mumbai between April 2024 and March 2025, according to information obtained under the Right to Information (RTI) Act. The data further shows that the city recorded a total of 20,950 Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) procedures during the year, with failure or inadequate use of contraception emerging as the most commonly cited reason.

The information was provided by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation's (BMC) Family Welfare Unit in response to an RTI application filed by activist Chetan Kothari seeking details on abortions, maternal deaths, and abortion-related deaths in the city. According to the RTI data, women in the 25-29 age group accounted for the highest number of abortions, with 7,296 cases

recorded during 2024-25. This was followed by women aged 30-34 years, among whom 5,673 abortions were reported. The 20-24 age group accounted for 3,314 cases, while 716 abortions were recorded among girls below 19 years of age. Kothari said, "The data indicates that contraceptive failure or inadequate use of contraceptive methods accounted for the overwhelming majority of abortions. Of the 20,685 cases for which reasons were recorded, 19,495 were attributed to improper or inadequate use of contraception or failure of contraceptive methods."

A senior BMC health official, however, said, "I would not interpret this data as evidence of contraceptive failure alone. In many cases, women may not have used contraception



correctly, may not have fully understood how to use it, or may be hesitant to disclose contraceptive use due to social stigma or embarrassment. Collecting such information requires detailed counselling and careful questioning by doctors. The data provided

through the RTI is based on information recorded during medical consultations, but these records may not always capture the complete picture. Therefore, it would be inaccurate to conclude that all these cases resulted from contraceptive failure."

Other reasons cited included danger to the life of the pregnant woman in 271 cases, grave injury to her physical health in 288 cases, grave injury to mental health in 358 cases, pregnancies resulting from rape in 27 cases, substantial risk of foetal abnormalities in 246 cases, and other reasons in 265 cases. The RTI response also provides a ward-wise break-up of abortion cases across Mumbai. K-West ward reported the highest number of MTP cases at 3,248, followed by F-North ward with 1,960 cases, S ward with 1,650 cases, R-North ward with

1,297 cases and G-South ward with 1,288 cases.

Religion-wise data shows that Hindu women accounted for 15,765 abortions, followed by Muslim women at 3,442 cases. The figures also include 649 Christian women, 354 Sikh women and 740 women from other communities. Apart from induced abortions, the city also reported 4,226 spontaneous abortions, or miscarriages, during the same period, according to the RTI response.

Kothari had also sought similar information through an RTI application in 2017. The response, covering the period between April 2017 and March 2018, recorded 19 maternal deaths linked to abortion. Of these, 13 deaths were reported among women aged 19-25 years, three in the 26-29 age group, and another three among women aged 30-35 years.

Short news

Gujarat ramps up mission back to school: Teachers task force tracks, reaches out to 6.4 lakh dropouts

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

A FEMALE municipal school teacher in Ahmedabad, who has been teaching for the past seven years at the city's western area, had an unusual deadline to meet within a fortnight last month during the annual summer vacation, before the new academic session commences on June 8.

A part of the task force of 5,200 teachers in Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation School Board, she was given a target—to track three students who dropped between Classes V and VIII in the 2025-26 academic session. The 5,200 teachers across over 450 municipal schools in Ahmedabad have tracked down around 10,000 students who dropped out between Classes I and VIII in the 2025-26 academic session.

These 10,000 children are a minuscule part of the massive 6.41 lakh dropouts across 44,000 government and grant-in-aid schools in Gujarat who have dropped out of these schools between Class I till X are being tracked down individually.

The workforce of nearly 2 lakh government teachers are tasked with tracking 6.41 lakh drop out students before the 24th edition of the annual school enrollment drive shala praveshotsav and kana kelayani, tentatively scheduled for June 18-20. In 2003-04, the then Chief Minister and present Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Kanya Kelvani Mahotsav and Shala Praveshotsav. This year, the state government is focusing on the out-of-school children—estimated to be around 6.41 lakh.

Odisha man kills elephant and buries carcass in farmhouse, held

DHENKANAL. (Agency)

In a bid to protect his mango crop, a 61-year-old man allegedly electrocuted an elephant to death and buried its carcass in his farmhouse near Hindol town in Dhenkanal district. Police on Monday arrested farmhouse owner Pramod Raj along with excavator operator Sudhir Bhutia (24) and watchman Rajib Chaudhury (38) for their alleged involvement in killing the 30-year-old male elephant and burying its carcass. Raj committed the crime to prevent elephants from entering his farmhouse and feasting on mangoes, said police.

Divisional forest officer (DFO) of Dhenkanal Lalit Kumar Patra said Raj's farmhouse is solar fenced to prevent elephants from entering it. However, the accused electrified the entire fence to keep elephants at bay and save his mangoes. On Thursday night, Patra said, a male elephant tried to enter the farmhouse and was killed instantly after coming in contact with the high-voltage live-wire fence. After finding the elephant dead, Raj buried its carcass in his farmhouse on Friday morning with the help of an excavator without informing the local forest officials. The DFO said based on intelligence inputs, an aerial survey of the accused's farmhouse was conducted with a drone. After being confirmed of a burial site, a forest team raided the farmhouse on Sunday. The three accused were picked up and during interrogation, they confessed to the crime, said Patra.

On the day, the elephant's carcass was exhumed from the farmhouse in the presence of RCCF Sanjay Kumar Swain and officials of the forest, revenue and electricity departments. Later, veterinarians conducted the postmortem.

Forest officials have sealed the farmhouse and seized the excavator and a motorcycle used in the crime. A case has been registered in Hindol police station and the accused will be produced in court on Tuesday.

Broke relative killed elderly couple after they refused money, arrested: police

Chandigarh. (Agency)

Police in Ludhiana Monday said the a financially broke relative killed the elderly couple whose decomposed bodies were recovered from their Janta Nagar residence on Saturday. Police Commissioner Swapan Sharma said they have arrested Pardeep Singh, 34 of New Angad Colony. The bodies of Kuldeep Singh, 69 and his wife Harmet Kaur, 71, were recovered from their house Saturday, and both had received multiple injuries inflicted with sharp-edged weapons.

Commissioner Sharma said Pardeep was known to the couple and was a distant relative of Kuldeep Singh. The accused used to visit the couple often at their house and on May 28 too, he had visited them to



ask for money. However, after Kuldeep Singh refused to give him money, he murdered the couple by attacking them with an iron girder and fled with Rs 60,000 cash, jewellery worn by the couple and their mobile phones, he said.

"The accused is broke. He had also mortgaged his car and wanted money to get it released," said Sharma. The police

officer added that the section 311 of BNS (robbery or dacoity with attempt to cause death or grievous hurt) has been added to the FIR registered at division number 6 police station for the offence of murder.

While the incident took around 6 pm on May 28, the couple's bodies were recovered almost 36 hours later on the morning of May 30. The crime came to fore after the couple's daughter Jyoti, who lives in Canada, kept calling them but received no response. Sources said that some relatives of the couple have claimed that when they called them, the accused impersonated as Kuldeep and spoke to them but they noticed startling difference in the voice and sensed something was wrong. "We are probing this angle if the accused impersonated the deceased and spoke."

ED alleges siphoning of school, government funds in Rs 645-crore bank fraud

Chandigarh. (Agency)

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Monday alleged that funds belonging to two private schools in Chandigarh and Panchkula were siphoned off along with money from bank accounts of the Haryana Government and the Chandigarh Administration in the alleged Rs 645-crore IDFC First Bank fraud case.

In a statement issued on Monday, the agency said its investigation had so far revealed the "embezzlement of Rs 645 crore from bank accounts of the Haryana Government, Chandigarh Administration and two private schools in Chandigarh and Panchkula maintained with IDFC First Bank".

The disclosure came days after the ED arrested real estate businessman Vikram Wadhwa under the Prevention of Money



Laundering Act (PMLA) in connection with the case. The ED alleged that Wadhwa, in connivance with co-accused Ribhav Rishi, Abhay Kumar, certain bank officials and government officials, was involved in the embezzlement of funds from government and other accounts.

"Vikram Wadhwa has been instrumental in generation, layering and concealment of

Proceeds of Crime and he received Proceeds of Crime amounting to more than Rs 70 Crore in his personal account in addition to huge amount of cash generated from embezzled fund," the agency said. According to the ED, Wadhwa subsequently invested the alleged proceeds of crime in various entities linked to him and also purchased several immovable properties. The agency said its probe has identified a network of intermediary shell entities, including Capco Fintech Services, Swastik Desh Projects, R.S. Traders and SRR Planning Gurus Pvt Ltd, which allegedly received embezzled funds directly from accounts of government departments. The money was then layered through multiple bank accounts of accused persons and associated entities, the ED claimed.

Long walk for water: How scarcity is breaking women in Maharashtra's tribal belt

Doctors say decades-long burden contributes to uterine prolapse, miscarriages, chronic pain and a growing health crisis.

Mumbai. (Agency)

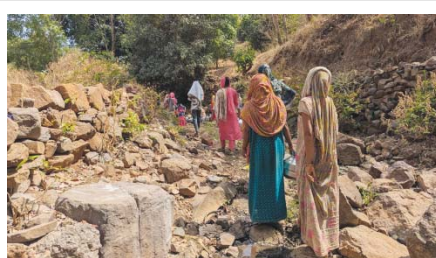
The women of Vadvi Pada begin their daily search for water at the hottest hour of the day. At 3 pm, under the harsh summer sun, around 30 women and girls from the tribal hamlet in Maharashtra's Nandurbar district start their descent down a rocky hillside carrying empty steel pots. The nearest water source is nearly 3 km away. Hours later, they climb back up balancing 7-10 kg of water on their heads.

At the bottom of the hill lies a shallow natural pit. After four or five pots are filled, the water runs out, forcing women to wait nearly an hour for it to seep back into the ground. Nearby stagnant pools are also used by cattle. For generations, women across the tribal villages scattered through the Satpura ranges have spent much of their lives fetching water from distant streams, pits and wells. Now, doctors and health workers warn that this burden is taking a

severe toll on their bodies. Women interviewed across more than 20 remote hamlets in Akkalkuwa and Dhadgaon talukas described chronic pelvic pain, uterine prolapse, recurrent vaginal infections, miscarriages, kidney stones and debilitating back pain conditions they believe are linked to years of carrying heavy loads of water from childhood. Forty-year-old Bajubai Dhoma Vadvi of Khadkapani village says she has spent nearly her entire life carrying water.

"As I grew older, the size of the pots increased too. By the time I was 12, I was carrying the same load as my mother," she says.

Story continues below. Subscribe to see fewer ads. Lying on a mat inside her thatched hut while her daughter-in-law Mamta Vadvi massages hot oil onto her abdomen and legs, Bajubai recounts years of pain. Mamta, 27, herself suffers from



chronic abdominal pain, recurrent vaginal infections and severe backache. "She cannot fetch water anymore because she cannot stand for long. Her uterus keeps slipping down," she says of Bajubai. Married at 13, Bajubai became pregnant soon after. "During my first pregnancy, I suffered a miscarriage while still carrying water in the ninth month. There was no choice. If women do not fetch water, the family has no water," she says. She continued carrying water through

subsequent pregnancies despite worsening symptoms. "I constantly felt heaviness and pressure in my lower abdomen. During my last pregnancies, my uterus would slip down repeatedly. My mother-in-law, who had the same condition, suggested pushing the uterus back using my finger. Somehow the children were born."

Bajubai later underwent multiple treatments for uterine prolapse, including the use of a vaginal pessary a ring-shaped device inserted to support the uterus. Two years ago, she underwent surgery after doctors detected a lump in her uterus.

The Indian Express visited 23 tribal hamlets across Akkalkuwa and Dhadgaon talukas, home to an estimated 28,000 people. Across these villages, women reported spending three to four hours daily fetching drinking water. In some settlements, they make multiple trips every day.

The ugly and the not so ugly Indian

Written by Eugene Burdick and William Lederer, the novel 'The Ugly American' was published in 1958. It was an instant sensation and is still a steady seller; it remains in print to the present day. Considered an iconic book of the Cold War, this fictionalised text, rooted in reality, pierced deep into the failures of the American diplomatic corps in Southeast Asia (by the Kennedy administration, the US Peace Corps is considered to be an offshoot of the book's immense impact).

An oft-quoted passage from the book is when a Burmese journalist says: "...the (American) people I meet in my country are not the same as I know in the United States. A mysterious change seems to come over Americans when they go to a foreign land. They isolate themselves socially. They live pretentiously. They are loud and ostentatious." The last bit gave rise to the stereotype image of the 'Ugly American' outside his borders — whether he was a tourist, diplomat or businessman. It is also believed that the title was a play on Graham Greene's book, 'The Quiet American', which had been published some years earlier (both books were turned into successful films). On the other hand, I don't think there are too many 'Ugly Indians' abroad — unless we are desperate to make a reel for social media and find that creating a nuisance facilitates the purpose. We behave reasonably well when we are overseas. We stand in line, we rarely shout. We may be 'Silly Indians', 'Fawning Indians' or 'Irritating Indians' — but we are rarely 'Ugly Indians'. We keep that for when we are home. Here, we litter, we often shout, we often fight; even when none of the above are desirable or necessary. Of late, I seem to have had my share of the 'Ugly Indian' — who has come in all shapes, sizes and in varied avatars. There is a tenant who arrived with references and grand promises. Before decamping and leaving the premises locked, he has not paid the rent for well over a year and has also burdened me, among other things, with an unpaid garbage bill. As if that was not enough, a set of goons decided that a fight was the way to get things turned in their favour, and found that beating up my son and manhandling my wife (in my noted absence) would move matters their way. So between shouts of 'how they would set the house on fire', and threats to life and limb, we have much to thank for the protection of the local police force. A less personal but an unforgotten impact of ugliness stemmed from something very different. This was a professional assignment in Srinagar some two decades back. I had been asked to be the compere for a tourism promotion event for J&K's Tourism Department. With the appropriate approvals, one had been hired by the event company. Kashmir's tourism business, the backbone of the local economy, was in doldrums. This was to re-showcase one of the most beautiful places in the world that was beset by terrorism and human tragedy. One drove past the Dal and Nagin lakes and their largely empty houseboats and noted, again, their delightful names — Young Mona Lisa, Cherry Ripe, Sea Hawk, Noble House, Rolex and New Golden Fleece. The absolutely magnificent setting of the Sher-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre took care of a substantial part of the show. The storied lawns were bordered by packed flowerbeds flowing down to the banks of the Dal Lake. In the background are the low rolls of the Zabarwan Range. As the sun slipped behind the hills, the lights and fountains came on. As best as I can tell, the programme was a success. This event was a bit of a junket and excursions were also on the menu. On the first visit, the very first thing that we saw as we got off the bus was graffiti on the wall that read: "Indian dogs get out." That, I'm told, has now changed. This time, the column may be somewhat grim, but these things and the insecurity that they carry with them is something that we common people seem to face on a fairly regular basis.

