



"Her Journey Inspires People": PM Modi Greets President Murmu On Her Birthday

Born on June 20, 1958, in Uparbeda village of Odisha's Mayurbhanj district to a Santhal tribal family, President Murmu's life story is one of perseverance and determination.

New Delhi.(Agency)
Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday extended greetings to President Droupadi Murmu on her birthday, praising her remarkable journey of public service and describing her life as an inspiration for millions across the country.



In a post on X, the Prime Minister said, "Warm birthday greetings to the President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu Ji. Her journey, marked by courage, simplicity, humility and unwavering commitment to public service, continues to inspire people across the country." Highlighting President Murmu's contributions to nation-building

and social welfare, Modi added, "Through her many years in public life, she has served the nation in an outstanding manner, especially passionate about the wellbeing of the underprivileged and marginalised. Her steadfast dedication to

India's development is very motivating." Extending his wishes, the Prime Minister said, "May she be blessed with a long and healthy life in the service of the nation. I look forward to meeting her later today at the programme in Odisha."

Joining the greetings, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath also lauded President Murmu's commitment to public service and constitutional values.

In a post on X, he wrote, "Heartfelt birthday greetings to Her Excellency the President, Smt.

Droupadi Murmu Ji. Your simple life, unwavering dedication to the upliftment of tribal society, and steadfast commitment to constitutional values

serve as an exemplary inspiration for all citizens of the country."

"I pray to Lord Sri Jagannath Ji for your long and illustrious life and excellent health," he added. President Droupadi Murmu, the 15th President of India, assumed office on July 25, 2022, becoming the first tribal woman and the youngest person to hold the country's highest constitutional office. Before becoming President, she served as the ninth Governor of Jharkhand from 2015 to 2021.

Born on June 20, 1958, in Uparbeda village of Odisha's Mayurbhanj district to a Santhal tribal family, President Murmu's life story is one of perseverance and determination. Beginning her education at

a village primary school, she went on to pursue higher studies in Bhubaneswar, becoming the first girl from her village to pass the matriculation examination and earn a college degree.

She graduated from Ramadevi Women's College in 1979 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and Economics.

Overcoming social and economic challenges, President Murmu built a distinguished career in public service, earning respect across political and social spheres. Her rise from a remote tribal village to Rashtrapati Bhavan remains one of the most inspiring stories in contemporary Indian public life.

TMC's Rs 440-crore bank accounts frozen after rebel MLAs seek probe

Kolkata.(Agency)

The debit operations of three bank accounts of the Trinamool Congress, holding around Rs 440 crore, have been frozen after complaints by rebel party MLAs sought a probe into the source of the funds. The move has sharpened the internal battle in the opposition party over control of its finances. A senior police officer told PTI that the three accounts, maintained with a private sector bank, had been placed under a "debit freeze". This means withdrawals or outward transactions cannot be made, though credits may continue to come in.

The action comes amid an intensifying power struggle within the TMC between camps led by former minister Aroop Biswas and Leader of Opposition Ritabrata Banerjee over control of the party's organisational and



financial set-up after its defeat in the recent Assembly elections.

The freeze followed complaints by 10 MLAs aligned with Banerjee to the cyber crime police station under the Bidhannagar Police Commissionerate, seeking registration of an FIR and a detailed investigation into the accounts.

In their complaints, the legislators questioned the source of the money deposited in the accounts and sought an inquiry into the transactions carried out through them.

According to a copy of one of the complaints, they asked investigators to find out whether the funds had come from lawful sources or from alleged unlawful activities, including suspected cut-money collections, diversion of public funds and proceeds of scams.

"It has come to my knowledge through reliable circumstances and surrounding developments that certain funds, arising out of illegal activities, including misuse of influence, dishonest financial dealings and suspected unlawful collection of money, may have been routed and subsequently deposited into bank accounts," the complaint stated.

Sanjay Raut's post on dogs and loyalty amid revolt by Sena MPs

New Delhi .(Agency)

Firebrand Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut took sharp jabs at rebel party MPs on Saturday, posting a cryptic message on social media as the Uddhav Thackeray-led outfit grappled with a fresh rebellion that threatens its future.

