



'Nepal a priority partner in our Neighbourhood First Policy':

PM Modi meets RSP Chairman Lamichhane; affirms deepening ties

New Delhi.(Agency) Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday met the Chairman of Nepal's Rastriya Swatantra Party, Rabi Lamichhane and underlined that India looks forward to elevating the special and multifaceted partnership between the two countries.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri were among those present in the meeting between PM Modi and Lamichhane.

In a post on X, PM Modi said, "I welcome and fully share his desire to work closely together for a shared and prosperous future. Nepal is a priority partner under our Neighbourhood First policy and we look forward to collaborating with the new government to elevate the special and multifaceted relationship between our two countries to greater heights." Earlier on Tuesday, Union Home Minister Amit Shah met the delegation led by

Rabi Lamichhane, as both sides expressed their firm resolve to work together to enhance the

India's best wishes for the success of the new government.

"A meeting was held by Hon'ble Union Home Minister Shri @AmitShah with the Nepalese delegation led by Shri Rabi Lamichhane, Chairman, Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP), in New Delhi today," Home Minister's Office said in a post on X.

The Home Minister congratulated Shri Lamichhane on RSP's victory in the elections and conveyed India's best wishes for the success of the new government. Both sides expressed their firm resolve to work together for enhancing the special ties between India and Nepal," it added.

Lamichhane also met External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar."It was wonderful to meet with India's External Affairs Minister, S Jaishankar, in New Delhi today. We held a constructive dialogue on strengthening Nepal-India relations, focusing on our development partnership, and multifaceted engagements," Lamichhane said in a post on X.



special ties between the two countries. The Home Minister congratulated Lamichhane on RSP's victory in the elections and conveyed

Maharashtra cabinet clears Rs 36,585-crore farm loan waiver scheme for 55.72 lakh farmers

Mumbai.(Agency)

The Maharashtra Cabinet on Tuesday approved the Rs 36,585-crore Purnayashlok Ahilyadevi Holkar farm loan waiver scheme, extending relief to an estimated 55.72 lakh farmers across the state.

The scheme covers short-term crop loans taken between April 1, 2019, and March 31, 2025, and comprises three components: a debt waiver, a one-time settlement (OTS) mechanism, and incentive benefits for regular borrowers.

Under the debt waiver component, farmers with outstanding crop loans of up to Rs 2 lakh, including principal and interest, that remained overdue on September 30, 2025, and unpaid by March 31, 2026, will be eligible for complete relief. The waiver will apply across one or more loan accounts, irrespective of landholding size.

Farmers whose overdue crop loan liabilities exceed Rs 2 lakh will be covered under the OTS scheme.

To avail of the benefit, borrowers must repay the amount exceeding Rs 2 lakh. Once the excess amount is cleared, the state government will waive up to Rs 2 lakh of the remaining dues. The provision will also apply to restructured and re-restructured crop loans. Eligible farmers have until March 31, 2027, to deposit the balance amount.



Kejriwal expresses grief over 21 deaths in Malviya Nagar fire, warns of "continuous fire incidents" in Delhi

New Delhi.(Agency)

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday expressed grief over the fire tragedy in Malviya Nagar, Delhi, which claimed 21 lives, while also flagging what he described as "continuous fire incidents" in the national capital.

In a post on X, Kejriwal said he prayed for the victims and expressed concern over the recurring nature of such tragedies in the city.

"I pray to God for the peace of the souls of those who lost their lives in the horrific fire in Malviya Nagar, Delhi. Today, such a massive incident occurred in Malviya Nagar. The tragic news of 20 people losing their lives... The continuous fire incidents in Delhi and the deaths of innocent people are extremely concerning," he wrote. According to Max Healthcare, of the 39 patients received at Max Hospital, Saket, 18 were brought dead, 15 are

admitted in ICU, including 8 patients on ventilator support and in critical condition. Five patients with minor injuries were treated



and discharged after primary care, while one patient was shifted to Safdarjung Hospital due to severe burns. Officials said the

deceased include both Indian and foreign nationals. Meanwhile, a team of forensic experts also reached the site as investigations were initiated into the cause of the fire.

Furthermore, Jitendra Kumar, SDM, DDMA, South District, said rescue operations concluded at 12:12 pm. He added that fire started from the ground floor.

"A total of 47 people have been rescued, and 21 people have died. The search and rescue operation concluded at 12:12 pm. The condition of 2-3 people is serious. There is a hotel located on the ground floor of the building. The fire department has not been able to confirm what caused the fire. The fire started from the ground floor," he told ANI.

Locals described chaotic scenes as people were trapped inside the building and rescued with the help of residents and emergency teams.

"Confidence that you will lead Karnataka successfully":

Sonia Gandhi wishes CM-designate DK Shivakumar ahead of swearing in Bengaluru (Karnataka) .(Agency)

Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi called Chief Minister-designate DK Shivakumar on Wednesday and wished him all the best, saying that she has "unwavering confidence that he will lead Karnataka successfully."

"Take everyone together. I have unwavering confidence that you will lead Karnataka successfully. Handle the new responsibility competently. May you be successful in the future," Sonia Gandhi said. Furthermore, caretaker Chief Minister Siddaramaiah informed that G Parameshwara would take oath as Deputy CM.

"Today evening, @DKShivakumar, who is set to take the oath as the state's new Chief Minister, and @DrParameshwara, who is set to take the oath as Deputy Chief Minister, met with me and expressed their gratitude. At this time, I congratulated both leaders and extended my best wishes," the post read.

Senior Congress leader G Parameshwara met Shivakumar at his residence earlier in the day. Several other senior leaders, including Satish Jarkiholi, Ramalinga Reddy, MB Patil, Priyank Kharge and Yathindra Siddaramaiah, are also expected to take oath as ministers in the new government.



Explosive Exposé: Police Employee Accused of Running Extortion Network from Private Office

Mahanagar Metro Desk / Pawan Makan

Ahmedabad. A shocking controversy has surfaced within the Ahmedabad Police establishment, where a police department employee, identified as "Giri," is allegedly operating an extensive extortion and illegal protection network from a private office near Wadaj Police Chowky instead of performing official duties. Sources claim that the employee has become a key intermediary for bootleggers and illegal operators across the city, allegedly managing financial dealings worth lakhs of rupees on a regular

basis. The case has sparked concerns about why local authorities, crime units, and enforcement agencies have allegedly failed to act despite widespread knowledge of these activities. Critics question whether influential figures within the system are shielding the network. The employee is also facing questions over his reportedly lavish lifestyle, including luxury vehicles, expensive properties, and significant real-estate holdings, allegedly disproportionate to a government salary. When contacted by Mahanagar Metro News, the local Police Inspector reportedly stated that



he had no information regarding the alleged illegal activities operating in the area. The revelations have prompted demands for a high-level inquiry into the allegations, with calls for the Home Department and senior authorities to investigate the alleged nexus between illegal operators and police personnel.

1 house, 4 bodies, cryptic Bunty-Babli message: Prayagraj murder mystery deepens

New Delhi.(Agency)

What began with a foul smell emanating from a house locked for several days has turned into a chilling murder case that has gripped Prayagraj. Four members of a family were found dead inside the house after neighbours, suspicious about the odour, alerted the police.

The case took a turn after a cryptic message was found near the bodies, some of which were reportedly beheaded. The message, handwritten on a piece of cardboard, read: "Bunty and Babli's daughter-in-law killed them."

Investigators have sent the message for handwriting analysis and are now trying to ascertain if the message was left behind by a victim or planted by a suspect to mislead the probe.

The gruesome incident came to light on Tuesday after the police were alerted about the house located near the Sabzi Mandi intersection.

Shivakumar as Shiva on Karnataka newspaper frontpage, people call it blasphemy

New Delhi.(Agency)

Ahead of the oath-taking ceremony of DK Shivakumar as Karnataka's Chief Minister on Wednesday, a Kannada newspaper has triggered a controversy after publishing an illustration depicting the Congress leader as Lord Shiva. The Bengaluru-based newspaper is now facing criticism, with many (including critics) accusing it of "blasphemy" and "political sycophancy".

Kannada daily Vishwavani's lead story on Wednesday portrayed Shivakumar as the Hindu deity Shiva, complete with jata (matted hair), tiger-skin attire, a trishool and a damru. The illustration was also shared on X by the newspaper's Editor-in-Chief, Vishweshwar Bhat, on Wednesday. The depiction of Shivakumar as Hindu deity Shiva quickly

sparked outrage on the day the 64-year-old Congress leader is set to take the oath as the Karnataka CM. People objected to the portrayal of Shivakumar with Hindu deity Shiva, calling it an irresponsible attempt to mix religion with political glorification.

"This is Blasphemy... I don't know how Kannadigas are seeing it as normal," a person posted on X, reacting to the newspaper's depiction. Karnataka-based Advocate Girish Bharadwaj said it was "against Dharma and undermined the sanctity of our gods".

"This should not be done with any politician. Portraying politicians alongside or as deities is against Dharma and undermines the sanctity of our gods," Girish Bharadwaj wrote on X.

"I never expected such content from Vishwavani. Dharma should not be trivialised for political

narratives," Bharadwaj added.

Several social media users also questioned the appropriateness of portraying Shivakumar as a Hindu deity, with some pointing to his past legal troubles.

"What a fall. Comparing a person who is an ex-Tihar to a Hindu deity. Some people can stoop to any level," Giridhar Upadhyaya, a biology professor from Bengaluru, posted on X. Upadhyaya's remark was a reference to Shivakumar's incarceration in New Delhi's Tihar Jail in 2019 in connection with a money-laundering case investigated by the Enforcement Directorate. Some people also saw the move as an attempt at excessive political flattery. "Creativity or absolute flattery? Transforming leaders into deities on a front page is wild.

Kannada newspaper Vishwavani triggered a row and is drawing criticism after depicting DK Shivakumar as Lord Shiva on its front page ahead of his oath-taking ceremony. The illustration has sparked outrage, with critics calling it an act of blasphemy and that of political flattery.



News box

Man parks vehicle in the middle of NH8's service road, faces FIR

Gurgaon.(Agency)

An FIR was filed against a person for parking his car in the middle of a busy stretch on the Delhi-Gurgaon Expressway (NH8) near Manesar bus stand. Police said construction of a flyover is currently underway near the bus stand, due to which vehicles travelling from Jaipur towards Delhi are being diverted onto a service road. A Hyundai Aura, bearing temporary registration number T026HR5704E, was parked on the third lane of the service road without any indicator.

ASI Parveen said he parked the police vehicle about 30 metres ahead and waited for the car to move. However, the vehicle remained stationary. The obstruction led to traffic congestion and increased the possibility of an accident on the busy highway stretch, police said.

When the police team approached the vehicle, they found a man standing next to the driver's window holding the keys. "On being questioned, he identified himself as Virendra, a native of Nasirpur village in Mainpuri district of UP and a resident of Roshanpura, Najafgarh, New Delhi," a cop said, adding that during questioning, Virendra failed to provide any satisfactory explanation for parking the vehicle on the road without indicators and causing obstruction to traffic.

Police took possession of the vehicle and its insurance documents as evidence. When asked to produce the vehicle's registration certificate, the driver said he didn't have the certificate on him. Manesar police registered a case under Section 285 (penalises anyone who negligently or intentionally causes danger, obstruction, or injury to others in a public way or waterway) of BNS.

Meanwhile, Gurgaon Traffic Police said it has intensified enforcement against traffic violations across the city. During a special campaign against wrong-side driving conducted in May, police issued 6,797 challans and imposed penalties amounting to Rs 41.56 lakh.

Police urged motorists to follow traffic regulations, use designated lanes and avoid actions that could endanger other road users or disrupt traffic flow.

Two MCM sanitary inspectors suspended for missing crucial meet



Gurgaon.(Agency)

Municipal Corporation of Manesar (MCM) on Tuesday suspended two sanitary inspectors for skipping a crucial meeting and an inspection related to an ongoing controversy over door-to-door waste collection vehicles. MCM commissioner Pradeep Singh placed Sumit Kumar and Sumit Hooda under suspension with immediate effect pending disciplinary proceedings. According to the orders, the officials were absent from a meeting on May 22 and a vehicle inspection on May 24.

"Subsequently, you were contacted via telephone but you did not respond. Furthermore, you did not inform any higher officials about your absence," read the notice. They also failed to submit a satisfactory reply to a show-cause notice issued on May 25. The suspension orders described the conduct as "gross negligence, dereliction of duty and non-performance". The action comes amid a storm over the inspection of vehicles by the mayor's husband in her absence last month. Waste collection operations across Manesar came to a standstill after the private agency responsible for the service alleged harassment of its employees during an inspection on May 20. The contractor claimed the mayor's husband, Rakesh Yadav, participated in the exercise despite holding no official position in the civic body, and that workers were intimidated during the process.

UP govt's free coaching classes for JEE, NEET to start next month

Noida.(Agency)

Students preparing for UPSC, UPPSC, PCS-J, NEET and JEE can apply for free coaching under UP govt's Abhyudaya scheme. In Noida, registrations will remain open from June 5 to 30, and entrance tests will be held between July 1 and 7. In Ghaziabad, applications for free IAS-PCS coaching are open till June 15, and classes will start on July 1. GB Nagar's district social welfare officer Satish Kumar said results of the entrance test will be declared by July 11 and classes are scheduled to commence on July 15. According to officials, coaching for UPSC, NEET and JEE will be conducted at Mihir Bhoj Boys' Inter College in Dadri, while UPSC and UPPSC classes will be held at Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar Library in Sector 37, Noida. NEET and JEE coaching is also proposed at Panchsheel Boys' Inter College in Sector 93, while PCS-J classes are planned at Gautam Buddha University in Greater Noida. The district administration has also invited applications from guest lecturers and subject experts for the programme. Faculty members will be empanelled for subjects ranging from polity, economy, geography, ethics and current affairs for civil services preparation, to physics, chemistry, mathematics, botany and zoology for engineering and medical entrance examinations. Officials said preference would be given to university and govt college teachers, as well as candidates who have cleared advanced stages of civil services examinations. Selected experts will receive an honorarium of Rs 2,000 per 90-minute lecture. Applications from eligible subject experts can be submitted by June 15.

Allegations of Corruption Rock Mehsana Police Department; Questions Raised Over Illegal Liquor and Gambling Networks

Mehsana. Fresh allegations emerging from Mehsana district have reignited concerns over the effectiveness of Gujarat's prohibition laws and the functioning of law enforcement agencies. Discussions surrounding alleged illegal liquor and gambling operations across several parts of the district have placed the spotlight on a police employee, with local sources claiming that organized networks continue to operate despite repeated complaints. According to allegations circulating at the local level, illegal liquor distribution and

gambling activities are reportedly active in areas including Langhnaj,



Nandasan, Kadi, Bawlu, and Santhal. Residents and community representatives claim that several such operations are functioning openly, while expected enforcement action has allegedly remained limited. A police em-

ployee identified as Tarunsinh Dabhi has become the subject of public discussion, with allegations suggesting that he may be playing an influential role in coordinating activities among individuals linked to these illegal operations. However, these allegations have not been independently verified, and no official agency has publicly confirmed the claims. The matter has gained further attention amid allegations of an interstate liquor-smuggling network. Local sources claim that liquor consignments are allegedly transported from

neighboring Rajasthan into Gujarat before being distributed through various channels. These claims remain unverified and would require a formal investigation to establish their authenticity. Civil society groups and local residents argue that if the allegations are found to be true, the issue would extend beyond any individual and point toward a broader organized network requiring thorough scrutiny. Calls are growing for an impartial and high-level inquiry by the Home Department, Police Headquarters, and other competent inves-

tigative agencies. Political and social circles have also urged authorities to examine the allegations and determine whether any form of protection or corruption has enabled illegal activities to flourish. They maintain that strict action should be taken against any individual found guilty after due investigation. As of now, no official response has been issued regarding the allegations. Public attention remains focused on whether the concerned authorities will initiate a comprehensive inquiry and bring clarity to the serious claims being raised.

Can frame fresh rules on teacher cadre change policy: Punjab and Haryana high court to govt

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

Punjab and Haryana high court has allowed the state govt to frame a fresh policy about school teachers. Disposing of a batch of petitions — filed by junior basic training (JBT) teachers challenging Haryana's cadre change policy linked to the transfer system — the bench of Justice Ashwani Kumar Mishra and Justice Rohit Kapoor, on May 25, made it clear that the concerns raised by teachers regarding the legality of the same — including claims of discrimination — must be taken into account by the state while framing a revised policy. Under the cadre change policy, teachers could be shifted across cadres during transfers, a move that many petitioners argued was arbitrary and could

affect their job security, seniority and working conditions. Several teachers also raised concerns about possible gender discrimination and lack of transparency in how cadre changes were being implemented. The order stops short of striking down or upholding the existing policy. Instead, it puts the responsibility on the govt to revisit and improve it.

Legal observers say this approach ensures administrative flexibility while safeguarding the interests of teachers. The dispute has its roots in Haryana's recent push to streamline teacher transfers through a centralised system, which included provisions for cadre changes. While the govt aimed to bring efficiency and uniformity, many teachers felt the

policy created confusion and could lead to unfair outcomes. The court noted that a similar challenge to the model transfer policy was already decided earlier in May 2026 in a lead case.

In that order, the court gave liberty to Haryana govt to formulate an appropriate policy. Following the same reasoning, the bench disposed of the current batch of petitions, stating that these would be governed by the earlier order. With the court now directing a reconsideration, teachers' groups are expected to demand consultations and clearer guidelines before a new policy is introduced. The HC also disposed of all pending applications related to the matter along with the main petitions.

Woman arrested for video 'offering beef to Bengal CM'

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

A district court on Tuesday denied bail to a woman arrested over a social media video in which she purportedly claimed she had cooked beef and wanted to offer it to West Bengal's "Hindu chief minister".