Engg Admissions: Race Between Popularity and Profundity

If Viksit Bharat 2047 is about the dreams of India becoming a global manufacturing hub, it requires Mechanical Engineers, Production Engineers,

When Usain Bolt successfully defended his Olympics Gold medal in 100 metres sprint for the second time in 2016, the world celebrated this hero's hatrick and called him the swiftest human on earth. When I asked my students about Ashton Eaton, who also won the Gold in decathlon at London and Rio, the class drew a memory blank. That Bolt is a genius athlete is undoubted but Eaton got shadowed just like Daley Thompson's Moscow and Los Angeles got under Carl Lewis's Los Angeles and Seoul showdown. Moral: Mono-discipline athlete is more popular than a multi-disciplinary comparable. Is it the same in higher education? Let us explore. Advertisement The career pathway to achieve career aspirations begins from schools, navigate multiple entrance exam pathways, and just when it reaches its final destination of hope, gets muddled with exploding choices leaving young minds at the cross-roads of chaos. Millions of Indian students begin their journey towards a medical or engineering admission that germinates from an academic aspiration. These crucial formative years of cognitive sprouting become an exhausting expedition through a maze of entrance examinations, counselling systems, coaching ecosystems, cut-offs, quotas, and uncertainty. The foundational basis of a meritocratic gateway has gradually evolved into a multi-layered fence that test endurance more than aptitude. Just like a young cricketer struggles to play Test cricket, T20, and One-Day formats on the same day—with different rules, different pitches, and different captains evaluating performance differently, young students struggle to perform well in Class XII exams, NEET, JEE, other private university entrance exams, interviews and many modern testing instruments. The reason is simple. One examination rewards speed and agility, another conceptual depth and precision, another memorisation and flexibility, and another strategic elimination techniques and creativity. Students are forced to become examination tacticians rather than genuine learners. This results in either becoming a NEET/JEE super-achiever humanoids like Bolt and Lewis or matured learners with holistic knowledge but shadowed like Eaton and Thompson. It doesn't stop here. It further stretches as they enter the higher-education fracas in which mindless popularity seems to be the screaming horse and not calibrated thinking which remains the muted mule. Viksit Bharat 2047 is Prime Minster Modi's ambitious mission mode target that charts India's growth story for the next 25 years. While Digital India is one foundational pillar, it cannot be the only growth trajectory, as all cylinders have to fire to carry the Indian engine far and high. Both human

bodies and countries function similarly. Artificial Intelligence and Computer Science represents the brain

electric vehicles require battery technology, AI systems require semiconductor fabrication, smart cities require



and nervous system, but without the heart, lungs, bones, muscles, and circulatory systems, the body cannot survive. Likewise, a nation cannot be built on algorithms alone unless it is supported by robust physical infrastructure and industrial capabilities. If Viksit Bharat 2047 is about the dreams of India becoming a global manufacturing hub, it requires Mechanical Engineers, Production Engineers, Industrial Engineers, and Materials Scientists. If it is about smart cities and urban transformation, it needs Civil Engineers, Environmental Engineers, Transportation Experts, and Structural Designers. If it is about green energy leadership, it depends upon Electrical Engineers, Energy Systems Engineers, and Chemical Engineers. If it is about semiconductor independence, Aerospace leadership, defence self-reliance, and advanced mobility ecosystems, it requires specialised core engineering talent at massive scale. In short, engineering intelligentsia of India is a superset of all and not a subset of few. The massive success of India's digital revolution rests on its physical infrastructure. Cloud computing requires data centres,

civil infrastructure, defence systems require aerospace engineering, medical technology requires biomedical engineering. Renewable energy requires power electronics and grid engineering. In essence, Computer Science and AI are accelerators, not substitutes for foundational engineering disciplines. The current trend among students often resembles a gold rush. Large numbers migrate toward Computer Science and its latest derivative cousin Artificial Intelligence not necessarily out of passion, but due to perceptions of salary, prestige, global mobility, and social validation. Core engineering branches are sometimes unfairly viewed as outdated or less glamorous. This perception is deeply misleading and if left unchecked will over-create isolated coders (Bolt-Lewis) and under-create interdisciplinary builders (Eaton-Thompson). India needs both with a balance just like Olympics needs both sprinters and decathlons. At a time when India needs this balance now more than ever, young minds and influencers should not get swayed by popularity, for popularity comes with no invitation and leaves with no farewell. In short: Young India should chase profundity and not popularity.

Punjab pulse : Civic polls verdict boosts AAP's confidence

The AAP swept the polls, leaving the Congress at a distant second, with the SAD and the BJP trailing behind even Independents

PUNJAB's local body election results may not be a definitive pointer to the Assembly elections due early next year, but they do offer important political signals. Civic polls are shaped more by local concerns than by broader state-level narratives. Historically, ruling parties enjoy an advantage in such contests because voters often believe development funds and administrative support flow more smoothly to areas aligned with the government of the day. That trend was visible again as the AAP swept the polls, leaving the Congress at a distant second, with the SAD and the BJP trailing behind even Independents. But these figures must be viewed with caution. Punjab recorded an overall turnout of nearly 64%, but participation in municipal corporations remained below 60%, reflecting subdued enthusiasm in larger urban centres. Local body polls have generally



reducing their predictive value for Assembly contests where turnout is usually higher and political issues broader. Even so, the verdict underlines a troubling

reality for the opposition: despite criticism of the government over drugs, gangsterism, law and order and governance issues, rival parties have failed to convert public discontent into meaningful gains. The Congress continues to suffer from factionalism and leadership uncertainty, while the SAD is still struggling to recover from the political fallout of the sacrilegious controversy and the farmers' agitation. The BJP, though still a marginal player in the state's electoral landscape, appears to have begun preparing early for 2027. The appointment of Kewal Singh Dhillon, a Jat Sikh, as the Punjab BJP chief is significant as it signals an attempt to move beyond its traditional urban Hindu base.

The road to the Assembly elections remains long. But for now, the AAP has seized the early advantage while the Opposition is still searching for coherence and direction.

Universe: Do not obsess over wealth

As per the foundational rules of financial dharma, true wealth is built on value creation, smart budgeting, and fair pricing

In the Shanti Parva of the Mahabharata, it is mentioned that all kinds of meritorious acts flow from the possession of great wealth like rivers from a mountain. From wealth springs all religious acts, all pleasures and heaven itself. Wealth gives us the ability to experience life fully. It is one of the four Purusharthas (goals of life). Wealth, however, has to be created ethically and without cheating others. Do not obsess over wealth. Wealth is elusive when you seek it directly, and it invariably comes to you when you are creating value for others. Spend less than you earn. Save and invest the surplus. Limit debt unless you are creating long-term assets. Insure for hard times and unforeseen calamities. We all have customers, either in business or as employees. Understand and satisfy their needs. Create value for them and price fairly. Do not cheat or overcharge them. Resolve their problems promptly.

Krishna & the fruit Seller A wandering fruit seller was once passing by the streets of Gokul. She happened to stop by little Krishna's house. As Krishna's parents were away, she found herself displaying her wares to the only potential customer in the house, Krishna himself! Krishna was tempted by the ripe, juicy fruits he saw in the fruit seller's cart. He wanted them all! He pointed to each of them. It was a hot afternoon, and the fruit seller was feeling thirsty. She had yet to sell any fruit, but she found herself drawn to the little fellow, with a peacock feather in his hair and a cheeky smile, and decided to humour him and make him her first customer of the day. She said to him, "You can have them for a fistful of grain!" Krishna understood what she said and ran inside excitedly to fetch her what she asked. He gathered as much grain as his little fists could hold and ran back towards the vendor, squealing with joy. He



did not realise that in his excitement, most of the grain he held had fallen to the floor, slipping from his tiny fingers and loosely clenched fist. Proudly, he offered her the few grains remaining in his hand and demanded his fruits. The fruit seller was so overcome by her maternal instinct

and touched by his innocence that she took the few grains he had given her and cheerfully handed over all the fruits that Krishna wanted. That evening, as the fruit seller returned to her house to count the day's earnings, she was most surprised to find that each of the grains she

had taken from Krishna were transformed into precious gems. Shiksha: Think of each of your customers as little Krishna and keep him happy. Create value for him. You will be rewarded with far more than you expect, as the fruit vendor learnt to her pleasant surprise.

We all know how spices like haldi and dhania can rev up a dish, but the culinary benefits apart, did you know spices can also work wonders for the skin and hair?

What your grandmother said has come true, with more people realizing the benefits of Indian spices in fighting acne, clearing clogged pores and enhancing the complexion.

Benefits galore

Several spices can add value to the skin. Says Dr Rashmi Shetty, Mumbai based cosmetologist and anti-ageing expert, "Some of our spices like cardamom, cinnamon, garlic etc are great immune boosters. They have some or the other property which increase metabolic rate and enhance the immune system. When we prepare Indian detox drinks and diets, spices are always used in them, so consuming them orally is also very good for the skin and body. And when it comes to using spices in beauty treatments I find two ingredients to be very useful, coriander and turmeric."

Cinnamon

People are not very aware of it, but cinnamon has some great benefits. It has very good anti-bacterial properties, it improves blood

circulation. It can be used for pimples. Just make a paste of it and apply it on the affected areas on the skin. When applied overall on the face, it will help in skin rejuvenation as it improves blood circulation.

Turmeric

"Turmeric has wonderful anti ageing, antibiotic and antiseptic properties. As a beauty product, it is often used in skin creams also. Every other product touts 'haldi' as an ingredient. It also has good skin lightening properties. It can be used as a facepack along with honey for wonderful results on skin," reveals Dr Shetty. Dermatologist, Dr Madhuri Agarwal, shares a few more:

Coriander seeds

These are very cooling and soothing. If you soak them overnight and use the water as eyes drops, it clears your eye, gives a wonderful cooling effect and makes the eyes look more bright, shiny and more white.

Black pepper

Black pepper is very good for exfoliation. If you make a powder of it and apply a paste on



How Indian spices enhance your beauty Treatment

your acne marks and blemishes, it will help exfoliate the affected skin and give it a clearer appearance. It can also help in clearing pimples. A little curd can also be added to black pepper powder and applied for beauty benefits.

Ginger

Ginger can aid in skin rejuvenation and it improves the skin colour and texture. It can be applied as a paste on the skin and left for some time. It will improve skin tone. It is said to reduce blemishes.

Red masoor dal

Though it is not among the spices, this still a great beauty product. It can be used in

face packs and has anti-tanning properties. Use it as a body scrub, especially for dry skin. To gain its benefits, make a dry paste of it and add chandan (sandalwood) and haldi (turmeric) and apply this on the skin. Grind masoor dal and store it in an airtight jar for further use in your face packs and pastes.

Be careful

Things to be kept in mind when using these spices:

1. Apply the paste or other mixture correctly. It should not go into the eye. To be safer, avoid the eye and eyebrow area completely.
2. Also, ensure it does not touch the hair as certain spices can bleach the hair.
3. Do a patch test by applying the mixture on the inside of the elbow first, to avoid any redness.

Secrets to make your Fragrance last long

Layer your smell and moisturize your skin to make your fragrance last all day, says an expert.



Ashokkumar, CEO and director of perfume house All Good Scents, shares how:

* Start with a warm shower. Use a shower gel, body wash or a scented soap all over your body and then spray the fragrance once your body becomes dry. When you take warm shower, it causes your pores to

open which when you apply the fragrance will soak up the scent better and the fragrance will stay longer as it gets layered on top of a line extension toiletry wash.

* After you have a shower, moisturize your skin with a generous amount of fragrance-free lotion or a body lotion with the same fragrance you use. Moisturized skin blends well with the perfume ensuring long lasting fragrance. On dry skin, the fragrance will dissipate faster. * Perfumes tend to react with fluctuating body temperature throughout the day and emit scent accordingly. To maximize the smell of your perfume, apply it on your pulse points as they tend to react with warmth of your blood and emit the fragrance accordingly. Wear the perfume on wrist, inside of your elbows, the nape of your neck and on your cleavage. Also, never rub the area where perfume is applied as it breaks down and diminishes the fragrance.

* Depending on the fragrance and the season, it is advisable to spray a little on your clothes too, particularly in winters on your sweaters or pullovers for a longer lasting smell. Thumb rule for spraying - always spray the perfume approximately 15 to 20 cms away from your body. Spraying an even amount of fragrance over a large area will have longer effect than concentrating it over smaller spot on skin.