Raut shared an image on X carrying the Hindi message, "Kuch log kuttey toh hoty hain, lekin wafa' daar nahi hoty" (Some people may be dogs, but they are not loyal), along with the caption, "Jai Maharashtra!"

The post came amid growing speculation that six of the Uddhav Sena's nine Lok Sabha MPs are preparing to defect to the ruling Shiv Sena led by Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde under 'Operation Tiger'. The latest revolt marks the second existential crisis for the party in four years after Shinde's rebellion split the original Shiv Sena in 2022.

Raut, never one to mince words, has launched a sustained offensive against the dissident MPs, branding them "traitors," mocking their actions and warning those who abandon the party of dire consequences.

At a press conference earlier this week, Raut alleged that rebel lawmakers had been offered up to Rs 50 crore each to switch sides. In an expletive-filled tirade, he also warned that the party would launch 'Operation Tudwa' (bash up) against those looking to switch sides.



THE DEADLY NEXUS BLEEDING THE NARMADA DRY

POLITICIAN-MAFIA SAND MINING CARTEL OPERATIONS UNCOVERED IN KARJAN

Politician-Mafia Sand Mining Cartel Operations Uncovered

Mahanagar Metro Desk

Pawan Makan

Karjan/Vadodara: Is the rule of law still alive in Gujarat, or has a shameless alliance between powerful politicians and the sand mining mafia buried it deep beneath the riverbeds? This burning question emerges directly from the banks of the sacred Narmada River in Vingerwada village, located in the Karjan taluka of Vadodara district. Along the road leading from Sasrod toward Nakeshwar, the holy river has effectively been transformed into a lawless territory for open plunder. According to verified and highly explosive local intelligence gathered by Mahanagar Metro, a notorious history-sheeter named Gokul Bharwad, alias Ghugho, is aggressively stripping the Narmada of its rich natural resources under the direct patronage and alleged partnership of the local BJP MLA from Karjan, Akshay Patel. On the Vingerwada riverbank, right under the noses of spineless law enforcement authorities, an enormous operation runs day and night to hollow out the riverbed with an army of over one hundred to one hundred and twenty-five heavy dumpers, twenty to twenty-five JCB excavators, and fifteen plus Hitachi and loader machines working in continuous shifts. While nominal royalties are paid on paper to maintain an



appearance of legality, millions of rupees are siphoned off through the back door every month, creating a deep-seated syndicate that routinely plunders the public exchequer for private gain. Local villagers have staged aggressive protests against this blatant lawlessness, but their desperate pleas have fallen on deaf ears, with local sub-divisional officers, Prant officers, and Mamlatdars seeming entirely powerless to conduct surprise raids due to the political protection enjoyed by the cartel. Even after an officer named Chavda from the Gandhinagar Flying Squad was provided with precise coordinates and hard evidence of the illegal

mining sites, the department maintained a calculated silence, fueling public rumors that the MLA's alleged direct access to high-level offices in Gandhinagar has successfully insulated a lucrative, highly coordinated network of weekly protection payoffs spanning from Vadodara to the state capital. The most terrifying aspect of this lucrative black-market operation is the absolute lack of fear regarding law enforcement, highlighted by the recent brutal abduction, confinement, and attempted murder of an honest Karjan police constable named Lakshman Ahir, who tried to raid the operation. The constable had

coordinated with the Mines and Minerals Department to execute a surprise raid on an illegal sand mining operation in Pingalwara, but internal leaks tipped off the mafia, causing the team to return empty-handed. Shortly after the attempted raid, Bharwad's armed henchmen boldly abducted Constable Ahir right from the public road, dragged him to a house in Jalaram Nagar, confined him, and brutally tortured him like an animal. In a desperate bid to erase evidence, the thugs attempted to murder him by dumping his severely injured, half-dead body near the Dhadhar River. The battered policeman miraculously managed to es-