The case, lodged after objections from local residents and social media users, centres on allegations that the clip was intended to provoke and outrage religious feelings. The court remanded the 33-year-old woman from Bengal in judicial custody. She will remain in jail at least till the next hearing on June 8.

Originally from South Dinajpur, the woman was arrested from Chakkarpur on May 30 after an FIR was registered at Sector 29 police station under Section 299 of the BNS, which deals with deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings.

The complaint was filed by Dinesh Yadav, a Chakkarpur resident, who told police he had received a video on his phone in which a woman was speaking in Bengali about cooking beef and feeding it to Bengal's newly elected chief minister, Suwendu Adhikari.

In the clip, the woman, dressed in pink, is seen standing in a kitchen, cooking and addressing herself directly to the "CM of Bengal". She purportedly says she has prepared beef, along with roti and rice, and offers it to the chief minister on camera. She also refers to restrictions on qurbani on Eid.

The counsel for the complainant, Sundar Singh, said the case was registered on the basis of material collected during the probe. "The accused, in her statement, also admitted to recording the video in question. She was arrested and produced before a court on May 30. The court remanded her in judicial custody," he said.

On Tuesday, the woman moved a bail plea through her lawyer, but the court refused relief. Opposing bail, police argued that since she is from another state, she could leave the city and influence witnesses if released. Singh said the defence "did not complete its arguments and sought more time".

In Gurgaon, live-in partner held 17 months after he poisoned infant son

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

Nearly 17 months after a five-month-old baby died under suspicious circumstances in Bilaspur, police on Monday arrested a 23-year-old man who allegedly poisoned the infant because he did not want the child born from his live-in relationship. Vikramjeet, a resident of Barri village in Hisar district, was arrested by a team from Bilaspur police station. Police said the case began on Jan 5, 2025, when Jamalpur police post received information that an infant had been brought to a hospital for treatment but was declared dead on arrival.

During inquest proceedings at the mortuary, the child's mother lodged a complaint that raised suspicion over the death. In her statement, the woman told police that she had been living with Vikramjeet since 2023 and that a baby boy was born from the relationship. She alleged that tensions between them escalated after the child's birth. According to the complaint, Vikramjeet had been unhappy about the baby and had repeatedly pressured her to terminate the pregnancy. She told police



that on Jan 4 last year, Vikramjeet took the five-month-old child with him and returned after some time, claiming the baby was unwell.

The infant was rushed to hospital, where doctors declared him dead. The mother then accused Vikramjeet of administering

a poisonous substance, causing the child's death. During interrogation, Vikramjeet admitted that he had entered into the live-in relationship despite already being married. Police said he confessed to giving a poisonous substance to the infant on Jan 4, leading to the child's death.

Brothers get life term for killing neighbour over Rs 3,000 unpaid loan

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A special Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes court on Monday convicted two brothers from Baghat and sentenced them to life in prison for killing a neighbour 10 years ago over a delay in repayment of Rs 3,000.

In July 2016, Narendra Kumar filed a complaint with the Sihanigate police station, accusing three persons — brothers Umesh Sharma and Ankur Sharma, and a teenage boy — of attacking them with iron rods and broken beer bottles. He said he had taken a loan of Rs 3,000 from Umesh a few months earlier, and he and his younger brother Rajkumar had gone to ask for more time to repay the loan when the assault took place. He claimed the accused were intoxicated and started beating them after hearing their request. While he narrowly escaped, his brother suffered fatal injuries. He succumbed to his injuries in hospital. Police handed over the teen's case to the juvenile justice board and began proceedings against the brothers. The accused were booked under Section 302 (murder) of the IPC and Section 3(2)(v) of the SC/ST Act (punishment for committing severe crimes against SC/ST



individuals). They were also booked under Section 201 (destruction of evidence) of the IPC for attempting to conceal the weapons and wash away the blood from their clothes.

During the trial, judge Jeetendra Mishra acquitted them of the charges under the SC/ST Act but declared them guilty of murder and destruction of evidence. It also imposed a fine of Rs 11,000 on each accused. Both the sentences will run concurrently and be adjusted against the time already spent in custody.

"The evidence of medical witnesses has corroborated the prosecution's story. The iron rod and beer bottle used in the incident have been recovered. The plaintiff in the case has given a clear, natural and consistent account of the incident. The version presented by the

accused witnesses was found to be unacceptable," the judge said.

The court, however, noted that the investigating officer failed to provide a clear answer to the question of whether the murder was committed keeping the caste of the victim under consideration. "Under these circumstances, the premise that the accused had personal

knowledge of the plaintiff or his family under Section 8(C) of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act is not sufficient to establish that the accused committed the crime of murder based on knowledge that the deceased belonged to a Scheduled Caste," the court held, acquitting the duo of the charges.

Mujhe maaf karen': 1,700 vow to shun crime in Ghaziabad

Noida.(Agency)

A special verification drive for criminals was carried out on Tuesday in the police stations of Khoda, Sahibabad and Loni. Under the "Operation Clean" campaign being conducted by the city police, a three-day drive was started on Monday — around 1,700 criminal checks were completed by Tuesday evening.

The drive started by police after a 17-year-old youth was stabbed to death by a group of people in Khoda. The prime accused — Asad — was killed by police during an encounter, while three people were arrested. The fifth accused is on the run. In Sahibabad, a total of 50 criminals' verifications were conducted on Tuesday. After the self-verification,

all criminals were administered an oath not to commit any kind of crime in the future and to stay away from illegal activities. Criminals were seen holding a paper on which they wrote, "Mujhe maaf karen, ab main crime nahi karta aur na bhavishya mein karunga (Forgive me, I no longer commit crimes and will not do so in the future)."

City and Trans-Hindon DCP Dhawal Jaiswal said that the objective of the campaign was to control crime in the area, maintain and strengthen law and order, and ensure effective surveillance of individuals with criminal tendencies. "The verification was conducted of criminals registered at Thana Sahibabad in cases of robbery.

Just 45 Days Of Water Left: Mumbai Braces For Crisis Amid Weak Monsoon Forecast

With reservoir levels at just 15 per cent capacity, Mumbai has only 45 days of water supply left, prompting the BMC to step up monitoring and contingency planning amid concerns over a weaker-than-normal monsoon.

Mumbai. (Agency)
With just 45 days of water left in its reservoirs, Mumbai has gone into alert mode after the India Meteorological Department (IMD) revised its monsoon forecast downward, raising concerns over the city's water security. The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), which depends entirely on rain-fed lakes for potable water, is now preparing contingency plans amid fears of a possible shortfall if rainfall remains below normal. Senior BMC officials held a closed-door meeting on Monday to assess the situation and formulate a strategy to maintain the water supply until the summer of 2027. Officials have been instructed to closely monitor rainfall in the catchment areas of the city's seven lakes over the next two months. "While it is too early to take any steps, the recent forecast of 90 per cent of the average rainfall is concerning as we have to ensure that Mumbai has sufficient water in its lakes till last until next monsoon season, even if we do not receive rainfall in the lakes," a senior official told as per a report.



Authorities are particularly concerned that an El Niño-linked rise in temperatures could accelerate evaporation from reservoirs if rainfall remains below normal. **Water Tankers, Consumption Under Scrutiny**
As a precautionary measure, the BMC is planning stricter monitoring of water tanker filling points across the city. Officials aim to

ensure equitable water distribution and prevent excessive price hikes if demand increases. "We are looking at intensely monitoring the water filling points as well as regulate the water tankers to ensure that the prices do not breach the normal levels as demand increases. Additionally, we are also seeking to appeal citizens to use water more judiciously and

issue advisories," Indian Express reported citing sources.

Mumbai is already facing a 10 per cent water cut that came into effect on May 15. However, officials said no decision has been taken on increasing the cut and future action will depend on rainfall trends over the next few months.

City Depends Entirely On Monsoon-Fed Lakes

Mumbai receives its potable water from seven lakes: Upper Vaitarna, Modak Sagar, Tansa, Middle Vaitarna, Bhatsa, Vihar and Tulsi. Together, these reservoirs have a total storage capacity of 14.47 lakh million litres. At present, the lakes hold around 15 per cent of their total capacity, equivalent to approximately 2.21 lakh million litres. Officials estimate that the current stock can meet the city's water requirements for about 45 days. The BMC said that while adequate rainfall during the early monsoon months could ease concerns, authorities are preparing for all possibilities, including a scenario where reservoirs do not fill to expected levels.

Short news

7 killed, 40 injured as 2 buses collide in Surat; 4 critical

Ahmedabad. (Agency)
At least seven people on board a bus were killed and 40 others were injured after it caught fire following its head-on collision with another bus, near Badroli town in Gujarat's Surat district on Tuesday afternoon, police said. Out of the 27 people hospitalised due to the accident, four were said to be in critical condition.

Both buses were operated by the Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC) and belonged to a depot in the neighbouring Dhule district, they added. While one of them was bound for Surat from Dhule, the other was returning to Dhule from Surat.

Surat superintendent of police Rajesh Gadhiya said the Surat-to-Dhule bus first struck a tractor that was pulling a water tanker while on National Highway-53 at Una village in Badroli taluka. Then, it jumped the road divider and hit the Dhule-to-Surat bus, which turned over by the impact and caught fire, he added.

Locals and passersby gathered at the spot and began pulling people out of the two buses. Fire and police officials took over the rescue efforts soon after. Along with the SP, district collector Tejas Parmar also went to the spot. Gadhiya said: "Seven deaths have been reported so far. Twenty-seven others, who were travelling from Dhule to Surat, were injured and hospitalised. The injured were taken to three hospitals: 15 to the government hospital in Bardoli, seven to the Sardar Smarak hospital in Bardoli, and five to the New Civil Hospital in Surat."

Stating that all the dead were on board the Dhule-Surat bus, he added that it ran on compressed natural gas or CNG. "We are in touch with the Maharashtra state transport department and are trying to identify the deceased. Our priority is to first ensure that all the injured passengers get immediate medical help, and the deceased are identified.

Why NCP is in turmoil in Pune and why its top leaders are upset

Pune. (Agency)
For the first time since Ajit Pawar's death on January 28, the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) is facing a severe internal crisis in Pune district, Maharashtra. A large section of the party's top leadership has revolted over the sudden nomination of Vikram Kakade for the upcoming Legislative Council (MLC) seat. Breaking away from traditional party discipline, senior leaders have openly criticised the candidate selection process. NCP insiders note that this level of "mass rebellion" was completely unprecedented during Ajit Pawar's lifetime.

While multiple senior leaders have aired their grievances publicly, one high-ranking official has already resigned, arguing that organisational loyalty has lost its value under the new dispensation led by national president Sunetra Pawar. According to party insiders, the main source of resentment stems from the influential role played by Sunetra Pawar's elder son, Rajya Sabha MP Parth Pawar, in selecting the candidate. While NCP state president Sunil Tatkare was preoccupied with securing a nomination for his own son in Raigad district, Sunetra Pawar reportedly delegated the selection of the Pune candidate to Parth. The decision to pick a newcomer over seasoned loyalists has alienated the party's grassroots rank and file.

High-profile resignation exposes resentment Resigning from his post as working president of the Parvati Assembly constituency in Pune, Ramdas Gade-Patil said, "I have resigned from my position as Working President because there is no place for loyalists in the party."

Suspecting Son's 'Plot To Kill' Over Family Dispute, UP Man Shoots Him Dead

Meerut police arrest father for son's murder over alleged Rs 10 lakh contract killing dispute.

Meerut (UP). (Agency)
Police probing the death of a 23-year-old who was found shot dead in a car parked along a highway in Meerut have arrested his father, identifying him to be the prime suspect in the case.

The father allegedly carried out the murder over a suspicion that his son had paid Rs 10 lakh to get him killed over a family dispute.

Police claimed to have solved the case within 24 hours of receiving information about the son's death around midnight on June 1.

Sunder Tyagi and his associate Amit alias Vedwan were arrested on Tuesday, while efforts are underway to apprehend another accused in the case.

Additional Superintendent of Police (Rural) Abhijeet Kumar said police received information through Dial-112 around midnight on June 1 that Tushar Tyagi had been shot dead and his body was lying

inside a vehicle near the Panchi underpass in the Khar Khoda area.

A case of murder was registered on the complaint of the victim's wife, Shikha,



following which three special teams were constituted on the directions of the Senior Superintendent of Police, Kumar said. During the investigation, police analysed technical evidence, CCTV footage and other physical evidence. The probe revealed that the main accused -- victim's father Sunder Tyagi, had arrived in

Kankerhera from Dehradun on the day of the incident and later travelled to the Kaili area with his associate Amit alias Vedwan. Police said CCTV footage showed the victim's SUV and the accused's car moving together before the crime.

During questioning on Tuesday, it emerged that Sunder Tyagi was travelling in the victim's vehicle at the time of the incident and allegedly shot Tushar dead, they said.

The accused later abandoned the body and the vehicle near the Panchi underpass before fleeing the scene, police said.

According to investigators, Sunder Tyagi suspected that his son had paid Rs 10 lakh as contract money to have him killed. He also alleged that the victim frequently assaulted family members, they said. Officials said Sunder Tyagi is a former history-sheeter of Hapur Dehat police station and has several criminal cases, including murder, registered against him.

Shaurya Chakra awardee MARCOS commando killed in Kangra road accident

Kangra. (Agency)
Shaurya Chakra awardee and elite Marine Commandos (MARCOS) operator Amit Singh Rana, 32, was killed after his car plunged nearly 500 feet into a gorge in Himachal Pradesh's Kangra district late on Monday night.

Rana, a Leading Mechanical Engineer (LME) in the Indian Navy and a member of its elite special forces unit, was driving through the Lahadu area near Khandian in the Jwalamukhi region when the accident occurred around 11 pm. He was reportedly returning home after meeting a friend when his vehicle skidded off a sharp bend and fell into the deep gorge.

Local residents launched a rescue operation and managed to pull him out around midnight before rushing him to Khandian Hospital. However, doctors

declared him dead on arrival. The incident has triggered criticism among local residents over the condition of roads in the area, with many pointing to the absence of



crash barriers and inadequate lighting along hazardous stretches. A third-generation soldier from a family with a long military tradition, Rana hailed

from the Laharu-Khundian area of Jwalamukhi tehsil. He is survived by his parents, wife, four-year-old son and two sisters. His last rites were performed with full military honours in his native village on Tuesday. Jwalamukhi MLA Sanjay Ratna was among those who paid tributes. Local Army units conducted the ceremonial honours. Rana was among the Indian Navy's most highly trained commandos and had been deployed under Operation Rakshak in Jammu and Kashmir since 2018. He was awarded the Shaurya Chakra, the country's third-highest peacetime gallantry award, for displaying exceptional courage during counter-terrorism operations in the Valley.

Grenade attack at Gurdaspur hospital; one held with links to 'foreign-based handler'

Gurdaspur SSP Aditya identified the accused as Dharminder alias 'Tindi' (24), from Tarn Taran. He was earlier booked in cases registered under the NDPS Act.

Amritsar. (Agency)
A grenade attack at a private hospital in Gurdaspur on Tuesday shattered windowpanes and glass door of its emergency ward, police said, adding they have arrested the main perpetrator with links to a foreign-based handler. Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav said the breakthrough came within six hours of the incident.

"Gurdaspur police and the Counter Intelligence Wing jointly solved the grenade attack case at Kalanaur, Gurdaspur within six hours of the incident. Acting swiftly on technical and human intelligence inputs, the main perpetrator responsible for the attack has been apprehended. Preliminary probe reveals the involvement of a foreign-based handler," said Yadav.

He added that further probe is underway, and both forward and backward linkages are being thoroughly examined to identify and dismantle the entire network behind the attack.

Gurdaspur SSP Aditya identified the accused as Dharminder alias "Tindi" (24), from Tarn Taran. He was earlier booked in cases registered under the NDPS Act. Asked about the motive, the SSP said investigators are questioning the accused and technical checks are being made to establish why the attack was carried out and whether it was intended to spread fear or to extort money. Kalanaur police station received information about a loud sound at Multani Hospital,



located near the bus stand area, around 2.40 pm.

"Police team found shattered glass at the spot. Forensic teams collected the evidence," the SSP said. In CCTV footage,

a suspicious man could be seen standing near the hospital. The doctor who operates the hospital told police that he had been receiving extortion calls for the past year and that he had been provided security. The SSP said those calls had been acted upon by police and action was taken.

Gurdaspur MP Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa termed the "explosion" as extremely worrying and demanded a probe. "According to the information received so far, this was a grenade attack; if this information is correct, then it is not just a matter of negligence in security, but also raises a big question on the security of sensitive places related to people's lives."

Faithline | The Paari principle

It's World Environment Day on June 5, and many thoughts flood the mind of our relationship with Nature. 'Paari and the Jasmine' is a favourite story from the ancient Tamil Sangam era. It vivified my childhood with its touching message and the values it conveyed, not by preaching but by shining example.

King Vel Paari ruled the lush, mountainous kingdom of Parambu Nadu, stretching from today's Sivaganga district in Tamil Nadu to Palakkad in Kerala. Valour and talent were celebrated in his land and generosity was valued as the greatest virtue. Love and appreciation of the good earth and its gifts were a life code. A tough soldier, Paari was also a sensitive person. He loved poetry and music. Singers and poets were drawn to him, including the feisty old lady Avvai, who wandered all over the land scolding backsliding kings—scholars now wonder if 'Avvai' was in fact a consolidation of three ancient women poets. Whatever the case may be, her poems and aphorisms are still recited 2,000 years later.

One day, Paari was out in his horse-drawn chariot when he saw a delicate mullai or jasmine creeper lying on the ground. Someone had cut down the tree that had supported it and abandoned the creeper to its fate. Paari was upset to see the prettily-flowering, sweet-smelling creeper lying forlorn in the dust, left to be trampled on and die. "This is not right," he thought. There was no sure way that he could uproot the creeper and give it the prop of another tree or fetch another support for it. So Paari detached his golden chariot, draped the creeper over it and went home on foot, leading his horses. He did not see it as a waste but as a necessary duty fulfilled. My granny used to say that at its deeper level, this incident was a poetic teaching story about helping all helpless beings—plant, animal or human.