Another way is to spray the fragrance in air and slowly walk into the mist. This will evenly distribute the fragrance across your body and will last longer too.

Budget friendly beauty tips

We are all constantly looking for beauty tips which are easy on the pocket, after all what's better than looking good and not spending much while you are at it.

Here are a few budget-friendly beauty tips you can follow
Stay hydrated: Drinking the mandatory eight glasses a day can do wonders to your skin and body. Staying hydrated is a simple yet important step in ensuring a healthy, supple skin. You can consume other liquids as well.



Make up remover: Make sure you remove your make up before you sleep, and you don't need expensive products to do the same. Olive oil and baby oil can help as well.

Sleep well: Getting sufficient sleep will keep you healthy and active throughout the day. It is important for day-to-day functioning and can rejuvenate you to start the new day afresh. Not getting proper sleep can give you dark circles and puffy eyes and keep you irritable throughout the day.

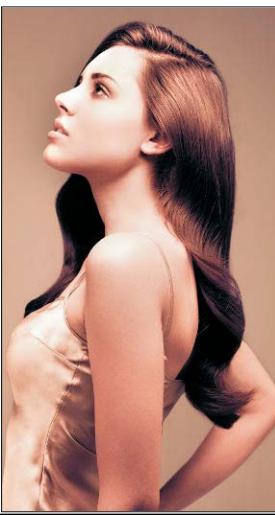
Green vegetables and fruits: If you binge on fast foods and sugary delights often, its time to stop. Fruits and vegetables are rich in antioxidants and can do wonders for the skin and overall nourishment of your body.

Rainproof Your hair

With the heavy downpour and thick monsoon winds blowing our way, you can feel the moisture seeping into your luscious locks. Ever wondered, what excess moisture could do to your hair? For starters, the humid air during the monsoons can leave your hair feeling wet and sticky, notwithstanding the blow dry session you've just been through. If that's not bad enough, getting wet in the rains with inadequate hair care can leave you with an itchy, flaky scalp that is prone to dandruff, bacterial and fungal infections. "Exposure to extreme and contrasting climatic conditions--extreme heat in the summers to the damp monsoons--can take a toll on your hair, ultimately leaving it frizzy and unmanageable. The extreme variations in weather often strip off the outermost layer of your hair, making it brittle, rough and dry," informs celebrity hairstylist Adhuna Akhtar. Here are some expert tips to battles hair woes in the monsoons.

Fight that frizz

For those used to light, airy tresses, a rough and unpredictable monsoon can surely strike havoc. However, it takes only a slight change in your regular hair care routine to ensure beautiful, stylish hair all-year-round. Oiling your hair regularly is one such trick. If you thought hair oiling was a grandmother's myth to healthy hair, here's what hairstylist-to-the-stars Savio John Pereira says, "Go in for deep oil massages to condition your hair and scalp during monsoon. Use a hair mask after your shampoo to moisturise hair. Identify your hair type and then use the right shampoo and conditioner for good results. Hair



tends to break easily when wet in the rains or even otherwise. So avoid brushing wet hair, instead use a wide toothed comb. Make sure you towel dry your hair thoroughly or semi-dry it with a dryer to remove all the excess moisture in the hair." Getting wet and soaked in the showers is a



From the scorching heat to the refreshing, cool showers of monsoon, are your tresses ready for the climate change? Celebrity hairstylists tell you how to look after those locks and keep them feeling healthy and beautiful.

pleasure that few can resist, but think again. Pereira reiterates, "Air pollutants dissolved in rainwater may spell doom for your tresses and make hair bonds weak, thus making your hair dull and frizzy." So avoid wetting your hair this monsoon. And yes, never ever tie wet hair. You know that, right?

Monsoon styles

Don't let the monsoon dampen your spirit. While there are umpteen styles to try your hand at, read about the top two styles to sport during this season. Akhtar mentions, "We're lucky this

is the year of the bob. Many women are opting to chop their long locks for a short, flirty and fun haircut. Wear it classically straight or opt for a trendy, dishevelled wavy bob or 'wob' either way a bob never goes out of fashion and it is the perfect accessory for the wet and wild monsoons." Braids are another big hit that have made a come back even on the runways and red carpet. Pereira suggests, "Braided hairstyles are the best option to keep your hair up and away from the nape. From fish tails, French braids, twisted braids, multiple braids, waterfall braids, etc, try any for a fun twist. It can be worn the classic way, which is at the back or to the side depending on the occasion."

So go out there and get cracking on your monsoon coiffure now!RAINPROOF your hair Annabel Dsouza ?? From the scorching heat to the refreshing, cool showers of monsoon, are your tresses ready for the climate change? Celebrity hairstylists tell you how to look after those locks and keep them feeling healthy and beautiful With the heavy downpour and thick monsoon winds blowing our way, you can feel the moisture seeping into your luscious locks. Ever wondered, what excess moisture could do to your hair? For starters, the humid air during the monsoons can leave your hair feeling wet and sticky, notwithstanding the blow dry session you've just been through. If that's not bad enough, getting wet in the rains with inadequate hair care can leave you with an itchy, flaky scalp that is prone to dandruff, bacterial and fungal infections. "Exposure to extreme and contrasting climatic conditions--extreme heat in the summers to the damp monsoons--can take a toll on your hair, ultimately leaving it frizzy and unmanageable. The extreme variations in weather often strip off the outermost layer of your hair, making it brittle, rough and dry," informs celebrity hairstylist Adhuna Akhtar. Here are some expert tips to battles hair woes in the monsoons.

Must-have exfoliating tools for Your skin

Cleansing and exfoliation are integral steps to any basic skincare routine.

They create a healthy foundation for products like moisturisers and serums and help in efficient absorption, allowing them to work effectively, and giving you that radiant to-die-for skin. Here are some skincare tools that you can use during cleansing/ exfoliation to



compleme nt your at-home skincare regime... Cleansing brush There are two types of cleansing brushes available in the market — manual and mechanical (battery-operated). Both provide a deep cleanse and are great tools to add another level of exfoliation to your cleansing routine. Mechanical cleansing brush Avni Amlani, international skincare professional says, "The most popular type of

cleansing brushes use sonic (sound) frequencies. The resulting flexing action works to loosen dirt and oil, removing deep-seated impurities from pores and priming skin to better absorb moisturisers, masques and serums. It is suitable for all skin types and cleanses the skin six times better than hands." Manual exfoliating brush If you cannot go for a mechanical brush, use an ultra-gentle brush to gently exfoliate surface debris and impurities for effective cleansing. Aesthetician Ritu Singh Tanwar says, "Exfoliating brushes with a long handle are great for a back scrub." Adds consultant dermatologist and aesthetic physician, Dr Madhuri Agarwal, "Use a long-handled, natural bristled brush for dry brushing before bathing to reduce dead cells." Sponge cloth Damp sponge cloth is a gentle tool that can thoroughly remove makeup and debris without irritating your skin. Avni says, "Select one that is made from biodegradable, bacteria-resistant fabric, can be easily rinsed clean and dries quickly. Sponge cloths can be used to remove cleansers, exfoliants and masques." Buffing cloth This hygienic, microbial exfoliating cloth can be used to buff and polish the body. Use this with a body wash to clean and exfoliate rough and dull skin in hard-to-reach areas. Opt for one made from extra-durable nylon fiber that can easily be rinsed clean and dries quickly. This is a great tool to experience an exfoliating power cleanse at home.



Stretch marks selfies are the latest fad!



marks selfies Gone are the days when post pregnancy stretch marks and bodies were kept secret. Now, besides tracing the progress of the baby in the womb, there are photoshoots that exclusively take place post the delivery. Stretch mark selfies are another 'proud mom' movement and speak of women empowerment. No makeup selfie While the Ice Bucket Challenge brought awareness to ALS, the no makeup selfie was started by the Cancer Research Institute in UK. Gradually, it transformed into a phenomenon of flaunting the makeup-free look all over the world and women, including some B-town beauties, put up selfies sans cosmetics. ThighReading This movement started last month when a microblogging site user posted a picture of her thighs, captioning it #ThighReading. Derived from the idea of palm reading, it

picked up. As a result, girls posted pictures of their thighs — with scars, cellulite, spider veins, stretch marks, freckles and hair. At ease with body hair



Be it the unthreaded hair on the upper lip or unwaxed arms, body hair has been a big no-no for ages, but that's changing now. The play Vagina Monologues has tapped the issue. 'Hairy feminists', as the term goes, are widely supporting it, some are even making documentaries on the same. JustATampon Similar to Kiran's endeavour is the #JustATampon campaign in which people posed for pictures holding a tampon to immunise the shock value that is still associated with menstruation. There are games like Tampon Run and Tampon Dodge based on it, where instead of bullets, tampons are fired and dodged. Then again, there are comics that tell readers everything about periods.

In April, Kiran Gandhi, a Harvard Business School graduate, who ran a race with blood running down her legs, made headlines. Her reason for doing this was to tell women to not be ashamed of their periods and to raise awareness about feminine products. This is not the only instance where women tried to bring focus to sensitive issues, there have been other similar initiatives. Here's taking a look at some...

Post Pregnancy photoshoot And stretch



Well, looking beautiful has more to do with taking care of your skin and hair and less to do with hoping for a magical transformation. And to help you out in your sojourn of beauty, we bring to you five affordable beauty and hair care tips every woman must know. - If your skin is prone to acne, you should use an oil-free product that is non-comedogenic. Try looking for the word on the label of the product you're planning to pick up. A non-comedogenic product is formulated in a way that it does not cause blocked pores. - When using a hair colour for the first time, do conduct a 24 hour patch test. Apply some colour behind your ear or the inside fold of your elbow. Allow the colour to remain on the test area for 24 hours to check if your skin is not allergic to the product. - Hassled by the idea of removing a long lasting lipstick? Try cleaning it with some sweet almond oil dabbed on a cotton ball.

5 beauty tips every woman must know

There isn't a woman, who's not beautiful but sadly, the beauty standards fixed by the world have started determining the attractiveness of a woman these days. But then, who said you can't match those high standards and be the epitome of beauty?

- For enviable hair, massage your mane with some coconut oil. Shampoo the hair post ten minutes of the comforting massage and see how different your hair seem. - Hate green tea? Well, your feet will love it! Try throwing in a few tea bags into a tub along with some cold water and believe us your feet with thank you for the exercise.



For those enviable thick and long fingernails

People judge you by the way you carry yourself. As much as you take care of your face, your hands and nails too need equal attention.

Chipped and peeling fingernails are a problem faced by one and all. Nails can peel off due to several reasons. Climate changes, dietary issues, yeast infections, too much exposure to water and vitamin deficiency are some of them. Here are a few tips to take care of your nails. - Cold, dry weather can cause layers to separate and flake off. So moisturise your hands and nails every morning and evening. - Lack of biotin, sulfur or vitamin B can result in flaky nails. A good



supplement, as well as raw vegetables and fruits, will prevent the chipping. - If you're suffering from a yeast infection, it can adversely affect your nails. If you've been given a prescription ointment or cream for what's on your skin, try rubbing it on your nails, too. - Water has a drying effect on your nails, leading to flaking and peels. If your nails are exposed to water for too long, wear gloves wherever possible, and

moisturise at least twice a day. - Biotin helps our body to process fatty acids and proteins. Two and a half milligrams of biotin supplement is recommended daily to strengthen nails. Or you can take vitamin B complex daily. Add enough protein in your diet. You should have at least several servings of meat, dairy or nuts every day. - Do not use your nails in removing tags, pulling out staples etc. Get the right tool instead. While applying nail polish: Before applying nail polish, file and buff your nails in one direction only and remove all ridges that can cause chipping. Always apply two coats of nail polish and a clear top coat at the end to seal the nail.

Ghaziabad Bakrid murder case: Uneasy calm in area amid heavy police deployment

The murder of teenager Surya Pratap Chauhan in Khoda has led to an encounter, arrests and wider police action. The case has left the locality marked by anger, silence and demands for accountability.

New Delhi.(Agency)
Nearly a week after 17-year-old Surya Pratap Chauhan was stabbed to death in Ghaziabad's Khoda area, the locality remains tense despite a series of major developments in the case. What began as a murder on May 28 has evolved into one of Uttar Pradesh's most closely watched criminal investigations, involving arrests, a police encounter, administrative action and a large-scale crackdown across the region.

The killing of the teenager on Bakrid sparked widespread anger among residents and quickly became the focus of discussion across Ghaziabad and neighbouring districts. Although police have arrested several accused and the main accused, Asad, was killed in a police

encounter, normalcy has yet to return to Khoda. According to police, Surya was attacked around 3.30 pm on May 28 in Navneet Vihar following an alleged dispute linked to a motorcycle.

Family members claim he was called to the location through a phone call and was then surrounded and attacked by Asad and his associates. He suffered multiple stab injuries and later died at a Noida hospital.

The murder triggered protests and demands for strict action against all those involved. Police launched an intensive manhunt, arresting three accused while Asad remained absconding. A reward of Rs 50,000 was

announced for information leading to his arrest.

The case took a dramatic turn on the night of May 30-31 when police received information that Asad was attempting to collect money before fleeing. A joint team of Khoda and Indirapuram police



intercepted him.

According to police, Asad opened fire during the operation, prompting retaliatory firing in which he sustained fatal injuries. One police officer was also injured.

Police have since arrested Nawab, Farhan and Atif for their alleged roles in the conspiracy and attack. Another accused, Sarik Mewati, remains absconding and search operations continue.

ROAD NAMED AFTER SURYA

As public attention around the case grew, several political leaders and local representatives visited Surya Chauhan's family. Former BJP MLA Sangeet Som provided financial assistance of Rs 1 lakh, while BJP MLA Nandkishore Gurjar and Cabinet Minister Sunil Kumar

Sharma assured the family of justice.

