

AN-32 crash in Assam: A look at the IAF's rugged transport aircraft

An Indian Air Force AN-32 transport aircraft crashed while attempting to land at the Air Force Station in Assam's Jorhat on Saturday. As rescue operations continue, attention has turned to the Soviet-origin aircraft, which has been a key part of the IAF's transport fleet for over four decades and is known for operating in difficult terrains and high-altitude regions.

Jorhat .(Agency)
An Indian Air Force AN-32 transport aircraft crashed at the Air Force Station in Assam's Jorhat on Saturday, prompting rescue and firefighting operations at the site. The aircraft was reportedly attempting to land when the accident occurred. The pilot is feared dead, while the cause of the crash remains under investigation.

AN-32 IAF

The AN-32 has been a key component of the Indian Air Force's transport fleet since the 1980s. India initially acquired 125 aircraft

and currently operates around 100 of them. The Soviet-designed aircraft was developed specifically to perform in challenging conditions, including extreme heat and high-altitude environments. Over the years, it has played a crucial role in transporting troops, equipment, supplies and humanitarian aid across the country.

AN-32 aircraft

Developed from the AN-26 aircraft, the AN-32 was equipped with more powerful engines and enhanced wing systems to improve performance.

According to its manufacturer, the aircraft



can operate from airfields located at elevations of up to 4,500 metres above sea level. This capability has made it particularly valuable for missions in the

Himalayas and other remote regions where larger aircraft often struggle to operate.

Its ability to land on short runways and function in rugged terrain has earned it a reputation as one of the IAF's most dependable workhorses.

The AN-32 made its maiden flight on July 9, 1976. It was first demonstrated in India later that year, before the Soviet Union approved production for export to the Indian Air Force. Serial production began in the early 1980s at the Kyiv Aviation Plant. Between 1982 and 1996, a total of 358 aircraft were manufactured. The aircraft also achieved

several milestones during its service life, including setting 14 world records related to altitude and cargo-carrying performance in 1985.

First made-in-India C-295 carries out maiden test flight

Meanwhile, the first India-manufactured C-295 military transport aircraft successfully completed its maiden flight on June 10, marking a significant milestone for India's aerospace sector. The Indian Air Force is procuring 56 C-295 aircraft worth around Rs 21,935 crore, with 40 to be assembled in Vadodra by Tata Advanced Systems.

ALLEGED BLACKMAIL NETWORK EXPOSED

Mahanagar Metro Exclusive

Claims Against Jain Monk Under Scrutiny as Key Accused Admits Lack of Evidence

Questions Raised Over Sensational Allegations

Investigative Inquiry Highlights Serious Concerns About Misinformation and Defamation

Mahanagar Metro Desk / Pawan Mekan

Ahmedabad. A controversy surrounding allegations made against a Jain religious leader has taken a dramatic turn after an individual accused of orchestrating an online campaign reportedly admitted that he possessed no concrete forensic or digital evidence to support the claims. According to information presented during an investigative inquiry, the allegations centered on accusations that a respected Jain monk was allegedly involved in the distribution of obscene content. However, when confronted with questions regarding the evidence behind these claims, the principal accuser reportedly acknowledged that his accusations were based on assumptions rather than verified facts. The matter has sparked concerns about the growing misuse of digital platforms, manipulated content, and unverified allegations that can severely damage reputations and religious sentiments. Investigators and media reports have linked the controversy to individuals identified as Jagat Parekh of Ahmedabad and Hardik Hudiya of Mumbai.

The duo has been accused of participating in a wider campaign involving the circulation of alleged fabricated content and defamatory material on social media platforms. During a telephonic interaction, Jagat Parekh was reportedly



asked to provide forensic reports, digital records, or any verifiable evidence supporting the serious accusations made against the Jain monk. According to the conversation, he allegedly admitted that he had no such evidence

and that his suspicions were based on assumptions influenced by media coverage of unrelated high-profile cases. The revelations have raised questions about whether the allegations were part of a broader attempt to exert pres-

sure, damage reputations, or influence public perception through sensational claims. Legal experts note that serious accusations without supporting evidence can have significant consequences, particularly when they target religious figures, community leaders, or private individuals. They emphasize that courts rely on documented evidence, forensic verification, and legally admissible material rather than speculation. Members of the Jain community have expressed concern over what they describe as an attempt to tarnish the image of respected religious personalities and hurt the sentiments of followers. Several voices within the community have called for a thorough investigation into the origin and dissemination of the disputed content.

Observers argue that the incident highlights the urgent need for stricter action against the creation and circulation of manipulated digital content, online defamation, and alleged extortion attempts carried out through social media channels. As investigations continue, all allegations and counter-allegations remain subject to legal scrutiny, and the accused individuals retain the right to present their version of events before the appropriate authorities and courts.

PM Narendra Modi leaves for 2-nation tour to France, Slovakia; set to attend G7 Summit

New Delhi.(Agency)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday departed on a 2-nation tour to Europe. He will be visiting Slovakia and France during this tour. The France trip will be in 2 parts, the first being on June 13 and 14 and the second between June 15 to June 19. In between the PM has a stopover in Slovakia. This will be the first visit of an Indian PM to Slovakia, ever since it gained independence in 1993.

PM Narendra Modi's France schedule

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will travel to Nice, where he will hold a bilateral meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron on Sunday. The 2 leaders will review the ties between their nations, which were recently upgraded to Special Global Strategic Partnership. The

upgrade happened during Macron's official visit to India, earlier this year, in February. PM Modi and Macron will then jointly inaugurate 'Bharat Innovates'. This event will bring together leading startups and venture capital funds from India, France and other countries. The PMO described it as a strong innovation partnership between the 2 countries. This event is being held as the 2 countries are together celebrating India-France Year of Innovation.

The PM will then head to Slovakia. He will once again return to France for a 2-day visit, between June 16-17. During his second stop, he will be attending the G7 Summit in Evian.

Apart from exchanging views with G7 leaders and leaders of countries invited for the Summit,



he will also be holding several bilateral meetings, on the sidelines.

On June 18, PM Modi will be travelling to Paris and take part in the Viva Tech Summit. He will also be holding more bilateral meetings here. He is also expected to address members of the

Indian diaspora in Paris.

PM Modi in Slovakia

PM Narendra Modi will be in Slovakia on June 14 and 15. He is expected to meet his Slovak counterpart, Robert Fico. The 2 will be holding discussions on ways to deepen bilateral cooperation.

In Slovakia, the PM will also meet the country's President Peter Pellegrini.

The visit by PM Modi comes at a time when India is hoping to strengthen cooperation with Slovakia, in key areas, including trade, investment, automobile and railway manufacturing. Before the PM's trip to the country, President Droupadi Murmu visited Slovakia in 2025. Later, the country's President, Pellegrini came to India.

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News box

Staffer hired month ago throws party, steals key and loots jewellery store in RDC

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

A salesman at a Tanishq showroom in Raj Nagar District Centre (RDC) allegedly stole jewellery worth several lakhs from the store in the early hours of Friday. An FIR has been registered and teams have been formed to nab the accused, who was caught committing the theft on CCTV. The showroom's owner, Rohit Arora, said his employees informed him around 8.50am on Friday that the shutter was open when they arrived at the store. He rushed to the spot and checked the CCTV footage, discovering the theft. Using the footage, cops identified Nitin Verma, one of the employees, as one of the two accused. CCTV footage shows Verma opening the shutter with a key around 7am, following which the duo targeted the high-end gold and diamond jewellery on the first floor, ignoring all other items in the three-storey building. "We are assessing the amount of theft yet as the audit team is checking the ornaments," Arora said.

ACP (Kavi Nagar) Suryabali Maurya said police were informed about the theft around 10am. Cops found that Verma had worked as a salesman at the store for the last month. He was hired following a police verification. Investigation revealed that the showroom's key used to remain with the manager, Gautam Raj. Raj has been detained for questioning to determine how the key was stolen and whether Raj was involved. On Thursday night, after work, Verma threw a party with the other employees in attendance, where they had all been drinking. It is possible Verma stole the key from Raj during the party, cops said. An FIR has been registered against Verma and unknown persons under Section 306 (theft by clerk or servant of property in possession of master) of BNS at Kavi Nagar police station, and five teams have been formed to trace the accused. Police said the accused carried out the theft within a 25-minute window and only targeted the first floor, where they knew the gold, diamond and gem-studded jewellery was kept. "At the time of theft, security personnel were also absent and police are questioning them as well," a senior police officer said.

Blaze traps elderly couple, firemen break down door to pull them out

Noida.(Agency)

An elderly couple, aged 86 and 83, was rescued by firefighters after a fire broke out in their flat's balcony in Noida's Sector 49 late on Thursday night. The couple was taken to a nearby hospital after they inhaled a lot of smoke and is reported to be in stable condition. The fire was extinguished within an hour.

Chief fire officer (CFO) Pradeep Kumar Chaubey said the fire control room received information about the blaze on the fourth floor of an apartment complex around 9.30pm. Multiple fire units and cops from the Sector 49 police station were dispatched to the scene.

News of the fire quickly spread throughout the apartment complex, triggering panic among residents. Many occupants rushed out of their homes and gathered in open areas as thick smoke began spreading through parts of the building. Rescue teams discovered that the couple were trapped in their flat and could not evacuate without assistance. The apartment was also locked from the inside and had become heavily filled with smoke, creating a life-threatening situation. Firefighters used hydraulic equipment and other specialised tools and cut through the apartment door to gain access and successfully rescue the couple. Following the evacuation, the couple was rushed to a nearby hospital for medical evaluation and first aid. Doctors later confirmed that their condition was stable and that they were out of danger.

Haryana Roadways bus driven by trainee ploughs into pedestrians in Gurgaon, 1 dies



Noida.(Agency)

A trainee driver allegedly took a Haryana Roadways bus without permission during a lunch break and drove into pedestrians near the Sector 37 industrial area on Friday afternoon, killing a 56-year-old man and injuring one other. The deceased, Ravi Shankar, was a factory worker from Satna, Madhya Pradesh, residing in Sector 37. Police said he was out on a post-lunch walk with coworkers when the bus bore down on them. Many escaped by jumping aside. Locals rushed the injured to a nearby hospital, where Shankar was declared dead on arrival. The other person, who was yet to be identified, is undergoing treatment. An FIR has been registered under sections of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. The vehicle, from the Sector 12 depot, eventually struck a parked car and ground to a halt before nearly hitting a loading tempo. Eyewitnesses said bystanders shouted at the driver to stop and pelted the bus with stones. The accused, identified as 25-year-old Bharat, then drove the bus back to the training ground near Leisure Valley Park and quietly parked it before fleeing. His phone remained switched off, roadways officers said. Police seized the bus after reaching the spot. The bus had left the depot around 10.30am as part of a month-long training programme for new drivers, conducted under the supervision of inspector Vidyanand and comprising 15-16 trainees. The batch was seven days from completing the course, which began around May 18. The trainees were having lunch during the afternoon break at around 1.30pm when Bharat allegedly took the bus and drove away without informing the instructors. No one else was inside the vehicle," a training officer said.

Police verification, ID cards must for all gym trainers and coaches

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

The district administration has made police verification mandatory for all trainers, coaches and instructors working in gyms and fitness centres. All trainers and coaches are also now required to carry their identity cards while on duty. This step will ensure better security and enhance accountability and transparency, officials said. Additional district magistrate (city) Vikas Kashyap said that no trainer or coach will be allowed to work in any gym or fitness facility without completing the police verification process. "The mandatory background checks will help create a safer environment for members and reduce the risk of misconduct or criminal activity within such establishments especially for women," the ADM said. The ID cards must include the individual's real name, permanent residential address, mobile number, photograph and other relevant details.

"These cards will be considered valid only after being verified by the competent authority," an official said. Trainers TOI spoke to were in support of police verification, but some raised objections against carrying an identity card. "Most often, people who have been going to the gym end up becoming gym instructors. They have no knowledge of the anatomy and end up wrongly training people which also leads to injuries," said Risabh Prajapati, a gym trainer for seven years at F1 Fitness. Calling it a "hassle", he added, "When the police verification is already being ensured, roaming around with IDs seems unnecessary."

Rajeev Dhama, owner of Vaishali-based Fitness Haadquarters, said that a verification drive was already being carried out at his gym, but a continuous set of guidelines adds more burden. "The

profit share has gone down as competition in this market has increased. Equipment has also become expensive now. We wish for better coordination and support from



the govt in return," Dhama said. Owners of gyms and fitness centres have also been directed to install an adequate number of CCTV cameras on their premises. The surveillance systems will help monitor activities inside fitness facilities, deter unlawful behaviour and provide evidence in case of complaints or

disputes, officials said. Gym operators have also been directed to prominently display information related to women's safety helplines and grievance redressal mechanisms at visible locations within their establishments. "Easy access to such information is expected to encourage timely reporting of complaints and contribute to a safer atmosphere for members. Gyms and fitness centres that have not yet obtained the necessary registration certificates have been asked to complete all formalities and secure registration without delay," the official said. Operators were given a seven-day deadline to implement all the prescribed measures, following which officials will conduct surprise inspections. Any violations or deficiencies found during inspections will attract action under applicable rules and regulations, with responsibility resting entirely on the concerned establishment, they added.

Airport, New Noida effect: Why Bulandshahr land prices are rising

Noida.(Agency)

Just 52 km from Noida International Airport and 30 km from the proposed New Noida, Bulandshahr eyes the boom it had not imagined. Landowners in the district are now looking at a windfall as the district is likely to be drawn into an expanding industrial network beyond Noida and Greater Noida. The catalyst is the proposed Dadri-Noida-Ghaziabad Investment Region, or New Noida, spanning across 84 villages. Notified in Oct 2024, the project straddles 63 villages in Bulandshahr and sits barely 30 km from Noida, 30 km from Ghaziabad and 40 km from Jewar — a triangle of proximity that planners regard as its greatest asset and that property dealers have already begun to price in.

Noida Authority has fixed acquisition rates at Rs 4,300 per sqm — roughly Rs 25 lakh to Rs 30 lakh per acre, matching the Yamuna Authority's revised airport-project compensation. But market rates in the region have already crossed Rs 1 crore per acre as commercial operations from the Noida airport draw close. Residents want

the Authority to close that gap, or even sweeten the deal.

In the first phase, land will be acquired from 37 villages, and 24 of them are in Bulandshahr, including Jokhabad, Sanwali, Bironi Fauladpur, Bironi Tajpur, Kaithara, Kishanpur, Muradabad and Nawada. Dheeraj Singh, 70, of Jokhabad, who has watched this land change hands before, said in 1970, nearly 1,400 acres from these villages were acquired for what became the Sikandrabad Industrial Area — today a cluster of nearly 200 factories turning out steel, paint and pipes. He gave 100 acres then and still holds 18.

"The area is already developed as an industrial hub. Noida airport and New Noida projects will strengthen it further," he said. Companies are already buying privately, he said, paying Rs 50 lakh to Rs 1 crore per acre. "Why will people give land to Noida Authority at such a cheap rate?" In Sanwali village, Karamveer Singh Gurjar, who runs a school, shares the scepticism. "Realtors and a few dealers are already quoting Rs 1 crore per acre, which is nearly

Rs 12,000 per sqm, for land in Sanwali, Hirdaypur, Jokhabad and Kishanpur, which are to be acquired by the Authority for New Noida in the first phase," he said.

Manoj Kumar, another Sanwali resident who works as a parking contractor on GT Road, said that the airport project already quickened the pulse of industrial activity in the area. "We are hopeful New Noida will accelerate growth further." But as it is already an industrial area, people understand that the new projects may bring in investments in industries, logistics, warehousing, real estate and infrastructure, and will not give land at the rate fixed by the govt, he added.

SDM Sikandrabad Deepak Kumar Pal said circle rates varied by proximity to urban centres and national highways, starting from Rs 2,000 per sqm for agricultural land. "The administration has received the DNGIR notification and is ready to act once Noida Authority formally initiates proceedings. Once they send us a letter, we will dispatch a team for land demarcation and identification of landowners," he said.