This deeply ingrained sense of being part of Nature and being responsible for it was also expressed in seemingly miraculous ways. For instance, it's an old Indian belief that there are certain holy men who can make it rain simply by their lustrous personalities. In the Ramayana, sage Rishyashringa is said to have made the rain fall on parched land merely by his presence. As recently as the 20th century, the late M G Ramachandran, when chief minister of Tamil Nadu, reportedly besought Kanchi Mahaswami, a luminous sage revered across the South with devotees even from far lands like the King and Queen of Spain and Princess Irene of Greece, to save Tamil Nadu from a blistering drought. The saint was on a padayatra in Karnataka at the time but felt duty-bound to return at once to Tamil Nadu. The story goes that soon after he crossed the border into the state, grey clouds began gathering out of nowhere in the burning sky, and it actually rained. Such personalities are part of the legitimate lore of the land and give us a personal standard of behaviour, an affirmation that good thoughts and good deeds enable the well-being of a country and its people. Further, if we look closely at the Indian calendar, we'll see that amid the busy timetable of holy days, there's a conscious plan to bond society by providing many festive opportunities to interact pleasantly. The best punya or merit gained on a holy day is when we are friendly and affectionate to all, and don't shortchange those to whom we owe money and manners. So the punya is of two kinds—one gained by doing the good things that build a cordial society and the other by not doing the bad things that vitiate the atmosphere.

These good intentions are framed by Nature, which is why Indian festivals follow the seasons, and festival foods reflect our rootedness in the land. Even grass is valorised through story and craft.

Grass figures in at least four incidents in the Ramayana. The first is at Chitrakoot, where Jayanta, a son of Indra, becomes a crow and attacks Sita when Rama is resting with his head on her lap.

A lesson in foresight from China

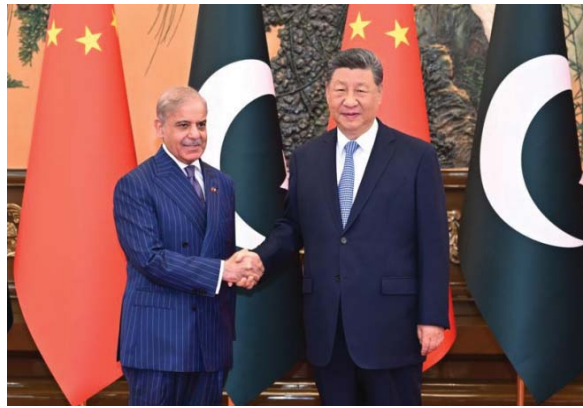
India needs astute statesmanship and diplomacy to tackle diverse challenges

CHINA added 543 gigawatts of new power capacity across all technologies last year, according to Bloomberg News (January 28, 2026). The report says that this is 12% more than India's entire power generation (as of end 2024). Of this addition, more than 80% was in renewables, shared between solar and wind energy. As per the US Energy Information Administration, China holds the world's largest strategic oil reserves (about 1.4 billion barrels). Interestingly, it significantly expanded its reserves in 2025, taking advantage of discounted Russian, Iranian and Venezuelan barrels. India held only 21 million barrels. Over the past few decades, China has given itself tremendous strategic depth in rare earth minerals, EV (electric vehicle) production, lithium-ion battery production and clean energy. The Chinese are now world leaders in this entire value chain. By doing this, they have not only managed to reduce their dependence on fossil fuels and reduce pollution but also established a very dominant position as the world transits out of fossil fuels. The troika of rare earths, battery manufacturing for EVs and clean energy is the "holy grail" for extracting an economy out of fossil fuel dependence.

This has been achieved by meticulous planning, highlighted in the Five-Year Plans (currently, the 15th Plan is being implemented), which are made by the central committee of the Chinese Communist Party along with the State Council (the Chinese cabinet). This strategic advantage will determine how the nation copes with the coming energy shock. It will be the difference between high and low inflation and a critical factor determining where the data centres for the AI age will move to, for there is a strategic confluence of clean energy generation, its storage, rare earth minerals and data centres. Just last year, China wielded its strategic tool and nearly brought India's EV production to a halt by restricting rare earth export (it has a near monopoly).

People make plans regarding their lives, generally based on their experience and prospects. Similarly, nations — through their governments — plan for the future. Such planning involves in-depth analysis of past and present experience as well as projections about anticipated developments. Based on the above, the State enunciates policies to deal with the future. Looking at ourselves and the situation in which India finds itself today vis-a-vis the energy situation and its ramifications, we appear to not have done the required homework over the past few decades. Since India is not a major oil-producing nation, it is incumbent upon the Union government to make sure that resources would be available in all contingencies and to build adequate reserves, and more importantly opt

for green energy in a big way so as not to be totally dependent on imported crude. While it is heartening that half of our installed electricity capacity is now from renewables, coal still does the heavy lifting with a nearly 42% share. Critically, it continues to provide 70% of the electricity consumed, even as India has not developed adequate storage capacity. Needless to say, China has done a lot on this front. This decade has been one of continuous disruption due to the Covid pandemic, the wars in Eastern Europe and West Asia and the emergence of AI. India missed the Industrial Revolution and paid a



heavy price for it. The nation missed the first half of the computer-dominated era of the 1980s and 1990s and only when it was driven to near bankruptcy did the reforms of the 1990s come into play. Thankfully, the private sector stepped in along with the armies of techies who helped salvage the situation. Though India has not yet become a serious player in the software development business, it has created a space for itself in the IT services sector. Given the late start, it is commendable that India achieved this much. Coming to the disruption being wrought by AI, we have once again missed the bus and can see it moving away fast over the horizon. India is nowhere in the semiconductor business, and our entire electronic industry is dependent on the Asian giants — Taiwan, South Korea and China. The data centres being envisaged will also remain dependent. The US and China have made giant leaps in AI and its related infrastructure. The infrastructure involves high-grade chip manufacturing, low-cost power and the government as a reformist and enabler. Companies such as Nvidia have become trillion-dollar firms and control the flow of AI technology. The US decides who can and cannot get these chips. Dutch companies such as ASML, which

basically make the machines required for high-grade microchips and have a near monopoly in this arena, sell only where the US allows. Where in all this does India stand? Are we again going to hope to be some sort of service and maintenance provider? The level of automation and robotics coming into play suggests that even this role will be a diminished one. As the conflicting strategic interests of nations come into play while trying to assume dominance in the AI age, astute and visionary leadership is required. Foreign policy and diplomacy will play a critical role in developing strategic partnerships to enable the development of AI infrastructure and energy security. Today, even our battery manufacturing for EVs and grid storage is dependent on rare earth minerals from China (again a near monopoly). The need for strategic alliances can be seen in the shortage of gas and likely shortage of fertilisers and crude oil due to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz by the war in West Asia and the resultant disruption in supply lines. India has been forced to scrounge around and ask for help. We had a tie-up with Russia, as did China, but the sanctions have hurt us more.

Similarly, Iranian oil is no longer available to us. Our storage capacity is limited, and India has only now tied up with the UAE to build large reservoirs... this will take time. The failure of US-Iran talks will only damage us further and create panic, which India has so far avoided. Simultaneously, the US is championing Pakistan and its Field Marshal and trusts it as an important mediator vis-a-vis Iran. The US has helped it out with the World Bank, easing its financial problems.

Adding to India's troubles is the close relationship between China and Pakistan. During his recent visit to China, Pakistan PM Shehbaz Sharif was received by President Xi Jinping and the "higher than the mountains" friendship was renewed. A joint statement called for solving the lingering "Jammu and Kashmir dispute". The Chinese keep developing infrastructure in the North-East (NE), especially in areas to which they claim ownership. Our own situation in the NE is not looking too good with the three-year-old problem in Manipur and the festering sores in Nagaland and Mizoram. The newly elected government in Bangladesh also needs monitoring as it is cosy up to Pakistan and China and is capable of creating more problems for us in the NE.

Taking all these factors together — the energy situation, which is likely to aggravate further; the China, Pakistan and Bangladesh positions with respect to us; and our own internal problems — the time calls for astute statesmanship and diplomacy of the highest order. The nation must unite to face this multi-pronged assault. This initiative must come from the leadership of the Indian government.

Exam chaos: Entire testing ecosystem under scanner

Over-reliance on complex outsourced digital systems without sufficient on-ground safeguards can be perilous

NEET, CBSE, CUET — the alphabet soup is becoming more unpalatable by the day. The disruption of the Common University Entrance Test (CUET-UG) has again exposed the fragility of India's digital exam infrastructure. A technical glitch delayed the start of the test, forcing more than 3,700 candidates to leave their centres. Left red-faced for the second time in a month, the National Testing Agency (NTA) has announced that these examinees would get a one-time opportunity to reappear. Even though about 95 per cent of the candidates eventually completed the exam, the distressing incident raises questions about preparedness during a high-stakes national test. It's obvious that over-reliance on complex outsourced digital systems without sufficient on-ground safeguards can be perilous. The NTA is already under fire after a question paper leak led to the cancellation of the May 3 NEET (National

Eligibility cum Entrance Test). The matter is being probed by the CBI, while the NTA has decided to



conduct the exam in the computer-based mode from

next year. Ironically, the leak happened even though paper-setting took place in a "highly secure" premises where phones/laptops and other electronic devices were not supposed to be allowed and there was mandatory shredding of all notes. Even "trusted" insiders are under suspicion — this shows that the rot runs very deep. Another national-level academic body, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), is in a spot over the on-screen marking system. An embarrassing mix-up of answer sheets has been flagged by several students. These back-to-back controversies indicate that transparency and accountability have taken a big hit in the education sector. As the clamour for Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan's resignation gets louder, the Modi government faces the onerous task of restoring public confidence in India's exam ecosystem.

Reimagining Sri Lanka-Tamil Nadu ties in the age of Vijay

➤ Vijay's popularity gives him influence across the Palk Strait. He now faces the challenge of turning goodwill into progress on Tamil rights, fisheries disputes and refugee concerns

For two decades, Sri Lankans have embraced iconic actor Thalapathy Vijay—Chandrasekaran Joseph Vijay—as one of their own. Cinema audiences across the island admire Vijay, whose popularity has often transcended ethnic and linguistic divides. This broad acceptance offers him a unique platform from which to contribute, at least indirectly, to a stronger understanding between Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka. While the path appears open for the new leader, Sri Lankans who have long admired Vijay, the film star, may view his emergence as a political figure through a different lens.

Vijay's rise in politics cannot be attributed to stardom alone, although his popularity and effective use of social media have undoubtedly contributed to his success. It also reflects wider political currents across South Asia. In recent years, several countries in the region have witnessed significant political churn driven by public discontent, youth mobilisation and demands for political renewal. Social media has played an important role in amplifying these trends. While India's political landscape is distinct, Vijay and his Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam have emerged as an alternative for voters seeking options beyond the traditional Dravidian parties, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam and the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam.

What remains unclear is whether Vijay will follow the political path laid down by leaders such as M G Ramachandran and J Jayalalitha or seek to carve out a distinct space of his own. Both leaders, at different points, shaped public discourse on the Sri Lankan Tamil question and adopted positions that reflected prevailing sentiments in Tamil Nadu regarding the conflict and the

aspirations of Sri Lankan Tamils.

Vijay will need to navigate carefully the intersection of geography, ethnicity and politics. The distance between Arichal Munai in India and Talaimannar in Sri Lanka is barely 55 kilometres. Northern Sri Lankan Tamils have historically looked to Tamil Nadu for cultural affinity and moral support. During the armed conflict, political leaders in Tamil Nadu drew attention to allegations of discrimination, humanitarian concerns and the plight of civilians. Some also expressed support for greater autonomy and political rights for Sri Lankan Tamils. While overt support for separatist causes diminished significantly after the assassination of former Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991, the situation of Sri Lankan Tamils remains a subject of periodic discussion in Tamil Nadu, informed by historical, cultural and familial connections between the two regions.

Vijay presents himself as someone who takes pride in his Tamil identity and has expressed solidarity with Sri Lankan Tamils. He has spoken about questions of justice, rehabilitation, resettlement and equal rights. These remain matters of continuing concern, particularly amid ongoing debates about reconciliation and post-war recovery in Sri Lanka. At the same time, references to political ideas associated with the conflict years are likely to be viewed differently on either side of the Palk Strait and require careful handling.

In the run-up to the Tamil Nadu elections, Vijay stirred debate by advocating the recovery of Katchatheevu, an islet ceded to Sri Lanka in 1974. He questioned the Centre's position on the issue and criticised the

Congress for agreeing to the transfer. The remarks generated discussion in northern Sri Lanka, where fishing communities have long viewed the island as part of their traditional fishing environment. Even today, Tamil Nadu fishermen are permitted to dry their fishing nets on Katchatheevu, while Indian and Sri Lankan

Lankan waters increased, leading to recurring disputes. Sri Lankan authorities regularly detain fishermen for alleged illegal entry into their waters and seize boats and fishing equipment. Sri Lankan officials and fishing communities have also raised concerns about bottom trawling, a method of fishing prohibited in Sri Lanka due to its impact on marine ecosystems.

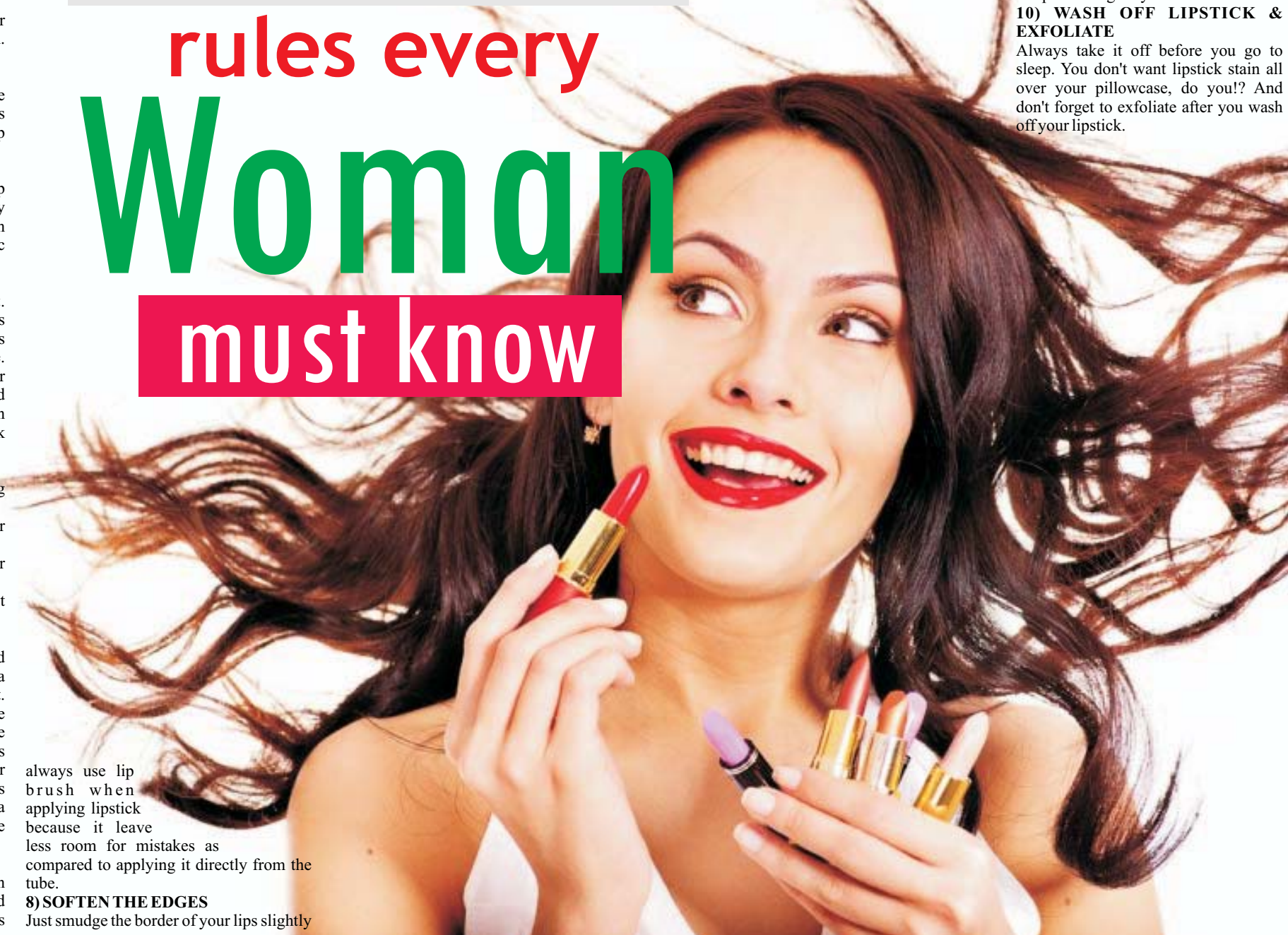
Vijay's government has sought greater engagement from New Delhi on the recurring arrests of Indian fishermen and the seizure of boats and equipment. While any durable resolution ultimately depends on bilateral engagement between India and Sri Lanka, advocacy by the Tamil Nadu government can help ensure that the concerns of affected fishing communities remain on the policy agenda. Then there is the sensitive question of how support for Tamil rights is distinguished from attitudes towards the LTTE. Vijay has consistently spoken about the rights, dignity and welfare of Sri Lankan Tamils. At times, however, statements or symbolism associated with the conflict years have prompted debate about the legacy of the LTTE in Tamil political discourse. The organisation emerged during a period of deep ethnic conflict and came to dominate the Tamil militant movement. Its legacy remains deeply contested, shaped both by its articulation of Tamil grievances and by its involvement in violence, including attacks on civilians and political leaders. For contemporary political leaders, the challenge lies in advocating justice and equality for Sri Lankan Tamils while avoiding the revival of divisions associated with the conflict.



fishers come together annually for the St Anthony's Church festival on the island.