Former MLA Amarpal Sharma announced that a road or intersection in Khoda would be named after Surya Chauhan. He also said employment assistance would be provided to Surya's elder brother.

The family recently immersed Surya's ashes in the Ganga at Haridwar. Despite the support received from public representatives and community members, family members say they are still awaiting complete justice and strict action against all accused.

Following the encounter, authorities also initiated proceedings against the residence linked to the family of the main accused, issuing a notice regarding alleged illegal construction and encroachment.

Crisis worsens at Delhi's Gulmohar Park, water contamination spreads across several lanes

New Delhi.(Agency)
More than a week after residents of South Delhi's Gulmohar Park began complaining of foul-smelling and contaminated water supply in parts of the colony, the crisis has now spread across several lanes, with households reporting illness, hospitalisation and acute shortage of clean water. even as repair work by the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) continues. According to residents, many families have stopped using piped water and are now dependent on DJB and private tankers as well as packaged drinking water.

The latest crisis comes days after authorities inspected possible contamination points near Gate 2 and other parts of Gulmohar Park, developed in the early 1970s. Local MLA Satish Upadhyay – also the DJB vice-chairman – had earlier told The Indian Express that possible contamination sources included illegal makeshift toilets set up during construction activity behind some houses and an old pipeline near a drain close to Gate 2 that had not been properly sealed.

Officials said the DJB later shifted focus to one of the colony's primary inlet zones after localised corrective measures failed to resolve the issue. They added that excavation near an earlier cave-in site revealed stagnant contaminated water, which could lead to sewage ingress into old pipelines through damaged joints and seepage points.

Prem Singh Dhingra (85), a resident, said he and his wife had both fallen ill. "The water was very dirty. But we had been using RO for years, so we continued using the water to brush our teeth and take bath... I developed diarrhoea and had to be hospitalised," he said. His 78-year-old wife, diagnosed with typhoid, is still in the hospital. "The water is still dirty and smelly. We are staying at our daughter's place in Uday Park till the situation is fixed at Gulmohar Park."

Eye on tackling undervaluation, stamp duty loss: Delhi tightens scrutiny of property registrations

New Delhi.(Agency)
To curb undervaluation of properties and ensure that government receives the correct amount of stamp duty, the revenue department has directed all sub-registrars and joint sub-registrars to closely scrutinise property registrations and take action to recover deficient amount if the declared property value is lower than the circle rates, particularly in cases involving basements in residential areas, officials said on Monday.

The circle rate is the minimum price fixed by the state government below which a property cannot be sold, while a stamp duty is levied to register documents, like an agreement or transaction paper between two or more parties, with the registrar.

The circular, issued by the Divisional Commissioner's office, lays down the procedure to be followed under Section 47-A of the Indian Stamp Act, 1899, in cases where properties appear to be undervalued. Officials also said that the circular has been issued following a recent High Court order.

According to the circular, under the Delhi Stamp (Prevention of Under-valuation of Instruments) Rules, 2007, owners must clearly specify both the plinth area (covered area) and built-up area (total physical footprint) of the property and the stamp duty will be calculated on the basis of these values, including the construction cost.

"In the case of partial sale of property, the valuation shall be proportional to the actual plinth area sold, and the stamp duty shall be determined accordingly," read the circular issued by the department. However, it is often observed that stamp duty is incorrectly computed on the maximum permissible plinth area instead of the actual built-up area, leading to undervaluation, it said.

Saket tragedy triggers MCD action: Owners of six buildings sent notices

Letters were sent to MCD regarding 200-300 such illegal structures by Mehrauli police station to MCD, BSES, and Delhi Jal Board in the Mehrauli-Chattarpur belt in the last three months.

New Delhi.(Agency)
Two days after a building collapse in Saidulajab area near the Saket Metro station in South Delhi killed six people, including five medical and engineering graduates, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) launched a crackdown on Monday against illegal constructions and issued notices to owners of six buildings in the vicinity, said officials.

Monday that the Delhi Police on two occasions in March had flagged ongoing illegal construction atop the four-storey building, which crashed on May 30. More than a dozen people — mostly medical and engineering graduates — were present inside a canteen adjacent to it, which was crushed in the collapse.

Six of them died. Even as construction of only three floors plus stilt parking is allowed, as per officials, a large number of buildings



— like the one that collapsed — are allegedly flouting the norms in the neighbourhood, which is home to a large number of students preparing for various competitive exams. Sources told that letters were sent to

MCD regarding 200 to 300 such illegal structures by Mehrauli police station to MCD, BSES, and Delhi Jal Board in the Mehrauli-Chattarpur belt in the last three months. A senior MCD official said, "We'll analyse what action has been taken against these units. At some places, notices may have been issued, some units may have been sealed, and at some places demolitions have been carried out." Close to the site of the incident stands another abandoned structure of five floors, which was also sealed by the MCD.

"After it was sealed, authorities just scrapped some part of its porch and then removed the seal. It should have been razed completely," said a source on the condition of anonymity.

'There was no 16-hour study schedule, played sports': JEE Advanced AIR 10

New Delhi.(Agency)
On the days when his preparation for JEE (Advanced) took a toll on him, Sikka would step away from his desk. He would play chess, head out to play sports with friends, or simply leave the books behind for a few hours.

"I tried studying 14-15 hours a day for two days," he recalled. "It didn't work for me. The cognitive load became too much. I couldn't process things properly and my problem-solving ability started going down," he told The Indian Express on Monday.

Among the 1,79,694 candidates who appeared for both papers of JEE (Advanced) 2026 on May 17, Sikka secured an All India Rank (AIR) 10

with a score of 311 out of 360 marks. The results, declared on Monday, placed him among the country's



highest-performing engineering aspirants.

All three top rankers — Shubham Kumar, Kabir Chhillar, and Jatin Chahar — belong to the IIT Delhi

zone, which dominated the Common Rank List (CRL) this year. While Kumar scored 330 out of 360 marks, Chhillar received 329 marks. Chahar secured the third place with 319 marks.

For Sikka, who lives near South Extension and studied at Delhi Public School, R.K. Puram, the journey to crack one of India's toughest examinations began much earlier, in Class 9.

Some of his friends had started preparing for competitive examinations, and he found himself drawn to the challenge. "I tried some problem-solving and liked the idea of solving difficult questions," he said. "I wanted to take it up as a challenge.

Manesar violence case: 3 workers get bail, court asks how families survived without their wages

New Delhi.(Agency)
Stating that demanding a salary hike to meet rising daily expenses is "not an offence itself", a Gurgaon court has granted bail to three factory workers arrested following the April 9 labour unrest in Manesar.

The court also expressed grave concern for the workers' families, observing that it was a matter of "serious and sensible thought" as to how their children survived without wages while the men languished in jail.

Additional Sessions Judge Dr Gagan Geet Kaur passed three separate bail orders on May 30 for Shyambir (50), Vivek Kumar alias Bunty (24), and Raj Kumar (32). The three were arrested in connection with the violence that erupted on April 9, during a protest by workers demanding higher wages at Richa Global Exports Pvt. Ltd at the Industrial Model Township (IMT) area.

The prosecution alleged that a mob of 200-250 protesting workers pelted stones at the company's managerial staff and police, set vehicles on fire, and caused injuries. The charges levelled against the accused included rioting, obstruction, causing damage to public and company property, and attempt to murder, with the police alleging the workers attacked officials with the "intention to kill".

While the prosecution opposed bail, citing the severe nature of the charges, the court closely examined the specific roles attributed to the three men and the lack of substantial evidence:

Vivek Kumar and Raj Kumar: The prosecution alleged both men were present at the spot, pelted stones with the intention to kill police officials, set a government motorcycle on fire, and were "captured in video damaging a

government vehicle".

Shyambir: The police alleged he was part of a pre-planned conspiracy, citing his mobile tower location at a co-accused's house where plans were allegedly hatched to provoke workers via



inflammatory WhatsApp messages. The police also relied on a "photograph of a get-together of the applicant-accused with other co-accused".

However, the judge did not find force in

the prosecution's immediate grounds for continued incarceration. Regarding Shyambir, the court held, "Except this, nothing incriminating has been shown against him... Prima facie... no incriminating evidence has been shown against applicant-accused till date".

For all three men, the court found no justification for further custody, explicitly recording in all three orders: "Admittedly, nothing is to be recovered from him". The court further noted that none of the applicants had a prior criminal background. Highlighting the systemic tragedy of the incarcerated labourers, the judge made strong observations about their prolonged custody. Shyambir had been in jail since April 13, while Vivek and Raj Kumar were incarcerated since the day of the incident on April 9.

New income tax regime: Can you claim deduction for interest on Home Loan? Explained

New Delhi..(Agency)

One common question most taxpayers will grapple with when they file their income tax return is if they can claim a deduction for home loan interest on their property under the new tax regime. The simple answer to this question is that under the new tax regime deduction for home loan interest on self occupied property is not available.

However, taxpayers can still claim a deduction on interest paid on a let out property. For a let out property, a deduction is allowed with no ceiling limit for loan interest against rental income from such property in the new tax regime. A taxpayer filing ITR under the new tax regime is not allowed to claim interest deduction against self-occupied property. However, for a let out property, the entire home loan interest repayment can be claimed as a deduction without any limit against the rental income under the new tax regime. Under the new tax regime, even if the interest deduction is allowed against the rental income, if there is any loss under the head house property then it cannot be set off against other income. Such losses cannot be carried forward to the future assessment years. Since the losses cannot be carried forward, the tax benefits on home loan interest are limited to the rental income from house property.

Let out property and tax deduction

According to the Income Tax India portal, "Income is taxable under the head 'house property' if it arises from a property consisting of any building or land appurtenant thereto." For the computation of income under this head, a house property has been classified into three categories:

Let-out property

Self-occupied property

Deemed let-out house property

Any rental income from a property owned by a taxpayer whether it is residential or commercial will be taxed under 'income from house property' unless it is used for their own business or is regarded as business activity. Any home that is rented out to a tenant for the whole or part of the year is considered a let-out house property for income tax purposes. For taxation, the rental income is classified under 'income from house property' and qualifies you for tax deductions. You can claim the entire home loan interest repayment as a deduction without any limit against the rental income of the let out property under the new tax regime. However, the tax benefits on home loan interest are limited to the rental income from house property.

ED conducts searches against Vedanta Group in FEMA probe

New Delhi..(Agency)

The Enforcement Directorate has conducted searches at premises linked to Vedanta Group as part of an investigation into alleged violations under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), officials said on Tuesday. The searches were carried out on Monday at multiple locations, including Delhi and Rajasthan, as the federal agency initiated a foreign exchange violation probe against the global mining conglomerate promoted by billionaire Anil Agarwal. Officials said the investigation pertains to alleged contraventions under FEMA's civil provisions. Confirming the ED action, a Vedanta spokesperson said the company was cooperating with investigators. "The company is extending full cooperation to the authorities and are providing all information sought." The company remains committed to compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. "As the matter is currently under regulatory process, we are unable to comment further at this stage," the spokesperson said.

Vedanta Ltd is a major producer of metals and critical minerals, with operations spread across India, Africa, the Middle East and East Asia.

India's public cloud spending set to reach USD 17.5 billion in 2026: Gartner

New Delhi..(Agency)

India's spending on public cloud services is expected to rise 28.1% to USD 17.5 billion in 2026 from USD 13.7 billion in 2025, driven by growing demand for artificial intelligence (AI)-ready infrastructure, application modernisation and digital transformation, according to Gartner.

The research and advisory firm said organisations across India are increasing investments in cloud technologies as cloud adoption becomes more closely linked to business objectives such as improving productivity, accelerating innovation, enhancing customer experience and strengthening resilience. "Strong enterprise demand for AI-ready cloud infrastructure is redefining cloud investment priorities in India, driving the next phase of public cloud spending growth," said Ashish Banerjee, Sr Principal Analyst at Gartner. "This is further fueled by rising demand for application modernisation, digital sovereignty, digital service delivery and more scalable, consumption-based IT models, as organisations move toward more advanced and strategic cloud use cases," he added. According to Gartner, infrastructure-as-a-service (IaaS) and platform-as-a-service (PaaS) will be the fastest-growing segments of India's public cloud market in 2026. IaaS spending is forecast to grow 40% to USD 6.26 billion in 2026 from USD 4.47 billion in 2025, while PaaS spending is expected to increase 25.4% to USD 6.41 billion from USD 5.11 billion. The rising need for AI-ready infrastructure, including GPUs, high-performance compute, high-speed networking, scalable storage and always-on inference capacity.

Not UK, not Germany: This Asian country has overtaken India as 6th largest stock market

South Korea has moved past India in global stock market rankings after a sharp rally in AI-linked chipmakers. The shift underlines how investors are favouring markets tied to the AI supply chain while Indian equities face near-term pressures.

New Delhi..(Agency)

Days after Taiwan pushed India out of the world's top five stock markets, another Asian economy has now moved ahead of India. South Korea has overtaken India to become the world's sixth-largest stock market, powered by a massive rally in artificial intelligence-linked semiconductor companies. Data compiled by Bloomberg shows that the total market capitalisation of South Korean-listed companies has surged 86% this year to reach \$5 trillion. In comparison, India's market value has fallen to \$4.8 trillion. The development

marks another setback for Dalal Street, which have been struggling with foreign investor outflows, a weakening rupee, rising energy costs and slowing earnings growth. The contrast is striking because India's economy remains more than twice the size of South Korea's.