4 liquor vends on Aravali forest land in Faridabad to be razed

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

Forest department has initiated proceedings to demolish four liquor vends found operating on notified forest land in the Faridabad Aravalis. The establishments are located in Bhatola, Mangar, Lakkarpur and on Surajkund Road. The action follows field inspections that found the outlets operating within protected or regulated areas where construction and commercial activity are restricted or prohibited under Punjab Land Preservation Act (PLPA), 1900. According to officials, the identified establishments were not limited to temporary kiosks. Inspections found permanent structures, including double-shutter shops, paved forecourts, tin-roofed seating areas, boundary walls and attached ahtas. Plastic chairs, benches and food stalls were also

found operating at several locations, effectively converting green stretches into commercial alcohol hubs. The issue of liquor vends allegedly operating on forest land has been under consideration by the National Green Tribunal since Dec 2024 following a plea by environmentalist Narendra Sirohi, who alleged that around 35 such establishments were functioning on forest land and green belts in Faridabad. During inspections, officials also recorded environmental violations around some of the outlets, including drains littered with liquor bottles, disposable cups, food waste and other garbage. Officials said such encroachments not only violate land-use norms but also intensify pressure on the fragile Aravali ecosystem, which is already affected by illegal construction, waste

dumping and habitat fragmentation. Forest officials said, "Demolition proceedings against these vends are being processed on priority, while legal scrutiny is underway for other liquor outlets operating in green belts and PLPA-covered zones." The department is also expected to examine how excise permissions, if any, were granted at such locations despite environmental restrictions. The development assumes significance as large parts of Mangar, Lakkarpur and the Surajkund belt are considered ecologically sensitive and important for groundwater recharge. Courts have repeatedly intervened over the years to curb non-forest and commercial activities in Aravalis. Sirohi told TOI, "Despite multiple complaints, no action was taken.

Tracking landowners across 6 cities, missing 40 acres: How Noida airport was built

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

When the first aircraft lifts off from Noida International Airport on June 15, it will take off from a runway that nearly did not exist. The 40-acre stretch of land at the heart of the runway — 16.4 hectares in the middle of what is now a fully operational airstrip — was missing from the original land calculations for the project. It was only caught in time, acquired in 2023 and folded into the airport's foundations. Even as land acquisition for Phase 1 began in 2018, the challenges were already stacking up. In the six villages — Ranhera, Rohi, Dayantpur, Kishorpur, Parohi and Banwarbas — where the terminal now stands, there stood swathes of agricultural fields and a way of life built around the land. The Land Acquisition Act, 2013, required consent from at least 70% of the 5,905 affected families. At the outset, four gave it. The problem was partly legal, partly human. Four of the six villages were reclassified as urban and industrial during the acquisition process. Under the 2013 Act, that shift moved compensation calculations to a lower multiplier. Farmers who had expected rural-rate compensation found the ground shifted under them. "There was resistance, doubt and anger," said BN Singh, then district magistrate. At an emergency meeting at Gautam Buddha University, a workaround was floated: treat the airport as a transport



project under a no-consent route, bypassing the deadlock entirely. But Singh rejected it. Instead, he went to the villages himself for seven consecutive days. He held meetings and had direct conversations with farmers about compensation, rehabilitation, resettlement and what the airport would mean for the region. The landowners, he found, were not all in the villages. Many had moved to Delhi, Gurgaon, Faridabad, Ludhiana, Lucknow, Kanpur, Agra and Mathura. Revenue officials were told to fan out across cities, tracking co-sharers, explaining the project, collecting signatures. Naib tehsildars Jeet Singh and Durgesh Singh led much of the ground outreach. Within roughly 20 days, consent was given by 4,235 families.

Eventually, more than 90% of affected farmers accepted compensation voluntarily. "This was not magic," said Singh. "It was the result of field contact, repeated explanation, transparent process and the hard work of officers and staff." Logistics of acquisition Speed was the second crisis. The possession deadline was tight, manpower was limited, and the scale of the acquisition was unlike anything the district administration handled before. Eventually, every lekhpal, revenue inspector and naib tehsildar involved in the acquisition was given independent vehicle support — a first in any land acquisition in the state. "A missing vehicle could delay a file, a farmer's signature, a site inspection

or a payment paper," he said. Five help centres were set up close to the affected villages, each functioning as a mini-administration office. Photocopy machines, generators, computers, printers, stamp vendors, notary advocates, photographers and CCTV cameras were deployed at each. Data-entry operators and sub-registrar support were on hand so that farmers could complete paperwork without travelling to distant offices.

"A photocopy machine mattered. A notary mattered. A vehicle for a lekhpal mattered. Food for a staff member working at midnight mattered. A farmer's bank account details mattered. A co-sharer living in another city mattered," said Singh, who monitored the entire process remotely through CCTV.

A 'missing' runway When Arun Vir Singh, then CEO of YEIDA and chairman of Noida International Airport Limited, reviewed the acquired land, something did not add up. The original 1,334-hectare boundary was marked using latitude and longitude coordinates. But village boundaries had shifted from rural to urban, older pillars and markers had been obscured by newer structures, and in the recalculation, 40 acres — 16.39 hectares — had dropped out of the count. That missing land was precisely where the main runway now stands.

Angered by wife's suspected affair, Bihar man leaks her private photos online

Police in Katihar arrested a man accused of uploading his wife's private photos and videos on social media. Investigators have seized his phone and are examining whether the material was shared elsewhere or deleted.

Katihar. (Agency)

Police in Bihar's Katihar district have arrested a man for allegedly uploading his wife's private and objectionable photos and videos on social media after suspecting her of having an extramarital affair. The accused, Dayanand Kumar, allegedly shared the content online to defame his wife. His wife later filed a written complaint at the Cyber Police Station in Katihar, leading to his subsequent arrest. According to police, Dayanand married the complainant in 2023. Investigators said he frequently suspected his wife of having an affair and would even doubt her movements when she visited her parental home. Police said that driven by these suspicions, he repeatedly uploaded her private and objectionable photos and videos

on social media. Dayanand allegedly remained absconding for several months while the woman stayed at her parental home. Police teams conducted repeated raids before finally apprehending him.

After his arrest, Dayanand admitted to posting his wife's private photos and videos on social media. However, he also claimed that he suspected his wife of having an affair and alleged that she had left with another person. He told police that he uploaded the content in anger and described his actions as a mistake.

"She had gone away with someone. I uploaded it in anger. She had an affair earlier. I made a mistake," Dayanand said after his arrest. Cyber DSP Ashif Alam said police arrested Dayanand after verifying the

allegations made by his wife. He said the accused had been absconding and that a police team arrested him after receiving information about his whereabouts. "The wife alleged that the accused uploaded her private and objectionable photos and videos on social media. We verified the allegations and arrested him. We will complete the legal formalities and send him to jail," Alam said. The DSP said police seized Dayanand's mobile phone after the arrest and found private and objectionable photos and videos of his wife on the device. Investigators will send the material for forensic examination and



content was shared elsewhere or deleted from the device. Alam described the act as a legal

offence and criticised what he called a "narrow mindset" among some individuals who seek publicity through social media by engaging in unlawful activities.

"Some people want to gain fame on social media by doing such things. This is a legal offence. Based on the complaint, we registered a case and arrested the accused. He will now be sent to jail," the DSP said.

Police said the investigation is ongoing, including forensic analysis of the seized mobile phone. According to the DSP, the accused's alleged modus operandi suggests that he used the private content to gain attention and publicity on social media.

Short news

Man kills Mumbai nurse in UP over marriage demand, hides her body in field



Bijnor. (Agency)

A man allegedly strangled a woman with whom he had developed a relationship while working in Mumbai and buried her body in a field here after she allegedly pressured him to marry her, police said on Friday.

According to Circle Officer Abhay Kumar Pandey, the accused, Faisal, a resident of Saifpur Khadar village under Mandawar police station limits, worked at a salon in Mumbai's Jogeshwari area, where he came into contact with Sana (35), a nurse and a resident of Anand Nagar.

The two developed a relationship and Sana had divorced her husband. When Faisal returned to his native village in Bijnor, Sana allegedly followed him and arrived there on May 29, the CO added.

Pandey said Sana was pressuring Faisal to marry her. He allegedly took her on a motorcycle to a forested area near Fatehpur Sabhachand village, where he strangled her and buried the body in a field.

A missing person's report regarding Sana was registered in Mumbai on June 2. A Mumbai Police team has reached Bijnor. The officer said efforts were underway to recover the body on the basis of information provided by the accused. Further legal action is being taken.

UP murder accused, with Rs 50,000 bounty, arrested after gunfight with cops

Ghaziabad. (Agency)

The Ghaziabad Police arrested a 50,000 reward-listed criminal, Gaurav Nagar, in an encounter on Saturday morning. Police sustained injuries to the accused during the exchange of fire and shifted him to a hospital for treatment. They also recovered a Swift car, a pistol, and cartridges from his possession.

According to police, they received information from an informer that Gaurav Nagar, a wanted accused in the Omkar Singh kidnapping and murder case, was travelling from Bantla towards Chirori. Acting on the tip-off, the Loni Police launched a checking operation near the canal on the Bantla-Chirori road. During the operation, police spotted a white Swift car approaching the area. When officers signalled the driver to stop, he allegedly attempted to flee. Police chased the vehicle, which eventually crashed into a tree on the roadside.

After the crash, the accused reportedly got out of the car and opened fire on the police team while attempting to escape. Police retaliated in self-defence, injuring him with gunshots in both legs. Officers then took him into custody and admitted him to a hospital. Police said they are carrying out further legal proceedings in the case.

During questioning, the accused identified himself as Gaurav Nagar, son of Gajraj and a resident of Badalpur village under Badalpur Police Station in Gautam Buddh Nagar district. Police said Nagar confessed that he, along with his associates, had kidnapped Omkar. He allegedly later murdered the victim and dumped the body in the Ganganaar area on Meerut Road. Authorities had announced a reward of Rs 50,000 for information leading to his arrest.

The recovered items include a Swift car, a .32 bore pistol, two live cartridges, and two spent cartridges.

Banda horror: Father allegedly kills daughter over love marriage during counselling

A 19-year-old woman was allegedly stabbed to death by her father during a police counselling session in Banda after she insisted on living with the man she had married. The killing has sparked outrage in the district, while police are investigating whether it was an honour crime.

Banda. (Agency)

A 19-year-old woman was allegedly stabbed to death by her father during a counselling session in Uttar Pradesh's Banda district after she insisted on living with a man she had married against her family's wishes, police said. The shocking incident took place in the Badousa police station area on Thursday and has triggered widespread outrage across the district.

According to police, the woman had been in a relationship with a young man from her neighbourhood. On May 18, she left home with him, prompting her family to file a complaint. A case was subsequently registered and police launched a search operation to trace her. Banda Superintendent of Police Palash Bansal said the woman was found safe on June 12 and brought back as

part of the legal process. Her parents were informed and were called for discussions and counselling with police officials.



During the interaction, the woman reportedly maintained that she wanted to stay with her husband. Police said she had married the man after leaving home and was

unwilling to return to her family despite repeated attempts by relatives and officials to persuade her otherwise.

According to investigators, tensions escalated during the counselling session when her father suddenly attacked her with a sharp-edged weapon, stabbing her in the abdomen.

The injured woman was rushed to the Atarra Community Health Centre and later referred to a medical college for advanced treatment. However, doctors declared her dead.

SP Bansal said that based on a complaint lodged by the victim's mother, police registered a murder case against the woman's father. The accused has been taken into custody and the weapon used in the crime has been recovered.

Bihar man strangles wife after dispute, hangs body from tree to fake suicide

A 25-year-old woman in Bihar's Bagaha was allegedly strangled to death by her husband after an argument, police said. The accused then allegedly hanged her body from a mango tree to make the murder appear as a suicide and has been arrested.

Patna. (Agency)

A man in Bihar's Bagaha allegedly killed his wife and then hanged her body from a mango tree to make the murder appear as a suicide, police said. Police arrested the accused husband, identified as Gautam Kaji, and sent him to judicial custody.

According to Bagaha Superintendent of Police Ramanand Kaushal, police received information about a woman's body hanging from a tree in an orchard near Garkatti village. A police team reached the spot, took custody of the body, and sent it for post-mortem examination. During the investigation, police identified the deceased as 25-year-old Hemlata Kumari, a resident



of Garkatti village. Considering the seriousness of the case, police officers and a Forensic Science Laboratory team inspected the crime scene and began a scientific investigation. Evidence collected during the

probe raised doubts about the suicide theory. Police subsequently detained Hemlata's husband, Gautam Kaji, for questioning. During interrogation, he allegedly confessed to the crime.

According to police, the accused said he had an argument with his wife and assaulted her before taking her to a sugarcane field, where he strangled her to death. He allegedly hid the body for some time and later hung it from a mango tree at night to make the death appear to be a case of suicide.

Based on a complaint filed by the victim's father, police registered a case of dowry harassment and murder. The accused has been arrested and sent to judicial custody.

From 'natural death' to murder: Nagaur Police uncover family's deadly secret

A truck driver's death in Nagaur, first treated as natural, is now being probed as a murder allegedly involving his wife and son. The case turned after forensic findings and police inquiry pointed to a family dispute and an alleged cover-up.

Nagaur. (Agency)

A truck driver's death initially believed to be natural has turned into a shocking murder case in Rajasthan's Nagaur district, with police alleging that the victim's wife and son killed him following a long-running domestic dispute. Police said they cracked the "blind murder" case within 24 hours of launching an investigation and have arrested the victim's wife, while a minor son has been taken into custody under the provisions of the Juvenile Justice Act. The incident took place in Kuahon Ki Dhani village under the Panchodi police station limits. The victim, identified as Shyam Kumar Prajapat, worked as a truck driver.

According to investigators, Shyam Kumar had been involved in frequent domestic disputes with his wife, Munni Devi. On the night of June 7-8, an argument allegedly escalated into violence, during which the accused assaulted him with sticks, causing serious injuries. Police said the attackers then allegedly strangled him with a rope, leading to his death. In the aftermath of the incident, family members allegedly attempted to portray the death as a natural one. However, police grew suspicious during the preliminary inquiry and

launched a detailed investigation. Given the seriousness of the case, Nagaur Superintendent of Police



constituted a special team to probe the circumstances surrounding the death. Investigators examined technical and scientific evidence, including the post-mortem report,

and questioned family members and other suspects.

The investigation revealed the alleged involvement of the victim's wife and sons. Police arrested Munni Devi and another accused, identified as Sukhran, while a juvenile in conflict with the law was detained. Panchodi Station House Officer Rajmal Kumawat said the case appeared suspicious from the outset, prompting investigators to examine all possible angles. Scientific and technical evidence, along with statements gathered

during the probe, pointed to the involvement of the victim's family members, he said.

Police said the post-mortem report and forensic findings confirmed that the death was a homicide and not a natural death as initially claimed.

The accused have been booked for murder and other relevant offences. Further investigation is underway to establish the exact sequence of events and determine the role of each accused in the crime.

The case has sent shockwaves through the local community, with residents expressing disbelief over the alleged involvement of close family members in the killing.

Time to let go of coyness about soft power

K P Nayar

The most important reason for the visit of acting Venezuelan President Delcy Rodríguez Gómez to India—from her standpoint—was also the least talked about. Rodríguez came to India for solace and mental peace after the roller-coaster when her boss and her country's elected President, Nicolás Maduro, was abducted and taken to the US. Rodríguez became de facto President, but only in an 'acting' capacity since Maduro is still legally Venezuela's head of State. Unless events as dramatic as the capture of Maduro by US forces continue to happen in Caracas, Rodríguez has to reconcile herself to being acting President until Maduro's current term in office expires in 2031. Hispanic-American US Secretary of State and National Security Adviser Marco Rubio, who is the most consequential adviser to US President Donald Trump on Venezuelan affairs, is widely speculated to be still testing Rodríguez in office. Trump and Rubio do not appear to be in any hurry to annul Maduro's 2025 election or organise fresh presidential polls. They don't have to as long as Rodríguez is taking orders from Houston, the energy capital of the US, and from Venezuelan exiles in Miami, who helped elect Rubio to the US Senate from Florida for three consecutive terms.

After her copybook meetings with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his ministers in New Delhi, Rodríguez travelled to Puttaparthi to pray at the shrine of Sathya Sai Baba and meditate at the facilities in the complex. This is the sixth time Rodríguez has offered prayers in Puttaparthi seeking peace and comfort. At a specially-convened briefing by the ministry of external affairs, its new Secretary (East), Rudrendra Tandon, was asked directly and indirectly about the acting President's visit to Sathya Sai Baba sanctuaries. Tandon first avoided an answer, saying: "Regarding the programme, we have already informed you about it." MEA Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal evasively chipped in. "You are already familiar with the programme." When reporters persisted, Tandon added: "On the private part of the programme, I don't think... because these are private. But as coming from a family, it is good that if she does go there, it is very good." [Sic]

It is unfathomable why the MEA is coy about such spiritual excursions by foreign visitors who combine them with official business. Especially when the visitors themselves want to speak about them and be photographed or videographed in places like Prasanthi Nilayam in Puttaparthi, or for that matter, at the Taj Mahal in Agra. Rubio was upset on record that during his recent visit to Agra along with his wife Jeanette Dousdebès, the accompanying American media team was not allowed to travel with him. It is true that according to convention, such diversions are outside the business of the State, but protocol is changing worldwide. The MEA must adapt to changes to include the country's soft power appeal in promoting leadership chemistry in international engagement. It began promoting the Buddhist tourism circuit at the request of East Asia's Buddhist nations. Why not do the same with places like Puttaparthi, Shirdi and Tirupati? In 2023, Ukraine's First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Emine Dzhamalova, revealed that she had visited Sathya Sai Baba institutions in Puttaparthi seven times as she made her way there for the eighth time. The MEA was coy about that part of her programme, too. When India indicated that it was not keen on her bilateral visit at all—she was the first minister from Ukraine to travel to New Delhi after the war with Russia began—she used her multiple spiritual connections in India to wangle that trip. That visit certainly helped enhance Dzhamalova's stature back home because India was then seen as more supportive of Russia in its conflict with Ukraine. India-Venezuela relations are unlikely to gain from the Rodríguez visit although it lasted five days from June 3. These relations are now in a similar rut as the India-Iraq relations were after a series of wars which Iraq got into intermittently from 1980 to 2003, culminating in regime change in Baghdad.