cape captivity around five in the morning the next day, making his way back to lodge a formal First Information Report at the Karjan police station. The political leverage enjoyed by Gokul Bharwad, who even secured a position in the Karjan Municipality, and his close alignment with political power brokers ensured that this dangerous assault on a uniformed officer yielded no immediate consequences, with inside sources revealing that approximately one crore rupees was quickly funneled through illegal channels to suppress the investigation and subvert the legal process. This raises a crucial institutional question regarding why the ruling party continues to provide political shelter to elements with dangerous criminal histories who actively try to kill the state's protectors. Refusing to back down, local residents have now mobilized, preparing for a decisive legal and public battle by submitting comprehensive dossiers to the Vadodara District Collector and the Superintendent of Police to see if the government will deploy its bulldozers to smash this lawless mining empire or continue to look the other way while the sacred Narmada River is left to the mercy of plundering cartels to line the pockets of corrupt politicians.

News box

Missing man found murdered, body burnt to destroy evidence

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A 64-year-old man was allegedly beaten to death by three men for objecting to them drinking in public in Khandsha. The accused then carried his body to a secluded spot and set it on fire to destroy evidence.

The deceased, identified as Balram, had gone missing on June 12. His son lodged a complaint at Sector 37 police station on June 14, following which a case was registered. His body was burnt in an open area around 500 metres from the village.

According to sources, the accused said Balram frequently abused them. On the night he went missing, an altercation broke out during which the three assaulted him with sticks, killing him.

Two of the accused then transported the body on a bike to a nearby cowshed belonging to their associate and set it on fire, remaining at the spot until it was completely burnt. Investigators also found that the accused had removed a ring from the victim's finger and sold it to a jeweller for around Rs 70,000. The ring has since been recovered. The breakthrough came after police examined technical evidence, CCTV footage and local intelligence inputs. A team from Sector 37 police station arrested the three accused on Thursday. The accused have been identified as Vishesh Tomar (18) a resident of Shamli in UP; Mithun (30) from Fakana village in Bulandshahr, UP; and Sandeep (41), from Kharkhoda in Sonapat.

Mithun operated auto-rickshaws in the area, while Vishesh and Sandeep were involved in animal husbandry. Sandeep was previously booked in a murder case in Sonapat; Mithun in assault cases in Ghaziabad and Gurgaon.

NCRPB floats mandatory service lanes, trauma centres along highways to boost road safety

Gurgaon.(Agency)

To improve road safety and emergency response, National Capital Region Planning Board (NCRPB) has proposed a comprehensive set of measures covering mandatory service lanes, dedicated accident recovery lanes, trauma centres and heli-ambulance infrastructure across NCR.

Under the proposed framework, service lanes will be made mandatory along all national and state highways and expressways by 2030, catering to cyclists, pedestrians, two-wheelers, e-rickshaws and other non-motorised traffic. "The move is intended to separate vulnerable road users from high-speed vehicular traffic, reducing accidents and improving mobility for a large segment of daily commuters who currently share carriageways with heavy and fast-moving vehicles," said an official.

The recommendations form part of NCRPB's draft regional plan, discussed at a meeting last week, and its broader strategy to build a smarter, more inclusive transport network across the region, which encompasses parts of Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan.

NCRPB has also proposed dedicated accident recovery lanes on all national highways and expressways within two years, and on state highways within five. These lanes will enable quicker removal of disabled or accident-hit vehicles from carriageways, restoring traffic flow and preventing secondary accidents. Recognising that prompt medical attention significantly improves survival rates, the board has proposed fully equipped trauma centres at intervals of 50-60km — or within one hour's travel time — to ensure victims receive care within the critical golden hour.

Airport parking free for 8 minutes, then Rs 150 for 2 hours

Noida.(Agency)

Noida International Airport announced its parking tariff, capping the maximum parking fee for 24 hours at Rs 600 for private vehicles and Rs 700 for commercial vehicles. It will allow vehicles free kerbside pick-up and drop-off for up to eight minutes.

After the free window, private vehicles will be charged Rs 150 for the first two hours, while commercial vehicles will pay Rs 200 for the same duration. Beyond that, both categories will be charged an additional Rs 100 for every extra hour.