According to International Monetary Fund estimates cited by Bloomberg, India's economy is expected to be worth around \$4.15 trillion this year, compared to South Korea's \$1.93 trillion economy.

Yet when it comes to stock market value, South Korea has now moved ahead.

AI BOOM DRIVES SOUTH KOREA'S RISE

The biggest reason behind South Korea's jump in the rankings is the global artificial intelligence boom. Bloomberg reported that technology giants Samsung Electronics and SK Hynix have become the driving force behind the country's stock market rally. The two companies, both major suppliers of memory chips used in AI systems and data centres, have recently joined the \$1 trillion market-cap

club. Their sharp rise has helped push South Korea's benchmark Kospi index to record levels and transformed investor sentiment towards the country.

South Korea's ascent follows a similar



trend seen in Taiwan, where chip giant Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC) helped lift the island nation's stock market above India's just days ago. Together, Taiwan and South Korea have become two of the biggest beneficiaries of the global race to build artificial intelligence infrastructure.

Gerald Gan, Chief Investment Officer at Reed Capital Partners, told Bloomberg that the rally highlights the growing importance of South Korean technology companies in the next phase of technological innovation. "It also reflects a broader shift in global capital flows toward major Asian economies, which were once overshadowed by Western markets but are now playing an increasingly prominent role in shaping the future of technology and growth," he said. **MORE THAN JUST AI**

Bloomberg reported that South Korea's stock market has also benefited from domestic reforms. President Lee Jae Myung's push for corporate governance reforms has coincided with the AI investment boom, creating a powerful combination for investors. The Kospi index has already crossed Lee's earlier target of 5,000 points, and some Wall Street analysts are now projecting even higher levels.

Stock markets decline in early trade as US-Iran negotiations face repeated setbacks

New Delhi..(Agency)

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty declined in early trade on Tuesday as investors remained concerned over the US-Iran situation, with diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis encountering repeated setbacks.

Persistent foreign fund outflows also hit markets' sentiment. The 30-share BSE Sensex declined 296.19 points to 73,971.30 in early deals. The 50-share NSE Nifty dropped 103.30 points to 23,272.25. From the 30-Sensex firms, Bajaj Finance, Eternal, Bajaj Finserv, Power Grid, Larsen & Toubro and NTPC were among the biggest laggards. Infosys, Tata Consultancy Services, Tech Mahindra, HCL Tech, Asian Paints and Mahindra & Mahindra were the gainers.

In Asian markets, South Korea's benchmark Kospi, Japan's Nikkei 225 index and Shanghai's SSE Composite index quoted lower, while Hong Kong's Hang Seng index traded higher.

US markets ended in positive territory on Monday.

"The US-Iran situation remains unresolved, with diplomatic efforts encountering repeated setbacks and no definitive breakthrough yet emerging. The prolonged tensions in the Middle East have kept global risk appetite restrained, prompting investors to adopt a more defensive stance amid concerns over regional stability and the broader implications for energy markets," Ponmudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth-tech firm, said.

US President Donald Trump said he persuaded Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to call off the strike on Beirut, following which the Israeli leader "turned his troops around". Trump made the announcement on Truth Social on Monday evening amid reports that the conversation between the two leaders was "heated" and the US president telling Netanyahu that he would have been in prison but for his intervention.

Trump's phone calls with Netanyahu came after Iran threatened to end the negotiations with the US over Israel's attacks on Lebanon. Meanwhile, Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 3,911.68 crore on Monday, according to exchange data. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, traded 0.73 per cent lower at USD 94.29 per barrel. "The trend of sustained AI trade, new records for markets in US, South Korea and Taiwan, sustained FPI selling in India and India's underperformance are continuing with no immediate signs of reversal," VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Limited, said. On Monday, the Sensex dropped 508.40 points, or 0.68 per cent, to settle at 74,267.34. Falling for the fourth consecutive day, the Nifty edged lower by 165.15 points, or 0.70 per cent, to end at 23,382.60.

Why your society maintenance bill could soon be Rs 3,000 higher every month

New Delhi..(Agency)

If you live in a gated community or apartment complex, your monthly maintenance bill may soon become noticeably higher. Across parts of Delhi-NCR, many housing societies are reviewing their maintenance charges after a recent increase in minimum wages for workers such as security guards, gardeners, cleaners, electricians and plumbers. According to a Times of India report, several residential communities have either already increased maintenance charges or are preparing residents for higher monthly bills in the coming months.

WHY MAINTENANCE CHARGES ARE GOING UP

The biggest reason behind the increase is the higher wage bill that societies now have to bear following the latest labour code revisions. Housing societies depend on a large workforce to manage daily operations, including security, housekeeping, landscaping, electrical maintenance and plumbing services.

With minimum wages rising, the cost of running these services has also increased significantly. Many resident welfare associations (RWAs) and apartment owners' associations



(AOAs) say they have little choice but to pass some of the additional cost on to residents. In some cases, maintenance charges are expected to rise by around 25% to 30%, potentially adding as much as Rs 3,000 a month to household expenses.

RISING COSTS BEYOND SALARIES

The wage increase is not the only challenge facing housing societies.

Rupee rises 16 paise to 95.03 against US dollar in early trade

MUMBAI..(Agency)

The rupee appreciated 16 paise to 95.03 against US dollar in early trade on Tuesday, as the market weighed India's strong domestic fundamentals against ongoing geopolitical uncertainty. Forex traders said the USD/INR pair opened on a positive note this morning on a slight risk off sentiment. However, the uncertainty surrounding West Asia continues to cast a shadow over financial markets and energy prices. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 95.16 against the US dollar, then touched 95.03 in early trade, up 16 paise from its previous close. On Monday, the rupee depreciated 34 paise to close at 95.19 against the US dollar. Market participants are now turning their attention to two key events closer to home -- the RBI policy decision scheduled for June 5, the



second event is the ongoing trade dialogue between India and the United States, CR Forex Advisors MD Amit Pabari said. A US delegation led by Assistant US Trade Representative Brendan Lynch will begin discussions with Indian officials in New Delhi this week as both countries work toward finalising a trade agreement. "Markets will closely monitor any progress on tariff-related issues and broader trade

cooperation," he said. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading at 99.19, down 0.01 per cent. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading down 0.59 per cent USD 94.42 per barrel in futures trade. On the domestic equity market front, Sensex declined 296.19 points to 73,971.30 in early trade, while the Nifty dropped 103.30 points to 23,272.25. Foreign institutional investors offloaded equities worth Rs 3,911.68 crore on a net basis on Monday, according to exchange data. On the domestic macroeconomic front, India's industrial production expanded by 4.9 per cent in April, while manufacturing output grew 6.2 per cent, matching its budget estimate.

Why LPG prices haven't risen despite global supply costs surging

Indian households continue to pay lower LPG rates even as global supply costs surge. The gap is being absorbed through subsidies and mounting under-recoveries at oil companies.

New Delhi..(Agency)

Even as global LPG prices have surged in recent months, Indian households have been largely shielded from the increase, with the government and state-owned oil companies absorbing a significant portion of the cost, government sources told India. According to data shared by government sources, the estimated cost of supplying a domestic LPG cylinder is currently around Rs 1,200. However, households covered under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) are paying just Rs 613 per cylinder after subsidy support. This means nearly Rs 587

per cylinder is being absorbed through a combination of government support and under-recoveries borne by oil marketing companies (OMCs). The figures come at a time when global LPG prices have risen sharply due to supply disruptions in the Gulf region and tensions around the Strait of Hormuz, a key route for global energy shipments. Despite these pressures, domestic LPG prices for households have remained unchanged. Government sources said the cost of LPG supply has increased by nearly two-fifths over the past few months as international benchmark prices climbed. The Saudi Contract Price (CP) for propane, which serves as the benchmark for India's LPG imports, rose from \$525 per tonne in January to \$750 per tonne in April. The sharp increase in global prices has put pressure on India's fuel subsidy system because the country imports a significant portion of its LPG requirements. Yet consumers have largely

been protected from the increase. According to the data, even households that do not receive Ujjwala support continue to pay less than the actual supply cost.

The price of a domestic LPG cylinder for



general consumers stands at around Rs 913, well below the estimated supply cost of Rs 1,200. The gap between the market cost and the retail selling price has resulted in mounting under-recoveries for oil marketing companies.

Government sources told India Today that OMCs faced domestic LPG under-recoveries of Rs 41,338 crore during FY25. The situation is expected to become even more challenging this year.

For FY26, under-recoveries are estimated to rise to around Rs 60,000 crore following the recent increase in international LPG prices. To ease some of the burden, government compensation to oil marketing companies for FY26 is projected at around Rs 30,000 crore, according to the data. The figures also highlight how Indian LPG prices compare with neighbouring countries. According to the data shared with India Today, households in Sri Lanka pay around Rs 1,241 for an LPG cylinder, while prices are around Rs 1,207 in Nepal and Rs 1,046 in Pakistan. In comparison, Indian households pay around Rs 913 for a domestic LPG cylinder, while beneficiaries under the Ujjwala scheme pay only Rs 613.

Short news

Six vehicles seized, FIR filed against illegal garbage dumping in Bengaluru**BENGALURU .(Agency)**

Six vehicles were seized, and an FIR was registered against those who were illegally transporting and dumping solid waste on vacant lands in the Kadugodi jurisdiction, Mahadevapura zone.

Waste was being illegally dumped into the Dakshina Pinakini River adjoining Survey Nos. 130, 131, and 142 near Siddhartha Layout in Kadugodi. Following public complaints, corporation officials maintained surveillance and initiated a special enforcement operation.

Five waste-laden vehicles that had arrived at the site for illegal dumping were seized on May 29. The drivers fled the scene after noticing officials. Bengaluru East City Corporation (BECC) said on Sunday that a sixth vehicle was seized at the same location on May 30.

Eco Sphere Waste Solutions Company was authorised by the corporation to collect and dispose of bulk waste generated from various commercial establishments and residential apartments within its jurisdiction. However, a group led by Naushad and others allegedly used fake identification cards in the name of the company and illegally collected bulk waste from different areas.

Two teens die in separate accidents in Bengaluru, police may book parents, bike owner**BENGALURU. (Agency)**

Two minor boys were killed in two road accidents in the city on Saturday night. In a hit-and-run case, a 16-year-old boy died and his friend sustained injuries after a tractor allegedly brushed against their scooter on RTO Road in the Mico Layout traffic police limits.

The deceased, Suraj Kumar (16), was a resident of 1st Main Road, Sarvabhooma Nagar. He was studying in 10th standard. His friend, Pushkar Ram Lohar, and Kumar's classmate, both 16 years old, escaped with injuries.

The police said that at 8.45 pm, Kumar was riding a scooter with Lohar on pillion. They were heading home after refuelling at a petrol bunk near Vijaya Bank Layout Circle.

A tractor passing on their left side was allegedly driven at high speeds.

The trailer of the tractor hit the scooter's left handlebar when the tractor driver braked suddenly. Both boys fell onto the road, and the rear wheel of the carriage ran over Suraj's head, killing him on the spot. Lohar sustained minor injuries and was rushed to a nearby hospital.

The tractor driver fled the scene. A case is registered against the driver, and the police are analysing CCTV footage to trace him. Police said a case would also be registered against the parents for allowing a minor to ride a scooter.

Head-on collision

A 15-year-old boy riding a motorcycle died after colliding with a scooter near SMVT Railway Station in JB Nagar traffic police limits on Saturday night.

Twice-rebuilt Chembumukku school road remains unfinished as monsoon, reopening nears**KOCHI.(Agency)**

A narrow lane near St Michael's Church in Chembumukku, which once served as a crucial shortcut for students heading to Assisi Vidyanketan Public School, has been rebuilt twice in three years after repeatedly collapsing into an adjoining canal. Yet, with the monsoon arriving and schools set to reopen, concerns linger over whether the stretch will be fully ready in time.

The lane, which connects the church area to the school, first gave way in 2022 when a portion sank into the nearby Edappally Canal, rendering it unusable.

Former councillor K X Simon, said the municipality floated a tender and assigned a contractor to reconstruct the road. Though the work was completed by February 2024, relief proved short-lived. "Within a few months, cracks began appearing on the road, and during the monsoon, the stretch was destroyed again. This time, completely," Simon said.

Shobha Philip, a local resident, recalled the incident. "It happened early in the morning, thus evading a major incident. But the road's collapse was hugely inconvenient to nearly a dozen families on this stretch," she said.

Former councillor Shaji Varghese, who represented the ward where the road is located, said the collapse worsened after the cleaning of Edappally Canal. "The work loosened the soil around the stretch, eventually leading to its collapse," Shaji said.

Vizhinjam port races to two million TEUs amid geopolitical instabilities**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM.(Agency)**

Vizhinjam is making big waves. Within just 18 months of operations, the seaport has achieved a milestone by handling 2-million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) — making it the fastest Indian port to cross both the 1-million and 2-million TEU marks.

Since its launch, the facility has successfully handled over 950 vessels. This includes 67 ultra-large container vessels measuring nearly 400m in length, such as the MSC Irina, the world's largest container ship, and the MSC Verona, one of the deepest-draft vessels to ever call at an Indian port.

This comes at a time when global shipping lines and major economies are prioritising resilient maritime infrastructure and diversified trade routes amid evolving geopolitical uncertainties across West Asia. To capitalise on this momentum, the

port is undergoing its phase-two expansion. Backed by an investment of approximately Rs 16,000 crore and slated for completion by 2028, the next phase aims to significantly boost the port's total container



handling capacity and facilitate full-scale international trade, building upon the official customs clearances received in November last year to handle export-import (Exim) cargo. However, the rapid growth in transshipment volumes stands in stark

contrast to the severe bottlenecks plaguing Exim cargo movements. Despite possessing state-of-the-art maritime infrastructure, the lack of crucial land-side logistics facilities — such as robust road and rail connectivity, container yards, and warehouses — is severely hindering seamless cargo flow.