Dhaka's Pakistan pivot

While unresolved issues from 1971 remain, they are no longer a barrier to engagement.

By Vuukle

Twelve senior Bangladeshi civil servants landed in Karachi last month for an executive leadership programme organised by Pakistan's Higher Education Commission and Civil Services Academy. The training began with an engagement at the National Institute of Public Administration in Karachi, alongside visits to key public institutions in Pakistan's financial capital. The delegation then proceeded to Lahore's Civil Services Academy, the institute that had trained bureaucrats of undivided Pakistan before 1971. This marked the first such institutional exchange between Islamabad and Dhaka in over 50 years. The development is significant because until recently, Bangladeshi officials trained in India. The Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), Mussoorie, hosted mid-career officials under agreements formalised since 2014. Although a training cooperation agreement for 2025-2030 has been renewed, no Bangladeshi officer has visited LBSNAA since the Sheikh Hasina's ouster in 2024.

Bangladesh emerged from the traumatic events of 1971. The Pakistan army's war crimes are deeply embedded in its national identity. During Hasina's 15-year tenure (2009-24), Pakistan was largely treated as a pariah partner, while the Awami League drew much of its political legitimacy from the liberation war narrative. The student-led uprising that toppled Hasina and sent her into exile in India opened space for a reset with Pakistan. Islamabad moved quickly. Cargo shipping resumed between Karachi and Chittagong, senior Pakistani officials travelled to Dhaka and structured cooperation expanded across trade, connectivity and governance. Thus, the Bangladeshi delegation's orientation in Karachi was equally symbolic. Exposure to institutions in Pakistan reflected Islamabad's effort to familiarise Bangladeshi officials with the country's trade architecture at a time of expanding economic engagement. While unresolved issues from 1971 remain, they are no longer being treated as a barrier to engagement. By de-hyphenating past issues from present realities, both sides seem to have found a new diplomatic space. But, the training programme's significance goes beyond this. These programmes are designed to shape



how officials think about governance, statecraft, regional politics and national interests. For years, Bangladeshi officials attended training programmes in India and were exposed to administrative practices, governance models and strategic perspectives shared by New Delhi and Dhaka. Pakistan now has an opportunity to engage a new generation of administrators. This is why the exchange of ideas may prove more consequential than the exchange of goods. Exposure to Pakistani institutions, policy debates and administrative traditions will now shape their perspectives. Pakistani analysts have argued that such exchanges should be institutionalised through long-

term agreements so that the relationship is not left vulnerable to changing political cycles. For decades, Dhaka-Delhi ties defined the boundaries of the Dhaka-Islamabad engagement. That constraint has loosened following political change in Dhaka. Religious affinities have also become more visible in the post-Hasina period. This does not mean Bangladesh has abandoned the Liberation War as a foundational national narrative. Rather, the post-Hasina political order appears more driven by national interest. The visit of officials reflects the willingness of both countries to test the possibility of normalisation, and that in itself is a milestone.

Dam warning : Use Bhakra's excess water, avert floods

Partner states, meanwhile, must coordinate reservoir operations with foresight

THE Bhakra Beas Management Board's (BBMB) advisory urging Punjab and Haryana to draw more water from the Bhakra reservoir should serve as a wake-up call on the growing complexities of water management in north India. Far from being a routine operational decision, it reflects the pressures of climate uncertainty, unsustainable agricultural practices and fragile inter-state cooperation. The reservoir level currently stands at 1,578.07 ft — more than 21 ft higher than at the same time last year. With only about 102 ft of vertical buffer remaining before the full reservoir level, the margin for error is narrowing as the monsoon approaches. Snowmelt from the Himalayas and extreme rainfall events could rapidly transform abundance into vulnerability. Ironically, this challenge coincides with Punjab's paddy transplantation season. Although the state advanced the paddy calendar to June 1 partly to optimise



water use, large tracts continue to depend heavily on groundwater while canal networks remain

underutilised. When available surface water is not efficiently distributed, reservoirs are forced to retain larger volumes, shrinking the flood cushion needed to absorb sudden inflows. The lessons of the devastating floods of 2023 should not be forgotten. Delayed releases and disputes over reservoir operations fuelled political acrimony and raised questions about preparedness. Dam management cannot focus solely on power generation. Flood moderation must be an equally important objective. Irrigation departments must ensure timely delivery of canal water, particularly to tail-end farmers, allowing greater reliance on surface irrigation and reducing pressure on depleting aquifers. Partner states, meanwhile, must coordinate reservoir operations with foresight. Water abundance should strengthen resilience, not heighten risk. Clearing reservoir space today is the best insurance against tomorrow's climate uncertainties.

Cooling India before it overheats

Extreme heat is turning cooling from a luxury into a necessity, demanding innovative approaches

Dinesh C Sharma

THE summer monsoon is here under the shadow of El Niño. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast below-normal monsoon rainfall at 90% of the long period average (LPA), driven by the developing El Niño conditions in the Pacific Ocean. The El Niño warming patterns are known to weaken moisture-bearing winds and create uneven rainfall distribution across India. In its latest update, the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) has warned that the world should prepare for a potentially strong El Niño event, which will exacerbate drought and increase the risk of heatwaves both on land and in the ocean. Among the global impacts of El Niño, according to the WMO, will be below-average monsoon rainfall in South Asia. One of the most obvious impacts of the developing weather situation will be extreme heat, heat-related illnesses, spread of vector-borne diseases and pressure on food, water and power generation. Heatwave conditions, warmer nights and humid conditions are being reported from many parts of the country. These impacts vary depending on local weather conditions and other factors like density of settlements, industrial and human activities and lack of green spaces. All this leads to higher demand for cooling appliances and systems — fans, desert coolers, home and office ACs, mobile air-conditioning systems in vehicles such as cars, buses and trains, chillers, cold storages, etc. Homes, offices, industrial factories and infrastructure need cooling systems to suit their needs and demands. Adding more window, split and centralised ACs is not a sustainable solution. The demand for AC units has surged this year and there are shortages in many markets. In the business-as-usual scenario, it is estimated that India will add 130 to 150 million new room ACs between 2025 and 2035. These units will be a strain on the power system,

accounting for almost 180 gigawatts of the load in 2035. At present, room ACs contribute to about 60 to 70 gigawatts of the peak load in the summer. Urban areas witness the phenomenon of urban heat islands (UHI), where some dense areas become several degrees warmer than surrounding less-populated areas. Besides consuming more power, the use of AC units in cities amplifies the UHI effect as each unit throws heat directly into the ambient environment, creating a vicious cycle in which hotter areas drive even greater demand for cooling. The mainstay of energy-efficient cooling in India, at present, is the star rating system for ACs introduced in 2009, first as a voluntary label and later made mandatory. Subsequently, the Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS) were introduced, followed by the Indian Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio (ISEER) in 2015. These standards have made some impact on the AC market, with consumers preferring star-rated products and manufacturers introducing upgrades like inverter technology, which improves efficiency by adjusting compressor speed to cooling load. While this is so, there are technical and implementation deficiencies. A 2025 study by researchers at the India Energy and Climate Centre, University of California, Berkeley, pointed out that the test procedures primarily assess cooling under dry conditions and overlook dehumidification, which is a critical factor in India's hot-humid climate. So, ACs might work well in lab tests, but they may underperform in real-world settings or overcool spaces at high energy cost. The study also found that the MEPS being enforced in India lag behind those of Japan and South Korea, where average efficiencies of ACs are almost double compared to the average unit in India. Compliance and enforcement

of standards remain weak. In addition, multiple Central and state agencies are involved in the implementation of different aspects of cooling efficiency norms. Another initiative, the India Cooling Action Plan, was launched in 2019. One of the ideas being experimented with under this action plan is the District Cooling System



(DCS), on the lines of the centralised heating systems in use in some European cities. The DCS involves a centralised cooling system for a set of buildings. Cooling is distributed through pipelines, much like water or gas utilities. Such a system is considered more efficient as cooling is produced at a central plant using treated wastewater and making use of waste heat through absorption chillers, instead of using refrigerant gases as in individual AC units. Since it is a centralised system, the cooling demand can be managed more efficiently. The

DCS is considered ideal for airports, IT parks, industrial hubs, special economic zones, university campuses, etc. Such systems are functional in Singapore, Dubai, Qatar and the UAE. For 'cooling as a service' to become a reality in India, however, several regulatory, legal and financial challenges, as well as hurdles like right-of-way, will have to be overcome. Some years ago, a DCS was planned for Connaught Place in Delhi, but the project failed to take off due to several on-ground problems. It may be relatively easier to implement in greenfield projects, as has been seen in the GIFT city in Gujarat. The DCS will be incorporated in the government buildings in Amaravati, the new capital of Andhra Pradesh, which is under development. It is time the DCS is promoted in large housing townships under construction in different cities.

Cooling is no longer just an option for the comfort of those who can afford it. As India gets urbanised and people move to cities, the demand for cooling will become more widespread. Building heat resilience for people and communities should be the policy goal if we are interested in addressing the cooling challenge that India faces. For this, the country needs a holistic cooling policy focussed on energy efficiency norms, cooling technologies designed to suit conditions in different regions, increased consumer awareness about energy efficiency and research into new cooling techs. At the same time, community-level initiatives like cool roofs, which can significantly reduce indoor temperature in dwellings exposed to heat, should be rolled out in heat-vulnerable areas. Although policies and initiatives exist, the overall approach remains fragmented and implementation slow.

You can use strawberries, banana peel or even coconut oil to get sparkling white teeth, but try these options only after proper research, suggests an expert.

Guidelines for getting pearly white

Teeth Naturally

- Banana peel

Claim: High levels of potassium, magnesium and manganese in bananas can help remove stains from teeth.

Simply peel a ripe banana, and rub your teeth with the insides of the peel for about two minutes. After three weeks, your teeth will have whitened.

Verdict: True. If you rub the skin it can act as a

gentle exfoliator and will remove some surface stains, but the banana will not reach inside the pores on the surface of your enamel - so no true 'deep' clean will take place.

- Cider Vinegar

Claim: Rinsing with apple cider vinegar (mixed two parts of water) will make teeth whiter and protect teeth and gums from bacteria.

Verdict: False. Cider vinegar is a favourite of 'detox' devotees. Once swallowed, it mixes with pancreatic secretions in the intestines and turns alkaline, but when it hits your teeth, it is an acid, albeit a weak one. This makes the enamel on your teeth less resistant to damage - like wetting a chalk and then scraping off the surface.

- Coconut oil

Claim: A 3,000-year-old Ayurvedic way to clean teeth is to swish a tablespoon of oil (usually coconut, sesame or olive oil) around your mouth for 20 minutes every morning. The coconut oil sticks to the oil in the cell membranes of any bacteria in your mouth, so when you spit it out, you are ridding your mouth of unwanted micro-organisms. Used by stars including Gwyneth Paltrow, who claim it whitens teeth and improves complexion.

Verdict: False. There is no scientific evidence at all that 'oil pulling', as it's called, will whiten teeth, or even remove bacteria. It's possible that the act of swishing the oil around your mouth will dislodge some bacteria or debris, so followed by a careful brushing session, your teeth may look cleaner. But no science shows that oil pulling will make your teeth any whiter.

Uchenna Okoye, clinical director at London Smiling Dental Group, doles out guidelines, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

- Strawberries

Claim: Mash up a ripe strawberry, dip your toothbrush in it and brush carefully over teeth. Within two weeks, your teeth will be whiter.

Dentist's Verdict: True. Strawberries contain citric acid, which can weaken the surface hardness of your teeth. But it also contains the more gentle malic acid, and the riper the strawberry becomes, the higher the concentration of malic acid compared to the more harmful citric acid.

So choose a really ripe strawberry, rub it on your teeth and just like exfoliating the skin, it does remove superficial debris. The malic acid won't actually break down the stain molecules, but the surface clean gives your teeth a whiter appearance. A gentle and effective natural whitener.

- Turmeric powder

Claim: Mix half a teaspoon of dried turmeric

powder with a few drops of water and stir to create a thick paste. Dip your toothbrush in (it will be stained yellow) and clean teeth. The usual cleaning time of two to three minutes is doubled, because of the time it takes to rinse the yellow from your teeth and gums. The abrasive qualities of the bright yellow spice (derived from a root) will clean your teeth.

Verdict: False. This is a recipe for disaster. The rule in dentistry is that anything that will stain a white shirt will stain your teeth. All spices stain teeth but yellow spices are the worst. Far from whitening

your teeth, using turmeric will make them even more discoloured.

A natural solution to Backache

Many of us are afflicted with back pain, which we tend to ignore or pay very little attention to, during the course of a busy day.

But you cannot overlook the fact that back pain can make it difficult for you to stand up, sit down or even walk around comfortably. So it's best you try some of the following natural remedies and get yourself some relief.

Increase your intake of Vitamin D -

A study looked at the prevalence of vitamin D deficiency in 150 people with chronic musculoskeletal pain and found that 93 per cent of patients had vitamin D deficiency! So all people with persistent, non-specific musculoskeletal pain should get themselves screened for vitamin D deficiency.

Indulge in some music

therapy -

Low cost and enjoyable, music has been found to reduce the disability, anxiety, and depression associated with chronic back pain. It has an immediate effect on reducing pain, although the results are not statistically significant.

Try some breathing techniques -

To reduce pain, try some breathing techniques that make use of the mind-body connection. These techniques integrate body awareness, breathing, movement, and meditation. The best thing about them is that they are safe, free of cost and you can do them at home!

Get a soothing massage -

The first thing that comes to your mind when you think of a backache is to get a nice massage. Massages may be effective for sub acute and chronic pain. What's more, they reduce anxiety and depression associated with chronic pain. In fact, massage therapy is the most popular therapy for low back pain during pregnancy.

Listening to heavy metal makes you calmer

The study is in contrast to previous studies, which claimed that loud and chaotic music was associated with aggression and delinquency. However, the new research, done by student Leah Sharman and Dr Genevieve Dingle showed listeners mostly became inspired and calmed when they listened to extreme music. "We found the music regulated sadness and enhanced positive emotions. When experiencing anger, extreme music fans liked to listen to music that could match their anger. The music helped them explore the full gamut of emotion they felt but also left them feeling more active and inspired. Results showed levels of hostility, irritability and stress decreased after music was introduced, and the level of inspiration they felt," explained Sharman.

The study involved regular listeners of extreme music, aged 18-34 years. Participants were monitored during a baseline period, after a 16-minute 'anger induction.' They spent 10 minutes listening to songs of their choice, or 10 minutes of

A research says that extreme music - such as heavy metal - can positively influence those experiencing anger.

silence, and were monitored once more. The 'anger induction' involved the interviewees describing angering events in their life, with prompts around relationships, employment and finances.

"A secondary aim for the study was to see what music angry participants would select from their playlist. Half of the chosen songs contained themes of anger or aggression. Yet, participants reported they used music to immerse themselves in feelings of love and enhance their well-being. All responses indicated that extreme music listeners use their choice of music for positive self-regulatory purposes.



Home remedies to treat stomach Ache

Here are simple home remedies to treat stomach ache

- Add honey in your lemon tea and have it twice a day.
- Take one teaspoon of lemon juice and mint juice, add a few drops of ginger juice and black salt. Drinking this mixture will cure stomach pain.
- Extract some juice after grating a few pieces of ginger. Massaging this juice on your tummy will give you relief from stomach ache.
- Drink water. It will cleanse the body of toxins and guarantee better bowel movements.
- Processed foods like chocolates and dairy products will only aggravate your problems. Opt for healthier options like leafy vegetables or fruits.
- If you regularly suffer from stomach ache, trying going for a daily walk. It will make your digestive system healthier.
- Mix one teaspoon of ajwain, some lemon juice and a pinch of black salt in warm water and drink it.





The arrival of the Monsoon season always tends to stir a feeling of nostalgia and excitement in our hearts.