Airport officials said the kerbside facility is distinct from designated parking zones. Vehicles stopping to drop off or pick up passengers must exit within eight minutes to avoid charges. "Vehicles parked in the designated parking zones will be required to buy parking tickets as per the notified tariff," an official said.

The airport also has separate parking facilities for visitors, app-based cab aggregators and premium taxi operators to streamline passenger movement and vehicle circulation within the premises.

Parking rates at Noida airport are broadly comparable with those at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport. At IGI's Terminal 3, private vehicles get a free window of up to 12 minutes. After that, private vehicles are charged Rs 160 for the next 30 minutes and commercial vehicles Rs 270 for the same period. Terminals 1 and 2 at IGI offer no free parking window — private vehicles are charged Rs 160 and commercial vehicles Rs 270 for up to 30 minutes, rising to Rs 250 and Rs 400, respectively, for up to one hour. Charges between 4 hours and 24 hours have been capped at Rs 600 and Rs 800 for private and commercial vehicles, respectively, at all three terminals.

A significant access gap, however, remains for passengers travelling to Noida airport by autorickshaw or bus. Both modes of transport are currently barred from reaching the terminal building and must stop at a designated point near the airport entrance, approximately one kilometre away. Passengers are required to use a shuttle service to cover the remaining distance.

Pintu Kumar, a Kushinagar resident who flew from Noida to Bengaluru on the inaugural day of commercial operations on June 15, said the restriction caught him off guard.

Gujarat's Dr. Amit Patel Shines on the Global Stage, Wins Accolades in International Photography Contest

Mahanagar Metro Desk

Ahmedabad: India has achieved remarkable success on the global stage in the prestigious "International Father's Day Photography Contest 2026", organized by the 'Skanderberg International Photography Contest', Austria. A deeply emotional photograph titled "Father and Daughter Love", captured by city-based hobbyist photographer Dr. Amit M. Patel (Ph.D.), has secured a place among the Top 25 photographs in the world. This international recognition has brought immense pride to both Gujarat and the entire nation. Fierce Competition Among Over 22,000 Entries The competition received a massive



response, drawing a total of 22,919 entries from professional and amateur photographers across 119 countries worldwide. Following a rigorous multi-stage evaluation process, the final win-

ners were selected by an esteemed international jury panel comprising photography experts from Austria, Australia, New Zealand, Ecuador, Peru, the Netherlands, and the United States. Dr. Amit Patel's selected photograph is scheduled to be showcased in a grand international exhibition in Austria in the near future. A Confluence of Two Decades of Dedication and Human Emotions Dr. Amit Patel has been actively engaged in photography as a passionate hobbyist for more than two decades (20 years), carving a distinct identity for himself in the field. His photographic works are widely renowned for their artistic and

sensitive portrayal of human emotions, social concerns, the simplicity of rural life, and the diverse dimensions of contemporary urban living. A Journey of Achievements: Dr. Patel's photographs have previously been showcased in numerous prestigious exhibitions across India and abroad. He has been the recipient of several notable awards in international photography competitions, featured in renowned art journals, and awarded various international grants and fellowships that have supported his creative projects and enabled him to present his work on global platforms.

Five special units set up for faster emergency response

Gurgaon.(Agency)

In an effort to enhance operational readiness for major protests, crowd management, communal unrest, VIP security and other critical incidents, police have constituted five dedicated law-and-order companies, comprising more than 500 personnel across the city.

Each company comprises 107 police personnel and will be headed by an assistant commissioner of police serving as the company commander. An inspector-rank officer will function as the assistant commander and oversee operational coordination. Four of the companies were created on a zonal basis, with one unit each assigned to the East, West, South and Manesar zones. The fifth company will function

under the deputy commissioner of police (headquarters) and can be deployed anywhere in the district depending on operational requirements. "These units can be mobilised immediately whenever required for law-and-order duties,

crowd management, VIP security arrangements, disaster response and other special situations," police spokesperson Sandeep Kumar said.