Local entrepreneurs and officials warn that the lack of a supporting ecosystem and skyrocketing real-estate prices are stunting regional trade potential. This delay has already allowed neighbouring Tamil Nadu to capitalise on the opportunity by developing industrial parks near the border.

To address these critical infrastructure gaps, Vizhinjam International Seaport Ltd (VISL) has partnered with three major central PSUs: Indian Oil Corporation Ltd, Container Corporation of India, and Central Warehousing Corporation. Together, they have launched a comprehensive 2,000 crore logistics master plan at the seaport.

After decades-long wait, South Coast Railway set to begin operations from Visakhapatnam on June 1**VISAKHAPATNAM. (Agency)**

After years of anticipation and nearly four decades of sustained demand, the South Coast Railway (SCoR) Zone will formally commence operations from Visakhapatnam on Monday, marking a major restructuring of Indian Railways.

The zone, the 18th in the country, positions Visakhapatnam as a key administrative hub for railway operations in Andhra Pradesh.

The new zone brings under its jurisdiction the Vijayawada, Guntur and Guntakal divisions, which were earlier part of South Central Railway, along with a restructured Waltair Division of the East Coast Railway (ECoR).

The Waltair Division has been bifurcated, with its southern portion forming the Visakhapatnam Division under SCoR,



while the northern section becomes the Rayagada Division under ECoR.

In total, the SCoR Zone will manage 3,532 route kilometres, covering 6,454 kilometres of track, including multiple lines, and oversee 385 stations across Andhra Pradesh and neighbouring regions.

The Visakhapatnam Division will handle key routes, including Ichchapuram-Visakhapatnam-Duvvada, Vizianagaram-Kureru, Naupada-Paralakhemundi and Bobbili-Salur stretches, all critical to

passenger movement and freight connectivity along the eastern corridor.

According to reports, the zone will be supported by an estimated workforce of nearly 62,000 employees across its divisions. At the zonal headquarters, around 128 gazetted officers and over 1,100 non-gazetted staff will manage administrative and operational functions.

The new structure is expected to streamline decision-making, improve coordination between divisions, and accelerate infrastructure planning and execution.

The zone is projected to handle close to 100 million tonnes of freight annually, driven by mineral transport, industrial corridors, and port-linked cargo movement. Annual revenue is estimated to be generated through both freight and passenger services including key commodities like coal, iron ore, petroleum products and fertilisers.

‘Defying govt orders’: 40 booked for namaz on road during Bakrid in UP’s Bijnor**Lucknow.(Agency)**

Forty people have been booked in Uttar Pradesh's Bijnor for allegedly offering namaz on a road during Bakrid on May 28, in violation of government directives prohibiting prayers on public roads.

According to police, the complainant in the case, Inspector Rahul Singh, said Eid prayers were scheduled to be held at the Eidgah on Jalilpur Road and adequate police personnel had been deployed to maintain law and order and ensure security arrangements during prayers.

Police said while prayers commenced at 6.45 am, a group of 30-40 people, who arrived later, allegedly sat down to offer prayers in a public area, occupying the space from the Eidgah gate to one side of the adjoining road. The complainant stated that police

officers informed the group about guidelines issued by the government and apprised them of prohibitory orders in force under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), which had been promulgated by the District Magistrate



of Bijnor.

The complaint claimed that despite repeated instructions and warnings, the accused allegedly disregarded the directions of the police and proceeded

to offer prayers in the public area.

Based on the complaint, police said a case has been registered at Chandpur police station against 15 named individuals and 25 unidentified persons under BNS section 223 (disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant).

In a statement in the run-up to the festival last month, UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had warned that no namaz on the road would be allowed and told devotees to pray in shifts. In a veiled remark, he had also asked devotees to control their “numbers (population)”.

Warning against “any form of anarchy”, the CM had said people should offer namaz in shifts if they have limited space and not on roads, as public spaces cannot be blocked in the name of religious activities.

Bawa White House—Airport Link Road nears completion**Mohali.(Agency)**

The much-awaited link road connecting Bawa White House in Phase 11 to Airport Road is inching closer to completion, but commuters may have to exercise caution for a few more days as portions of the project remain under construction.

Although traffic is currently being allowed through a temporary one-way passage, several stretches of the road are still unpaved. A section of the bridge under construction is yet to be completed, with concrete slab work continuing at the site. Vehicles are presently navigating through temporary dirt tracks on either side of the bridge.

Contrary to concerns about a prolonged delay, GMADA officials say the remaining work is expected to be completed shortly. Speaking to The Indian Express, Amit Garg, Superintending Engineer, GMADA, said, “The remaining bridge work and road construction will be completed within the next 10 days. After that, the road will be opened for two-way traffic.”

Recent rainfall has further complicated construction activity, creating muddy conditions in the area. With the monsoon season approaching, concerns remain that adverse weather could impact the pace of work if the remaining construction is not completed on schedule.

People using route at their own risk

Workers at the construction site said the road is not yet ready for regular public use and that motorists are using the route at their own risk. Akhilesh Kumar, a worker at the site, said warning boards and plastic

384 structures to be demolished: BMC begins demolition drive in Mulund for GMLR project**Mumbai.(Agency)**

Paving the way for the construction of Goregaon Mulund Link Road (GMLR) project's twin tunnels, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) on Sunday launched a demolition drive of 150 structures across Mulund's Amar Nagar and Khindipada. With a total of 384 structures identified along the project alignment, 234 more residential and commercial structures are slated to be razed in the upcoming week.

Pegged at a cost of Rs. 6500 crore, the GMLR is an ambitious

project which aims to alleviate congestion by linking Goregaon in the western suburbs to Mulund in the eastern suburbs. While the entire project comprises of four phases, a crucial segment of the project entails the 6.65-km long TBM twin tunnels which will commence from the Film City in the western suburbs, run beneath the Sanjay Gandhi National Park (SGNP) and open near Mulund's Amar Nagar, which currently houses a huge slum belt.

At the Mulund exit of the tunnel, the BMC has identified 384 structures sprawled across Amar Nagar and Khindipada along the



project alignment. Of the total structures, records from the BMC show that 351 are residential structures,

including 275 eligible structures while the remaining are commercial establishments. On Sunday, the BMC's T ward staff

Illegal adoption angle, medical links emerge in Bareilly child trafficking probe, nurse among 6 held**Lucknow.(Agency)**

An alleged child trafficking racket unearthed by Bareilly police during the investigation into the abduction of an 18-month-old child from the district's Aonla area has led investigators to a larger illegal adoption racket.

Six people, including a government health facility nurse from Bareilly, have been arrested so far, with police claiming the network has been active for nearly a year.

The investigation began after the 18-month-old boy, Rishabh, was abducted from Manauna Dham in Aonla on May 24 while playing with two other children. Police registered a case of kidnapping and, on May 27, arrested Yogesh Kaziya and Pawan Chandel during an encounter, rescuing the child and reuniting him with his family.

During the course of the investigation, police traced the alleged involvement of Uttam Vajpayee, who was arrested and sent to jail on May 29. His interrogation subsequently led investigators to what they describe as a larger child trafficking network, resulting in the arrest of Sanjay Kumar Vishwas, Keshavram alias Manjesh and Seeta on May 30.

The police said in a press statement that the accused told investigators that they had been involved in taking and selling children through Uttam Vajpayee and other members of the network.

Bareilly Additional Superintendent of Police (South) Anshika Verma, who led the investigation, said the accused were connected through Uttam, who acted as a mediator between kidnappers and people working in the medical field.

NEWS BOX

GT players evacuated as short circuit causes team bus breakdown after IPL final

NEW DELHI. (Agency)

As the fireworks lit up the Ahmedabad sky and Royal Challengers Bengaluru players celebrated yet another IPL triumph, one man sat quietly in the stands, soaking in the moment. Abhishek Pathrod had found a spot close to the presentation stage, eagerly waiting for his childhood friend Rajat Patidar. With the coveted trophy in his hands, Patidar walked straight towards his childhood friend after the ceremony. The two embraced, their eyes moist with emotion. It was a hug that carried years of shared dreams, struggles and countless hours spent playing cricket together. "Dekha, jeet gaye. Kar diya na maine," Patidar told Abhishek before pulling him in for another hug.

Abhishek, who had played a significant amount of junior cricket alongside Patidar, couldn't resist reminding his friend of the remarkable journey. "Yes bhai, welcome, injury replacement to two-time IPL-winning



captain," he replied, triggering laughter from both. Two years ago, Rajat Patidar was just another player in the RCB dressing room. He shared space with superstars like Virat Kohli, Faf du Plessis and several other big names, but had little identity of his own on the IPL stage. Patidar is now the only captain after MS Dhoni and Rohit Sharma to win back-to-back IPL titles as captain.

"Usko to record pata nahi tha ki Rohit aur Dhoni ke record ko barabar kiya. His teammates told him. I remember when he took the captaincy, all of us friends got together and asked him, 'bhai 17 saal se nahi jite, pressure ka kya?'. He had smiled and said, 'kya pata iss baar jeet jayein'. He went on to lead the team to the IPL title," Pathrod remembered. Leading RCB is a completely different challenge from captaining a team like Mumbai Indians or Chennai Super Kings. The franchise carried the burden of a 17-year trophy drought. But Patidar not only embraced the captaincy, but he also elevated his batting alongside it - something many great captains have struggled to achieve.

Patidar's childhood coach and mentor, Amay Khurasiya believes the batter always possessed leadership qualities, regardless of his lack of captaincy experience.

I trained my binoculars on Virat Kohli right after the IPL final. I couldn't find him



Ahmedabad. (Agency)

The report was filed. The last line was sent to my teammates at the desk, the laptop shut. There were still a few balls left in the IPL 2026 final, and I had already reached for the binoculars because when Royal Challengers Bengaluru crossed the line, there was only one place worth looking at.

I trained them on him well before the winning six. He hit it: 75 off 42 balls, nine fours, three sixes, the last of them sealing the chase with two overs to spare. And then I waited. He blew a flying kiss toward the stands where Anushka Sharma sat. He raised his bat, briefly, at the crowd. And then he walked across to shake hands, opponents first, then teammates, in the manner of a man who had known all evening how this would end. I kept the binoculars on him, waiting for the knees to buckle, for the chest to open, for the Kohli I knew to come flooding through. The thing about Virat Kohli is that he celebrates a wicket like he has just won a World Cup. Arms spread, chest out, roaring at no one and everyone, as though the act of a batsman losing his stumps is the most significant event in human history. It is instinct, not performance — or perhaps, with Kohli, the two have always been the same thing. For seventeen years at Royal Challengers Bengaluru, that intensity was the heartbeat of the franchise. When he hurt, the team hurt. When he wanted it, you could feel it from the stands. Which is why anyone watching closely, on television or from the press box in Ahmedabad, spent much of the IPL 2026 final searching for that man and finding someone else entirely. To understand why that mattered, you had to have been in the same stadium twelve months earlier.

In the 2025 final against Punjab Kings, Kohli had started crying before the last delivery was bowled. Standing along the boundary rope, he sank to his knees, tears running freely. It was not a celebration, not yet. It was the release of 17 years of weight, the accumulated pressure of four runner-up finishes and a franchise that had taken everything he had and kept asking for more.

Virat Kohli, RCB fired up as Mo Bobat calls for unprecedented IPL feat

IPL 2026: Royal Challengers

Bengaluru ignited dreams of an

unprecedented IPL three-peat

after team director Mo Bobat

delivered a stirring dressing-room

rallying cry following their 2026

title victory over Gujarat Titans.

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

Royal Challengers Bengaluru might have just won their second consecutive Indian Premier League trophy, but the franchise has no intention of stopping. After ending an agonizing 18-year title drought last year, the team has well and truly gelled into a powerhouse, and they are now chasing a feat no other franchise has ever achieved.

Delivering a fiery speech in the dressing room following RCB's dominant victory over Gujarat Titans in the IPL 2026 final in Ahmedabad on Sunday, team director Mo Bobat wasted no time shifting the

goalposts. "I've got one last thing to say," Bobat announced to a captivated dressing room. "No team's ever won three in a row. Skipper, what do you reckon? Three in a row?" The question instantly shifted the vibe of the room. Virat Kohli and the rest of the squad erupted, completely hyped up by the prospect of charting unprecedented territory. Skipper Rajat Patidar answered with absolute certainty: "Definitely." SILENCING THE AUCTION CRITICS

Achieving a three-peat is an exceedingly rare feat in elite sport, with Australia's dominant men's cricket era between 1999 and 2007 standing as the most famous modern template. To even be in a position to replicate that greatness, Bobat stressed that building the right foundation from the ground up was essential. Speaking to reporters in a virtual press conference on Monday, Bobat reflected on the strategic choices that built this championship core during the previous mega auction. At the time, critics were far from impressed. "It's

funny when we finished our mega auction, I think we were ranked second bottom for the quality of the squad by quite a lot of broadcasters and a lot of experts," Bobat recalled. "Many people had us to finish



last. "Rather than letting outside noise derail them, the management backed their calculated blueprint." That was certainly nothing that affected our thought process or psychology," Bobat asserted. "We were clear on what we were trying to build as a squad in terms of team structure. We were quite clear

on the attributes and characteristics that we wanted from players—a combination of skill and character." Bobat also noted that while franchises cannot completely win a tournament at the auction table, they can certainly lose one, explaining that "it's quite hard to undo things that you then either regret... once you've got through your first mega auction."