Ways to improve immunity during

Monsoons

After all, who amongst us doesn't have fond memories of dancing or playing games in the rain, sipping a cup of steaming tea, munching on fresh home made pakoras, or just sitting in the veranda happily watching the rain pouring down - a welcome relief from the scorching summer heat. However, over the past few years our relationship with the monsoon season has soured. We no longer want ourselves or our kids to get wet in the rain for fear of catching a cold or infection. The monsoon munchies we used to savour earlier, now threaten to upset our stomach, and most of all, the rainwater we used to enjoy dancing in, is no longer safe and free of pollutants. What's more, most doctors too warn that the monsoon season brings with it a

plethora of illnesses, infections, and digestive ailments, which is why we it is critical to take extra precautions to be fit during this season. So what's the reason behind us not being able to enjoy monsoons? Weak immunity - the increased pollution, humidity, and moisture reduces our metabolic rate and thus

suppresses the body's ability to fight diseases. A lower metabolic rate also means that our digestive system's ability to break down and absorb food is weaker, leading to stomach ailments from constipation and bloating to diarrhoea. That said, we can take adequate steps to increase our immunity and metabolic rate

and not miss out on our favourite monsoon activities. Here are 5 tips to help us do so: 1. Stay Hydrated: Drink plenty of water and water-based drinks such as green tea during monsoons because the increased humidity makes us sweat more and leaves our bodies dehydrated and more susceptible to falling ill.

- 2. Increase Fibre Intake: Increase consumption of light fibrous grains such as oats, brown rice, and barley that are easy to absorb by the body and also have high fibre content that cleanses our stomach and intestines. Avoid watery cereals such as curried rice which can cause bloating during Monsoons.
- 3. Switch to Light Cooking Oils: As much as you love eating pakoras during monsoons - avoid deep fried foods as they make one feel heavy, slow metabolic rate, and are difficult to digest. If you still want to indulge in a few monsoon munchies use lighter oils such as Corn oil or Olive oil instead of heavy cooking oils such as Mustard or Sesame oil.
- 4. Use Natural Immunity Boosters: Take a leaf from your grandmother's remedy book, literally! Herbs such as neem, turmeric powder, and methi seeds boost metabolic rate and are natural antibiotics - great at increasing immunity and digestion.
- 5. Add Lime and Honey: To further boost our metabolic rate and immunity, add lemon juice and honey as they assist in the digestion process and help the intestines carry out their functions properly and effectively.

What your Eyes say about Your health

Here is what a few common eye symptoms could reveal about your body's health

Is there more to your health than meets the eye? According to experts, your peepers may hold clues to undiagnosed health problems and a routine eye test could reveal the truth. Eyes are the window into the body, offering a great pre-warning for many life-threatening illnesses. Most of us think we only need their eyes checked for vision problems, but all of us should have regular examinations, as conditions such as diabetes can be detected in the eye before they start to cause problems in the body. Here are some common eye symptoms that can be detected by opticians and what they could reveal about your health. Red eyes Could be: High Blood pressure When an optician shines a light into your eyes, they see the tiny blood vessels in your retinas - the sensitive tissue at the back of the eye. High blood pressure can make these blood vessels appear twisted - or even cause them to burst so the eyes look red. A quarter of adults with high blood pressure don't know they have the condition, which can cause strokes. Yellow deposits behind the eye

could be: Diabetes Yellow deposits of fat, or small tears in the retina, are signs of Type 2 diabetes. A big change to your glasses prescription is another. Early diagnosis is key to avoiding long-term, sometimes fatal, complications. Iris rings Could be: High cholesterol White rings around the iris — the coloured part of the eye — are a sign of high cholesterol levels. Another clue is 'xanthelasma' — flat, white fat deposits under the skin on or around your eyelids. Studies show people with both these symptoms have a higher risk of heart disease. Pale inner eyelids Could be: Anaemia If the inside of your lower eyelids look pale when pulled down, you may be anaemic - lacking iron, which helps makes red blood cells. Anaemia can be treated with iron supplements, but can be a sign of internal bleeding, so see your GP. Bulging eyes Could be: Thyroid problems Prominent-looking eyes can run in families, but eyes that appear to bulge may be evidence of an overactive thyroid. Abnormal levels of thyroid hormone cause the tissues around the eye to swell, making it appear the eye is popping outwards. Droopy eyelid Could be: Bell's Palsy or Stroke A drooping eye can indicate Bell's Palsy, a temporary facial paralysis. It can also be a symptom of a stroke, especially if the speech is slurred. More rarely, it could also be evidence of a brain tumour or an autoimmune disease that is known as myasthenia gravis. Yellow eyes Could be: Liver disease

Liver conditions, including hepatitis and cirrhosis, can turn the whites of your eyes yellow — a symptom which requires an immediate doctor's trip. The colour is caused by bilirubin, a chemical created by the breakdown of hemoglobin, the oxygen-carrying molecule inside red blood cells. Pale optic nerve

Could be: MS or Brain tumour The optic nerve, which transmits information from the retina to the brain, is visible at the rear of the eye to an optician. A pale optic nerve can be an early manifestation of MS or evidence of a brain tumour.

Different sized pupils Could be: Stroke or tumour Healthy pupils are around the same size and react similarly to light. If this is not the case with you, check yourself for problems such as stroke, brain or optic nerve tumour, a brain aneurysm or MS.

How kids respond to differently Foods

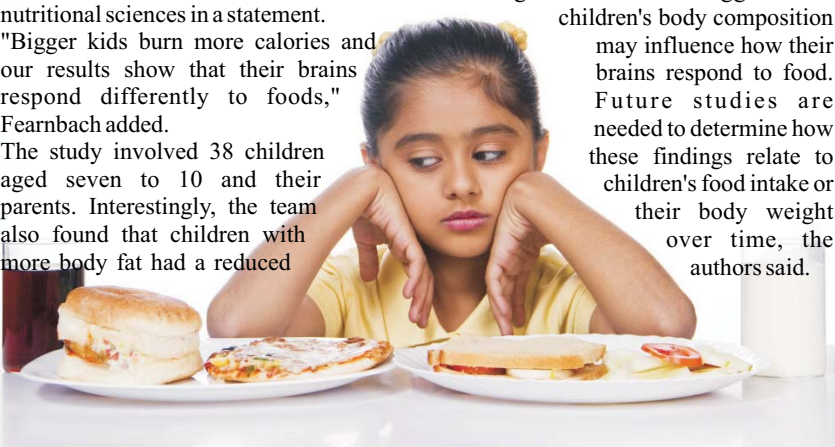
How children perceive high-calorie foods depends on how much fat have accumulated around their waistlines, a new study says.



So lean children will have more powerful brain responses while looking at high-calorie foods compared to children with lower lean body weight. On the contrary, the researchers found that children with higher body fat had lower activity in this same brain area when they saw pictures of healthier, low-calorie foods. "Kids with more lean body weight might have a greater reward response to higher calorie foods, in part because they have greater energy needs compared to children with less lean body weight," said Nicole Fearnbach from Pennsylvania State University's department of nutritional sciences in a statement. "Bigger kids burn more calories and our results show that their brains respond differently to foods," Fearnbach added. The study involved 38 children aged seven to 10 and their parents. Interestingly, the team also found that children with more body fat had a reduced



brain response to healthy foods. It might be that kids with higher body fat find those healthier foods to be less rewarding. The results suggest that children's body composition may influence how their brains respond to food. Future studies are needed to determine how these findings relate to children's food intake or their body weight over time, the authors said.



India's missile shield gets major boost as DRDO nails 3 back-to-back tests

Announcing the achievement, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said DRDO had conducted three consecutive flight tests that showcased India's ability to counter multiple categories of threats.

New Delhi.(Agency)

India on Friday took a significant step forward in strengthening its strategic defence architecture as the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully demonstrated a series of key missile technologies, including a multi-layered Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) system and a new medium-range

Naval Anti-Ship Missile capability. Announcing the achievement, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said DRDO had conducted three consecutive flight tests that showcased India's ability to counter multiple categories of threats.

"DRDO has successfully demonstrated multiple crucial technologies bolstering the nation's defence capabilities against different types of enemy threats. Three consecutive flight tests were successfully conducted to demonstrate multi-layered defence against long-range Ballistic Missiles and Anti-ship capability at medium range," Singh said in a post on X. According to the defence minister, the multi-layered BMD capability was successfully validated as interceptor systems engaged and



destroyed their assigned targets. He also said the systems were developed using advanced technologies to address emerging missile threats. The tests demonstrated India's ability to detect, track and neutralise incoming ballistic missiles through a layered interception mechanism designed to operate across different altitudes and engagement ranges.

Such architecture provides multiple opportunities to eliminate a hostile missile before it reaches critical targets. "These tests have put India in an elite group of nations having Ballistics Missile Defence Capabilities to engage Ballistic Missiles up to ICBMs," Singh said.

The capability is strategically important as modern conflicts increasingly feature long-range ballistic missiles capable of carrying conventional and nuclear payloads.

A credible missile shield enhances the protection of military infrastructure, strategic installations and civilian population centres while improving national resilience during conflict scenarios.

The successful demonstrations also highlighted the growing maturity of

indigenous defence technologies developed by DRDO, including sensors, interceptor systems, command-and-control networks and tracking radars designed to function as an integrated response system. Alongside missile defence, DRDO carried out the maiden flight test of the Naval Anti-Ship Missile-Medium Range (NASM-MR), aimed at enhancing the Indian Navy's ability to strike hostile surface combatants at stand-off distances.

The new capability is expected to strengthen maritime deterrence and reinforce India's operational posture in the Indian Ocean Region. The developments align with the government's broader push for self-reliance in defence manufacturing under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative and reflect India's effort to reduce dependence on foreign military technologies.

Delhi BJP rejig: 75% office-bearers may be replaced with young faces

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Delhi BJP is all set for a major organisational reshuffle in the wake of MoS Harsh Malhotra's recent appointment as the party's state unit head. The proposed changes are expected to cover several key organisational posts, including vice-presidents, general secretaries, and secretaries.

Sources said that about 75% of the party's state office-bearers are likely to be replaced by fresh and young faces. According to party sources, the BJP leadership is preparing for a comprehensive overhaul of its Delhi



organisation, aimed at strengthening the party structure after a year of its return to power and ahead of the crucial next years' municipal polls.

After taking over the party's reins last month, Malhotra had said, "We expect to complete the reorganisation and the appointment of office-bearers in the next two months."

Party insiders said the reshuffle is being viewed as an effort to align the Delhi unit with the BJP's broader organisational strategy of promoting fresh leadership while balancing social and regional representation. It also aims to remove several deadwoods, who have been holding onto the positions despite lagging on performance.

Man promises jobs at Teg Bahadur to 23, dupes them of Rs 5.5L; arrested



New Delhi.(Agency)

A man was arrested for allegedly duping 23 unemployed youths of over Rs 5.5 lakh by falsely promising them contractual jobs at Guru Teg Bahadur Hospital in east Delhi.

The accused, identified as Manish Kumar, is a BSc nursing graduate. According to police, he was addicted to gambling and alcohol and allegedly devised the scam to pay off his debt.

Kumar was arrested on June 9 from GTB Enclave in Shahdara following a complaint by 23 victims. Police said he lured them by claiming that GTB Hospital in Dilshad Garden had vacancies for contractual posts, offering a monthly salary of around Rs 21,000.

In order to gain their confidence, he stated that his father was employed at a senior position in the hospital. He also misrepresented that he had strong connections in the hospital administration, through which he could arrange appointments.

Believing his claims, the complainants submitted their educational certificates, Aadhaar cards, and other personal documents. Thereafter, the accused induced them to deposit amounts of '20,000 to 25,000 each as a security deposit on the false pretext of facilitating their appointments as nursing assistants and data entry operators on a contractual basis for a period up to three years.

After collecting the money and documents from the complainants, the accused continued to assure them that the recruitment process was underway. No appointments were given despite the complainants repeatedly contacting the accused. Later he stopped responding to their calls, switched off his mobile phone and absconded.

All crew safe: Govt dismisses reports of 4 seafarer deaths on MT Liaki Freedom

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Friday dismissed reports claiming that the vessel Liaki Freedom, carrying Indian crew members, had been hit by a military strike and confirmed that all crew members on board are safe. In an official statement, the MEA said, "We have spoken with the Master of the vessel Liaki Freedom, who has confirmed that all crew members are safe and that the reported information is false."

Reports circulating on social media and through various unofficial channels had claimed that four seafarers had died aboard the tanker MT Liaki Freedom operating in the Strait of Hormuz region. However, sources associated with the Directorate General of Shipping (DG Shipping) refuted the claims.

According to the sources, authorities established contact with the vessel's Master, who confirmed that all crew members on board were safe. The sources said the information being circulated regarding the deaths of four seafarers was factually incorrect.



Amid the ongoing security tensions in the region and recent maritime incidents, several unverified claims had emerged concerning MT Liaki Freedom. These reports alleged that four crew members had been killed in

an attack or another incident involving the vessel. However, based on the information currently available, no such incident has been confirmed. The clarification comes days after three Indian-linked vessels were targeted in the Gulf amid the ongoing Iran war.

In one of the incidents, Indian crew members were killed in a US strike on the Palau-flagged tanker MT Settebello off the coast of Oman. The vessel had 24 Indian crew members on board. Authorities rescued 21 sailors, while the three missing crew members were later confirmed dead.

Following the incident, India lodged a strong protest with Washington and summoned the US charg d'affaires in New Delhi. The MEA said it had conveyed its deep concern over the use of lethal force against civilian shipping and stressed that attacks on commercial vessels undermine the safety, security and stability.

Heavy rain returns to Delhi-NCR for second night, IMD issues red alert

New Delhi.(Agency)

Delhi-NCR witnessed a second consecutive night of heavy rainfall late Friday night, with thunderstorms, lightning and strong winds sweeping across the region and bringing relief from the intense heat that had gripped the national capital over the past week.

The IMD issued a red alert for Delhi and adjoining areas, warning of moderate thunderstorms accompanied by lightning and squally winds reaching 60-70 kmph, with gusts up to 80 kmph. The weather office said most parts of the capital were likely to receive very light to light rainfall, while isolated pockets could witness moderate showers. A red alert indicates potentially hazardous weather conditions and calls for

immediate precautions by residents and authorities. Officials have advised people to remain indoors during thunderstorms, avoid sheltering under



trees, and stay away from electric poles, open areas and waterlogged stretches.

The latest spell of rain follows widespread showers and gusty winds that lashed Delhi-NCR on Thursday evening, significantly lowering

temperatures and providing respite from sweltering conditions. The change in weather has been attributed to an active western disturbance affecting the northwestern Himalayan region, which is also expected to bring rainfall to parts of Punjab, Haryana and Delhi through Saturday. The impact of the weather system was evident in the capital's temperature readings. Safdarjung, Delhi's primary weather station, recorded a maximum temperature of 34.6 degrees Celsius on Friday, 5.3 degrees below the seasonal average.

While the rain has offered temporary relief, the IMD has cautioned that thunderstorm activity is likely to continue over the next few days. A yellow alert has been issued for Saturday, with forecasts of thunderstorms and rain across the city.

Tughlakabad building fire | He loses life while trying to save his kin stuck in blaze

Moments later he ran back into the building to save his family trapped inside.

He didn't make it.

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Tughlakabad building fire left behind stories of loss. One among them is 28-year-old Pankaj, who died while trying to save his family. His neighbours said Pankaj was rescued from the burning structure, but he kept asking for his family members. Moments later he ran back into the building to save his family trapped inside. He didn't make it.

Pankaj was the sole breadwinner of his family and used to run a mobile phone repair shop in Harkesh Nagar. He had purchased the flat two



years ago and was living with his mother, two sisters and maternal grandmother.

His grandmother Sushila Devi and sister Soni also died in the fire. His mother Guddi Devi and younger sister Mani remain critically injured. His father had died two years ago due to cancer. Pankaj's uncle Suresh Chand Pandey said that Pankaj always wanted to own a house, this was his happy place.

Soni worked in a private firm, while Mani was pursuing a course. Pandey said, Pankaj wanted to see both his sisters become independent. "I spoke to him last night, and a few hours later we lost him forever," his other uncle Bambam Jha said.

A local said that as soon as the fire was controlled, they entered the building looking for survivors, where they found Pankaj on the ground floor in a semi-conscious condition and rushed him outside.

"He kept asking about his mother and sisters. Before anyone could stop him, he ran back into the building to save them. Pankaj managed to climb back inside and reached the upper floors before the thick smoke overwhelmed him, and he succumbed," he added.

Cooling measures for animals at zoo, but guards left to bear searing heat

New Delhi.(Agency)

As Delhi's heatwave continues to drive temperatures to extreme levels, security guards at the National Zoological Park are spending long hours outdoors under direct sunlight, often with limited opportunities for rest while monitoring visitors across the sprawling premises. The conditions have drawn attention to the challenges faced by frontline workers tasked with maintaining safety and order at the zoo.