The move comes amid increasing demands on the police force during large gatherings and protests. Earlier this year, on April 9, more than 1,000 contractual workers gathered outside several factories in IMT Manesar despite prohibitory orders imposed

a day earlier by the district administration to prevent a "planned" protest over minimum wage demands.

The protest turned violent as some participants allegedly pelted stones, damaged public and private property, and vandalised police vehicles, including the official vehicle of the Manesar SHO, an emergency response vehicle and a police motorcycle. The motorcycle was also set ablaze. Glass panes at several industrial units were damaged, and attempts were made to set furniture on fire.

Police carried out a lathi charge to disperse the crowd. Several workers and six to seven police personnel sustained minor injuries during the clashes. Two FIRs, including one under attempt-to-murder provisions, were registered at IMT Manesar police station, and around 70 people

were arrested. Officials said the newly formed companies will operate in an organised manner and are expected to strengthen the force's ability to maintain public order and respond effectively to similar situations in the future.

AI cams, drones to track bird migration & habitat changes at Sultanpur park

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Work has begun on Haryana's first technology-driven bird census at Sultanpur National Park, with two watchtowers already equipped for AI cameras that will monitor bird movements, migration patterns and habitat changes across the wetland.

The project marks a shift from traditional bird counts that rely on observations made over a few hours or a day. Wildlife officials said the new system will generate continuous data through cameras mounted on watchtowers and drone surveys conducted across the sanctuary. It is expected to be operational before peak winter migrants arrive at the Ramsar site. Gurgaon divisional forest officer (wildlife) RK Jangra said the watchtowers,



strategically located to overlook both water and terrestrial habitats, will serve as platforms for the AI-enabled cameras. "The drone surveillance will help enable a more accurate census," he said.

Sultanpur attracts more than 250 bird species annually, including over 100 migratory species — among them northern

pintails, bar-headed geese, shovelers, spoonbills, storks and several raptors.

Recent counts have shown fluctuating numbers. The 2025 Asian Waterbird Census recorded 2,593 migratory birds from 48 species, compared with 2,686 birds from 43 species in 2024 and 9,026 birds from 51 species in 2023. Officials said the new system will help build a long-term database to assess how climate variability, shifting rainfall patterns and habitat pressures are influencing bird populations. It will also allow managers to detect habitat stress and environmental threats earlier.

From Oct, the census will track year-on-year shifts in species composition and numbers to fine-tune habitat management, water levels, vegetation and visitor zones.

Small emitters contribute more to pollution than industries in Indo-Gangetic Plain: Study

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A new study has found that emissions from unmitigated small sources contribute more to overall air pollution than large industries and the transport sector. The research, based on sample studies in Varanasi and Ludhiana, was conducted to understand pollution trends across the Indo-Gangetic plain, which includes Delhi-NCR.

Researchers found that small eateries and micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), though individually minor contributors, collectively add significantly to PM2.5 pollution because of their large numbers and lack of mitigation measures.

Lead researcher of the project titled — Reducing Emissions from Unmitigated Fuel Usage: Data-Driven Strategies for Air Quality and Climate Action in IGP — Udhaya Kumar said wherever studies are conducted to make an emission inventory, the smaller contributors are largely ignored. Unmitigated fuel in the title of the study refers to the combustion of any fuel, whether for productive end uses or other purposes, without the application of air pollution control devices.

"The study focuses on two contrasting districts in the Indo-Gangetic Plain —



Ludhiana in Punjab, a major industrial and manufacturing hub, and Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh, a prominent heritage and tourism centre. It reveals that a significant share of particulate matter emissions in both districts originates from fuel use occurring without adequate pollution controls or regulatory mechanisms," said Kumar. "Ludhiana generates approximately 21,000 tonnes of PM2.5 emissions annually, of which 54% originates from unmitigated sources. In Varanasi, annual PM2.5 emissions are

estimated at 14,000 tonnes, with 62% remaining unmitigated." He said that the study indicates there are substantial gaps in existing emission inventories and clean air planning approaches.