While there is little prospect of revisiting the island's status, the debate has once again highlighted the sensitivity of Sri Lanka-related issues in Tamil Nadu politics. The more immediate challenge lies in the longstanding fisheries dispute. During the years of conflict, restrictions on fishing in northern Sri Lankan waters created opportunities for fishermen from Tamil Nadu. Over time, the presence of Indian trawlers in Sri

10 Lipstick rules every Woman must know



Who doesn't desire a well-painted kissable pout? It's the thought of applying the wrong shade that many of us dread.

The thought of getting the right colour and the right pout is no ordinary task, unless you follow these easy but important steps for the perfect pout.

1) EXFOLIATE WITH ALIP BALM

Treat your lips just like you would treat your face. Ex-foliate lips, moisturise with a balm. Repeat the regimen daily.

2) KEEP YOUR MAKEUP MINIMAL

It's always safe to highlight only one feature of your face. If you are going for bold lips then better keep the rest of your face makeup minimal for perfect balance.

3) AVOID TOO MUCH SPARKLE

"Shimmer can look cheap," says make-up artist Troy. Look for lipsticks with a creamy finish. "Light reflection should come from moisture in the formula, not metallic pigments," he says.

4) CHOOSE RIGHT COLOUR

Finding the right shade is important. Different colours work differently on various complexion types, so try on a bunch of shades before zeroing down on the most suitable one. Advice: go for a shade that complements your skin tone. Lighter shades of reds and burgundy look fabulous with warm skin tones, while pinks and true reds work brilliantly for fairer skin.

5) USE PRIMER

Always use primer before you start applying the lipstick. Because

- it will give the lipstick shade a better colour contrast.

- it will help your lipstick last longer (throughout the day).

In case you run out of primer or you don't have one, you can use foundation instead.

6) PICK A LIPLINER

They say liner can either be your best friend or your worst enemy. Either case liner has a significant role in achieving the perfect pout. Just find the right lip liner, probably a shade that's closest to your lip colour, and outline your lips before applying the lipstick. This will give the required shape to your lip, either making them fuller or thinner. It also keeps your lipstick from feathering. FYI: Opting a much darker shade than your lipstick is the worst make-up disaster.

7) START IN THE MIDDLE

Always. Start your lipstick applying session from the centre of your lips and then spread outward with the help of lip brush. Experts

always use lip brush when applying lipstick because it leave less room for mistakes as compared to applying it directly from the tube.

8) SOFTEN THE EDGES

Just smudge the border of your lips slightly

so as to get a natural, not-overly-done look.

9) BLOT! BLOT! BLOT!

After you are done applying lipstick, blot it with a tissue, then apply another layer. Blotting removes excess oils and emollients from the first layer of lipstick while leaving

the pigments largely intact. "Blotting will create a base, and the second coat adds shine and coverage," says Troy. Adding a second layer of lipstick after blotting increases the pigment concentration in proportion to the creamy ingredients that are the enemies of lipstick longevity.

10) WASH OFF LIPSTICK & EXFOLIATE

Always take it off before you go to sleep. You don't want lipstick stain all over your pillowcase, do you!? And don't forget to exfoliate after you wash off your lipstick.

Know the complete truth about your fairness Cream

India market is considered the biggest market for beauty products specially fairness solution. Among Indian society there is an absurd statement and phenomenon of beauty.

Thanks to our high list of endorsement start, both men & women need variety of fairness creams. In spite of existing multimillion dollar market of fairness products in country, the question of how impactful these products are? Keep dwindling in consumer's mind. Our skin colour is determined by our race and genetic lineage which in turn decides the amount and structure of melanin. Fairness creams can only work to a certain extent. As per dermatology studies, achieving fairness up to 20% is possible, but not more than that. The fairness creams only block sun rays and prevent secretion of melanin. Thus help in reducing tan and restoring natural skin.

Side Effects of Fairness Creams

Extreme use of fairness creams can rather lead to severe skin damage. Fairness creams contain harmful bleaching agent such as hydroquinone, mercury, lead, nickel, chromium and high levels of steroids that cause following problems:

- Thinning of skin
- Discoloration of face
- Capillaries become prominently visible
- Severe acne
- Hypersensitivity to sun
- Rebound paradoxical pigmentation
- Unwanted facial hair growth
- Skin allergy
- Skin cancer

Thus these creams should always be used judiciously only under the supervision of a certified

dermatologist.

Do's and Don't What to do -Apply moisturiser daily during day and before going to bed

-Wash your skin with clean water at least thrice a day

-Use sunscreen lotion to prevent tanning and harsh UV rays damaging skin

-Use fairness cream preferably aloe based. It works well for inflammation and tanned skin for Asian weather.

-Usage external barriers like umbrella and Shades while going out.

-Drink 6-8 glasses of water every day

-Have anti-oxidant rich fruits

-Increase the intake of Vitamin C. It increases cell turnover, helps protect against sun damage, and boosts the production of collagen and elastin, the two vital component of healthy and glowing skin.

-Exfoliation is one of the most important steps in maintaining your youthful glow. We recommend weekly exfoliation to brighten the skin tone. Regular use of an exfoliation removes the oldest dead skin cells that cling to the skin's outermost surface, or epidermis. It is an important part of both facials and body treatments

What not to do

-DO NOT support the common trend of fair skin and the stigma of being dark

-Avoid excessive bleaching in alternate weeks. Comprising of Ammonia and hydrochloric acid primarily these ingredients can cause both minor and severe burn.

-Avoid Products that Encourage Acne Breakouts

The truth is we don't need white skin to show our beauty, if you have healthy,

Benefits of using shikakai on your skin

The enriching benefits of using shikakai on hair has been proved long ago and has made it a trusted natural product in Indian households. But very few know about its benefits on the skin.

In fact, shikakai works magically for the skin, too. Here are a few ways to use this wonder herb on your skin:

- Effective in treating scabies You can use shikakai to treat skin ailments like scabies. To reap maximum benefits, you can make an antiseptic body wash using shikakai and turmeric. Soak raw turmeric in hot water and then grind it



to make a paste. Burn shikakai pods till they turn black, grind them to form powder. Mix the turmeric paste and shikakai powder with milk. Strain and use as a body wash.

- Use shikakai to treat spots

Take half a teaspoon of shikakai powder and mix it with a tablespoon each of cream, almond powder and turmeric. Add two tablespoons of honey and use it as a body scrub.

This mixture helps in eliminating dead cells and gives your skin a natural glow.

- To treat minor cuts and boils on your scalp

Burn shikakai pods, grind them. Mix with a teaspoon of neem powder, make a paste using cold water. Apply on summer boils to help them heal.

5 facials you must try out in your Lifetime



Facials you must try out in your lifetime.

Anti-aging Telomere Facial

What it is: Telomere is the real fountain of youth. The skin looks brighter, smoother and more translucent, as it's massaged with a replenishing cream in a way that enhances absorption. Specialised masks are used for the flower power thermoherb face lift that irons out lines and wrinkles, making the skin more firm and youthful.

USP: Anti-aging, stops wrinkles

Plant Stem Cells Facial What it is: Another breakthrough in anti-aging treatments is plant stem cell - it rejuvenates the skin powerfully. When plant stem cells are introduced into the skin during the facial, they repair dead and damaged skin cells. The skin looks tighter, firmer and younger. The products used contain active plant stem cells of the Edelweiss flower, collagen, elastin, ceramides and powerful anti-oxidants. Once the mask is washed off, the skin is toned and cold compress is given.

USP: Gives a soft glow

Platinum Facial What it is: This facial starts with a cleanser, scrub, cream, mask, serum and moisture mist. The face is first cleansed with the cleanser, followed by vegetable peel and platinum scrub. A lymphatic massage is also done to purify the skin and add radiance.

USP: Cleanses all pollutants

Diamond Facial What it is: This is for those who want to defy age. In Ayurvedic skin care, the oxidised diamond or 'bhasma' is used, while diamond powder is used for exfoliation. This facial uses extracts of lotus, basil, dates, orange oil, carrot seed and vetiver (khus).

USP: Improves skin's vitality

Pearl Facial This is for those who need hydration. It's based on a 4,000 year old Ayurvedic and Oriental tradition of using the powder of natural pearls. Pearls

influence the transfer of melanin (natural pigment) to the skin surface, preventing tanning and pigmentation.

USP: Removes pigmentation



5 exotic Hairstyles for Young Brides



Side-parted braid bun

This is a very popular hairdo which shows off great facial features and is especially perfect for those with straight hair. It is a very easy style and barely takes five minutes — all you have to do is part your hair on the side and braid it tightly. If you want to make the braid look more intricate and elaborate, try the fishtail braid or the mermaid braid, which brings a great modern twist. Then wrap the braid around and pin it neatly into a bun with several bobby pins. If you want to add an additional oomph factor, use bedazzled bobby pins or fresh flowers which match your bouquet. This hairdo works best for those that don't have bangs, so that the side partition will be more evident. If, however, you do have bangs, then pin them neatly to the side and make sure you use lots of hair spray to keep in

place. In order to look extra polished, make sure that you comb your hair and keep it tangle free. A hair accessory like a hair comb can also be pinned on the top of the bun for a nice sophisticated effect.

Half updo

This is a lovely romantic hairdo that's elegant but actually very low maintenance, hardly taking two minutes to create. Loosely gather the top half of your hair and pin it in place. Make sure there is a little volume at the top, otherwise it will end up looking flat and limp, so do some gentle backcombing if necessary. "For this style, I recommend using bobby pins that are similar to your hair colour, so that the effect is more subtle and don't forget to use hairspray to keep the hair in place and avoid humidity," says hairstylist Asgar Saboo. Add a flower chain or a string of pearls to add to that romantic bohemian vibe, which is something we are seeing more on celebrities who want to bring a fresh take to their wedding look.

The head wrap chain

If you want to add an exotic vibe to your look, wear a head wrap chain. The style options are endless, ranging from the styles with big stones and crystal to the delicate ones with small chains and bells. "If you have smaller facial features, then I recommend opting for the more delicate and subtle head chain, whilst those with bigger features can get away with a more extravagant look," says Asgar. You can choose to wear the chain with your hair tied up in a bun, but this accessory looks best when the hair is left down and flowing. Also make sure that the hair is parted in the middle, since symmetry is important for this accessory to look glamorous and exotic.

Messy twisted braid

This hairstyle is perfect for women with thick hair, which is very common with my clients from the Middle East and India. To get this look, gather all your hair and braid it loosely. Don't be worried if you have a lot of flyways, it adds to the charm of the hair style, but make sure that you add bobby pins so the braid stays in place. "If you really want to take the hair style a step further, go into the garden and pluck some flowers," says hair dresser Agnes

Chen. You can find brightly coloured flowers all over the world that look gorgeous when you braid them into your hair. Make sure that when you pick the flowers that they have a small stem at the bottom for you to use. This is a very bold hair style, so pair it with some subtle earrings.

French twist

This is a hairstyle that suits all hair textures and brings glamour to any bride's look. Grab all your hair into a low pony and twist it all around, twice. Tuck the ends inside the twist and secure it firmly with bobby pins - that's how simple this style is to do. You can customise this

hairstyle according to how much volume you want around your face, and you can accessorise by wearing a headband or a hair comb at the back. If you want, you can even tuck some flowers beneath the twist, which gives the style a little edge and modernity. However, it's really important to ensure that you use enough bobby pins to place your locks firmly in place, otherwise you will be fiddling with your hair throughout your big day. Adding some hairspray is all you need to fix the hair once this is done, leaving you to relax and enjoy your wedding day in style.



How to wear coloured mascaras!



Coloured mascaras are not as bizarre a make-up trend as they sound. There's one for everyone, and there is a right way to wear it, of course. Depending on the colour of your eyes, there's a coloured mascara for everyone. Available in hues of blues, greens, yellows, oranges, pinks and purple, let's have a look at what's meant for you...
Brown eyes: Plum and dark blue look perfect on brown eyes. Its deep look draws attention and you don't need to put on any more eye make-up.
Black eyes: Black eyes can be accentuated well with deeper shades. Thus, plum, navy blue and olive green and great picks.
Blue eyes: For blue eyes, navy blue is a good choice since the layering works well. Due to the lighter tint of the eyes, brown stands out.
Green eyes: Flatter green eyes with purple mascaras. Again, layering works well here and so, green mascara is a good option.
Hazel eyes: Clear, hazel coloured eyes can take on blue, purple and green mascaras well. With coloured mascaras, you don't have to do much eye make-up. While it can be completely avoided, you can at the most apply a double-liner, a subtle lipstick and subdued eye-shadows.
 Go rock the look!



Five-minute Beauty hacks for working women

Manisha Chopra, cosmetologist, beauty expert, co-founder, cosmetic brand SeaSoul Cosmeceuticals, shares five-minute beauty tips:

- * Whether your eyes look puffy due to lack of sleep or you've developed a hint of dark circles, applying concealer correctly can save the day. Instead of following the age-old practice of dotting your concealer under the eyes, apply it in a triangular shape. After rubbing it in gently, dab on some translucent yellow powder and watch your whole face come alive.
- * You must have noticed that after a few hours at work, your lipstick begins to fade and lose its initial vibrancy. And who has time to reapply colour in between the hectic daily schedule? Apply one coat of your chosen lip colour. Now lightly hold a tissue over your lips and dust off some translucent powder over the tissue. This seals your lip colour for a long time.
- * Always wanted that beautiful smokey eye look that the celebrities seem to do so effortlessly? Here's an ultra-cool way of getting perfect smokey eyes for a party or for work. Use your eyeliner and draw a slanted hashtag on the outer corner of your eyelid. Now blend this in with the rest of your make-up and voila, it's done!
- * Doing a winged eyeliner at home may seem tough but it really isn't. All you need is a few minutes and some scotch tape. Place a piece of tape at the corner of your eye, going towards your eyebrow. Now use your liner pencil to draw a thin line across your upper lash line extending all the way to the edge of the tape. Trace the edge of the tape with your liner and now

A busy schedule can be a dampener for your beauty regime. But who says you can't do make-up in just five minutes?

make the line thicker on the outside edge than the inside. It makes your whole face look more defined.



* A white eyeliner or kohl pencil can work wonders. It is also a beautiful way to make smaller or droopy eyes pop. Use it on the inner corners of your eyes for a wide-eyed look. Draw a sideways V and then gently blend it in.

Get your beauty fix from the benefits of Seaweed

Want some TLC for your skin? Forget that exotic Moroccan rose soak or a mint chocolate wrap.

Of late, the new skin pampering comes in the way of seaweed. More people are waking up to the benefits of the stringy, green algae that may look gross, but has powerful ingredients that help to tone and repair the skin. Here's what's the lure is about...

Party quick-fix

Duchess of Cambridge Kate Middleton reportedly pampers herself with seaweed facials. Closer home, several people in Mumbai are going in for a 'seaweed wrap' before a night out, reveals skin expert, Dr Rashmi Shetty. "It's a no-harm quick-fix for the skin and people are trying this just before they have to get into their dress for a party or walk the red carpet. The wrap is applied to the body and as it's warming, it causes the person to sweat. During this process, the body eliminates excess toxins, urea creatinine and water. This temporarily reduces puffiness and redness (if any), as well as the appearance of cellulite. You feel lighter and drop half an inch all over. But to see extended benefits, one has to try this more often — once a week is quite safe to do so," she says.



Post-holiday skin recovery

Seaweed is also increasingly being touted as the solution to ease skin stress after a holiday. "During this time, various factors like harsh climate, humidity levels, water, an erratic lifestyle, even dehydration on flights — all play havoc on the skin. Seaweed helps to re-mineralise the skin and combat the damages due to these conditions. It has a kind of restorative ability," affirms spa expert Nisha Jhaveri. "People use it on the face, but I recommend it more on the body. What's popular is the seaweed body scrub or polish, which removes dead cells and helps even out the skin tone. You can also try the body envelopment, which has seaweed extract."

Here's how to do minimal make-up

Avoid heavy make-up and dark eyes in monsoon to look chic and be comfortable, says an expert.

Aakriti Kochar, beauty and make-up expert, Oriflame India, suggests how to get minimal make-up looks:

- * It is always good to wear a sun block as a good base to protect your skin from any damage during the day. Keep the look minimal, go for soft smudged eyeliner -- maybe brown instead of black. If you are fond of using a mascara, use a waterproof one which stays on keeping in mind the hot and humid weather. A soft matte blush for the day is also a good addition to the look.

Lips with soft pink and coral can add to the fresh look.



* Using a BB cream instead of a foundation is also a good idea since it is an all-in-one moisturizer, SPF, foundation, compact and primer. A good BB cream can compensate for multiple layers since in one layer it does it all. It is light and comfortable on the skin.

* Avoid heavy make-up and dark eyes in monsoon. Smokey eyes is a big no! Lip and cheek tint is a good idea for summer or monsoon as well, since it's light weight and gives a natural hint of colour. * Avoid glosses in monsoon since they have a sticky feel to it which makes it extremely uncomfortable in humid weather.

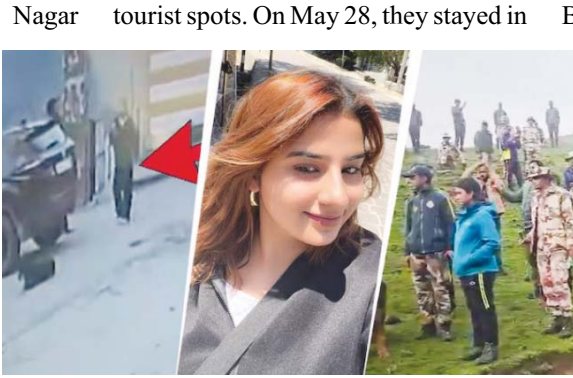


Uttarkashi trekker missing for 6 days, last CCTV footage emerges

Six days after trekker Babita Pandey went missing from Goi Base Camp near Dayara Bugyal in Uttarkashi, search efforts have entered a crucial phase. Authorities are now focusing on a nearby lake, with a six-member deep-search team set to use specialised equipment after extensive searches yielded no significant clues.