There are also concerns about the workload being handled by the guards on duty. During a visit to the zoo, this writer could find only around 20 guards on the premises. Several sections of the zoo appeared unmonitored at different points. When asked, Savitri, a female security guard, said, "The zoo employs approximately 110 to 115 guards in total,

with 30 to 40 deployed during a single shift." Earlier, the area surrounding the hippo enclosure appeared completely unmonitored despite regular visitor movement through the section. After the issue was brought to the attention of zoo authorities, two guards were stationed near the enclosure.

Most guards working at the zoo are employed on a contractual basis. Zoo director Dr Sanjit Kumar said guards earn approximately '800 to '850 per day. However, several guards disputed the figure, claiming their actual earnings amount to less than '650 per day despite working shifts lasting eight to nine hours. When asked about the relief arrangements for security personnel, Kumar said, "Guards work eight-hour shifts with a 30-minute break and have access to

green rooms equipped with fans and coolers." He added that ORS packets and drinking water are provided to help



workers cope with the heat. However, accounts from guards pointed to gaps between the facilities described by

officials and the conditions experienced on the ground.

Jitendra, a security guard at the zoo, said ORS packets are distributed irregularly and estimated that guards receive them only once or twice a week during the summer months. Another guard, Arshad, said guards assigned to patrol different sections of the zoo are often unable to access lockers or green rooms during active duty because leaving designated areas unattended is difficult while monitoring visitors.

Meanwhile, from sprinklers and water ponds to misting systems and coolers, several cooling measures have been taken to help the zoo animals cope with the heat. The contrast in the level of arrangements for personnel and animals was stark.

Nifty, Sensex post notable gains this week over hopes of US-Iran peace pact

New Delhi,.(Agency)

The Indian equity benchmarks posted notable gains this week after two weeks of consecutive losses, over investor optimism about potential US-Iran peace agreement, and decline in Brent crude prices. Nifty added 1.10 per cent during the week and gained 1.99 per cent on the last trading day to reach 23,622. At close, Sensex was up 1,695 points or 2.30 percent at 75,527. It added 1.73 per cent during the week. The Indian equities showed structural resilience in a turbulent week, marked by global headwinds and continued uncertainty surrounding the US Fed's policy trajectory, analysts said. Large-cap stocks outperformed broader markets, while mid- and small-cap segments witnessed profit booking following their recent strong rally. While US bond yields eased during the week, persistent inflationary pressures and resilient labour market data are keeping the expectations of a delayed rate-cut cycle intact, an analyst said. "Indian equities traded in a range-bound manner with a mild negative bias, witnessing a modest recovery toward the end of the week," he added. Meanwhile, domestic bond yields moderated, supported by RBI policy measures that improved liquidity conditions and attracted foreign inflows into the debt market. On the sectoral front, financials emerged as the top performers, led by private banks after favourable regulatory developments and a defensive rotation away from higher-beta growth segments. FMCG stocks also advanced on expectations of sustained pricing power. IT sector continued its decline and metal stocks were weighed down by softer commodity prices amid muted demand expectations from China. Market participants said that a slowdown in FII selling or improved visibility on the Federal Reserve's policy direction could serve as a trigger, for domestic capital unloading in the secondary market.

Zuckerberg rules out more Meta layoffs in 2026, admits mistakes in AI workforce overhaul

MUMBAI.(Agency)

Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg has told employees that the company made "mistakes" in reshaping its workforce around artificial intelligence, adding that further company-wide layoffs are not expected this year. Zuckerberg pledged to provide greater stability as possible" in terms of organisation changes going forward, multiple reports said. "I don't want to over promise because the world is changing in ways that are out of our control," he said, adding that rapid advances in AI have created complex challenges and that Meta will "almost certainly make more" mistakes as it adapts. Zuckerberg said that the company's management is focused on finding new roles for employees reassigned to train AI models. In a restructuring in May, Meta had cut about 10 per cent of the workforce and moved roughly 7,000 staff into AI-related initiatives.

"By creating important new roles for people, this also allowed us to shrink the size of teams knowing that if we make mistakes in some places, then we could transfer some people back," Zuckerberg wrote, in an internal memo to employees. He informed about the company's plans to increase investment in team-building initiatives, through higher budgets for offsites and corporate events. It will organise a large-scale hackathon in July to strengthen cross-team collaboration and development on its latest models. Meta has also taken note of concerns over the expansion of manager oversight responsibilities and plans to scale back the practice, he added.

DRDO validates ICBM interception capability, tests new anti-ship missile

Bhubaneswar.(Agency)

In a major leap in the strategic missile programme, India has successfully conducted three consecutive flight tests of its most advanced interceptors and anti-ship missile from a defence facility off the eastern coast, demonstrating the country's ability to intercept long-range ballistic missiles, including threats in the intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) class, and strike hostile warships at medium range.

The tests conducted over the last two days mark one of the most significant milestones in India's strategic weapons programme in recent years and come amid a rapidly evolving security environment marked by growing missile arsenals in the neighbourhood, deployment of hypersonic weapons globally and intensifying military competition across the Indo-Pacific region. According to the Ministry of Defence (MoD), the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully test-fired two next-generation interceptor missiles and conducted the first flight trial of the Naval Anti-Ship Missile-Medium Range (NASM-MR) from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) off the Odisha coast. The twin tests of interceptors (AD-1 and AD-2) demonstrated a multi-layered Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) capability in which the interceptors engaged and destroyed their designated targets, which sources said were Agni-series missiles mimicking hostile targets. The NASM-MR, designed to provide the Indian Navy with a new indigenous anti-ship strike option, also met mission requirements. "The interceptors successfully engaged their respective targets. The systems are designed and developed with the latest technologies to address emerging missile threats," the MoD said in a statement. Sources said all four missiles (interceptors and targets) were tracked by radars and all guidance and launch computers operated in full operational mode for handling multiple targets with multiple interceptors. The missiles were in the sky simultaneously and both interceptions took place as expected.

Retail inflation in May below 4%: Expert agencies expect it to peak in October



Kolkata.(Agency)

India's retail inflation marginally rose in May. It touched 3.93% compared to 3.48% in April and the rise in May was helped by rising food inflation, which climbed to 4.78% from 4.20% in April. Food inflation in the rural regions was higher at 4.85% compared to 4.66% in urban regions. However, the real apprehension is that food inflation can peak in the second half of this year, thanks to the El Nino developments predicted this year by the Indian Meteorological Department and all weather agencies. Both SBI Research, which is the economy research wing of the State Bank of India and QuantEco Research have put forward the same grim prediction.

Below-normal rainfall

Against the backdrop of the super El Nino prediction, SBI Research has noted the rains which are already below normal. "During the first 11 days of June, India received 27% below-normal rainfall, with rainfall deficits of 48% in the central region

and 38% in the east and northern region. Continued weakness in monsoon progress could delay planting of summer-sown crops like rice, cotton, soybeans and pulses," mentioned the agency.

Food inflation threat

QuantEco Research has flagged the threats of rising food inflation in the next few months. "Looking farther ahead, inflation trajectory is expected to see continual firming up, surpassing 6.0% in H2 FY27. Food inflation will add to upside, as below-

normal monsoon outlook, is likely to weigh on kharif sowing and output. In past years of El Nino and rainfall deficiency, agriculture GVA is seen to contract by 0.6% on an average basis," it mentioned in a note. The agency also highlighted that reservoir levels have declined in recent weeks, with current capacity at 28.2% of total capacity as of June 11, lower than 34.3% as at end May this year and 30.4% recorded a year ago. It also said that agriculture output could face a risk due to any potential

fertiliser supply constraints against a backdrop of elevated global fertilizer prices, despite current stocks being adequate to ~50% of kharif season's requirements.

LPG prices and eating out

QuantEco Research noted how inflation under Restaurants & cafes, for both cooked meals as well as snacks rose above 5.0% in May following a "cumulative 79% increase in commercial LPG prices since March 1, 2026." It contributed ~7 bps to headline CPI inflation, the agency said in a note.

RBI prediction of inflation in FY27

RBI has projected retail inflation at 5.1% for FY27. The inflation footprint in the four quarters of the current financial year, according to the RBI, could be 4.2% in Q1, 5.1% in Q2; 5.9% in Q3 and 5.4% in Q4. Core inflation, which is inflation without the volatile item like food items and fuel, is projected at 4.7 per cent for FY27. RBI's mandate is to maintain retail inflation at 4% plus/minus 2 percentage points.

US Justice Department okays Paramount's \$110 billion

New Delhi.(Agency)

The US Justice Department's Antitrust Division said it has cleared Paramount Skydance Corp's planned USD 110 billion acquisition of Warner Bros. Discovery, saying it was unlikely to harm competition or consumers. DOJ said it spent eight months evaluating how the transaction would affect streaming video services, traditional television and the film industry, weighing input from across the entertainment industry.

"The extensive investigatory record reviewed by the Division suggests that the impact of the transaction will be to increase competition across the media and entertainment ecosystem, with benefits for American consumers and workers," the Justice Department wrote in a statement released on Friday. Paramount CEO David Ellison's father, billionaire Oracle co-founder Larry Ellison, has cultivated ties with President Donald Trump, and the company has hired former Trump officials. Assistant Attorney General Omeed Assefi had said that politics would "absolutely not" drive the DOJ's

review of the transaction. COMPETITION FOR AUDIENCES, TALENT, INVESTMENT



Paramount issued a statement thanking the DOJ for its review of the transaction, which it said would allow the company to better compete in an industry defined by an intense scramble for audiences, talent, technology and investment. "We remain focused on completing the transaction as soon as possible and delivering its benefits to consumers, creators and the entertainment industry as a whole," Paramount said. The Federal Communications Commission has not yet approved a

petition seeking approval for foreign interests, including Gulf sovereign wealth funds, to own up to 100 percent of the debt in the proposed USD 110 billion deal. Democratic senators raised concerns about Middle Eastern sovereign wealth funds and Chinese companies taking part in the deal. They noted that it involves sovereign wealth funds from Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Abu Dhabi investing in a company that would control CBS stations, as well as major cable news operations including CNN. They also cited media reports that China's Tencent

may take part. The family of Paramount CEO David Ellison will continue to control voting shares. Paramount said in a filing on Thursday that the "new foreign investors, which will receive only non-voting equity, will not have any ability to influence the company's editorial decision-making." The DOJ said it reviewed more than 2 million documents obtained from 80 sources in evaluating the deal's impact on various segments of the entertainment industry.

Nestle India rejects allegations over Maggi infestation, says tests confirm product quality

HONG KONG.(Agency)

The FMCG major has rejected allegations circulating on social media regarding the alleged presence of infestation in Maggi noodles, asserting that laboratory tests on a batch and market samples confirmed that products met all quality and food safety standards. In a clarification submitted to stock exchanges, the company said it was made aware of the complaint through the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) following concerns raised by an unverified account on social media platform X. "We categorically reject allegations circulating on media basis an unverified account regarding the presence of infestation, allegedly on MAGGI noodles," said Nestle India in response to a query from the NSE and the BSE on a media report published on June 12. The company said it is "yet to receive" any

The FMCG major has dismissed social media claims of infestation in Maggi noodles, stating that laboratory tests confirmed the products comply with all quality and food safety standards.

sample from the complainant for assessment, and did not receive any response from them while the social media account remained unreachable. "As part of standard procedure, the reference sample of the same batch was sent for testing to an independent FSSAI-notified and NABL-accredited laboratory, which found the sample to be free of any infestation," Nestle India

said. The company added that it had conducted quality analysis on both batches and market samples and that the laboratory report confirmed compliance with quality standards, including the absence of infestation of any nature.

Nestle India said it has already submitted a detailed representation to competent authorities, including quality records, batch and market sample data, and test reports. "A detailed representation, supported by all relevant facts, quality records from batch and market samples, test reports, has already been submitted to FSSAI in reference to their fact-finding query," Nestle India said. The company reiterated that it maintains stringent quality and food safety standards across its manufacturing operations and remains fully transparent with regulators. "We are confident that the facts and evidence will conclusively establish the truth of the matter," it said.



Director, Anand Rathi Group said "both food and fuel inflation are likely to remain on an upward trajectory in the months ahead." "Our assessment is that headline retail inflation could breach 6 percent at some point over the next six months. Even so, the Reserve Bank of India may refrain from adopting a decisively hawkish stance, provided core inflation remains anchored around 4% and inflationary pressures do not become broad-based." Debopam Chaudhuri, Chief Economist at Piramal Group, noted that inflation is accelerating faster in urban areas compared to rural regions. "This could further erode purchasing power among urban households and weigh on discretionary consumption demand," she said.

For real estate sector, the industry remains stable as per Vivek Rathi, National Director- Research, Knight Frank India. Noting that housing inflation has continued to be moderate, Rathi noted "the sector has not become a significant source of price pressures in the economy." "Going forward, the interplay between global commodity prices, and domestic inflation expectations will be critical in shaping the macroeconomic environment and the interest rate outlook," said Rathi.

FDs, SCSS or mutual funds? The best way to invest Rs 50 lakh after retirement

Retiring with Rs 50 lakh may sound reassuring, but the real challenge begins after retirement: how do you turn that lump sum into a steady monthly income without running out of money?

New Delhi.(Agency)

Mogambo khush hua..." was my uncle's favourite line whenever his pension arrived on time and covered all his bills and post-retirement expenses. A small moment of relief. A big emotional milestone. But in today's India, that "khushi" (happiness), rarely lasts without a follow-up thought. Will this monthly income still be enough 20-25 years later, when groceries, medicines, and hospital bills refuse to stay still? This is exactly where many retirees with a Rs 50 lakh corpus quietly find themselves. Cash-rich on paper, but unsure how to turn it into a stable, inflation-proof monthly income. The challenge is no longer

earning after retirement.

It is about protecting income from slowly losing meaning. THE RETIREMENT PUZZLE: SAFETY FEELS GOOD, BUT IS IT ENOUGH?

For most Indian households, retirement planning still begins and often ends with fixed deposits. Familiar. Safe. Predictable.

But safety can be misleading. In an inflation-heavy economy, FDs alone can feel like running on a treadmill. Movement is there. Progress is not. That is why financial planners now push a blended approach—SCSS (Senior Citizen Savings Scheme), FDs, and mutual funds working together, not competing. As Ramneek Ghotra, Chief Growth Officer at Finvasia, puts it, "A retiree's portfolio should be designed around three objectives: regular income, capital preservation, and inflation protection. Relying entirely on one asset class can expose retirees to reinvestment risk, inflation risk, or liquidity constraints. Therefore, diversification is critical." SCSS for stability. FDs for steady cash flow.

Mutual funds for inflation protection. Liquid funds for emergencies. A system, not a single bet.

WHY SCSS AND FDs STILL MATTER

There is a reason these instruments still dominate retirement conversations.



They are predictable. They are tangible. They feel safe. SCSS offers government-backed assurance with regular payouts. Fixed deposits provide structured income and liquidity when laddered properly across tenures. Comforting? Yes.

Complete? Not quite.

Because over time, even "safe" income can lose its strength against rising prices.

THE SILENT PRESSURE: INFLATION DOESN'T ANNOUNCE ITSELF

It doesn't shock you in one day. It creeps in.

A medical bill that once felt manageable. A grocery basket that keeps expanding. A utility bill that never really comes down. This is the real retirement risk. Not volatility. But erosion.

Which is why retirement planning is no longer just about "protecting money." It is about protecting lifestyle.

WHERE MUTUAL FUNDS CHANGE THE EQUATION

Mutual funds enter here; not as aggressive tools, but as quiet inflation buffers.

Conservative hybrid and equity savings funds combine debt stability with limited equity exposure. Less drama than pure equity. More growth than pure deposits. They don't replace SCSS or FDs. They complete them. They help the portfolio breathe over time.

Short news

A year later, AI171 crash lives on — in memories and questions

Ahmedabad.(Agency)

Several of the 241 families of the passengers and crew killed on board the Ahmedabad-Gatwick AI-171 flight that crashed in Ahmedabad minutes after it took off from the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport on June 12, 2025, reached Ahmedabad on Friday to pay homage to their loved ones at the crash site and held a prayer meet in their memory.

The Ahmedabad-Gatwick Boeing 787 Dreamliner crash that killed 241 of the 242 passengers on board, leaving Vishwas Kumar as the sole survivor, had killed 19 individuals on the ground. The families are mostly from across Gujarat and Diu.

Vihar, the teenage grandson of Chaitanyabhai Ramanlal Parikh — a retired government employee who was a resident of Sector 29 in Gandhinagar — one of the 241 passengers killed onboard the Ahmedabad-Gatwick AI-171 flight that crashed in Ahmedabad minutes after it took off from the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport on June 12, 2025, says that the journey back home after a year was “harrowing”.