THE INFINITE GOAL

A massive pillar of RCB's unprecedented back-to-back success has been the calm leadership of Rajat Patidar. Stepping into the captaincy role, Patidar has prioritised collaboration over autocracy. "I always like to back my instincts, but I also like to go and communicate with the coaches and the experienced players, where I can get ideas," Patidar explained.

"Overall, this is my way of captaincy." With a robust leadership group backing his instincts, the franchise is ready to transition from a double-champion to an absolute dynasty. Bobat believes that a truly great team must never get comfortable with past success.

Roland Garros Day 10 Order of Play: Zverev and next-gen stars take centre stage

➤ Roland Garros moves into a loaded day with Alexander Zverev, Elena Svitolina and Joao Fonseca all on the schedule. The draw also carries a Ukrainian derby, a late-night clash of disruptors and Indian interest in boys doubles.

MIAMI. (Agency)

Day 10 at Roland Garros marks the start of the quarterfinal phase, bringing with it a stacked lineup featuring top seeds, breakthrough performers, and blockbuster matchups across the draw. Second seed Alexander Zverev headlines the action, while teenage sensation Joao Fonseca continues his giant-killing run on

the Paris clay. The women's singles draw also takes centre stage with seventh seed Elena Svitolina set for an all-Ukrainian quarterfinal clash against Marta Kostyuk. Kostyuk enters the contest on the back of a stunning straight-sets victory over four-



time champion Iga Swiatek, one of the biggest upsets of the tournament so far. Action on Court Philippe-Chatrier begins at 2:30 PM IST with eighth seed

Mirra Andreeva taking on 18th seed Sorana Cirstea in the opening match of the day session. The schedule then moves into the much-anticipated Svitolina-Kostyuk encounter, before second seed Alexander Zverev takes on Rafael Nadal, who has impressed with a series of hard-fought wins to reach this stage. The night session features another intriguing showdown as Novak Djokovic's conqueror Joao Fonseca meets Jakub Mensik, both emerging as breakthrough names of the tournament after taking down established stars. Meanwhile, India will also be represented in the junior category, with Arnab Paparkar competing in the boys' doubles second round against the top-seeded pair. The day's action also spans across Court Suzanne-Lenglen, where several top seeds from the women's, men's, and mixed doubles draws continue their pursuit of the title.

Franchise cricket's boom forces ICC to take action on jam-packed calendar

BUDAPEST. (Agency)

Alarmed by the rapid proliferation of franchise T20 leagues across the globe, the ICC Board has approved the formation of a dedicated committee to examine how franchise cricket can coexist with the international calendar without disrupting the existing structure. The move reflects growing concerns among member boards that the expansion of domestic leagues is increasingly putting pressure on bilateral commitments and the ICC's Future Tours Programme (FTP). The issue has gained urgency as franchise leagues continue to multiply across cricketing markets. Alongside the IPL, tournaments such as the SA20, ILT20, Big Bash League (BBL), Bangladesh Premier League (BPL), Lanka Premier League (LPL), The Hundred and the Caribbean Premier League (CPL) occupy significant windows in the cricket calendar, while the European T20 Premier League is set to launch later this year. The Board expressed concern regarding the growing expanse of franchise cricket and resolved to form a committee to assess the



harmonisation of franchise cricket with the international calendar within the current structure," the ICC said in a statement.

The governing body has long grappled with balancing player availability, national commitments and the commercial growth of franchise competitions. Previous discussions within ICC committees have included proposals to cap the number of leagues a player can participate in during a

season while ensuring international obligations remain the priority. The concern is particularly acute for smaller cricketing nations, where players increasingly view franchise cricket as a more lucrative and sustainable career path than international cricket. Recent years have seen several high-profile players step away from international cricket to focus on franchise opportunities. West Indies batter Nicholas Pooran retired from international cricket before turning 30, while South Africa's Heinrich Klaasen also opted out of national duties despite remaining one of the most sought-after T20 players in the world. Former West Indies spinner Sunil Narine similarly spent much of his career prioritising franchise commitments over representing his national side. With new leagues emerging and existing tournaments expanding, the ICC fears that an unchecked franchise calendar could further undermine bilateral cricket and complicate scheduling under the FTP. India remains an exception, with the BCCI continuing to prohibit its contracted first-class.

Arnaldi outlasts Tiafoe in 5-hour epic to seal historic Italian trio in Paris

Roland Garros: Matteo Arnaldi outlasted Frances Tiafoe in a five-set French Open epic to reach the quarter-finals. The comeback completed a rare Italian trio in the last eight and set up a meeting with Matteo Berrettini.

Paris. (Agency)

Matteo Arnaldi produced one of the matches of the French Open to become the third Italian man in the quarter-finals on Monday, beating American 19th seed Frances Tiafoe 7-6(5) 6-7(5) 3-6 7-6(3) 6-4 in a late-night contest on Court Suzanne-Lenglen that lasted five hours and 26 minutes.

The result gave Italy a notable presence in the



last eight, with Arnaldi joining Matteo Berrettini and Flavio Cobolli despite Jannik Sinner's surprise second-round exit. Arnaldi, ranked 104 in the world, will now face compatriot Berrettini for a place in the semi-finals. Arnaldi had looked finished when he fell 4-1 behind in the fourth set, with Tiafoe in control and the match slipping away.

Instead, under the Paris floodlights and with the crowd fully engaged, he found another push, dragged the contest into a deciding set and then came through on his third match point after a night of fierce ball-striking and punishing rallies. "It's a dream to be here. Today in the third set I was so tired," Arnaldi said after the match. "We live to play these

matches, I always wanted to play like this at night at Roland Garros. It was not tennis, just something else, with everything we had. Someone had to win. Fortunately, it was me tonight." Arnaldi has now spent 17 hours and 42 minutes on court in Paris, the most by any player reaching the quarter-finals of a Grand Slam since the ATP Tour began recording match times in 1991. He had already needed more than five hours to get through his third-round match, and again he had to rely on endurance as much as skill.

Against Tiafoe's power, the Italian survived through relentless defence, chasing from corner to corner and repeatedly turning defence into attack. The match stretched both men to exhaustion before Tiafoe finally broke, sending a backhand into the net to end it. For Arnaldi, it was a comeback from the edge and a place in the last eight; for Italy, it was another marker in a strong Paris run, with three men in the quarter-finals and an all-Italian meeting between Arnaldi and Berrettini now set to decide one semi-final spot.



opening game before carrying that momentum into the second, sealing the match in straight games and moving one step closer to a potential rematch against world No. 1 An Se-young. The South Korean star, who defeated Sindhu in the quarterfinals of the Singapore Open last week, is expected to be the Indian's next major hurdle in Jakarta. However, An must first negotiate her opening-round clash against Turkey's Neslihan Arin before any meeting with Sindhu can materialise. With Tuesday's victory, Sindhu extended her remarkable dominance over Busanan to 21 wins in 22 meetings. The head-to-head record remains one of the most lopsided among top-level women's singles players in world badminton. While Busanan once again pushed Sindhu with her defensive resilience and court coverage, the Indian's superior attacking game ultimately proved decisive in the key moments. OTHER INDIAN SHUTTLE IN ACTION

India will have several more players in action as the opening rounds continue in Jakarta. Men's singles star Lakshya Sen, who reached the quarterfinals of the Singapore Open last week, is scheduled to face home favourite and world No. 13 Alwi Farhan later in the day. Former world No. 1 shuttler Pornpawee Chochuwong.

Sharvari Wagh

Wows Fans With Her Piano Skills, Recreates 'Maskara' From Main Vapas Aaunga

Actress Sharvari has found a new way to express her love for her song "Maskara" from her upcoming film "Main Vaapas Aaunga" as she showcased her talent by playing the song on the piano and stated that she is "finding new ways to obsess" over it. Sharvari shared a reel video of herself dressed in an all-black ensemble. In the clip, the actress is seen sitting and playing Vedang Raina's bit on the piano. "A piano, 10 free minutes in between shoot, and a little bit of #Maskara.. Had to try.. tbh just finding new ways to obsess over this part of Maskara #MainVaapasAaunga Releasing in cinemas on 12th June," she wrote as the caption. The song has vocals by Vedang and Nilanjana Ghosh. "Maskara" shows how the feelings of young love haven't changed over time. For Sharvari's character Jiya, it's all sparkle and mischief. She



dances through the feeling, teasing it, turning her butterflies into something bold and fun.

For Vedang's character Keenu, it is soft, honest, and vulnerable, as he quietly understands what she is playfully hiding. Main Vaapas Aaunga is set in Imtiaz Ali's dreamy world of love and longing. The film is set in Punjab predating the Partition of India, and tells the story of 2 lovers. The film features the architectural ruins of Punjab.

It stars Diljit Dosanjh, Naseeruddin Shah, Sharvari, and Vedang. Produced by Applause Entertainment and Mohit Choudhary and Shibasish Sarkar of Window Seat Films, the film releases in cinemas on 12th June 2026.

Talking about Sharvari, she began her career as an assistant director for Luv Ranjan and Sanjay Leela Bhansali in 2015, before making her acting debut in the war drama series The Forgotten Army – Azaadi Ke Liye in 2020 by Kabir Khan. The actress was then seen in the dud Bunty Aur Babli 2 in 2021. After which she was seen in the comedy horror film Munjya in 2024.



R Madhavan's Wife Sarita Calls Him 'Wonderful Husband And Father' In Birthday Wish: 'You Make Us Proud'



Actor R Madhavan, who turned 56 years old on Monday, received a heartfelt birthday wish from his better half, Sarita Birje.

Sarita penned an emotional note on her official Insta handle, in which she called Madhavan a 'wonderful husband and amazing father'.

She went on to add that she and their son, Vedaant, are keen admirers of his strength, kindness, and commitment. Dropping a video montage of a few unseen moments with the 'Rehnaa Hai Terre Dil Mein' actor, she wrote on the photo-sharing app, "Happy Birthday to my wonderful husband! And an amazing father, we are so grateful for the love, guidance, and support you give our family every day. You make us incredibly proud with all the hard work, dedication, and accomplishments you have achieved. (sic)".

"We admire your strength, kindness, and commitment, and we are so lucky to have you in our lives. Wishing you a birthday filled with happiness, love, and all the joy you deserve. love you," Sarita went on to add.

Several members from the entertainment industry, such as Shilpa Shirodkar, Bipasha Basu, Raghav Sachar, and, others used the comment section to wish Madhavan on his special day.

Additionally, his 'De De Pyaar De 2' co-star Rakul Preet Singh also wrote on her Insta Stories, "Happy Birthday @actormaddy... I've always admired your work, and I'm so grateful to have had the opportunity to work with you and learn from you. You're not only a remarkable artist but also an amazing human being."

"Here's to many more memorable roles, beautiful stories, and a year filled with joy, peace, good health, great food, and everything that makes you happy. Wishing you a wonderful birthday and an incredible year ahead!", she added. Moreover, director Vignesh Shivan added, "To an intelligent, Apolline, Polymathic, Erudite, handsome, inspiring & successful gentleman wishing a year that's filled only with astounding success and abundant happiness... Happy birthday to you @actormaddy sir #RMadhavan lots of love & respect (sic)."

'My Wife Never Left Me': Bobby Deol Praises Tania Deol, Says She Ran House Financially When He Had No Work



Bobby Deol has been enjoying a strong professional resurgence in recent years after making a comeback with his impactful performance in several projects, including Animal and The Baahubab of Bollywood. This marks a sharp turnaround from a long period of professional lull, during which he also faced personal struggles, including alcohol addiction and other challenges. In a recent conversation with Rajat Sharma on Aap Ki Adalat, Bobby opened up about that difficult phase in his life. He admitted that during his career slump, he turned to alcohol as a way of coping with feelings of failure and self-doubt. He credited his wife Tania Deol for helping him overcome alcohol addiction. He also rubbished rumours that she left him during his low phase, saying that she always stood by him.

Bobby Deol On Battling Alcohol Addiction

Bobby shared that his wife, Tania, played a crucial role during those tough years, even managing household responsibilities and finances while he had no work. He revealed that a turning point came when his children began questioning him, which motivated him to take control of his life and work on himself.

"When you give up, you get into self-pity. It's human nature. You feel your world is over, no one likes you, and then you get addicted to a few things which help sedate you. Even my father loved to drink, and I too started drinking and got addicted. But my wife helped me out of it," said Bobby Deol.

"If Tanya wasn't in my life, I wouldn't be sitting here today. She took care of our house financially. She was working and bearing all the expenses at home. It was when my children started asking why I was always sitting at home and their mother would go to the office that something snapped within me and I decided to work on myself," he said.

Bobby Deol Rubbishes Rumours Of Wife Tania Walking Out Of Marriage During His Bad Phase

The actor also addressed rumours suggesting that his wife had left him during his difficult phase, dismissing them as completely false. He clarified that although she would often warn him about his drinking, she never walked out of the marriage and stood by him throughout.

Katrina Kaif

Shares Glimpses Of Her 'Amazing' May, Drops Pictures With Vicky Kaushal And Vihaan

Katrina Kaif has just posted a series of pictures on her social media, and we can't keep calm looking at the cuteness. The actress has taken to her Instagram to give fans a peek into how her month of May went, and we surely know that she had fun. The actress attached her post with a long caption explaining each of the pictures that she shared. Putting out the post, Katrina Kaif wrote, "May..... you've been amazing" and continued explaining the pictures in the carousel. Explaining the first few pictures, in which she is looking absolutely dapper in an all-black outfit, the actress wrote, "Whichever city I go to, my search for the best hot chocolate is on happy to say that this is the best one ever" Sharing a few more pictures featuring Vicky Kaushal, his birthday cake, and more, the actress added, "Happy Family, but mummy has a strange hairstyle" The actress also gave a glimpse of her life with her baby boy, Vihaan. The actress is seen holding a storybook in her hand. Finally, the last picture in the carousel is a screenshot of the song Naa Pushde. Talking about it, Katrina wrote, "I discovered this song all on my own ... absolutely nobody told me about it"

About Katrina Kaif and Vicky Kaushal

Katrina Kaif and Vicky Kaushal tied the knot on December 9, 2021, in a private yet grand wedding ceremony at Six Senses Fort Barwara in Rajasthan after dating for nearly two years. Over the years, the couple have kept their relationship and personal life private.