New Delhi.(Agency)
A trekker, identified as Babita Pandey, has been missing since May 29 during a trip to Uttarkashi, and police have taken the two friends who were last seen with her in CCTV footage in for questioning as part of the investigation. Police said the last CCTV footage of Babita Pandey was recorded in Raithal village, where she was seen with the two men. The men, both aged 23, are being questioned at Maneri Police Station. Police identified them as Harman Pal Singh, a resident of Dineshpur in

Uttarakhand's Udham Singh Nagar district, and Harmanpreet Singh, a resident of Shahjahanpur in Uttar Pradesh. According to the timeline provided by the police, the three left Udham Singh Nagar on May 25 for a trip to Uttarkashi. They stayed in Dehradun the same day and reached Harsil on May 26. The group is reported to have spent May 26 and May 27 visiting Harsil, Gangotri and



Raithal village. On May 29, the trio left for Dayara

and stayed at Goi Base Camp. Police said Babita Pandey went missing from the base camp, following which a search operation and an investigation were launched. Now, 6 days on, the search operation has entered a crucial stage, with the entire operation focusing on a lake located near the campsite from where she was last reported missing. Over the past several days, teams from the SDRF, NDRF, police, forest department and other agencies have conducted

extensive searches across forests, slopes, trekking routes and other difficult terrain. However, no concrete clues have emerged so far. Officials believe the lake could provide an important lead in the case. According to information available, a six-member special deep-search team is expected to reach the spot shortly and begin operations. Using modern equipment, the team will conduct a detailed examination of the lake's depths as well as the surrounding area. Local residents and the administration are closely watching.

Delhi likely to witness thunderstorms, rain till June 5, says IMD

New Delhi.(Agency)
The city is set to witness a week of rains and thunderstorms, the Met department has forecast. After days of severe heatwaves, Delhi will see temperatures hovering below 40°C till June 5. The city on Tuesday recorded a maximum temperature of 37.7°C, 2.3°C below normal, amid relatively mild weather conditions across the city, weather data showed. According to the India Meteorological Department



(IMD), temperatures remained below normal across monitoring stations, with Safdarjung, the base station, recording a maximum of 37.7°C, while the minimum stood at 26.8°C. Palam recorded a high of 35.9°C, Lodhi Road 36°C, The Ridge 37.2°C, and Ayanagar 36.1°C, all 2.5°C to 5°C below the normal for the season, IMD said. Also, the minimum temperatures at these four stations ranged between 24°C and 25.7°C, slightly below the seasonal normal. The weather conditions are expected to remain favourable in the coming week, reducing the likelihood of heatwave conditions. For Wednesday, the IMD has forecast a partly cloudy sky with the possibility of thunderstorms and light rain in isolated places.

Two more floors added in Saidulajaib building recently, says MCD report

New Delhi.(Agency)
The Municipal Corporation of Delhi on Tuesday released a report detailing the collapse of the building near Saket metro station, which killed six people and injured several others. On May 30, at approximately 7:55 PM, the Zonal Control Room received telephonic information regarding the collapse of a building in the Said-ulajaib area, and upon receiving the information, the MCD deputed its Junior Engineer (JE), Assistant Engineer (AE), and other staff members to the site, the report stated. Additionally, necessary machinery, trucks, and JCB machines were also dispatched without delay, and the MCD team reached the site at around 8:30 PM. However, due to the area being cordoned off by the Delhi Police, the officials were not permitted to enter the site at that time.

During the rescue operation, approximately 24 persons were traced, out of whom 18 were rescued safely and 13 injured persons were shifted to a nearby trauma centre for treatment, and six persons were confirmed deceased. The report further mentioned that the collapsed property covers an area of approximately 300 square metres. The building comprised a basement, ground floor, first floor, and second floor, which had been constructed approximately 12-13 years ago, while the third and fourth floors had been added in recent years. It was located in an unauthorised colony that is not among the 1,511 colonies identified for regularisation, it added. The rescue and debris removal operations continued uninterrupted on the next day as well. Since the collapse, officers and staff of the Building Department and Maintenance Department have been continuously engaged in rescue and clearance activities.

Man suffers heart attack during badminton match, off-duty doctors save his life

Deepak Pujara was in the middle of a match at the Raizada Hansraj Stadium in the city when he suddenly collapsed to the ground due to a heart attack. The distressing scene sent the sporting venue into panic mode. Amid the chaos, two off-duty doctors took charge of the situation.

New Delhi.(Agency)
A 45-year-old man narrowly escaped death after suffering a heart attack while playing badminton in Punjab's Jalandhar, thanks to the quick thinking and prompt intervention of two doctors. Deepak Pujara was in the middle of a match at the Raizada Hansraj Stadium in the city when he suddenly collapsed to the ground due to a heart attack.

The distressing scene sent the sporting venue into panic mode. The staff called for a medical team. Meanwhile, amid the chaos, two doctors, who had themselves come to the stadium to enjoy a few hours of recreational sports, took charge of the

situation. As soon as Dr Nitish Garg and Dr Piyush Sharma realised what they were dealing with, they instructed the venue's staff to bring



the available emergency health kit and medical equipment. Without waiting for the medical team to arrive, the off-duty healthcare

professionals rushed to Pujara's side and began administering emergency care as he lay unconscious on the badminton court. Their efforts to save the badminton player's life continued even after the medical team arrived at the scene. Dr Garg began administering CPR to Pujara. However, when there was no immediate improvement in his condition, the doctor turned to defibrillation. Using a defibrillator, and with the assistance of his fellow doctor and the responding medical team, he delivered an electrical shock to Pujara's heart. The procedure proved successful, as the badminton player's vital signs began to stabilise.

Solar boom in Gujarat and Tamil Nadu is polluting Delhi-NCR, study says

New Delhi.(Agency)
Solar power development has advanced at an unprecedented pace in Gujarat and Tamil Nadu; however, waste management has not kept up. A significant volume of waste generated in these states is being transported to the Delhi-NCR region, which is already burdened with multiple types of waste affecting air and water quality. A joint report by the Chintan Environmental Research and Action Group and the World Resources Institute reveals that informal waste aggregators are dumping solar waste, including end-of-life solar panels, photovoltaic cells, lithium-ion batteries, and other hazardous electronic waste, into Delhi-NCR.



This region is already burdened with excessive waste, contaminating groundwater, other water resources, and air quality. In informal discussions with several waste aggregators in two states, validated by non-profits, researchers, start-ups, and formal recyclers in Gujarat and Tamil Nadu, the report indicated that there is no reliable quantitative data or

traceability mechanism available to determine the proportion of this material that is ultimately processed through informal recycling operations in Delhi-NCR and other northern regions of India. In Tamil Nadu, the modus operandi involves formal recyclers passing on non-profitable scraps, such as aluminum frames and photovoltaic cells, along with other hazardous materials to Delhi-NCR. There is around Delhi-NCR has around 5,000 e-waste processing units that employ more than 50,000 people. Due to a lack of formal recycling capacity and technical knowledge, much of the solar waste ends up in landfills.

UPSC has built a leakproof island. Here's how it prevents paper leaks

New Delhi.(Agency)
There is a running joke in the circles of UPSC aspirants in Delhi's Mukherjee Nagar and Old Rajinder Nagar. Even if someone managed to get hold of the UPSC Civil Services Examination paper before the exam, there is no guarantee they would be able to solve it. Jokes apart, aspirants and mentors after the 2026 UPSC Prelims paper on May 24 said that the questions were difficult enough to leave even the best-prepared candidates sweating. The joke highlighting the exam's difficult and unpredictable nature throws a question that has gained relevance amid a string of paper leak controversies. How has the UPSC managed to conduct some of India's biggest examinations year after year without finding itself at the centre of such scandals? The

question came up in the Supreme Court last week as the National Testing Agency (NTA) faced scrutiny over examination irregularities. During a hearing before a bench of Justices PS Narasimha and Alok Aradhe, the court pointed to the UPSC as an example of how large-scale examinations can be conducted without repeated paper leak controversies. "UPSC has never been in a situation. You need to learn," Justice Narasimha observed, while questioning the NTA's handling of exam security. The observation has turned the spotlight on the puzzle that has long intrigued students and ordinary people alike. Every year, the UPSC conducts examinations involving lakhs of

candidates across thousands of centres. Yet unlike several recruitment boards and exam agencies that have repeatedly



battled allegations of leaks and cancellations, the Commission has largely preserved its reputation for confidentiality and process integrity. What exactly does the UPSC do

differently? Is it simply a matter of experience, or are there institutional safeguards that make leaks far more difficult? And can other recruitment agencies such as the NTA or the SSC, learn from not just the UPSC, but also premier institutions like the IITs and IIMs, which conduct high-stakes entrance examinations like the JEE and CAT, on a massive scale? The answers lie in a combination of secrecy, compartmentalisation of papers, use of technology and decades-old decorum, according to experts and stakeholders India Today Digital spoke to. "The UPSC has an established strictness, established protocols and institutional decorum that makes any attempt to compromise the examination process.

'Fake votes': Delhi Medical Council polls come under scrutiny

It has also been alleged that some non-doctors may have participated in the voting process, raising questions about possible electoral malpractice.

New Delhi.(Agency)
The Delhi Medical Council (DMC) election held on May 21 has come under scrutiny following allegations of multiple voting, inadequate voter verification and procedural lapses that may have compromised the integrity of the electoral process. Concerns have been raised by candidates, voters and observers regarding voter identification, voting slip issuance, crowd management and other safeguards intended to ensure a fair election. It has also been alleged that some non-doctors may have participated in the voting process, raising questions about possible electoral malpractice. According to accounts shared by individuals present at the polling venue, several administrative checks expected in a professional election process were either absent or inadequately implemented. One of the primary concerns relates to the absence of a properly structured and segmented voter list. In elections involving a large electorate, voters are generally assigned to specific counters based on predefined divisions of the electoral roll. However, participants alleged that no such system was followed and voters were reportedly allowed to approach any of the kiosks set up for issuing voting slips. Around ten kiosks were reportedly operational for slip distribution. Observers alleged that due to the absence of real-time coordination between kiosks, individuals could potentially obtain multiple voting slips against the same name or registration number. "Around 2 or 3 pm we realised a lot of people were voting twice or thrice because computers were not connected and people were getting their slips made two or three times," said Dr Neelam Lekhi, President, Delhi Medical Council. "They have voted around 500-1000 fake votes," she alleged. Another major concern relates to voter identity verification. Several participants claimed that identity card checks were discontinued later in the day, reportedly after 1 pm to 2 pm. It was also alleged that the ink used during voting was not indelible and could be removed easily.

ITR filing 2026: Not in taxable income? Major reasons why you must still file your income tax returns

New Delhi..(Agency)

As the Assessment Year 2026-27 filing season gets underway, some salaried individuals frequently wonder if they should file an Income Tax Return (ITR) even if they don't have any tax liability. The simple answer to this question is that you should file an ITR if you have no tax liability. In several cases, filing an ITR even if tax liability is zero is a calculated move that can be of immense benefit in multiple ways. Income tax submission and filing means you have a formal record of your annual income declaration to the IT department. Even in cases where the tax liability is zero, filing ITR helps to maintain a verifiable and factual financial history.

1. Income and identity proof

An ITR acts as a legal document because it is recorded with the government. The ITR you file can be used as identity proof in several cases such as while applying for an Aadhaar card. The government accepts it as proof of residence as well. It also acts as income proof as it contains a detailed list of all your incomes and expenses. It can be particularly useful for self-employed individuals, business owners and freelancers who may not have salary slips to prove their income.

2. Applying for Loans

Several banks often request ITR documentation as proof of income while giving home loan, personal loan or business loan to customers. If you can produce a filed return to the banks or lending institutions then it can help improve eligibility for loans. A filed ITR return details your past and present financial position and assures your loan repayment capability.

3. Claim refund

Tax deducted at source (TDS) might be deducted on savings interest, freelance income, fixed deposits or dividend payouts for stocks even if your tax liability is zero. Once you file income tax returns, this helps you claim such a refund without any hassles. If excess tax has been deducted from your income through TDS, filing an ITR becomes necessary to claim a refund.

4. Carry forward of losses

If you have calculated losses from any source of income that cannot be offset against the current year's income, you can carry forward these losses to future years by filing a tax return. Suppose you have suffered losses in the stock market, property or business activity and want to carry them forward to the next year, you can easily do so if you have filed an ITR.

Rupee falls 28 paise to 95.64 against US dollar in early trade

MUMBAI.(Agency)

The rupee depreciated 28 paise to 95.64 against the US dollar in early trade on Wednesday, after the US Trade Representative proposed 12.5 per cent additional duties on India and 53 other countries over forced labour import violations.

Forex traders said the US Trade Representative's action, amid fresh hostilities and stalled talks between the US and Iran, weighed on investor sentiment. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 95.43 against the US dollar, then touched 95.64 in early trade, down 28 paise from its previous close. On Tuesday, the rupee depreciated 17 paise to 95.36 against the US dollar. The US Trade Representative has proposed imposing 12.5 per cent additional duties on 54 countries, including India, for failing to prohibit the import of goods produced with forced labour.

The action follows investigations launched against 60 countries over what the USTR described as their failure to impose and effectively enforce bans on imports made with forced labour. India has denied the allegations under the forced labour clause and asked the US to end the investigations, saying such matters should be addressed within the framework of ongoing bilateral trade negotiations.

The USTR statement said 54 countries, including India, China, Japan, Brazil, Australia, the UK, and Saudi Arabia, have failed to impose and effectively enforce a prohibition on the importation of goods produced with forced labour.

Indian travellers can now pay via UPI at 4.5 million merchant outlets in Cambodia

New Delhi.(Agency)

Indian tourists and travellers heading to Cambodia can now leave their currency exchange worries behind, with UPI payments going live at more than 4.5 million merchant locations across the Southeast Asian nation. The cross-border QR payment linkage was launched by NPCI International Payments Limited in partnership with ACLEDA Bank Plc, enabling Indian users to scan Cambodia's national QR code system, KHQR, through any UPI-enabled app to make real-time payments at restaurants, tourist attractions, retail stores and other businesses.

The launch was formally announced at an event in Phnom Penh attended by representatives of the National Bank of Cambodia and the Reserve Bank of India.

How does it work

In the first phase, Indian travellers can use their existing UPI applications to make instant QR code payments across Cambodia's KHQR merchant network, the same way they would pay at home in India. The system is designed to offer a secure and seamless payment experience while eliminating the need to carry cash or exchange currency for everyday spending.

RBI MPC meeting starts today: Will rising inflation risks lead to a rate hike?

The RBI's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) begins its three-day meeting today amid rising concerns over inflation, higher crude oil prices and global uncertainties. Will these factors be enough to trigger a rate hike?

New Delhi..(Agency)

The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) three-day Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting begins today, with all eyes on Governor Sanjay Malhotra, who will announce the policy decision on Friday, June 5. The six-member MPC will assess the country's inflation outlook, economic growth prospects and interest rates at a time when global uncertainties, rising crude oil prices and geopolitical tensions are creating fresh challenges for policymakers. While concerns over inflation have resurfaced, most market experts believe the RBI is likely to keep

the repo rate unchanged rather than opt for a rate hike.

WHY IS THE MPC MEETING IMPORTANT?

The MPC's decision directly affects borrowing costs across the economy. Any change in the repo rate influences home loan EMIs, personal loan rates, business borrowing costs and overall consumer spending. At its last policy review in April 2026, the RBI left the repo rate unchanged at 5.25 per cent. The central bank also maintained its neutral policy stance. Since then, rising crude oil prices, pressure on the rupee and tensions in West Asia have raised questions about whether the RBI may need to act to contain inflation.

WHY EXPERTS EXPECT RBI TO HOLD RATES

According to Shishir Bajjal, International Partner, Chairman and Managing Director, Knight Frank India, the RBI is unlikely to raise rates despite current inflationary pressures. "We expect the

MPC to keep policy rates unchanged, amid inflation concerns, but the tone of commentary will be important to take note of. Much of the current inflationary pressure is being driven by supply-side factors such as elevated crude oil prices,



geopolitical tensions, and climate-related uncertainties, which are largely beyond the influence of monetary policy," he said. Bajjal added that increasing interest rates in response to such factors may hurt economic growth without significantly reducing inflation. "Therefore, it is

essential that the central bank continues to keep interest rates stable, prioritise growth support while remaining vigilant on inflation dynamics," he said.

MARKETS FOCUSED ON RBI'S MESSAGE

Gaurav Garg, Research Analyst at Lemonn Markets Desk, also expects the RBI to maintain the status quo. "We expect the RBI to maintain status quo on the repo rate in the upcoming MPC meeting. While recent developments such as higher crude prices, fuel price revisions, rupee weakness and geopolitical uncertainties have added to inflationary concerns, much of the current pressure appears to be supply-driven," he said.

According to Garg, the central bank is likely to monitor developments carefully rather than respond with immediate policy tightening. "In such an environment, the RBI is likely to remain watchful rather than react with immediate policy tightening," he said.

TCS, Tech Mahindra, HCLTech crash up to 8%: Why are IT stocks falling after recent rally

New Delhi.(Agency)

After leading the market's recovery over the past two sessions, information technology stocks came under heavy selling pressure on Wednesday, with investors rushing to book profits following a sharp rally driven by artificial intelligence optimism and hopes of stronger software spending.