“Our air travel time of 13 hours ended up being 26 hours due to delays and lack of assistance from airline staff. We waited for eight hours at the boarding gate at the Delhi airport. It was a tough journey and a harrowing time for us,” said Vihar, who accompanied his father from London to Ahmedabad. The Parikh family had shifted to London around four years ago. Chaitanyabhai, passenger number 113 of the Ahmedabad-Gatwick Boeing 787 Dreamliner AI-171 flight was to visit his son Kunal in London in June last year.

Vihar also claimed that the several documents, including his grandmother’s passport which Chaitanyabhai was carrying with him as a remembrance as she died three years ago, were recovered but not handed over to the family despite repeated requests.

Air India crash, a year later: At crash site, families and friends sift for memories and a life that once was

CHENNAI.(Agency)

Sita Patni and Amanda Donaghey sat beside each other at the foot of the burnt shells of the medical college hostel buildings on Friday, grieving for their sons.

Donaghey, a British national, held a collage of her son’s photographs that read “Memories of Fiongal”, as she accepted condolences with folded hands. Fiongal Greenlaw-Meek, 39, and his partner Jamie, 45, were returning to London after celebrating their wedding anniversary in India. They were among the 241 who died when Air India’s Ahmedabad-Gatwick Boeing 787 Dreamliner crashed shortly after take-off on June 12 last year.

Sita Patni’s 13-year-old son, Aakash, had been sleeping on the pavement next to the family’s tea stall when the plane crashed nearby, into the hostel mess of BJ Medical College. Fiery debris from the crash fell on Aakash, who was among the 19 killed on the ground. Patni’s arm still bears the burns she sustained while trying to save her son. Behind the grieving mother on Friday were photographs of Aakash, with visitors coming to pay their respects. A large poster announced a bhajan event on Friday evening in the New Lakshminagar flats, where the family lives, barely 50 metres from the crash site.

BMC deploys 8 fully-equipped RATs to tackle flooding in Bhubaneswar

BHUBANESWAR.(Agency)

The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has deployed eight rapid action teams (RATs) to tackle urban flooding and ensure quick drainage of rainwater as the south-west monsoon made its onset in the state on Friday.

Equipped with tools and machinery, the teams will remain on round-the-clock standby to respond immediately to waterlogging and other rain-related emergencies across the city, said municipal commissioner Chanchal Rana.

Rana said BMC currently maintains around 360 km of major R&B drains and 1,300 km of secondary drains for storm water disposal. To streamline monsoon preparedness and ensure uninterrupted drainage, the major drain network has been divided into eight zones. Agencies have been engaged for systematic cleaning, desilting and maintenance of these drains. “The civic body is putting in place all necessary arrangements for effective storm water management this monsoon,” Rana said.

Additional commissioner Kailash Chandra Das said dedicated vehicles, portable pumps, drain-cleaning equipment and tree-cutting machinery have been provided to the teams. Each rapid action team will comprise four trained personnel equipped with complete safety gear.

BKC’s first Public Transport Friday cuts morning traffic, highlights last-mile gaps

Mumbai.(Agency)

The first edition of Public Transport Friday in the Bandra-Kurla Complex (BKC) led to a modest reduction in traffic congestion during morning peak hours, with traffic police estimating a 10-15 per cent drop in vehicle movement. However, commuters said the initiative’s long-term success would depend on addressing persistent last-mile connectivity issues, particularly between railway stations, metro stations, and office complexes.

The initiative, spearheaded by the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) and WRI India, aims to encourage employees in the city’s premier business district to shift from private vehicles to public transport.

“During the peak hours in the morning, traffic was less by 10 to 15%. While typically, traffic disperses after 11:30am, today the roads largely cleared by 10:45 to 11am,” said a senior traffic police officer who overlooks the BKC area.

“While traffic returned in the evening, it was



slightly lesser than normal.” The private bus service operator, Cityflo, noted a 22 to 25% increase in the ridership of their buses plying to and from BKC, and a whopping 154% increase in ridership in their metro feeder buses. BKC sees an estimated 4-6 lakh people enter the district every day. Studies have estimated that around 20,000 private vehicles enter the area during peak hours, contributing to chronic congestion.

Ahead of Friday, several companies and institutions encouraged employees to use public transport. Puneet Saxena, chairman of the Association of Members of G Block, said he had written to at least 15 companies in the area, including UTI, NSE, PNB and ICICI, urging them to participate. “Even one person taking the step towards public transport can have an influence on others,” said Saxena.

“In the first half of the day, I saw considerable improvement on the roads. People showed a good response.” Officials said organisations such as Bharat Diamond Bourse and SEBI circulated advisories encouraging employees to leave their cars at home. BEST deployed seven additional buses on BKC routes, while Cityflo plans to add another 50 buses to the 100 buses currently servicing the business district.

For some commuters, the experience demonstrated that public transport could be a viable alternative if services remained reliable. “If the journey through public transport is as predictable and dependable as mine was today, I might consider ditching my car more often,” said Ashish, a banking technology professional in G Block who travelled by BEST bus from Bhandup to BKC.

Exclusive: BMC proposes Ladki Bahin-style aid for domestic workers, seeks state nod

Mumbai.(Agency)

After the state government’s Ladki Bahin scheme transformed Maharashtra’s political landscape, Mumbai’s newly elected civic body has proposed its own version for women working in the informal sector. The Indian Express has learned.

Three months after taking office, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has sent a proposal to the state government seeking approval for ‘Swabhiman Nidhi’, a monthly financial assistance scheme for domestic workers, cooks and other women employed in the unorganised sector. The scheme proposes to provide eligible beneficiaries between Rs 1,500 and Rs 2,000 per month and could potentially cover up to five lakh women in Mumbai, adding an estimated Rs 75-100 crore to the civic body’s monthly expenditure.

The proposal’s journey is politically significant because it originated as part of the Shiv Sena (UBT)’s manifesto for the January BMC elections but has since received backing from the BJP-led ruling side in the civic body, where the Mahayuti enjoys a majority.

The proposal was formally moved in March by Kishori Pednekar, Shiv Sena (UBT) corporator and Leader of Opposition in the BMC, to Ganesh Khankar, BJP corporator and Leader of the House. Khankar subsequently endorsed the proposal and forwarded it to the BMC Standing Committee chairman Prabhakar Shinde, recommending that the civic administration examine the feasibility of making budgetary provisions for the scheme.

“Domestic helps shoulder the responsibility of supporting their families and providing education to their children despite having modest incomes. Illness, old age and sudden financial emergencies often push them into precarious situations as most of them do not have any form of social security or assistance,” Pednekar wrote in her letter.

IDFC First Bank fraud cases: CBI files 2 chargesheets in Haryana, Chandigarh

Chandigarh. (Agency)

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Friday filed two fresh chargesheets in connection with the bilking of funds belonging to the Haryana government and Chandigarh Smart City Limited (CSCL) from IDFC First Bank, officials said.

The agency named real estate businessman Vikram Wadhwa and Rajan Katodia in the alleged Rs 504-crore Haryana government funds misappropriation case. It also chargesheeted several accused, including five bank officials, an official of CSCL, and one private person, in the alleged Chandigarh Smart City Limited (CSCL) fraud case involving a loss of around Rs 153 crore.

The chargesheet in the Haryana case was filed before the Special CBI Court, Panchkula. The



CBI said Wadhwa and Katodia were arraigned as recipients of the alleged proceeds of crime. The filing marks the second chargesheet in the six bank officials, two companies and four private individuals. The agency had taken over investigation from the Haryana State Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau, which was probing alleged irregularities involving funds belonging to eight Haryana government departments. According to the agency, the alleged loss caused to the state exchequer in the transactions under scrutiny is around Rs 504 crore. In the CSCL case, the agency filed its first chargesheet before the Special CBI Court in Chandigarh.

The chargesheet names former IDFC First Bank branch manager Ribhav Rishi, former CSCL chief finance officer Nalini Malik, bank officials Abhay Kumar and Seema Dhiman, and real estate businessman Vikram Wadhwa among the accused. The CBI said a total of seven persons were chargesheeted in the case.

STF Haryana secures deportation of 11 gangsters, associates in less than six months

Chandigarh.(Agency)

In less than six months this year, the Special Task Force (STF) Haryana has successfully secured the deportation or extradition of as many as 11 gangsters and gang associates.

The latest in this series is Dinesh, alias Mittu, an alleged associate of the Kala Khairampur gang, which comprises around 38 members, and Himanshu Bhau gang. He was deported from Cyprus on Friday.

According to the police, the other gangsters and gang members deported or extradited include four members of the Lawrence Bishnoi and Randeep Malik gang — Sombir Motta, Abhay Rana, Prashant Deswal and Ashish Dahiya; one member of the Rohit Godara gang, Aman Bhainswal; one member of the Bhuppi Rana Gang, Sahil Chauhan; one member of the Kaushal Gang, Ankit Shokeen; and two others. Vainket Garg, who is allegedly the leader of the Vainket Garg gang, also figured in this list. Police described the deportation of



Mittu as a significant success in STF Haryana’s ongoing crackdown on organised crime and fugitive offenders. According to the police, Kala Khairampur, the leader of the gang with which Mittu is associated, faces 26 cases involving heinous crimes. The gang has allegedly been involved in murder, targeted killings, attempted murder, extortion, organised crime and the illegal use of firearms across Hisar, Sonipat, Bhiwani, Panipat, Sirsa, Fatehabad, Gurugram and parts of Rajasthan. Preliminary investigations have revealed that Mittu was facilitating and using illegal communication networks to make extortion calls while residing in Cyprus. According to the police, these channels were used to conceal the identities and locations of gang leaders and members, particularly those operating from abroad, thereby shielding them from law enforcement scrutiny. The police said Mittu was one of the key conspirators in the high-profile extortion-linked firing incident at a Mahindra showroom in Hisar in 2024. An open-dated arrest warrant had been issued against him in connection with the FIR registered under charges of attempted murder and other serious offences.

Investigators further stated that Mittu played a significant role in strengthening the operational network of the gangs. He allegedly recruited new members and helped expand the gangs’ influence in different areas. Acting as a key link between the gang leadership and ground-level operatives, he is accused of coordinating criminal activities at the direction of senior gang members.

Effects of loneliness same as smoking 15 cigarettes a day: Study

BENGALURU.(Agency)

A recent survey has shown that India, specifically its urban areas, is home to the largest population of lonely people. Noted psychiatrist Dr Ajit V Bhide was delivering the 12th Prof RL Kapur Oration organised by the National Institute of Advanced Studies, on the topic ‘Mirror Mirror, On the Wall, I’m the Loneliest of Them All’, here on Friday. The talk shed light on the causes of loneliness, whether it has reached epidemic proportions and solutions to alleviate this condition.

Dr Bhide shared that according to his research, the swell of loneliness and increasing pre-occupation with oneself are two conditions that seem especially prevalent now. “Although the world is more interconnected and digitally crowded, we are still physically alone. Technology use has replaced meaningful face-to-face interactions,” he remarked.

The cost of loneliness is also immense, as it contributes to many health conditions like cardiovascular diseases, immune suppression, cognitive decline and accelerated cellular decay. “Being lonely is equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day,” he observed. Senior loneliness is also observable, owing to loss of familiar roles and social networks, reduced mobility and limited incomes. Addressing the solutions to loneliness, Dr Bhide highlighted the importance of building strong social networks.

Bengaluru residents block work on E10-crore waste transfer station on ‘park land’

BENGALURU.(Agency)

Residents of Kasturinagar in Bengaluru Central City Corporation limits were taken by surprise on Friday when earthmovers arrived to begin excavation work for a proposed Rs 10-crore secondary waste transfer station on land that according to residents is designated as a park and playground.

According to members of the Residents’ Welfare Association (RWA), a bhoomi puja for the project had recently been conducted. On Friday morning, residents were shocked to find excavation work commencing as early as 7 am. They immediately halted the work, expressing concerns that the facility would lead to pollution, increased rodent activity and other public health issues.

“The proposed project is coming up on land earmarked as a park and playground. Residents were not consulted before such a

decision was taken. We demand that a public consultation be held before the project proceeds,” said Raghu Ram, an RWA member.

Manjunath S, a resident whose house is located barely five metres from the proposed site on 1st A Cross, alleged that the project violates the provisions of the Karnataka Parks, Play-fields and Open Spaces (Preservation and Regulation) Act, 1985. He said the legislation protects public green spaces from being converted for other uses and ensures residents have access to safe recreational areas. “Around 50 residents stopped the workers from digging in the park area. We have documents from the Bengaluru Development Authority showing that the land is reserved for a park and playground, and walking tracks have already been laid. If a waste transfer station

is allowed here, poor maintenance, corruption and other lacunae could turn the facility into a bane for the neighbourhood. Water and air pollution may increase, and residents will suffer as waste from across the



Assembly constituency is brought here. Continuous movement of vehicles will also lead to noise pollution. That is why we are opposing the project,” Manjunath said. The

residents expressed their apprehension with the commissioner of the Bengaluru Central City Corporation and the Chief Executive Officer of Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML), expressing their concerns. They have also urged the corporation’s Horticulture Department to protect the land, which they claim falls under its jurisdiction.

Responding to the residents’ objections, Parishudh Ventures, which operates waste transfer stations in Koramangala, Chamarajpet and HBR Layout, said the public had been “misguided” about the project. “The facility will not create any nuisance. Once operational, it will handle about 150 tonnes of waste daily. Residents will be taken to an existing facility nearby so they can see how it functions and clear their doubts,” a senior engineer with Parishudh Ventures said.

NEWS BOX

Rohit Sharma has a point to prove as India begin their road to the 2027 World Cup

New Delhi., (Agency)

The road to South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia begins for India, and Afghanistan, in the shadow of the Dhauladhar ranges in Dharamsala. Fittingly, India begin their campaign on a peak, as they look to summit one two years from now. The FIFA World Cup is underway in the Americas. India's women will launch their T20 World Cup campaign on Sunday. Shubman Gill's men, meanwhile, away from the glare of those brighter lights, begin their quieter, longer journey to next year's ODI World Cup. With Virat Kohli ruled out of the series through injury, all eyes will be on Rohit Sharma — who will be 41 when the ODI World Cup is played in October-November next year.

And there is plenty riding on these three matches for Rohit. Neither he nor Kohli are automatic selections any longer; the selectors have made that much clear. Rohit arrives at this series having raced against time to recover from a hamstring injury that troubled him throughout the IPL 2026 season, restricting him to just nine games. He managed 283 runs, operating largely as an Impact Player. Unlike



Kohli, who let his bat do the talking through another victorious season for Royal Challengers Bengaluru, Rohit has a point to prove to the selectors.

FIT-AGAIN ROHIT EYES BIG RUNS

The reassurance, at least, is that he is fit and ready. Bowling coach Morne Morkel confirmed as much on the eve of the match. It is always nice to have his experience back. Just the calmness he brings to the dressing room is always, always a positive. He's training well, he's moving well. I know he's excited to go tomorrow," Morkel said.

While Rohit played a key role in India's ODI tour of Australia last year, he managed just 61 runs at an average of 20.33 in the three-match series against New Zealand earlier this year. With age not on his side, every series is now a proving ground. He will be well served by repeating the form of the 2025 season — 650 runs at an average of 50 across 14 matches.

Dembele defends Mbappe as France captain faces scrutiny before Senegal opener

New York, (Agency)

France forward Ousmane Dembele has come out strongly in defence of captain Kylian Mbappe ahead of Les Bleus' FIFA World Cup 2026 opener against Senegal. The Ballon d'Or winner said criticism of the Real Madrid superstar has become excessive, insisting that people often forget the human being behind one of football's biggest names.

Mbappe enters the tournament under intense scrutiny despite another prolific campaign in front of goal. Speaking to Spanish newspaper Marca ahead of France's opening match, Dembele said much of the criticism aimed at his long-time teammate has gone too far. Some



people go a bit too far with the criticism of Kylian. He's an incredible player and a very good person off the pitch."

The France winger also suggested that every aspect of Mbappe's behaviour is now placed under a microscope simply because of his status within the game. "Some people overdo the criticism because he's Kylian Mbappe. They shouldn't keep going after him. Whether he ties his shoelaces or not, whether he pulls up his socks or not... it's too much. He's still a human being." "With the France team, he's very good with us, he's a leader."

Mbappe is expected to spearhead France's bid for a third World Cup title alongside Dembele as Didier Deschamps prepares for his final major tournament in charge of Les Bleus.

WHAT IS THE CRITICISM AROUND MBAPPE?

Mbappe has remained one of the most scrutinised footballers in the world since leaving Paris Saint-Germain for Real Madrid in 2024. Although he continued to score regularly, Real Madrid endured a disappointing season by their standards, finishing without either the La Liga title or the Champions League trophy. His leadership role with France has also come under the spotlight since he inherited the captaincy following Hugo Lloris' retirement.