Director research of International Forum for Environment, Sustainability and Technology Pratima Singh pointed out that the agriculture sector remains largely unmitigated.

"Though we have data and have identified sources like stubble burning, threshers and water pumps operating on diesel,

much has not been done to deploy pollution control measures," she said. "The findings have important implications for India's National Clean Air Programme and future air quality management strategies. By introducing a new framework for identifying and quantifying unmitigated fuel use, the study provides policymakers and regulators with a more comprehensive understanding of emission sources." Climate science adviser for Clean Air Fund Arindam Roy said the study must be conducted for more districts in the country to develop a national database.

"At the district level, the findings seem to be substantial, but only if it reflects at the national level, funding mechanisms could be expedited for mitigating these small contributors," he said. Commenting on the findings, Trailokya Saud of IIT Kanpur said that the approach for preparing emission inventory must be rectified.

"When the small sources like the eateries and domestic cooking or stubble burning are contributing more to the PM2.5 emissions, we have to give them a place in the inventory towards the top of the chart to be addressed," he said.

Consumer court raps health insurance firm over 'wrongful' claim rejections

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

A CONSUMER court in Ahmedabad has ruled against New India Assurance Co Ltd for "wrongfully rejecting" four medical insurance claims of a minor child with Rett Syndrome, holding that insurers cannot deny reimbursement for unrelated illnesses merely because a patient has a genetic disorder.

The District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission, Ahmedabad (Rural), issued the orders on June 5 in four separate complaints filed by the Consumer Education and Research Society (CERS) and a policy holder. The Commission directed the insurer to reimburse the claim amounts along with interest, compensation and litigation costs after finding that the claims had been wrongly rejected under a genetic disorder exclusion clause.

The four claims involved reimbursement amounts of Rs 19,049, Rs 20,830, Rs

1,14,360 and Rs 1,14,832. In each case, the Commission directed the insurer to pay the claimed amount along with interest at 8 per cent per year from the date of repudiation. The insurer was also ordered to pay Rs 5,000 as compensation and Rs 5,000 towards litigation costs in each complaint.

The dispute arose after the policy holder's minor daughter, who was diagnosed with Rett Syndrome, was hospitalised on four separate occasions in 2018 and 2019 for the treatment of pneumonia and lower respiratory tract infections.

Although the family held an active mediclaim policy, New India Assurance rejected all four claims, arguing that the child suffered from a genetic disorder that was excluded under the policy. According to the complaints, the insurer relied on references to Rett Syndrome in the hospital



discharge summaries and invoked the policy's exclusion clause relating to genetic disorders.

The family, however, maintained that the hospitalisations were not for the treatment of Rett Syndrome but for acute respiratory illnesses that could affect any child regardless of genetic background.

As per the information shared by CERS, during the proceedings, the complainants submitted medical certificates from

treating doctors stating that the respiratory infections had no direct connection with Rett Syndrome. The doctors clarified that the child had been treated for bacterial infections, including pneumonia and lower respiratory tract infections, and not for complications arising from the genetic disorder.

The Commission agreed with this argument and criticised the insurer for applying the exclusion clause without establishing any medical link between the genetic condition and the illnesses for which treatment was sought. In its observations, the Commission noted that the insurance company had effectively acted as its own medical expert by relying solely on the mention of Rett Syndrome in the discharge records.

The insurer also attempted to challenge the complaint on procedural grounds. It argued that the policyholder, who was living

abroad, had filed the case through his father and that the authorisation documents were not valid. The Commission rejected these objections, observing "that consumer grievances should not be defeated by technical rules, particularly when the complainant was overseas and had authorised a family member to act on his behalf". In its ruling, the Commission referred to established legal principles that require a direct connection between a pre-existing condition and the illness for which treatment is claimed before an insurer can rely on an exclusion clause. It held that a background genetic disorder could not automatically be used as a reason to deny claims for unrelated medical conditions.