The Nifty IT index plunged 4.66%, making it the worst-performing sectoral index on Dalal Street by a wide margin. The sharp correction also dragged benchmark indices lower, with IT heavyweights emerging as the biggest losers on the Sensex. Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) crashed 7.16%, making it the biggest loser among Sensex stocks. Tech Mahindra fell 4.54%, Infosys declined 3.80%, and HCL Technologies slipped 3.65%. Together, these stocks accounted for a significant portion of the market's losses during the session. The sell-off marks a sharp reversal for the sector, which had gained about 7% over the previous two trading sessions. Sentiment was further

hit by weakness in US-listed ADRs of Indian IT companies. Infosys ADRs fell 2.5% overnight, while Wipro ADRs dropped more than 8% after sharp rallies in recent sessions, indicating



profit booking in technology shares globally.

WHY ARE IT STOCKS FALLING TODAY?

The biggest reason behind today's decline is profit booking after a strong rally. IT stocks had witnessed aggressive buying over the last two sessions as investors cheered strong earnings from

US software companies, optimism around artificial intelligence spending and expectations that the US Federal Reserve could eventually cut interest rates. Nitant Darekar, Research Analyst at Bonanza, said that the recent IT bounce was largely sentiment-driven.

"The Nifty IT index gained roughly 6% over three sessions and about 15% off its May lows, fuelled by Snowflake's upbeat earnings signalling resilient AI spending, rising US rate-cut hopes, a weak rupee boosting margins, and attractive valuations after a sharp correction," said Darekar. Today's reversal, led by TCS, is essentially profit-booking on an overextended relief rally. Fundamentally, TCS stays the weakest link: down nearly 23% in 2026 on margin pressure and weak growth visibility. Valuations at a ~30% discount to historical P/E offer comfort, but a durable rerating needs demand recovery, not just AI optimism," he added.

Stock markets tumble in early trade; Sensex tanks 700 points

MUMBAI.(Agency)

The rupee appreciated 16 paise to 95.03 Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty tumbled in early trade on Wednesday amid uncertainty related to US-Iran negotiations, fresh spike in crude oil prices and persistent foreign fund outflows. The 30-share BSE Sensex tanked 699.74 points to 73,959.48 in early trade. The 50-share NSE Nifty dropped 177.40 points to 23,302.50. From the 30-Sensex firms, Tata Consultancy Services, Tech Mahindra, Infosys, HCL Tech, ITC and Eternal were among the biggest laggards. IT stocks fell sharply amid profit-taking after rallying in the past few days. Meanwhile, Maruti, Adani Ports, Asian Paints and Bharti Airtel were the gainers from the blue-chip pack. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, traded 0.89 per cent higher at USD 96.85 per barrel. "The mild

escalation in the West Asia conflict has again pushed up Brent crude price to close to USD 97 indicating no respite to India from the energy shock," VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Limited, said. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 8,362.92 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data. "At present, investor sentiment remains cautious and highly sensitive to incoming developments. The lack of tangible progress in US-Iran negotiations, elevated crude oil prices and continued foreign fund outflows continue to reinforce a risk-off environment," Ponmudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth-tech firm, said. Meanwhile, the US Trade Representative has proposed slapping 12.5 per cent additional duties on 54 countries, including India, for failing to prohibit the import of goods

produced with forced labour. The action follows investigations launched against 60 countries over what the USTR described as their failure to impose and effectively enforce bans on imports made with forced labour. "The failure of our most important trading partners to address the importation of goods made with forced labour is unacceptable. This creates a dynamic where American workers are forced to compete globally on an uneven playing field," US Trade Representative Ambassador Jamieson Greer said in a statement. In Asian markets, Japan's Nikkei 225 index and Shanghai's SSE Composite index quoted higher, while Hong Kong's Hang Seng index traded lower. US markets ended in positive territory on Tuesday. "Overnight, the S&P 500 closed at a fresh record high, while Japan's Nikkei 225 set new lifetime highs.

performed strongly in recent years, the prolonged conflict is emerging as a key concern for exporters. "As the conflict has continued through February, March, April and May, its impact has become more evident for tea sellers. If the situation does not improve in the coming months, producers may have to shift back to CTC tea manufacturing, or orthodox tea may have to be sold at lower prices," he added.

Despite the challenges, Bihani expressed confidence that exporters could diversify their market base. He pointed to Russia as a significant alternative destination and said the industry is actively exploring new export opportunities. We have identified new markets for exports, and Russia remains a major market for us. Much will depend on how the situation evolves in the coming months," he said. The concerns come even as India's tea export sector continues to record robust growth. In May, Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said the value of India's tea exports had surged 93 per cent to Rs 8,719 crore in 2025-26, compared with Rs 4,509 crore in 2013-14.



Gold, silver prices are down again. Should investors buy, hold or wait?

If you've been tracking gold and silver prices recently, you've probably noticed that the rally has lost some steam. Both metals have slipped despite ongoing geopolitical uncertainty, leaving investors with an important decision to make: buy more, stay invested, or wait for the dust to settle.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Gold and silver have long been seen as safe places to park money during uncertain times. But in recent weeks, both precious metals have struggled to maintain the strong momentum they enjoyed earlier this year. Prices have turned volatile, leaving many investors wondering whether this is just a temporary pause or the start of a bigger correction.

On Wednesday, precious metal prices remained under pressure. At around 11:30 am, MCX Gold was trading lower by Rs

849 at Rs 154,700 per 10 grams, while MCX Silver fell by Rs 1,267 to Rs 265,440 per kilogram.

WHY ARE GOLD AND SILVER UNDER PRESSURE?

Fresh military exchanges between the United States and Iran have once again raised concerns about the stability of the recently announced ceasefire. The latest developments have increased uncertainty in global markets and weakened investor confidence. While geopolitical tensions usually support safe-haven assets such as gold, other factors, including a stronger US dollar and fluctuations in currency markets, have weighed on prices. Emerging markets, including India, have also come under pressure as investors assess the possible economic impact of the ongoing conflict.

GOLD FACES SHORT-TERM WEAKNESS

According to Kaveri More, Commodity Analyst - Technical Research at Choice Broking, gold has witnessed significant weakness over the past two weeks.

"MCX Gold prices declined nearly 4% over the last two weeks amid a stronger U.S. dollar and weakness in the Indian rupee," she said. More noted that the August gold contract is currently trading around



159,300. She pointed out that the key weekly support level is near the 20-week Exponential Moving Average (EMA) at 157,380. "The overall trend remains moderately bearish, with major support seen at 157,380-152,700 and resistance placed at 163,650-169,000," she added.

The technical indicators suggest that gold may continue to face some pressure in the near term unless fresh buying interest emerges. SILVER SHOWING MORE

RESILIENCE

While silver has also corrected, it has held up better than gold in recent weeks.

"MCX Silver continues to witness range-bound trading between 261,000 and 277,400," More said. She added that despite the recent decline, silver has shown relative resilience compared to gold. The Gold/Silver Ratio, often referred to as the Mint Ratio, is currently hovering around 59-60. "Going forward, silver is likely to remain sideways unless a decisive breakout occurs. Key support levels are placed at 261,000-249,300, while resistance is seen at 277,400-299,000," she explained. This suggests that silver may continue to move within a broad range until a strong trigger pushes prices higher or lower.

WHAT SHOULD INVESTORS DO NOW?

Market experts generally advise investors not to make decisions based solely on short-term price movements. Gold and silver remain important diversification tools, particularly during periods of economic and geopolitical uncertainty.

Short news

Mumbai's Mrinal Tai Gore Flyover extension to open on June 6

Mumbai .(Agency)

The long-awaited extension of the Mrinal Tai Gore Flyover is set to be inaugurated on the morning of Saturday, June 6. The project is aimed at easing traffic congestion in Goregaon. The 750-meter flyover will provide a direct link between Ram Mandir and Goregaon areas in western suburbs and will have four lanes.

While the main span of the Mrinal Tai Gore Railway Flyover was opened to traffic in 2016, work continued on the two approach arms of the bridge, each approximately 390 metres long. The project also included the development of pedestrian amenities, painting works, safety infrastructure and installation of noise barriers.

The completed flyover is expected to significantly improve traffic flow in Goregaon and provide relief to commuters by reducing congestion along the corridor. The project, initially estimated at Rs 209 crore, ultimately cost around ₹248 crore upon completion.

The extension project received administrative approval in 2018, with construction commencing on March 22, 2019. The contract was awarded to the

Illegal dargah in Aarey razed amid tight security

Mumbai .(Agency)

An illegal dargah inside Aarey Colony was demolished by the administration on Tuesday amid tight police bandobast. Police officials said there was no law and order situation. Police shut internal roads in Aarey Colony to prevent any mob from gathering.

DCP Gajanan Rajmane (zone 12) told reporters that a trust built the dargah without the necessary permissions. "As it



was an encroachment, notices were sent to the trust to take down the structure. Sufficient time was provided to them, but it was not pulled down. The administration then asked us for sufficient police bandobast, which was provided, to pull it down."

BJP leader Kirit Somaiya said he had lodged a complaint against the illegal structure almost a year ago. Aarey Colony security officer Vijay Wagh had alleged in his complaint in Jan this year that electricity had been illegally used at the dargah for the last 10 years. He said over 77,000 units amounting to Rs 31 lakh had been drawn illegally from the electricity box near unit 32 in Aarey Colony.

Sand mining ban in Krishna until Oct 15

VIJAYAWADA.(Agency)

The Krishna district administration has imposed a ban on sand mining in the Krishna River from June 1 to October 15 in line with National Green Tribunal (NGT) guidelines for the monsoon season, while intensifying surveillance and enforcement measures to curb illegal excavation and transportation. Authorities have also stocked nearly 10 lakh metric tonnes of sand in designated stockyards to ensure uninterrupted supply to consumers during the restriction period.

District Collector DK Balaji issued the directions while chairing a meeting of the District-Level Sand Committee at the Collectorate on Tuesday. The meeting was attended by Superintendent of Police V Vidyasagar Naidu, Joint Collector M Naveen and officials from various departments.

The Collector said the restrictions have been enforced in accordance with NGT and Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change guidelines, which prohibit sand mining during the monsoon season. He warned that strict action would be taken against individuals involved in illegal sand mining or transportation.

To prevent any shortage during the four-and-a-half-month ban period, the district administration has stocked nearly 10 lakh metric tonnes of sand in nine designated stockyards across the district. Sand will be supplied round the clock through authorised agencies to meet public demand.

Can state be made to compensate families of people who died in political events?: Madras HC asks Tamil Nadu govt

Chandigarh.(Agency)

Can the state govt be directed to provide compensation to persons who were killed in events organised by political parties, Madras high court asked the Tamil Nadu govt on Tuesday. Justice Mohammed Shaffiq made the query, on a plea moved by P Vadivelu, a daily-wage labourer from Tondiarpet, seeking ₹50 lakh compensation for the death of his 14-year-old daughter Yuvasree in a stampede during a relief distribution program organised by AIADMK at R K Nagar, in Dec 2023.

The court has also directed AIADMK to respond to the plea in two weeks. According to the petitioner, on Dec 9, 2023, AIADMK organised a relief distribution event for people affected by cyclone Michaung.

The event was attended by AIADMK general secretary and former chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami. Yuvasree had gone to collect relief materials along with her aunt when a stampede broke out due to a massive crowd. She was killed in the stampede.



Alleging that the stampede occurred due to the negligence on part of the authorities in managing the crowd, the petitioner contended that the negligence amounted to violation of the right to life with safety and

dignity of his daughter guaranteed under the Constitution.

Therefore, he wanted the court to direct the state govt to provide Rs 50 lakh as compensation for his daughter's death..

HC orders naming of Raji Reddy Bhavan, directs panchayat to enforce GO

Hyderabad .(Agency)

Telangana high court has directed district and gram panchayat authorities to implement a GO naming the Timmapur gram panchayat building in Siddipet district as 'Raji Reddy Bhavan' and to display the name on the building.

A vacation bench of Justice Nagesh Bheemapaka issued the order on May 29 while disposing of a writ petition filed by advocate Ramavaram Madhavi Reddy. The petitioner stated that her father-in-law, late Raji Reddy, had served as sarpanch of the village, and in 2017 the gram panchayat had unanimously resolved

to name the newly-constructed building after him.

the order was not implemented despite repeated representations.

The petitioner alleged that the name initially displayed was later defaced due to political rivalry, and despite multiple requests, including one on May 12, 2026, no action was taken.

The high court, after reviewing the material, held that once a GO is issued, gram panchayat authorities are duty-bound to implement it. The court also recorded the submission of the standing counsel for the gram panchayat that necessary steps would be taken.

Accordingly, the bench directed the authorities to imprint or affix the name 'Raji Reddy Bhavan' on the gram panchayat office within four weeks and disposed of the petition.



Based on this resolution, the state govt issued a GO in Feb 2020 officially naming the building 'Raji Reddy Bhavan'. However,

gram panchayat office within four weeks and disposed of the petition.

Pay more or travel more: Rents hit new highs around Hyderabad IT hubs

Hyderabad.(Agency)

Rising house rentals are reshaping the way people live in Hyderabad. As rents soar across Madhapur, Gachibowli, Kondapur, HiTec City and other localities along the IT corridor, many residents are being pushed into shared flats, crowded PG accommodations and longer daily commutes.

For a growing number of professionals, finding a place to live is no longer just about comfort or convenience; it has become a tradeoff between saving money and saving time.

Shakina Fatima, who works in Jubilee Hills, said, "Given the traffic, commuting from Kondapur would take me nearly an hour every day. So I shifted to Banjara Hills. I now pay ₹26,500 for a 1BHK apartment, but my travel time has reduced significantly."

A standard 1BHK that rented for Rs

10,000-12,000 a month last year now costs Rs 15,000-20,000, while 2BHK apartments command Rs 30,000-35,000. Premium gated-community homes in the IT corridor are fetching

during the same period. Similar increases were recorded in Gachibowli, where rents climbed from Rs 18,000-30,000 to Rs 22,000-35,000, and in Kondapur, where they rose from Rs 15,000-25,000 to Rs 18,000-40,000.

Even 1BHK apartments now command rents ranging from Rs 15,000 to Rs 30,000 in these localities. Pratham Sharma, an IT professional, described the challenges faced by newcomers to the city.

"When I first came to Hyderabad and started looking for accommodation near my office in the IT corridor, the prices felt unreasonably high. Paying Rs 8,000 for a four-sharing PG room seemed expensive, while Rs 10,000 for a single room was beyond my budget. Eventually, I moved into a 2BHK apartment in Bachupally with three other roommates, paying a total rent of Rs 20,000 per month."



anywhere between Rs 50,000-70,000 per month. In Madhapur, average rents for 2BHK apartments increased from Rs 20,000-32,000 in 2025 to Rs 22,000-38,000 in 2026.

In Hi-Tec City, rents rose from Rs 22,000-35,000 to Rs 28,000-42,000

Newborn delivered on train with help from passengers in Ahmedabad

Ahmedabad.(Agency)

A baby girl was born aboard the Jabalpur-Somnath Express on Tuesday, after a woman passenger went into labour while the train was between Ahmedabad and Viramgam. Railway officials said that the woman was travelling with her husband in Coach S-2 on Jabalpur-Somnath Express from Ahmedabad to Veraval, and began experiencing labour pain shortly after departure from Ahmedabad station. Her husband and co-passengers alerted the on-duty ticket examiner, Ramjeevan Kumar. By this time, the train had crossed Chandlodia station and was heading for Viramgam which was the next stop.

Senior divisional commercial manager Atul Kumar Tripathi of Bhavnagar division of Western Railway said Kumar promptly informed the commercial control office and arranged for bedsheets and other basic support. As the woman's condition intensified, other women passengers in the coach stepped forward to assist. With their help, the delivery was conducted safely inside the coach. The woman gave birth to a healthy baby girl. After the birth, the railway administration coordinated medical support ahead of arrival at Viramgam. An ambulance and medical assistance were arranged at Viramgam station. With the husband's consent, the woman and newborn were disembarked and taken to the government hospital in Viramgam for examination and care. Doctors later confirmed that mother and child were stable and healthy. Officials said the TTE assisted the family after the delivery, and arranged tea and refreshments, while ensuring communication with control staff for timely medical coordination.

Tractor makers stay optimistic despite deficient monsoon fears

Chennai.(Agency)

The tractor industry remains cautiously optimistic about demand in the current fiscal year after posting a record performance in FY26, despite concerns that a potentially deficient monsoon could dampen rural sentiment and farm incomes. The industry has projected single-digit growth for FY27.

Industry representatives, however, believe the sector is better positioned to withstand weather-related disruptions than in the past, supported by structural improvements in the agricultural ecosystem.

TR Kesavan, past president of the Tractor &

Mechanization Association (TMA), said that while a deficient monsoon could have a short-term impact on farm sentiment, crop planning and liquidity in certain rain-fed regions, the impact on the tractor and farm mechanisation industry is unlikely to be uniform across the country. Indian agriculture has become more resilient due to expanding irrigation coverage, improved crop varieties and better reservoir management. "At this stage, the industry is not seeing any adverse impact," he added.

Echoing this view, a top official at a leading tractor manufacturer said Indian agriculture has become significantly more



resilient over the past decade. "We have had record food production this year, groundwater levels are sufficient, and

sowing is higher than last year. Soil moisture is above the decade average and is supporting sowing activity. Rains are expected to improve in the second half, while MSP prices are also higher. We have not seen any fall in tractor demand so far, and I don't see any reason for panic," the official said. Nevertheless, analysts caution that an El Niño event could weigh on industry performance in FY27. According to Pantomath Capital Advisors, the tractor industry could see a high-single-digit decline if rainfall remains below normal. Narinder Mittal, president and MD of CNH India, said a below-normal monsoon.

Rain cools Ahmedabad's max temp by 3.8°C in 24 hrs

Ahmedabad .(Agency)

Showers tamed the heat to some extent, bringing the maximum temperatures down from Monday's 40.8 degrees celsius to 37 degrees on Tuesday, a much-welcomed drop of 3.8 degrees in 24 hours. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Tuesday's maximum was 4.3 degrees below normal. At 22.7 degrees, the minimum temperature was 5.4 degrees lower than normal. IMD indicated that the city received 6.6 mm rainfall in 24 hours.