I watched the Yogasana World Championships and realised my dad was right all along

A trip to the World Yogasana Championship showed how a new sport started its journey into find recognition and a city trying to show its class to be India's new sports hub. By the time 2036 comes in, will Yogasana and Ahmedabad truly live through the test of time?

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

For years, my father's prescription for my frantic life was simple, repetitive, and entirely ignored: take up yoga to calm the mind. Like most sons navigating the quiet persistence of parental wisdom, I treated it as background noise. Yoga, in my mind, belonged to the realm of slow mornings and lifestyle choices, not the high-octane world of a sports journalist. By June 2, a calm mind was the last thing on my agenda anyway. I was still carrying the heavy, bone-deep exhaustion of a frantic IPL 2026 season, desperately looking for a brief window to breathe before the FIFA World Cup 2026 demanded my full attention. The plan was merely to recharge the batteries.

No other sport was on my radar. My initial instinct was to treat it as a clinical, desk-bound exercise: write a brief explainer to introduce the sport to our readers, and move on. When Yogasana Bharat chief Udit Sheth kindly invited me to Ahmedabad to cover it live, I politely declined, citing the brutal calendar ahead. But newsrooms have a way of disrupting quiet plans. On June 3, my team lead quietly nudged me toward the tournament—the exact same way he had pushed me toward the Hockey Asia Cup in Rajgir the previous year. Having just survived his own IPL grind, his briefing on Ahmedabad was short and ominous: "It's absolutely hot out there." He had omitted a similar warning about Rajgir, which had turned out to be a natural sauna in its own right, leaving me to wonder if he was secretly moonlighting as an Ironman coach testing my physical endurance. Jokes aside, I trusted his news sense. Within hours, the tickets were booked. Before I left, he left me with one piece of parting advice: When looking for a feature, keep an open mind. That is easier said than done when approaching a discipline still fighting for its identity in a

crowded sporting landscape. But as I walked into the arena, I kept an open notebook. On the first page, I instinctively scribbled three words: One breath. One stage. One world. COVERING YOGASANA

Then, I looked up at the three competition



stages, and my father's vision of a quiet, meditative lifestyle choice evaporated instantly. It took me a moment to quite literally pick my jaw up from the floor.

The question that immediately hijacked my brain was simple: Is the human anatomy actually designed to do that?

On stage, an Indian athlete was in the middle

of arching her back into a flawless, terrifying 'D' shape. Her head rested casually on the floor between her legs, while her lower body remained as unyielding as granite. She looked out at the crowd, smiled, raised her arms to complete the posture, and made the impossible look routine. In the press box, I could swear my own lower back cracked in sympathy, my hamstrings tightening at the mere sight of it. This wasn't a wellness retreat; it was elite, agonizingly precise athleticism. The sheer scale of the spectacle only added to the vertigo. This wasn't just a singular exhibition, but a complex matrix of six age categories and a bewildering array of disciplines. There were individual battles in traditional yogasana, leg balance, forward and hand balances, twisting, and artistic solos. Then came the synchronized choreography of the group events—rhythmic pairs, artistic pairs, and full artistic groups.

All around the arena, the expression was uniform. Fans, seasoned journalists, and even the organisers stood suspended in the same state of disbelief, collectively trying to process how the human body could be pushed to such aesthetic extremes.

FIFA World Cup 2026: USA thrash Paraguay 4-1 to begin campaign in style

IRVINE, Calif. (Agency)

The United States could not have asked for a better start to their home FIFA World Cup campaign, defeating Paraguay 4-1 in their Group D opener at SoFi Stadium in Inglewood, California, on Friday.

Playing a World Cup match on home soil for the first time since 1994, the hosts took control from the outset and rarely looked troubled. An early own goal from Damian Bobadilla set the tone before Folarin Balogun struck twice in the first half to put the Americans firmly in command. Paraguay pulled one back through Mauricio in the second half, but the result was never in doubt as Gio Reyna capped an impressive night with a stunning stoppage-time strike to seal a convincing victory for Mauricio Pochettino's side. Balogun thought he had doubled the lead shortly before the half-hour mark, only for the effort to be ruled out for offside. The striker did not have to wait long for his goal. In the 31st minute, Pulisic again proved the creator, slipping a precise pass through the Paraguay defence for Balogun to finish first

FIFA World Cup: England camp hit by theft in USA days before opener vs Croatia

England's build-up to the 2026 FIFA World Cup has been disrupted after training equipment was stolen while being transported to the team's base in Kansas City, just days before their opening match against Croatia.

IRVINE, Calif. (Agency)

England's preparations for the 2026 FIFA World Cup have suffered an unexpected setback after a shipment of training equipment was stolen en route to the team's base in Kansas City, just days before their tournament opener against Croatia.

The Football Association is assessing the extent of the losses after vehicles carrying equipment to Swope Soccer Village in Missouri were reportedly broken into before the squad arrived on Saturday. Training balls, boots and other essential gear are believed to have been taken. The shipment had been

transported from England's pre-tournament camp in West Palm Beach, Florida, and was due to arrive ahead of the team's first training session in Kansas City. Instead, FA officials were forced to take stock of the missing



equipment and begin arranging replacements. According to the Daily Mail, only one football remained from the targeted consignment. Boots belonging to England captain Harry Kane and midfielder Jude Bellingham are feared to be among the stolen items. "England were the victims of an

audacious World Cup heist after the players' match boots were stolen from a van before their first training session in Kansas City," the report said. It added: "Boots belonging to the team's biggest stars were pinched along with official tournament balls and key training equipment. One football was left among the cargo that remained, while there are fears that the boots belonging to the likes of Harry Kane and Jude Bellingham have also gone." The theft is understood to have extended beyond playing equipment. Analysis tools, whiteboards and massage tables were also part of the shipment, creating a significant logistical challenge for England's backroom staff.

The timing could hardly be worse for manager Thomas Tuchel, whose side begin their World Cup campaign against Croatia in Dallas on June 17. Kansas City is set to serve as England's group-stage base, with the opening days of their stay intended to help establish routines and finalise preparations for the tournament.

Neymar ruled out of Brazil vs Morocco, Carlo Ancelotti assures recovery in progress

FIFA World Cup 2026: Brazil will begin their campaign without Neymar after Carlo Ancelotti confirmed the forward is not fit for the Morocco clash. However, the Brazil coach offered an encouraging update, saying the star forward is progressing well in his recovery.

East Rutherford. (Agency)

Brazil will begin their FIFA World Cup 2026 campaign without Neymar after head coach Carlo Ancelotti confirmed the Selecao's all-time leading goalscorer is unavailable for their opening Group C clash against Morocco. The five-time world champions face the 2022 World Cup semi-finalists at the New York New Jersey Stadium on Saturday, but Neymar's long-awaited return to the international stage has been delayed by an ongoing calf injury. Speaking ahead of the match, Ancelotti insisted the forward is

making good progress in his recovery. The Brazil boss also stressed that Neymar's importance to the squad extends beyond what he produces on the pitch.

"We called him up not only for his football ability, which is indisputable, but also for the



experience and example he can provide to the younger players in the squad." Neymar has not played for Brazil since 2023 and has been sidelined since suffering a right calf injury in mid-May, leaving fans waiting a little longer to see the country's biggest star back on football's biggest stage.

IS NEYMAR INJURED?

Neymar is currently recovering from a right calf injury that he picked up in mid-May.

The 34-year-old was included in Brazil's World Cup squad despite concerns surrounding his fitness, with the coaching staff hopeful he could recover in time for the tournament. However, the Morocco game has come too soon for the veteran forward. While Brazil remain one of the favourites for the tournament, Neymar's absence is a significant blow given both his experience and status within the squad. He remains Brazil's all-time leading scorer and has netted eight goals across four previous World Cup campaigns.

WHEN WILL NEYMAR PLAY IN FIFA WORLD CUP 2026?

Ancelotti offered a positive update on Neymar's recovery, revealing that the forward is expected to resume training next week. That timeline means Neymar could potentially be available for Brazil's second Group C match against Haiti on June 19, although the coaching staff are unlikely to take unnecessary risks with their star player.



time. The Monaco forward struck again in first-half stoppage time with the goal of the match. Receiving Malik Tillman's pass on the right edge of the penalty area, Balogun cut inside two defenders before curling a superb effort into the top corner to make it 3-0 at the break. Paraguay showed more urgency after half-time and reduced the deficit in the 73rd minute. Julio Enciso reacted quickest to a loose ball and fed Mauricio, who beat goalkeeper Matt Freese with a low finish to give his side a glimmer of hope. The hosts, however, remained in control. Substitute Ricardo Pepi nearly restored the three-goal advantage moments later but was denied by goalkeeper Orlando Gil. Reyna ensured the night ended on a high note for the Americans. Deep into stoppage time, the midfielder capped a sweeping counterattack with a brilliant outside-of-the-boot finish that flew beyond Gil and into the net.

Another Sooryavanshi prodigy? Vaibhav's 10-year-old brother smashes a century

While Vaibhav Sooryavanshi continues to impress for India A in Sri Lanka, his 10-year-old brother Aashirwad has made headlines back home with a century in a local practice match in Bihar.

New Delhi. (Agency)

While Vaibhav Sooryavanshi continues to make headlines with India A in Sri Lanka, another member of the family has grabbed attention back home. His 10-year-old brother, Aashirwad Sooryavanshi, scored a century in a local practice match in Bihar, delivering a performance that quickly drew interest across cricket circles. Turning out for Cricket Academy Tajpur in Samastipur, Aashirwad scored 103 off 87 balls in an innings filled with attacking strokeplay. The youngster struck 20 fours and a six while scoring at a



strike rate of 118.39, helping his side post 234 for 4 in 29.5 overs. Shivam Raj contributed 52 as Cricket Academy Tajpur registered a commanding total. The innings earned praise from Vaibhav, who is currently part of the India A squad competing in the Tri-Nation A Series in Sri Lanka alongside Sri Lanka A and Afghanistan A. The teenager shared the



scorecard on his Instagram story and posted a congratulatory message for his younger brother. Aashirwad's century comes at a time when Vaibhav's career continues on a steep upward trajectory. The opener was one of the standout performers in IPL 2026, finishing as the tournament's highest run-scorer with 776 runs. His season brought a host of accolades,

including the Orange Cap, Most Valuable Player, Emerging Player of the Year and Super Striker awards. Vaibhav's performances over the past year have established him as one of the most promising young cricketers in the country. The left-handed opener finished IPL 2026 as the leading run-scorer with 776 runs and won the Orange Cap, Most Valuable Player, Emerging Player of the Year and Super Striker awards. He also hit 76 sixes during the season, surpassing a long-standing record held by Chris Gayle. His form earned him a maiden call-up to India's T20I squad for the tours of Ireland and England, while he was also included in the country's Asian Games squad. With the 15-year-old set to join a senior national team for the first time, the BCCI has requested his parents to accompany him on the tours. If selected in the playing XI, Vaibhav could become the youngest cricketer to make his debut for India, breaking the record currently held by Sachin Tendulkar.

Katrina Kaif

Plans Acting Comeback With Chandni Bar 2, Film To Be Based On 'Red Light Area': Report

Katrina Kaif, who has been missing from the big screen for a long time, is now reportedly planning to make a comeback. If a latest report by Filmfare is to be believed, the actress is in talks with filmmaker Madhur Bhandarkar for the sequel to his 2001 movie, Chandni Bar. Reportedly, Katrina is in the final cast list of Chandni Bar 2, which will be directed by Ajay Bahl. A source close to the film told the entertainment portal that the film will also star Tabu in the lead and will be based on a theme similar to its original one. While details about the storyline remain under wraps, the insider also claimed that the new Chandni Bar film will also be based on "the red light area and crime ecosystem." An official confirmation from the makers regarding Chandni Bar and its cast is awaited.

What Did Chandni Bar Revolve Around?



Made under the direction of Madhur Bhandarkar, Chandni Bar starred Tabu and Atul Kulkarni in lead roles, along with Ananya Khare, Rajpal Yadav, Minakshi Sahani and Vishal Thakkar in supporting roles. The movie shared a heartbreaking story involving the Mumbai underworld, prostitution, dance bars and gun crime. Released on September 28, 2001, Chandni Bar turned out to be both a box office and a critical success.

Legal Battle Over Chandni Bar 2

Last year, Filmmaker Madhur Bhandarkar, who directed the original Chandni Bar, complained to the Indian Motion Picture Producers' Association (IMPPA) against producer Sandeep Singh and director Ajay Bahl. He claimed that Singh and Bahl are using the title Chandni Bar without his permission. Soon after the complaint was filed, IMPPA wrote a letter to Sandeep Singh and his banner asking them to stop using the title. Later, co-producer Vishal Gurnani also issued a statement to clarify the legal standing of the project.

Kangana Ranaut

Says 'There Can Never Be Another Deepika Padukone', Internet Is Mighty Impressed

Actress and politician Kangana Ranaut is back with her new movie, Bharat Bhagya Viddhaata. The film hit theatres today, on June 12, and it has already been receiving good reactions from the audience. Ahead of the release, Kangana spoke to the media during the promotions. Now, a clip of hers has been winning hearts online in which she can be seen speaking about the legacy of iconic actresses across generations and said that every era has its own defining faces. Interestingly, her reply had



Deepika Padukone's name, which has impressed the netizens. While speaking to ABP Live earlier, Kangana Ranaut was asked why the industry couldn't get another Kangana Ranaut. Drawing parallels with iconic actresses such as Meena Kumari, Madhubala, Hema Malini, and Madhuri Dixit, she remarked that just as these legends are irreplaceable, there can never be another Deepika Padukone. She said, "Humko lagta hai ki actresses aati hain aur jaati hain. Lekin aisa nahi hai. Dusri Meena Kumari nahi milegi, yahan tak ki main soch rahi thi dusri Karisma Kapoor bhi

nahi hogi. Voh jo ek waqt hota hai, chahe Hema Malini ji ho, Waheeda Rehman ho yaa Madhubala toh khair ho hi nahi sakti. Har daur ke ek face hote hain jinko aap kabhi replace nahi kar sakte. Madhuri Dixit dusri nahi hogi. Yeh meri hi baat nahi hai. Mujhe lagta hai dusri Deepika Padukone bhi nahi hogi (We often think that actresses come and go. But that isn't true. There can never be another Meena Kumari. In fact, I was thinking that there can never be another Karisma Kapoor either. Every era has its own icons—whether it's Hema Malini ji, Waheeda Rehman, or Madhubala, who is simply irreplaceable. Each generation has certain faces that can never be replaced. There will never be another Madhuri Dixit. And I'm not just talking about myself. I feel there will never be another Deepika Padukone either)."

She further continued, "Ek daur hota, uss daur ko hum represent karte hain. Lekin yeh baat zaroor hai ki Madhuri ji itna kaam kar rahi, kahin na kahin logon ko yeh baat ka abhas late hua lekin ho zaroor raha hai kyunki unka kaam abhi bhi enjoy kara jaa raha hai. Varna aisa hota ki nahi nahi inko hatao nayi actresses ko laao. They are rare happenings woh hona nahi waali dusri baar (Every era has its own identity, and we represent that era).

One thing is certain though, Madhuri ji is still doing so much work, and people are gradually beginning to realise this. It is happening because audiences continue to enjoy watching her work even today. Otherwise, people would simply say, 'No, no, move her aside and bring in new actresses.' Some artists are rare phenomena; they are not going to happen a second time."



Riddhima Kapoor Says Rishi Kapoor Never Stopped Her From Doing Films: 'People Say Kaam Nahi Karne Dete...'



Rishi Kapoor and Neetu Kapoor's daughter Riddhima Kapoor Sahni recently made her acting debut with the film 'Daadi Ki Shaadi', which was released in theatres last month. In a recent interview, Riddhima was asked how her late father, Rishi Kapoor, would have reacted to her acting debut, given the perception that he may not have approved of her entering films. Riddhima dismissed the notion that her father would have opposed her acting career, and said that he was always supportive, and would have guided her.

Riddhima Kapoor Shuts Down Claims That Rishi Kapoor Didn't Want Her Joining Films

In a conversation with ANI, Riddhima said, "My father was very protective. A lot of people say 'Nahi, films mein aane nahi dete, kaam nahi karne dete'. Aisi baat nahi hai. (A lot of people say, 'Oh, he wouldn't let us join films or work,' but that wasn't the case)."

"When I wanted to go abroad to pursue further studies... I told my father that I wanted to study further and do it in the UK. He was very stressed about the idea of his daughter going to the UK alone, living alone, and wondering how it would work out. He paced up and down for half an hour, just thinking and thinking. He used to get very stressed whenever something different or new came up, like the kids going away. I was maybe 16-17 at the time, but he let me go," she recalled.