The ruling is significant for health insurance policyholders because it addresses the growing issue of claim rejections based on broad interpretations of exclusion clauses. By holding that insurers must establish

Short news

HC upholds tribunal order, junks ED appeals in Vanpic case

Hyderabad. (Agency)

Telangana high court on Friday dismissed a batch of appeals filed by Enforcement Directorate challenging an order of the Appellate Tribunal under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act.

The tribunal had directed the release of properties attached in connection with the alleged Vanpic quid pro quo case involving Andhra Pradesh former chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy and industrialist Nimmagadda Prasad.

A division bench comprising Justices P Sam Koshy and Suddala Chalapati Rao upheld the tribunal's July 2019 order, observing that no additional material or valid grounds had been presented to warrant interference.

The court categorically held that it found no reason to disturb the tribunal's conclusions. The bench also noted that the tribunal's reasoning adequately addressed the issues raised and did not call for appellate intervention. The appeals were filed by the ED against several companies and individuals, including Jagan and Prasad.

According to the ED, Prasad allegedly received undue benefits in the Vanpic project and, in return, invested ₹854.50 crore in companies linked to Jagan as quid pro quo. On this basis, the ED had attached multiple properties and initiated proceedings under the PMLA. The tribunal, however, examined the chronology of events and concluded that the investments in Jagan-linked companies were made prior to the conception of the Vanpic project. It held that the investments could not therefore be treated as bribes or illegal gratification tied to the project and accordingly directed the release of the attached assets.

Day-long standoff at Health Directorate in

Thiruvananthapuram

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. (Agency) High drama unfolded at the Health Department Directorate in Thiruvananthapuram on Friday.

Dr V Meenakshy, who was holding additional charge as Director of Health Services (DHS), refused to vacate her seat for Dr K J Reena. Dr Reena had just secured a 15-day stay order from the Kerala Administrative Tribunal (KAT) against her transfer and demanded the official chair in accordance with the verdict. However, Dr Meenakshy refused to budge, insisting on an explicit directive from the government.

This triggered a tense, day-long administrative standoff inside the office, prompting Dr Meenakshy to seek police protection to carry out her duties. Both senior officers remained in the same cabin until 5.15 pm, sitting directly opposite each other across the table.

While Dr Meenakshy continued her routine work and even refused to leave her seat for a lunch break, Dr Reena signed her rejoining papers right at the desk. This confrontation stems from a controversy surrounding Dr Reena's abrupt removal from the top post while she was on a two-day leave. She had faced the wrath of Health Minister K Muraleedharan over various issues, resulting in her being relegated to a lower-level position as director of the Regional Health Laboratory, Ernakulam.

MMRDA drops contentious Metro-4 tender clause after contractor backlash

Mumbai. (Agency)

The Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) has dropped a contentious tender condition that barred contractors already executing two or more Metro projects from bidding for fresh station works on Metro Line 4, following objections from industry players and concerns over reduced competition flagged by The Indian Express last month.

The condition, introduced in two tenders worth Rs 307.72 crore floated in April for station works on the under-construction Wadala-Kasarvadavali Metro corridor, meant that contractors, joint ventures or consortiums already executing two or more civil, architectural finishing or pre-engineered building packages across Mumbai Metro projects would have been ineligible to participate in the fresh bids under the original Clause 9.11.

Contractors cite 'cartel' concerns

Infrastructure firms and contractors had strongly objected to the move, arguing that it would shut out experienced players, reduce competition and increase the risk of



cartelisation. The Indian Express first reported on May 8 that several contractors had written to the MMRDA seeking withdrawal of the clause.

Documents from the pre-bid meeting held on May 4 show that at least six bidders raised objections. "Their experience and knowledge of metro-specific requirements

would only benefit project outcomes. Restricting them could also lead to cartel-like tendencies among remaining bidders," one bidder said.

Another bidder said, "Introducing such a clause would significantly narrow the pool of eligible bidders, raising serious concerns about adequate competition."

While the MMRDA did not publicly explain the rationale behind the condition, sources had indicated that officials were concerned contractors handling multiple Metro projects could struggle to maintain the pace of work.