For Ahmedabad, the Met office has forecast a maximum temperature of around 37 degrees on Wednesday. The sky is likely to remain cloudy and the city may get some spells of light to moderate rain with a thunderstorm. For Gujarat, the forecast indicates no large change in maximum temperatures in the next 24 hours. After that, a drop in temperature by 2-4 degrees for three days.

An Orange Alert has been issued in Banaskantha, Patan, Mehsana, Sabarkantha, Aravalli, Gandhinagar, Kheda, Panchmahal, Dahod, Mahisagar and Kutch for Wednesday, suggesting moderate thunderstorms and lightning.

A Yellow Alert for Ahmedabad, Anand, Vadodara, Chhota Udepur, Narmada, Bharuch, Surat, Dangs, Navsari, Valsad, Tapi, Surendranagar, Rajkot, Jamnagar, Porbandar, Junagadh, Amreli, Bhavnagar, Dwarka, Gir Somnath, and Botad means these cities could get moderate thunderstorms and light to moderate rain.

Only some cities and towns recorded maximum temperatures above 40 degrees on Tuesday. At 41 degrees, Bhuj and Kandla had the highest maximum temperature; Rajkot recorded 40.7 degrees.

NEWS BOX

Shreyas Iyer's misery continues as Shivam Dube steals the show in Mumbai T20 League

Mumbai. (Agency)

Shreyas Iyer's difficult run of form continued on Tuesday evening. Playing in his first match since Punjab Kings were knocked out of the 2026 Indian Premier League, the star Indian batsman failed to score big at the Wankhede Stadium. He was dismissed cheaply, while his fellow Indian teammate Shivam Dube stole the spotlight.

Iyer recently finished a tough season as the captain of the Punjab Kings in the IPL. On June 2, he turned up for the SoBo Mumbai Falcons, hoping to find his rhythm back on his home ground. Walking out to bat at number three against ARCS Andheri, the right-hander wanted to build a strong innings. However, his stay at the crease lasted only a few moments, and he was out after scoring just five runs. The big wicket came from Shivam Dube. Bowling in the fourth over, captain Dube bowled a sharp delivery that forced an error from Iyer. The ball caught the outside edge of Iyer's bat and flew straight into the hands of wicketkeeper Prasad Pawar. Video clips of the dismissal quickly spread



across social media, putting more focus on Iyer's current struggle for runs. The Falcons were relying heavily on Iyer's international experience to help them get a big score in their first match of the season. Instead, his early departure shocked the team and triggered a major batting collapse. Without their main batsman to anchor the innings, the rest of the lineup struggled to cope with the pressure. ARCS Andheri took full advantage of the situation and kept taking wickets at regular intervals.

With no one left to steady the innings, the Falcons were bowled out for a low score of 126 in 18.2 overs. While Dube ended the night happily after a match-winning performance, Iyer is left searching for answers to his batting slump as the tournament moves forward.

Pat Cummins hints at skipping IPL 2027: Tests, World Cup are my priorities



New Delhi. (Agency)

Sunrisers Hyderabad captain Pat Cummins hinted that he may skip IPL 2027 to deal with his heavy workload for Australia next year. Cummins has been a part of the SRH franchise for the last three years and helped them reach the playoffs in IPL 2026.

He missed the early part of the season and played just eight games this time around as he was recovering from an injury. He picked up eight wickets during this time. Australia's schedule next year is packed, beginning with a four-Test series in India during January and February. They will then host England in Melbourne for a one-off match commemorating 150 years of Test cricket in March, before embarking on a full Ashes campaign ahead of the ODI World Cup in southern Africa, which is set to take place in October and November. This has made Cummins as his assess options for IPL next season, saying that Tests and the ODI World Cup will be "Something has got to give at some stage next year and it's not going to be test matches or an ODI World Cup," Cummins told the Sydney Morning Herald on Wednesday. "I will make a call a lot closer and work with the franchise to see what makes sense. Things can change. I've had a couple of injuries pop up, so I don't really want to lock in anything." The priorities for me are always the test matches and that ODI World Cup. I dare say if I play all of India, I need some sort of break before a pretty gruelling Ashes series. "Cummins' workload was carefully managed last summer, with the Australian captain featuring only in the Adelaide Ashes Test and sitting out the T20 World Cup while recovering from a persistent back issue. With fellow pace veterans Josh Hazlewood and Mitchell Starc also entering the latter stages of their careers, Australia are expected to weigh up rotation options, including giving the trio breaks during the home Test series against New Zealand around the turn of the year.

India to play biggest-ever bilateral tour of New Zealand in landmark year

India will tour New Zealand for a 12-match all-format series from October 22 to December 1. The tour will also mark 100 years of sporting ties between both nations.

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

India are set for an extensive tour of New Zealand later this year, with the two sides scheduled to contest a 12-match all-format series between October 22 and December 1. The tour, which includes five T20 Internationals, five One-Day Internationals and two Test matches, will be the largest men's bilateral series ever hosted by New Zealand and the most matches the country has staged against a visiting team. The landmark series coincides with the centenary celebrations of sporting relations between



India and New Zealand, adding further significance to an already high-profile contest. Action will get underway with the first T20I in Christchurch on October 22.

Following the completion of the five-match T20I leg, the teams will shift focus to the ODI series, beginning at Auckland's Eden Park on November 4. The red-ball segment of the tour starts in Wellington, where the opening Test will be played at the Basin Reserve from November 19 to 23. The second and final Test is scheduled for Christchurch's Hagley Oval from November 27 to December 1, bringing the 40-day tour to a close. The Test series will also mark India's first visit to New Zealand for a red-ball assignment since the 2019-20 campaign. In the years since, New Zealand have travelled to India on two occasions, including their memorable 2024-25 tour when they recorded a stunning 3-0 clean sweep in the Test series.

The tour forms part of wider celebrations recognising 100 years of sporting connections between the two nations, with the New Zealand Government backing the initiative alongside several other India-related sporting events planned for later in the year.

Joao Fonseca far from reaching limits as dream run ends in French Open quarterfinals

Jakub Mensik beat Joao Fonseca in straight sets to reach his first Grand Slam semi-final at Roland Garros. Fonseca said the defeat still strengthened his belief in his game, body and mentality.

MIAMI. (Agency)

Brazilian teenager Joao Fonseca insists he is yet to discover the absolute limits of his game or his body, despite his fairy-tale French Open campaign coming to an end at the hands of an ice-cool Jakub Mensik on Tuesday. In a highly anticipated battle of breakout stars under the Court Philippe-Chatrier roof, marking the youngest Roland Garros men's quarter-final since Rafael Nadal played Novak Djokovic in 2006, it was Mensik who ultimately

prevailed. The 20-year-old Czech history-maker booked his first-ever Grand Slam semi-final spot with a commanding 6-4, 6-3, 7-6(3) victory. In doing so, Mensik



bypassed legendary compatriot Ivan Lendl to become the youngest Czech man to reach the last four of a major since 1981. He now advances to face tournament favourite Alexander Zverev.

FONSECA REMAINS DEFIANT

Despite falling in straight sets, the 19-year-old Fonseca left Paris with his head held high. Having arrived at the clay-court major with severe concerns over a recent injury, a giant-killing run that included stunning victories over Novak Djokovic and Casper Ruud heavily exceeded his expectations.

"Coming from a little injury and not having any expectations for this tournament and doing a great run, this is a positive week," Fonseca told reporters. "This tournament gives me more conviction and more confidence to keep going and, for sure, understanding a little bit more [of my] body and my limits." "I have never seen my limit yet, but I already know that I can be comfortable with my physique," the Brazilian added. "I think it's more comfortable with my game, the way that I'm playing, that my mentality is on the right path... Maybe it's the same Joao, but finding new stuff."

Praggnanandhaa beats Carlsen twice, matching Anand's historic 19-year-old feat

Oslo. (Agency)

Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa joins a pretty exclusive list of players after his latest win over the legendary Magnus Carlsen in the eighth round of Norway Chess on Wednesday, June 3.

After taking down Carlsen with white in the third round back on May 27, the 20-year-old from Chennai completed the stunning double by repeating the feat with the black pieces. It must be noted that Praggnanandhaa had also beaten Carlsen in the same tournament back in the 2024 edition as well. This is reportedly the first time in the last 19 years of classical chess, that a player has managed to get the better of the Norwegian great twice in the same tournament. The last person to do so was none other than the Indian legend himself, Vishwanathan Anand. He beat Carlsen twice at the Linares International Chess Tournament back in 2007.

PRAGGNANFUAZED

Despite the magnitude of the victory, the youngster is refusing to buy into the surrounding hysteria. Instead, his focus

remains entirely on the bigger picture of the tournament.

"More than beating Magnus, I think winning a game in this tournament is more important at this stage. So I'm happy that I managed to do that," Praggnanandhaa told ChessBase India after the match. When



speaking about Carlsen, the Indian prodigy noted that despite coming out on top, the Norwegian was never far off. He acknowledged the legend's immense defensive skill, admitting that Carlsen kept finding the right moves even under intense

pressure.

"No, he was actually playing really well and defending extremely well. I think many other players would start making small positional mistakes here and there, but he kept finding all the right moves," Pragg said. "At one stage, I genuinely thought the

game was just going to be a draw. It was surprising that he blundered the way he did because he had defended so well up to that point." Looking ahead to the remainder of the event, the Chennai grandmaster expressed confidence in his current form but highlighted one specific area for improvement:

"In general, I feel like I'm playing well. The only thing is that the time scrambles haven't really gone my way. So I'll just try to keep more time on the clock and continue playing the way I've been playing over the last few games. I'll try to rest tomorrow and then come back in fighting mode for the final rounds."

Meet Rasikh Salam: The boy Irfan Pathan spotted. The man RCB trusted

IPL 2026: Irfan Pathan saw something in a teenager walking away from a trial in Srinagar. Eight years, four franchises and a two-year ban later, Rasikh Salam took 19 wickets in a title-winning campaign for Royal Challengers Bengaluru. Here is his story.

Paris. (Agency)

On the eve of the IPL 2026 final, with Royal Challengers Bengaluru preparing to defend their title against Gujarat Titans at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, the senior bowlers took the optional training session off. Josh Hazlewood, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, men who had carried the attack all season, men who had nothing left to prove to

anyone, rested. Rasikh Salam Dar came in and bowled. To understand why, you have to go back to a selection trial in Srinagar in 2018, where a teenager with misaligned arms and an extraordinary back-of-the-hand slower ball was already walking away. He had been to these trials before, every year, as a junior. He had never made the 30-member squad. He had learned, the hard way, not to wait for the rejection to find him standing still. For a man who has spent his career learning that opportunities do not wait, that doors open and close and sometimes do not open again, an optional training session on the eve of an IPL final is not optional. It never was.

DON'T GOYET

Rasikh Salam Dar, 26, from Kulgam in Kashmir, finished IPL 2026 as RCB's second-leading wicket-taker: 19 wickets in 12 matches, four more than Hazlewood, at an average of 21.32. In the final, he took 3 for 27, dismissed Nishant Sindhu, Rahul Tewatia and Rashid Khan, and became only

the second uncapped player in IPL history to take three or more wickets in a tournament final. RCB restricted Gujarat Titans to 155 for 8 and won by five wickets to lift back-to-back titles. And yet, for much of the season, Rasikh operated in exactly the kind of silence



he has always inhabited. He came on at first or second change, behind Bhuvneshwar and Hazlewood. He completed his four-over quota in eight of his 12 appearances. He did not produce a spell that stopped

Italian contingent will remain under the spotlight well into the Parisian evening, as a thrilling, all-Italian night session match up sees the resurgent Matteo Berrettini trade blows with Matteo Arnaldi under the lights. Indian tennis fans will have their eyes glued to Court Simonne-Mathieu, where N. Sriram Balaji and his Brazilian partner Marcelo Demoliner face a monumental task. The unseeded duo is scheduled to play the second-seeded team of Harri Heliövaara and Henry Patten in the men's doubles quarterfinals.

Meanwhile, the future of the sport takes centre stage in the junior events, where rising Indian star Arnav Vijay Paparkar faces a massive double-duty day. Paparkar first squares off against Jack Kennedy in the boys' singles third round, before teaming up with Kuanan Pantaratom to challenge top seeds Luis Guto Miguel and Ziga Sesko in the doubles quarterfinals.



conversations mid-sentence or a send-off that trended overnight. He just took wickets, kept his economy tight, and made batsmen feel — slightly too late — that they had misread something. Irfan Pathan was the mentor of the J&K cricket setup in 2018, sorting through 70 or 80 boys at a time, looking for something worth keeping. Most of them blurred into one another. Rasikh nearly walked out before Pathan could decide.

"I saw him bowling a few balls, and after bowling a few balls, I told him to stand on the side. Then he started walking away because he thought he wasn't selected. He kept walking away with his brother," Pathan recalls in his chat with IndiaToday.in.

"I asked him, 'Why were you leaving?' I told you to stay there." He said, "I thought it's happening like every year. I used to come here for junior trials and I never used to be part of the 30-member squad."



Sara Ali Khan

Celebrates 3 Years of Zara Hatke Zara Bachke, Thanks Vicky Kaushal And Laxman Utekar

Sara Ali Khan turned nostalgic as her film Zara Hatke Zara Bachke completed three years since its release. Marking the special occasion, the actress shared a heartfelt note on social media and expressed gratitude towards her co-star Vicky Kaushal and director Laxman Utekar for making the film a memorable experience.

Taking to her Instagram handle, the actress shared the video and wrote, "3 years to Zara Hatke Zara Bachke. Thank you for all the love Missing @vickykaushal09 & @laxman.utekar sir @raghav_dop." Fans reacted with heart emojis. One of the fans wrote, "Somu and Kappu, the cuties that won everyone's heart and made #ZaraHatkeZaraBachke a super hit." Another wrote, "Superhit somu kappu".

Zara Hatke Zara Bachke revolves around the life of an Indore-based married couple, who is madly in love with each other. However, as they live in a joint family after their marriage, they struggle for privacy. In order to get their privacy, the couple fakes a divorce, battles all odds, and fakes a hundred fights only to have a flat for themselves, through a valid government scheme. Produced by Dinesh Vijan's Maddock Studios, Zara Hatke Zara Bachke is directed by Laxman Utekar. The film marks the first collaboration between Vicky Kaushal and Sara Ali Khan. News18 Showsha's review of the film reads, "Zara Hatke Zara Bachke is a clean entertainer and doesn't come off as too preachy. It has family-friendly written all over it and has all the elements of a typical commercial Bollywood entertainer."

She is currently seen with Ayushmann Khurrana, Wamiqa Gabbi, Sara Ali Khan and Rakul Preet Singh in Pati Patni Aur Woh Do. The film is about Prajapati Pandey who is a simple forest officer's life. The trailer begins with Ayushmann Khurrana's entry as Prajapati Pandey, a simple forest officer who lands in the midst of complete chaos as his one attempt to help a female friend lands him in complete trouble with not one, not two, but three women, played by Sara Ali Khan, Wamiqa Gabbi and Rakul Preet Singh. As the confusion snowballs into an all-out comedy of errors, Vijay Raaz enters as a cop, dialling up the chaos even further.



Lalit Modi Reveals Sushmita Sen 'Paid For Everything' During Their Relationship: 'I Was A Kept Boyfriend'



Back in July 2022, businessman and former IPL chairman Lalit Modi sent social media into a frenzy when he shared cosy holiday pictures with Bollywood actress and former Miss Universe Sushmita Sen, publicly revealing that they were dating. The photos quickly went viral, with many social media users questioning the relationship and labelling Sushmita a "gold digger" because of Modi's wealth and public profile. Nearly four years later, Lalit Modi has finally reacted to those allegations head-on.

In a conversation with Humans of Bombay, the businessman confirmed that the relationship was real and strongly defended Sushmita against the criticism she faced. Calling her one of the most independent women he has known, he said the public perception of their relationship was completely wrong.

Speaking about Sushmita's financial independence, Lalit said, "Sushmita, please understand, is a very beautiful and a very well-to-do lady. I don't know if anybody knows this, but she has more diamonds than anybody I know on the planet. And she has earned it herself, and she has diamond stores. So she's a very wealthy lady. She has done it all on her own. There wasn't a time I went out with Sushmita that I had to pay for anything. She paid for everything. I was like a kept boyfriend. So Sushmita is a woman that is very proud, and I'm going to say this very happily, and she is the remarkable lady and the self-made lady, self-made lady, and she will never accept anything from anybody."

The businessman, who has been based in London for several years and is best known for founding the Indian Premier League (IPL), said the narrative surrounding Sushmita was unfair from the very beginning. He insisted that if anyone benefited from the relationship, it was him. He said, "So when somebody says she's a gold digger, no, Lalit was a diamond digger. It wasn't she was a gold digger. I was hoping that I was a diamond digger as far as she was concerned, because she was truly a diamond. And as far as I'm concerned, she could have anybody on the planet she wanted. It was never about money. It was never about anything else. And she is extremely well-to-do. I mean, she can buy what she wants and do what she wants and probably buy anybody she wants on the planet, without a doubt."

'You Can't Really Control...': Madhuri Dixit On Kalank Failure After Varun Dhawan Said It 'Shook Him Up'



Varun Dhawan, Alia Bhatt, Sonakshi Sinha, Aditya Roy Kapur, Madhuri Dixit, and Sanjay Dutt's Kalank was released in 2019. Despite featuring a stellar star cast and a larger-than-life setup, the Abhishek Varman directorial failed to impress the audience. While the film generated significant buzz ahead of its release and was praised for its grand visuals, lavish sets, and soulful music, it struggled to connect with viewers due to its weak storytelling and pacing issues. The film ended up underperforming at the box office. Recently, Madhuri Dixit, who played the role of Varun's mother Bahaar Begum, opened up about the film's failure. Earlier, this role was supposed to be played by Sridevi, who passed away in 2018.