The couple first announced their pregnancy in September 2025 with a soft black-and-white Polaroid-style picture on Instagram. In the photo, Vicky was seen lovingly holding Katrina close while she cradled her baby bump. Their caption read, "On our way to start the best chapter of our lives, with hearts full of joy and gratitude. ॐ"

Months later, in November 2025, Katrina and Vicky announced the birth of their baby boy with another joint statement. Without revealing the baby's face, the couple shared that they had welcomed "our bundle of joy" and thanked everyone for the love and blessings pouring in. The couple later revealed their son's name as Vihaan Kaushal in January 2026 while sharing the first glimpse of him online. Since then, Katrina has largely stayed away from the spotlight, embracing motherhood privately.



NEWS BOX

A US soldier and a British soldier die during training in Iraq

WASHINGTON. (Agency)

One American soldier and one British soldier died during a training exercise in Iraq, US and UK officials said Monday without releasing further details.

The deaths occurred Sunday at an air base in Irbil in the semi-autonomous Kurdish region of northern Iraq, where the U.S. has retained a presence, the US Army said in a post on X. The statement said the soldier's identity is being withheld until 24 hours after his or her family has been notified. The UK's Ministry of Defence said in a separate post that the family of the British soldier has been notified and requested a "period of grace" before more details are released. The US has been reducing the number of troops countering the Islamic State group in Iraq. But American forces have retained a presence in the Kurdish region as the U.S. seeks to strengthen ties with the Kurds. The US inaugurated a large new consulate compound in December in Irbil, the capital of the Kurdish region, highlighting Washington's diplomatic and strategic engagement in the area.

The deaths occurred nearly a month after two American soldiers fell off a cliff and died during an off-duty recreational hike in Morocco. They were reported missing May 2 after participating in African Lion, an annual multinational military exercise.

Man Named Loony Toon, Who Shot At Police Officers, Sentenced To 20 Years In Prison

world. (Agency)

An Oregon court sentenced Loony John Franklin Kolb Toon to 20 years in prison for shooting at three police officers. The incident occurred during a June 2025 traffic stop in Milwaukie, a suburb of Portland. Toon, whose unusual name mirrors the famous cartoon series, Looney Tunes, as well as a colloquial term some invoke when describing an eccentric or irrational person, opened fire on the officers before being apprehended. He was convicted on multiple counts of attempted murder and will remain behind bars for two decades. As per the Clackamas County District Attorney's office, the 43-year-old was on probation in connection with a first-degree attempted kidnapping charge at the time. Afterwards, Toon abandoned his car, ran onto a golf course and evaded arrest until the officers apprehended him approximately 30 km away in the city of Sandy, Oregon, four days later. "This was an incredibly dangerous incident," said Clackamas County Deputy District Attorney Rebecca Wareham Portlock, who prosecuted the case. She added that Toon "showed callous disregard for every single person in his path and endangered the lives of four police officers." He was charged and convicted on four counts of Attempted Assault in the First Degree with a Firearm, Unlawful Use of a Firearm, Felon in Possession of a Firearm and Escape in the Second Degree. Some Milwaukie police officers who were involved in the confrontation attended the hearing but declined to make victim impact statements. Toon also declined to make a statement when offered the opportunity. Apart from the prison sentence, Toon must also pay restitution to both Milwaukie's municipal government for damaging a police cruiser and the owner of a car that he struck with bullets, the district attorney's office said.

7, Including Suspect, Killed In Shooting After "Domestic Dispute" In US' Iowa

Tehran. (Agency)

At least seven people, including the suspect, were killed in a shooting spree at multiple locations across Iowa, United States, in an apparent domestic dispute. The "series of homicides" occurred at two residences and a business in the city of Muscatine, according to police. In a statement, the Muscatine Police Department said cops were dispatched at approximately 12:12 pm on Monday to a report of a shooting at a residence on Park Avenue. When officers and emergency responders arrived at the scene, they found four people with gunshot wounds inside the house. All four victims were pronounced dead at the scene. Investigators soon identified the suspected shooter as Ryan Willis McFarland, 52, of Muscatine, who had left the residence before police arrived. Law enforcement officials located



McFarland a short time later near a pedestrian bridge with a self-inflicted gunshot wound. Officers and paramedic personnel provided medical aid, but he was pronounced dead at the scene. As the investigation progressed, detectives learned there were additional victims and, subsequently, located two men dead from apparent gunshot wounds. One was found at another residence on Mill Street, and the other at a nearby business on Grandview Avenue, authorities said. Police said that preliminary findings indicate the shootings stemmed from a domestic-related dispute, as all victims were found to be family members of the suspect. Authorities have not released the names or ages of the victims.

Rubio to testify before Congress for the first time since the start of the Iran war

The former Republican senator will sit before House and Senate committees to make the State Department's annual budget request.

WASHINGTON (Agency)

Secretary of State Marco Rubio is set to face a litany of questions Tuesday about the Trump administration's fragile or stalling diplomatic efforts around the world when he appears for back-to-back hearings on Capitol Hill for the first time since the Iran war began. The former Republican senator will sit before House and Senate committees to make the State Department's annual budget request. But the focus is likely to shift quickly to the already uneasy ceasefire between Washington and Tehran, which has been further tested in recent days by back-and-forth attacks. Cabinet members, including Rubio,

have defended President Donald Trump's decision to launch the conflict despite promises over the years not to engage in "forever wars" in the Middle East. That work has been made more difficult by Trump's shifting goals for the conflict.

While Rubio is testifying before Congress for the first time since the Iran war started on Feb. 28, he took part in a classified briefing for lawmakers days after the first U.S. and Israeli strikes. He faced Democrats' anger over the lack of congressional approval but strong support from most Republicans for taking action against one of America's oldest adversaries.

In the two months since the war began, however, a small but growing faction of Republicans have joined Democrats in questioning the astronomical price tag and overall economic consequences of the conflict as they head into midterm elections in the fall. Last month, the Senate managed to advance legislation for the first time that would have forced Trump to withdraw from the conflict after GOP Sen. Bill Cassidy, fresh off a primary election

loss in which Trump endorsed his opponent joined Democrats in pushing it forward. The House also had scheduled a vote on a war powers resolution, but GOP leadership kept it from coming to the floor after it became clear that the majority party



would not have the numbers to defeat it. The actions show the GOP is struggling to maintain political backing for Trump's handling of the war as rank-and-file Republicans are increasingly willing to defy the president over the conflict. Following his appearances

Tuesday before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and House Appropriations Subcommittee responsible for the State Department, Rubio will return to the Hill on Wednesday to testify before the House Foreign Affairs Committee and equivalent Senate Appropriations subcommittee.

Rubio — the son of Cuban immigrants — also is likely to be questioned about the administration's escalatory behavior toward Cuba, as Trump has hinted that the small island country could be the next U.S. target after operations in Iran are wrapped up. Despite a series of meetings between U.S. and Cuban officials, Trump and Rubio have renewed threats against the island's government, which take on greater weight after the administration announced criminal charges against former President Raúl Castro. Over his congressional career and now as America's top diplomat, Rubio has maintained that Cuba is a national security threat because of its ties to U.S. adversaries and that Trump is intent on addressing it.

Pentagon bars journalists from its press office, saying it has become a 'classified space'

On X, acting Pentagon press secretary Joel Valdez said the press office was redesignated a classified space because speechwriters handling sensitive material now work there.

NEW YORK. (Agency)

In another of a series of moves restricting media access at the Pentagon, the Defense Department has declared that its press office is now a classified space inaccessible to journalists. On X, acting Pentagon press secretary Joel Valdez confirmed the move, saying there was "nothing controversial" about it and that it came because speechwriters, who use classified material, were now occupying the space. "The Pentagon Press Office has been redesignated as

a Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility due to speechwriters from the Office of the Secretary of War sharing the facility," Valdez wrote. "These speechwriters



routinely handle classified material ... as a result, journalists will no longer be permitted to enter the office space. There's nothing controversial about that." The latest move, first reported by The Washington Post, took place against a backdrop of escalating tensions between the U.S. media and the second Trump administration, which has played out both in the public arena and at times in the courts. For many years, Pentagon reporters had

credentials granting them wide movement in the building as they sought to interact with press officials there. But last October, most news outlets turned in access badges and walked out of the Pentagon rather than agree to government-imposed restrictions on their work.

The New York Times sued the Defense Department on May 18 for the second time in five months, arguing that a requirement that journalists be escorted while on Pentagon grounds violates the First Amendment and is "an unconstitutional attempt by the Pentagon to prevent independent reporting on military affairs." The paper said it had filed the additional lawsuit after first suing the Pentagon in December over new rules imposed by Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, to challenge an interim policy "that the Pentagon hastily put into place after a federal judge ruled in The Times's favor in its original lawsuit." The new policy included the requirement that journalists be accompanied by escorts at all times while in the Pentagon.

Russian attack on Ukraine kills at least 11 and traps others in damaged buildings

KYIV. (Agency)

Russia attacked Ukraine with a barrage of missiles and drones overnight Tuesday, killing at least 11 people, injuring dozens and trapping others, authorities said. At least four people were killed in Kyiv and 58 people were injured, including three children, Ukraine's state emergency service said in a statement on Telegram. Residential buildings and other civilian infrastructure were damaged in eight of Kyiv's districts. Attacks were also reported elsewhere across Ukraine. In the central Dnipropetrovsk region, at least six people were killed and 36 others injured after Russian strikes hit the city of Dnipro, according to the emergency service. A second attack as first

responders arrived at the scene killed one rescuer. A two-story residential building and part of a four-story apartment block were damaged, with people trapped beneath the rubble of



the larger building. The boom of explosions echoed through most of the night and into the early morning. Kyiv had been bracing for another mass attack for days, after

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy warned that Russia was preparing a renewed assault and urged people to remain cautious and seek shelter during air raid alerts.

In the Podilskyi district, there was partial damage to the upper floors of a nine-story building, trapping people under the rubble. Rescue operations were still underway in the early hours of the morning, even as the air raid alert remained in effect.

In the Solomianskyi district, a 20-story building and a 24-story building were damaged. Ukrainian officials have been pressing allies for more air defense missiles to counter Russia's ballistic missile attacks. While Ukraine continues to intercept a high percentage of drones, ballistic missiles remain a major vulnerability for the country's air defenses.

Trump Wants Tougher Iran Deal, But It Looks More Like Obama's 2015 Pact

WASHINGTON. (Agency)

Donald Trump's renewed push to secure a new nuclear agreement with Iran is being viewed by many through the lens of the deal negotiated by former US President Barack Obama. Trump has repeatedly criticised the 2015 pact, calling it the "worst deal ever".

Since he spent years slamming Obama's nuclear agreement and withdrew from it in 2018, Trump does not want to sign a new deal that looks too similar. Trump is focused on making a new Iran deal that he can present as better than the 2015 agreement. Though it seems that the draft memorandum of understanding (MoU), which is being discussed with Iran, is, in some ways, similar to the deal he had strongly opposed. "Trump will be very worried about his deal being compared to Obama's because ripping up the JCPOA was a centrepiece of the early days of his first administration," said Andrew Moran, a professor at the London Metropolitan University, according to the iPaper. The Obama deal placed limits on Iran's nuclear activities for 15 years until 2030. In 2015, Tehran even gave almost 97 percent of its uranium to Russia. Trump argued that the deal was not strong enough and pulled the US out of the agreement in 2018. Soon after, Iran started increasing uranium enrichment earlier than expected, which brought it closer to being able to build a nuclear bomb.

"If that deal had stayed in place, it is unlikely that we would be in the situation that we're in now," said Moran. Trump is facing pressure from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and hardline members of his own Republican Party. They want any agreement with Iran to be tougher than the 2015 deal and do not want sanctions on Iran to be eased without major concessions. At that time, Iran was allowed to enrich uranium only up to 3.67 percent, far below the roughly 90 percent enrichment needed for a nuclear weapon. The deal limited Iran's uranium stockpile to 300 kilograms. Iran now has about 440.9 kilograms of uranium enriched to 60 percent. The US is now pushing for a long-term agreement, including a 20-year ban on uranium enrichment and a firm commitment that Iran will never develop nuclear weapons. The proposed plan also includes a possible 60-day ceasefire, reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, a key global oil route, and restarting talks on Iran's nuclear programme. "It feels like the whole framework of these negotiations is based on the Obama deal, the only difference being the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, which was open and running freely until Trump started this war," said Mark Shanahan, associate professor at the University of Surrey.

Pentagon Bars Journalists From Its Press Office. Here's Why

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December over new rules imposed by Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, to challenge an interim policy "that the Pentagon hastily put into place after a federal judge ruled in The Times's favor in its original lawsuit." The new policy included the requirement that journalists be accompanied by escorts at all times while in the Pentagon.

The policy was implemented in March following a ruling by U.S. District Court Judge Paul L. Friedman that had struck down earlier restrictions. The following month, the judge ruled that the interim policy violated his March order. But the escort policy remained in place when an appeals court stayed part of Friedman's ruling while the government appeals. The appeals process is ongoing.