Riddhima Kapoor Says Her Dad Rishi Kapoor Would Have Supported Her

"He said, 'You do what you like, and I know you'll give it your 100% in whatever you do.' He was very confident about that. Back then, and even now, if I had told Dad, 'I want to do this film, I'll make you proud, you guide me, and I'll be doing it with Mom,' he never would have stopped me. He would have been right there, guiding me. I know that because I knew my father; that's why," she said. Daadi Ki Shaadi is a family comedy-drama written and directed by Ashish R Mohan. Backed by R Take Studios, BeingU Studios and Shimla Talkies, the film stars Neetu Kapoor, Kapil Sharma, Riddhima Kapoor Sahni, Sadia Khateeb and R. Sarathkumar in key roles.

Farhan Akhtar To Begin Shoot For RD Burman Biopic Amid Don 3 Controversy? Find Out



Amid uncertainty over Don 3, Farhan Akhtar is now likely to begin shooting for RD Burman's biopic. If a recent report is to be believed, the actor-filmmaker is in talks with Neeraj Pandey for a biopic on legendary music composer. Reportedly, Akhtar is 'excited' to play the part and is likely to take an 'extensive preparation' for the role.

"Neeraj Pandey has been developing the RD Burman biopic for a while now, and the writing work is progressing at a rapid pace. Farhan Akhtar is in talks to play the legendary composer and is extremely excited about the prospect of bringing Pancham Da's journey to the big screen. If all goes according to plan, he will undergo extensive preparation to get into the skin of the character," a source cited by Pinkvilla claimed.

"The team has secured rights to the classic RD Burman tracks that defined an era. The idea is to create an authentic and emotionally rich homage to the genius of Pancham Da. Music sittings have already begun to bring the best versions of the original songs," the insider added.

The report also claimed that RD Burman's biopic is likely to go on the floors by the end of 2026. While Neeraj Pandey will direct, he will also co-produce the film with MS Dhoni: The Untold Story and Manikarnika's producer Kamal Jain.

Farhan Akhtar's Don 3 On Hold

This comes at a time when Farhan Akhtar has been facing uncertainty over Don 3. The fallout between him and Ranveer Singh over the film has become one of Bollywood's biggest controversies.

According to multiple online reports, Singh exited the film due to creative differences with the makers. Several reports also suggested that Ranveer was unhappy with repeated delays in production and the absence of a locked final script.

What initially appeared to be a routine casting change has now escalated into a legal matter, with Akhtar's Excel Entertainment demanding Rs 45 crore in compensation and the Federation of Western India Cine Employees (FWICE) issuing a non-cooperation directive against the actor, which has now been revoked.

NEWS BOX

Anthropic Suspends Fable 5, Mythos 5 AI Models After US Security Order

World. (Agency)

Anthropic said Friday it has suspended access to two powerful AI models, Fable 5 and Mythos 5, to comply with a US national security order.

Just three days after publicly launching Fable 5, the company said in a blog post that it received a government directive banning all foreign nationals, even ones who work at Anthropic, from accessing Fable 5 and Mythos 5 over national security concerns. "The net effect of this order is that we must abruptly disable Fable 5 and Mythos 5 for all our customers to ensure compliance," it said. The company said it received the letter at 5:21 pm (2121 GMT).

Axios reported that the letter came from US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick. The US Commerce officials did not immediately respond to a request from AFP. The firm said that the letter did not state what specifically concerned the government. However, the firm's "understanding is that the government believes it has become aware of a method of bypassing, or 'jailbreaking'" the Fable 5 model such that it could aid hacking. Fable 5, released Tuesday, is a locked-down version of Mythos 5, a cutting-edge AI model that Anthropic has held back from the public amid concerns that it had unprecedented abilities to identify software vulnerabilities -- or holes in code that hackers could exploit. Mythos 5 -- the unrestricted model -- has only been released to select companies. Anthropic said it had reviewed the "jailbreaking" method at the center of the speculation and the hacking opportunities it exposed, but it does not believe Fable 5 gives hackers capabilities that are not already available through other public models. The firm said that none of its security testers had found a "universal jailbreak," or a way to bypass its safeguards against helping hackers.

"We disagree that the finding of a narrow potential jailbreak should be cause for recalling a commercial model deployed to hundreds of millions of people," the company said.

1 Dead, 10 Injured In Texas Shooting, Suspect Fired At Cop Days Earlier

world. (Agency)

A man who opened fire in the West Texas city of Midland in an attack Friday morning that left one person dead and 10 injured had shot at a police officer just days earlier during a chase, authorities said.

The suspect, 45-year-old Victor Mata Villarreal, already was being sought by authorities when he began firing at police and bystanders in Midland on Friday before barricading himself in an abandoned veterinary clinic, where he was eventually found dead, according to the Texas Department of Public Safety.

Police have provided limited details about how the shooting unfolded. Police arrived in the area after receiving reports of an active shooter, and Mata Villarreal started firing at officers, said Midland Police Chief Greg Snow. Several officers were pinned down behind their patrol cars and had to be rescued by an armored vehicle, Snow said, but no officers were shot. Police then got everyone out of the area. "We moved to deny more targets for this active shooter," Snow said.

A few hours after the shooting began, authorities used robot and drone footage from inside the building to confirm the shooter was dead, Midland Mayor Lori Blong. Police did not say how he died. A spokesperson for the city identified a man killed in the shooting as Ed Scott, a father and husband who worked in solid waste for Midland. He also did a lot of work with local and regional softball organizations, according to the city.

Friends mourning his death described him in social media posts as a softball umpire and volleyball official who was known for his kindness and jokes.

Mata Villarreal, of nearby Odessa, was wanted for attempted capital murder of a peace officer after firing multiple times at a Midland police officer on Wednesday, the state's public safety agency said.

The officer, who wasn't injured, fired back after initially trying to pull over Mata Villarreal, who drove away, investigators said. His vehicle was found empty a short distance away, they said. Police have not said why the officer tried to stop Mata Villarreal. Friday's standoff happened about a half-mile (1 kilometer) from where the shots were fired at the police officer Wednesday.

US Secretary Of State Marco Rubio Compares UFC To 1969 Moon Landing

World. (Agency)

Ahead of the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) Freedom 250 event on the White House South Lawn on Sunday (Jun 14), US Secretary of State Marco Rubio praised the company's bold vision, comparing the founding of the UFC to America's 1969 Moon landing. Speaking at an event on Thursday (Jun 11), Rubio hailed the upcoming fight card as a 'historic' moment that reflects the nation's audacious spirit.

"When President Kennedy announced that we were going to put a man on the moon and return him safely to the earth, no one thought that was possible, and we did it," said Rubio. "We are a nation founded on doing what no one else dared to do, and no one else aspired to do. And at some level, that's what this whole company, what UFC has been," he added. Rubio also referred to the UFC as "United Nations of Fighting," and praised the Dana White-led company for bringing athletes from different countries. "If you've been to UFC fights, and I've been to many, and you look into the crowd, the crowd is as diverse as you can imagine," said Rubio.

White House UFC Event

The mixed-martial-arts fights, billed as UFC Freedom 250, will be held in an octagon-shaped cage that is currently being erected on the South Lawn. The UFC fight is part of a series of events that Trump has planned for America's 250th-birthday celebration that also coincides with his 80th birthday.

Indian-Origin Man Jailed For 34 Years In UK For Kidnapping And Rape

The Met Police noted that the woman was traumatised by the experience and initially reluctant to tell the police the full truth of what had happened.

OTTAWA. (Agency)

An Indian-origin man was on Friday sentenced to 34 years' imprisonment after being convicted of kidnapping, torture and rape offences in London. Gagandeep Singh, aged 34, was found guilty in February of two counts of rape, false imprisonment, causing grievous bodily harm with intent and kidnapping following a trial at Isleworth Crown Court. He will serve a 34-year sentence, comprising 28 years in custody followed by a six-year extended licence period under strict restrictions. He cannot be considered for parole until he has served at least 18 years, or two-thirds of the custodial term.

The trial heard that the victim -- a 24-year-

old woman -- was taken to a house in Hanwell, west London, where she was subjected to prolonged torture. "The brutality of what the victim in this case faced is unimaginable," said Detective Constable Seetara Abdul from the Metropolitan Police's North West Rape and Serious Sexual Offences Unit, who led the investigation. "She has shown immense bravery in coming forward and helping us ensure her attacker faces justice. The cruel level of control left her fearing for her life," she said. The court heard that the woman became suspicious when she was asked to deliver a suitcase containing unknown items from Thailand back to the UK in June 2024. She refused and when she arrived at Birmingham Airport, she was put into a car and driven to London by masked men where Singh subjected her to rape on two occasions.

The Met Police noted that she was traumatised by the experience and initially reluctant to tell the police the full truth of what had happened. "Threats were made to try and silence her, but the support of her

mum and the diligent care shown by the officers investigating her case meant we were able to apprehend and charge an extremely dangerous individual," said DC Abdul. "We thank her for that trust and for the patience, bravery and determination she



has shown throughout this investigation and the trial that followed. Her courage in the face of such awful crimes is a testament to her hugely impressive strength and resilience," she added. After being subjected to more than a day of torture, including being "punched in the face, beaten, stripped, whipped, burnt and raped", the

victim was released by her captors. She was threatened and warned not to tell anyone what had happened. "I never wanted to contact the police. It felt daunting. I was left thinking that if I did, I could be putting myself and the people around me in danger,"

said the victim, in a statement released through the police. "It was my mum who never gave up. She believed going to the police was the right thing to do. She kept my clothes as evidence and saved a lot of my doctor's notes. She said she couldn't rest knowing they could be doing this to other people," she said. "At the time, I felt a deep sense of shame... To anyone who has experienced abuse, sexual or otherwise, please remember this: we are not the ones who should carry shame. We

survive, and we go on to live again," she stated. In the hours after her release, she confided in her mother about her ordeal who went on to make an initial third-party report to the police. The clothing her daughter had been wearing when she was kidnapped was submitted for forensic examination and led to the arrest of Singh.

Deal with US closer than ever, says Iranian foreign minister Abbas Araghchi; Trump shares his post

World. (Agency)

Iran's foreign minister Abbas Araghchi said Friday that a deal with the United States to end the Middle East war was closer than ever, as a senior US official and key mediator Pakistan both expressed mounting optimism for an elusive agreement. Publicly, however, the warring sides' negotiating positions remain far apart, with Iranian state media publishing a breakdown of what was purportedly on the table that stood sharply at odds with Washington's longstanding red lines.

Araghchi's statement came shortly after US President Donald Trump lashed out at Iran, accusing it of negotiating in bad faith following the Iranian media reports. In a social media post, Trump dismissed the Iranian accounts as having "NOTHING to do with the terms that were agreed to, in writing". "Very dishonorable people to deal with," he continued. "They better get

their act together, and FAST!"

But the Iranian minister appeared to play down the row. "The Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding has never been closer," he wrote in a social



media post, referring to the Pakistani capital that hosted previous US-Iran talks. "Pending its finalization, the media should refrain from entering speculation about its content," he added. Trump later posted a screenshot of Araghchi's message on his own feed. Disputing Trump's "bad faith" accusation, foreign ministry spokesman

Esmail Baqaei said an agreement had now been reached with Washington "on most points." He added that a meeting was also currently underway in Iran to finalise a consensus. "We are in the last

phases of arriving at a conclusion," he said. Over weeks of halting negotiations -- marked by threats and exchanges of fire despite an April truce -- President Trump has repeatedly insisted that a deal was all but signed, only for talks to drag on. Not 100 percent

Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, whose country has been a key mediator since the initial talks, confirmed that "a final, agreed-upon text of the peace deal has been reached."

Peace has never been as close as it is now," Sharif said, while acknowledging "incessant misinformation" surrounding the deal. A senior US official also voiced optimism that the parties would be "signing this agreement over the next few days".

Leader Of "Bloodthirsty" Terror Outfit Tren De Aragua Killed In US Strike

KABUL. (Agency)

President Donald Trump said Friday that a "swift and lethal kinetic" US strike has killed Hector Rusthenford Guerrero Flores, whom he called "the infamous leader" of the Tren de Aragua gang.

Tren de Aragua has been labeled by the United States as a terrorist organization. Guerrero Flores was charged in a New York federal court with racketeering conspiracy and other crimes, including lending support to terrorists in crimes that stretched more than a decade, authorities announced in December. US Attorney Jay Clayton said at the time that the gang is responsible for countless acts of violence, extortion and drug trafficking in North America, South America and Europe. Trump nominated Clayton on Thursday to be director of national intelligence. The US State Department had offered rewards of up to \$5 million for information leading to Guerrero Flores' arrest. In a post on his

social media site, Trump wrote, "Tren de Aragua terrorists no longer have safe haven in Venezuela or anywhere else and, under my leadership, we will find these vicious murderers and drug lords anytime, anywhere, and send them to the depths of hell where they belong." Trump's post referred to Guerrero Flores by his alias, "Nino Guerrero." The Pentagon had nothing to add beyond the Truth Social post from Trump. Venezuela's ministry of communications did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the operation. Trump has taken a series of extraordinary actions against the gang, including a series of strikes on small boats his administration has accused of smuggling drugs to America. At least 207 people have been killed in boat strikes by the U.S. military in the eastern Pacific Ocean and Caribbean Sea since the Trump administration began targeting those it calls "narcoterrorists"

in early September.

Trump and administration officials have consistently blamed Tren de Aragua for being at the root of the violence and illicit drug dealing that plague some US cities. The president spent months repeating the claim - contradicted by a declassified U.S. intelligence assessment - that Tren de Aragua had operated under Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro's control. The U.S. whisked Maduro out of Venezuela to face US drug charges in January. Tren de Aragua originated more than a decade ago at an infamously lawless prison with hardened criminals in Venezuela's central state of Aragua. The gang has expanded in recent years as millions of Venezuelans migrated to other Latin American countries or the US in search of better living conditions. The size of the gang is unclear. Countries with large populations of Venezuelan migrants, including Peru and Colombia,

Peace Deal Soon? US Official 80-85% Confident, But Iran Has Some Conditions

BRUSSELS. (Agency)

The US-Iran peace deal cliffhanger continues with an official in Washington saying his confidence about reaching an agreement has risen from 75 per cent to 80-85 per cent as questions remain over Tehran's agreement over key sticking points like nuclear stockpile, frozen assets and the Strait of Hormuz. On condition of anonymity, the US official told New York Times that a potential framework of an agreement with Iran will likely be signed within "the next few days", but added that it was not near finished. A signing date or venue remains unclear but Iran's internal decision-making was "very complicated", the official added. "What the deal does is actually quite simple. It accomplishes the core objectives that the President of the United States set out for this mission, and gets us in a very, very good place at the end of it. And what it does is, first, it reopens the straits and lifts the blockade. Number two, it leads to the dismantling of the Iranian nuclear program. Number three, it leads to the United States getting the enriched

material. We provided the agreement that this material would be destroyed on site and then taken out of the country," the White House official added. Rejecting report of upfront financial gains for Iran, the official refuted claims that Tehran would receive payments upon signing the memorandum of understanding. "I've seen people say that they get \$12 billion or \$1 billion or \$6 billion upon the signing of the MoU. That's all not true, that the Iranians don't get anything upon the signing of the MoU or upon the negotiation itself. What they get is that they get rewarded economically for complying with their obligations under the deal, so if they turn over the nuclear material as promised, they'll get something. If they dismantle their nuclear programs or their nuclear facilities, they'll get something else. If they, you know, really commit to regional peace and stability, they'll get additional things on top of that," an official added.

Though pitched as a major diplomatic victory, reports cited the Iranian side as

saying that the proposed agreement will only establish a 60-day ceasefire that would be followed by another set of negotiations over Iran's nuclear programme and Tehran's



frozen assets. So far, the terms of the deal remain vague and Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei has stopped short of a direct sign-off. Iran's foreign minister Abbas Araghchi said the deal "has never been closer", but reiterated that the negotiations will be conducted in two parts. He pointed to an

issue that seems to have hampered negotiations on the Iranian side since a long time: Tehran's deep distrust with the Trump administration. Iran's top negotiator

Mohammed Ghalibaf top sounded a cautious note with a post on X that read, "Commitments made must be commitments kept. No ifs, no buts, no excuses. For the close deal ahead, there is no other way. You reap what you sow." But the US official dismissed Iran's version of the deal's workings, saying they are aimed at Iranian leaders' domestic audience.

Israel, which launched the war along with the US on February 28, has been kept out of the negotiations and refuses to withdraw from Lebanon. The US official though told New York Times that the peace deal will cover Israel, Lebanon, the Gulf and Iran.

Pakistan, which was the first to host US-Iran talks in Islamabad but not with any success, said it is working with both sides to finalise the next steps to seal a "final, agreed-upon text".