While speaking to SCREEN, Madhuri Dixit reflected on Kalank's poor box office performance. She said, "You do your best, and put it out there. And then whatever happens, happens. You can't really control that. I'm sure there are a lot of people who've seen it. But by and large, there are other factors why a film doesn't do well. So, we basically leave it at that. I've done my best, and at some point, somebody will watch it." Recently, the discussion around Kalank started after Varun spoke about the film. During his chat with his father, David Dhawan, the actor said that it affected him very deeply. He said, "When I had my first flop, it shook me up very badly. Until then, there was a streak of success. I never understood it because I had worked very hard on that film."

It was the hardest we had worked as a team, so we didn't understand why it didn't work." Reacting to the same, David Dhawan added, "The film I got disappointed with was a very big one, I think Karan (Johar, producer) must have sold his last shirt also for it, it was Kalank. I also asked Sanjay Dutt if he did the film just because Madhuri Dixit was in it. Sanjay was very upset about doing that film."

"Kalank was originally conceived by filmmaker Karan Johar and his late father Yash Johar in 2004. At the time, the project was reportedly envisioned with an ensemble cast featuring Shah Rukh Khan, Kajol, Rani Mukerji, and Ajay Devgn. However, following Yash Johar's passing, Karan chose not to helm the film."

Anushka Sharma

Virat Kohli Visit Premanand

Maharaj After RCB's IPL 2026 Win

Bollywood actress Anushka Sharma and her husband, the Indian cricket legend Virat Kohli, paid a visit to Vrindavan to meet the Gurudev of Premanand Maharaj on Tuesday. Premanand Maharaj is reportedly giving time to the couple in a solitary abode. In the videos and pictures circulating online, the couple can be seen wearing face masks and strolling in the premises. This comes after Kohli's team, Royal Challengers Bengaluru, lifted the IPL trophy recently for the 2nd consecutive time. RCB squared off against the Gujarat Titans in the IPL 2026 finale, as they successfully defended their title in IPL 2026. They defeated the Gujarat Titans by five wickets in the final at Ahmedabad.



RCB chased 156, and saw an unbeaten 75 from Virat Kohli to seal their second consecutive IPL championship. The bowling attack set up the win by restricting GT to 155/8, with Rasikh Dar, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, and Josh Hazlewood leading the way.

The season's leading run-scorer was Vaibhav Suryavanshi, who amassed 776 runs and broke several batting records during a remarkable campaign. Virat Kohli finished among the tournament's top performers and capped the season with a match-winning knock in the final. RCB's win in the IPL 2026 finale made them the third franchise in IPL history to win back-to-back titles, cementing their status as the dominant team of the 2025-26 era.

Meanwhile, Anushka has been away from the screen for almost 4 years. Her sports biopic 'Chakda Xpress' based on Indian pace legend Jhulan Goswami has been shelved. The actress was last seen in a cameo appearance in the streaming film 'Qala' starring Triptii Dimri. The film was directed by Anvita Dutt, and was produced by Anushka's brother Karnesh Ssharma.



NEWS BOX

US Man Destroys Home With Excavator After Wife Threatens Divorce

WASHINGTON. (Agency)

A US man has been arrested after he allegedly tried to demolish his own house with an excavator while his family was still inside. Erik Pierwsza, 48, based in Pennsylvania, has been charged with three counts of recklessly endangering another person, one count of disorderly conduct, and one count of causing a catastrophe, after his violent outburst. The incident took place last week (May 26) when Pierwsza's wife told him she no longer wanted to be married to him. In a fit of rage, Pierwsza allegedly responded, "If it's over, I'll tear the house down," before embarking on the demolition job. Within minutes, he allegedly climbed into an excavator and started demolishing the house while his wife and two scared daughters were inside, according to a report in USA Today. The woman and children were physically unharmed. However, as per the police, there was enough destruction to impact the house's structural integrity. Buffalo Township Police Department detailed that the wife called 911, with emergency operators stating that they could hear screaming and the sounds of machinery in the background during the call. Investigators said that Pierwsza eventually stopped his alleged attack on the house, ran inside, grabbed a duffel bag, and left for a different town. He was arrested the same day.

Elon Musk Could Become World's First Trillionaire With SpaceX's Market Debut

world. (Agency)

He is already the richest man in the world, but when SpaceX finally makes its hotly anticipated stock market debut, Elon Musk could become the planet's first trillionaire. Forbes magazine on Tuesday estimated Musk's net worth at nearly \$835 billion, as compared with \$342 billion in its annual rich list in March 2025. He is far beyond Google co-founder Larry Page, who is second at \$298 billion. SpaceX's market debut, expected around June 12, will "all but guarantee his net worth rising above \$1 trillion," Forbes said in early April, when the company first filed to list on the Nasdaq. The valuation of the company, founded in 2002, is expected to range from \$1.7 trillion to \$2 trillion, up from a range that topped out at \$1.5 trillion in March. On Tuesday, platforms for trading unlisted shares valued the group at about \$1.5 trillion, with an individual share going for about \$129 on Forge Global (up from \$53 in mid-December) and \$118 on Nasdaq Private Market.

The 54-year-old Musk currently holds 12 percent of common SpaceX shares and about 94 percent of Class B shares (each one retains 10 votes), according to a filing submitted to the US Securities and Exchange Commission. According to AFP calculations, after the company goes public, Musk would hold about 42 percent of SpaceX capital and 79 percent of all voting rights -- or the equivalent of \$735-840 billion, given the latest valuation estimates. "Current trends are an incredible and continued centralization and concentration of wealth" in the hands of about 3,000 billionaires, William Robinson, a professor of sociology at the University of California, Santa Barbara, told AFP.

"At the top end of those billionaires, the concentration is accelerating." "Tech oligarchy" - Robinson noted that at the same time, five billion people on Earth are living below the poverty line, creating an "extreme inequality" that can spawn civil wars and other crises.

Trump Orders AI Developers To Share Models With Government Before Release

United States. (Agency)

US President Donald Trump on Tuesday signed an executive order creating a voluntary framework under which AI developers will share advanced models with the government before public release. The central provision allows companies such as OpenAI, Google or Anthropic to give the government access to their most powerful models for up to 30 days before planned release. The order was triggered by concerns over Anthropic's Mythos model, which the AI startup has held back from the public due to its ability to expose vulnerabilities in computer systems, including those of banks, governments and hospitals. The 30-day window represents a compromise. The original draft called for up to 90 days of pre-release government access, while tech companies had pushed to cut that figure to just 14 days. For OpenAI chief Sam Altman, the executive order "gets the balance right." "The US should lead on AI by continuing to develop the very best models, making sure they're safe, and getting cyber tools into the hands of trusted defenders," Altman said. Kent Walker, Google's head of public affairs, called the order an "important step forward" that will ensure "defenders have the AI tools they need to keep America secure." And Anthropic, which has repeatedly clashed with the Trump administration, called the order "an important step in strengthening America's leadership in AI." "Unnecessary" The signing comes after a turbulent few weeks in which the White House appeared close to unveiling the measure, only to pull back abruptly. According to Politico and other media, David Sacks, the Silicon Valley venture capitalist who served as Trump's AI and crypto czar, called the president to warn that the measure would slow innovation and hurt the United States in its AI race with China -- blindsiding White House staff who believed Sacks supported the order. Sacks wrote on X last week that "unnecessary regulation is the biggest threat to innovation in America," adding that winning the AI race required clearing "bureaucratic hurdles" from state legislatures and "woke" Washington politicians.

The order also instructs the Treasury, the National Security Agency and the CISA cybersecurity agency to form an "AI cybersecurity clearinghouse" in voluntary collaboration with industry and critical infrastructure operators to identify software

US proposes 12.5% additional duties on India, 53 other countries over forced labour import violations

WASHINGTON (Agency)

The US Trade Representative (USTR) has proposed additional import duties of 12.5 per cent on 54 countries, including India, over their alleged failure to prohibit goods made with forced labour from entering their markets. The proposal comes after investigations into 60 countries for not imposing or effectively enforcing restrictions on imports linked to forced labour, according to the USTR. "The failure of our most important trading partners to address the importation of goods made with forced labour is unacceptable. This creates a dynamic where American workers are forced to compete globally on an unlevel playing field," US Trade Representative Ambassador Jamieson Greer said in a statement. "We will no longer tolerate this disparity," he said.

India has contested the allegations under the forced labour clause and urged the US to discontinue the investigations, maintaining that the issue should be resolved through ongoing bilateral trade discussions. The USTR said 54 economies, including India, China, Japan, Brazil, Australia, the UK and



Saudi Arabia, have failed to introduce and effectively implement prohibitions on imports produced with forced labour. Meanwhile, Canada, Ecuador, the European Union, Indonesia, Mexico and Pakistan were found to have existing prohibitions but inadequate enforcement mechanisms. Greer said some trading partners had initiated measures to restrict forced labour-linked imports through mechanisms such as the USMCA and Agreements on Reciprocal Trade, but

added that stronger action was needed. "each of our trading partners must do more to ensure that trade does not pervasively encourage and entrench forced labour globally." Under the proposal, countries that already enforce forced labour import bans, have committed to such measures under reciprocal trade agreements, or maintain partial safeguards against such imports would face an additional 10 per cent duty. "For all other economies, the US Trade Representative proposes 12.5 per cent as the rate of additional duty," the statement said.

The propose 12.5 per cent additional tariff would apply to the 54 countries identified in the investigation. Separately, the USTR has proposed a textile mechanism that would permit a specified volume of apparel and textile imports from select countries to enter the US at lower tariff rates. The USTR has invited interested parties to submit requests to appear at hearings, along with testimony summaries, by June 22, while written comments can be submitted until July 6.

North Korea slams US remarks comparing South to 'dagger'

General Xavier Brunson made the comments in an interview as speculation builds that Washington may seek to expand the US Forces Korea (USFK) role in countering China's regional influence.

SEOUL. (Agency)

North Korea slammed on Wednesday remarks by the top American military official in South Korea comparing his host nation to "the dagger in the heart of Asia", saying it reflected Washington's strategy to contain China. General Xavier Brunson made the comments in an interview as speculation builds that Washington may seek to expand the US Forces Korea (USFK) role in countering China's regional influence. About 28,500 US troops are stationed in

South Korea to help guard against the nuclear-armed North. The state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) published commentary by analyst Kim Myong Chol who said Brunson's remarks showed the US as "the chieftain of harassing peace and



the world's worst war empire". The comments reflected how Washington intended to use South Korea "as an important geopolitical instrument to realise its regional strategy aimed at containing China," said Kim, who is based in Japan and considered an unofficial overseas spokesman for North Korea. China has for decades

been Pyongyang's main trading partner and a key source of diplomatic and economic backing. Seoul's presidential office said at the weekend that it was aware of Brunson's remarks and has been "maintaining communication at various levels regarding all relevant issues". Local media outlets including News1 and JTBC reported that Seoul has raised concerns with the United States. USFK commander Brunson said in the interview, "When (the Chinese) look out from the east coast of China, what they see is there's Korea, the dagger in the heart of Asia."

Brunson also compared Japan to a "shield that's sort of a backstop" against China's regional ambitions, according to a transcript posted by the Strategic Studies Institute of the US Army War College. Beijing's embassy in Seoul last week condemned the remarks as having "truly crossed the line" and "rife with hostility and aggression toward China", asking whether they were authorised by Washington.

US military attacks Iran's Qeshm Island; Tehran targets Gulf countries

WASHINGTON. (Agency)

The United States military early Wednesday announced that it conducted "self-defense" strikes on Iran's Qeshm Island. The military also said it had "successfully defeated" a series of Iranian missile and drone attacks in the Gulf. US Central Command also denied claims by Iran's Revolutionary Guards that they had struck the headquarters of the US Navy's Fifth Fleet in Bahrain and a separate air base in the region. "Iran launched several ballistic missiles toward regional neighbors; however, all failed to hit their intended targets," Centcom said in a statement. "Two Iranian missiles fired at Kuwait fell short or broke apart en route, and three missiles launched at Bahrain were immediately intercepted by US and Bahrain air defense forces." Kuwait's military said its air defenses were intercepting "hostile" missile and

drone attacks. The US military also shot down three attack drones that had



been launched by Iran "toward civilian mariners that were rightfully transiting regional waters," Centcom said. Qeshm Island is located in the strategic Strait of Hormuz, the key shipping channel for Gulf oil and gas that has been effectively closed by Tehran since the start of the war with the US and Israel in late February. Centcom said the strikes had

targeted an "Iranian military ground control station" on the island, adding that no US personnel were injured. In a statement carried by the official IRNA news agency, the Revolutionary Guards claimed they had struck the US military installations in response to the strike on Qeshm Island. "FALSE," Centcom said in a post on X. "All Iranian attacks on American forces failed." A ceasefire has been in place between the United States and Iran since April 8, but subsequent talks to try to put a more permanent end to the conflict have so far been unsuccessful. Tehran said Monday that Israel's expanding campaign in Lebanon risked ending the US-Iran ceasefire. Earlier, US forces fired a missile at a ship that was attempting to sail toward an Iranian port in violation of an American blockade, disabling the vessel.

Over 2 lakh applicants paid USD 100,000 for H-1B visas in FY2026: DHS Secretary Mullin

World. (Agency)

More than two lakh applicants paid USD 100,000 to fast-track their H-1B visa applications for employment in the United States during fiscal year 2026, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Markwayne Mullin told a Senate panel on Tuesday. Testifying before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee, Mullin said the DHS had received around 2.86 lakh H-1B applications so far in FY2026.

"We had 286,000 applicants a year to date for the H-1B visas, out of those, over 200,000 of them paid USD 100,000 to be able to come in because it allows us to process them in a little bit faster of a manner," Mullin said in response to a question from Senator Susan Collins regarding the shortage of doctors in rural America. According to Mullin, applicants who pay the fee have their cases processed in approximately 15 days, while standard applications take nearly 7.5 months. Collins highlighted the burden on rural healthcare providers, telling the subcommittee that a hospital in Presque Isle, northern Maine, recently paid the fee to recruit an overseas surgeon.

She argued that healthcare providers in underserved



regions should be treated differently from employers hiring skilled workers in sectors with larger domestic talent pools. "Would you be willing to consider carving out an exemption for medical professionals from this fee when a community can demonstrate that there is not a medical professional available?" Collins asked. Mullin said the department would examine possible solutions and consider whether greater flexibility could be applied to such cases individually. "I would suggest that there's a huge difference between bringing in a computer expert from another country to work in wealthy California and Silicon Valley versus a much-needed surgeon to work at a rural hospital in northern Maine," she said. Republican Senator Lisa Murkowski of Alaska also raised concerns over teacher shortages in rural districts in her state.

Massive Russian attack kills 22 people across Ukraine, officials say, as Moscow escalates fighting

KYIV. (Agency)

Russia launched hundreds of drones and dozens of missiles against Kyiv and other Ukrainian cities overnight, killing at least 22 civilians and wounding 138 others, authorities said Tuesday. Russian President Vladimir Putin has escalated Moscow's aerial campaign in recent weeks in an apparent bid to take advantage of Ukraine's shortage of U.S.-made air defense systems and persuade an increasingly pessimistic audience at home that Moscow is prevailing in the 4-year-old war. Emergency rescue crews digging through the wreckage of apartment buildings pulled out the bodies of a 3-year-old child as well as those of a woman and her 8-year-old son in the central Ukrainian city of Dnipro, officials said. The attack stretched past dawn, with explosions reverberating across cities. Officials said 16 people were killed in Dnipro and six in Kyiv. Residents of the capital have been on edge for days after Russia warned last week that a massive aerial attack was coming and told foreign diplomats to leave. None

appeared to heed the call and no embassies immediately reported damage Tuesday. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy appealed for more U.S. and European support, describing the massive overnight attack as "an explicit statement by Russia: If Ukraine is not protected from ballistic missiles and other missile strikes, those strikes will continue."

Putin has stepped up his aerial campaign against Ukraine, with Russian forces recently launching another of their powerful hypersonic Oreshnik ballistic missiles. Ukraine's shortage of air defense systems, in part because of depleted U.S. stocks from the Iran war, has left civilians especially vulnerable to ballistic missiles, even as Kyiv's defenses stop most of Moscow's drones.

Another and daughter shelter in a bathtub. At least 81 people were wounded in the capital, said Tymur Tkachenko, head of the Kyiv City Military Administration. Iryna Salikova, 37, spent the night lying in a bathtub for protection with her 3-year-old

daughter, as blasts reverberated across the city. "Our window was broken. A cobblestone flew into the children's room," Salikova said, although they weren't hurt. "Thank God we're alive."



Today we're alive, today we're lucky." Russia unleashed 73 missiles and 656 drones across Ukraine, according to the country's air force, with the main targets including Kyiv, Dnipro and the eastern cities of Poltava, Kharkiv and Zaporizhzhia. Ukrainian air defenses destroyed or suppressed 40 missiles and 602 drones. Dnipro Mayor Borys Filatov proclaimed

Wednesday would be a day of mourning for the dead in his city. That announcement came 20 minutes before Filatov said another drone had struck a residential building there about 2:40 p.m. Putin seeks to change the narrative of the war

Putin is keen to generate some positive news from the conflict that began with Russia's February 2022 invasion of its neighbor and hasn't gone according to plan. Western officials and analysts say Ukrainian drones are pinning down Russian troops on the front line, choking Russian supply lines in occupied regions of Ukraine and disrupting oil facilities deep inside Russia that provide vital revenue for Moscow. That has made the war, which Moscow refers to as a "special military operation," more visible to Russians and increased pressure on Putin. U.S.-led peace efforts have fizzled out as the sides made no progress on key differences and after the war in Iran grabbed Washington's attention. Zelenskyy accepted an unconditional ceasefire demanded by U.S.