Bidders say existing norms assess contractors' capacity

Bidders, however, argued that existing qualification norms already assessed a contractor's ability to take on additional work. "Contractors with sufficient bid capacity, resources and proven execution capability are well-equipped to handle multiple projects efficiently."

Man from Navi Mumbai arrested for raping minor daughter for 10 years

Navi Mumbai. (Agency)

A 55-year-old man was arrested on Thursday for allegedly sexually abusing his 16-year-old daughter since 2016, when she was seven. Police said the girl gathered courage to lodge a complaint against her accused father as she claimed that she was unable to bear the repeated sexual abuse and threats for several years at their residence.

API Pandurang Ghagare of Khandeshwar said the girl gathered courage to lodge a police complaint against her accused father as she claimed that she was unable to bear the repeated sexual abuse and threats for several years at their residence. Ghagare said, "The accused owns a



hardware store in New Panvel. His wife has separated from him for the past five years due to frequent domestic quarrels. Hence, the girl, her elder brother and sister

resided with their father. The girl did not reveal her sexual assaults until she became an adolescent after turning 16 years old."

The accused was booked under relevant sections of BNS for the offence of punishment for rape, aggravated rape, committing rape repeatedly on the same woman, committing rape on a girl under 16 years of age, voluntarily causing hurt and criminal intimidation along with the Pco Act.

On Friday, the arrested accused was produced before Panvel district sessions court for the Pco Act case and was remanded to police custody till Sunday. Thereafter, he will be sent to jail custody at Talaja Central Prison.

6 students at Gujarat's Bhavnagar medical college suspended for 'ragging juniors'

No compromise with safety & dignity of students, govt has zero tolerance policy against ragging: Health Minister

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

A TOTAL of six students of the orthopaedic department at the Government Medical College in Bhavnagar were on Friday suspended for periods ranging from six months to two years in connection with allegations of ragging.

"Students are made to sit (by seniors) in a rooster position on tables till cramps develop in muscles, or made to do sit-ups till they lose consciousness, and told to write 'apology note' 500-1,000 times," one of the first year students at the college told The Indian Express on Friday, alleging that they were subjected to "mental and physical harassment."

This is the second such instance reported from a government medical college in Gujarat in a span of three days. On June 17, three postgraduate (PG) students of the orthopaedic department of B J Medical College, Ahmedabad, were suspended for

periods ranging from six months to one year for allegedly ragging their juniors.

On Friday, the state government ordered the suspension of six of a total 12 second year students after a marathon meeting of the anti-ragging committee of the medical college that started at 5 pm on June 18 and went till 2 am on June 19.

"The officials of the Gandhinagar health department, Director and the Anti-Ragging Committee of Bhavnagar Medical College along with the members of the Anti-Ragging Committee worked in continuous coordination till 2 am Friday," Health Minister Praful Pansheriya told this newspaper.

During this meeting, written statements of first year, second year and third year students of the orthopaedic department, as well as the faculty members and supporting staff concerned were taken by the

committee. Along with this, a detailed review of the available documentary evidence was also conducted.

While one student has been suspended from



the college for two years, three students were suspended for one year and two students for a period of six months with immediate effect, a state government order issued on Friday said.

All these six students were also removed from the hostel with immediate effect during the period of punishment. They will have to vacate their rooms by the evening of June 19 and inform the college administration, the order stated.

During the period of punishment, the students concerned will not be able to participate in any kind of academic, clinical, research or other activities of the college, it said.

"Anti-social, inhuman and indiscipline activities such as ragging will not be tolerated in any medical college of the state under any circumstances. The state government is fully committed to maintaining the safety, respect and healthy academic environment of the students and strict action will be taken by the state health department with a zero tolerance policy against such acts," said Health Minister Pansheriya.

Docs assn calls for waiting lists in medical recruitment



Hyderabad. (Agency)

The Healthcare Reforms Doctors Association (HRDA) has urged the state govt to introduce category-wise waiting lists for the ongoing recruitment of assistant professors in govt medical colleges and civil assistant surgeon specialists being conducted by the Medical and Health Services Recruitment Board (MHSRB).

A delegation of HRDA members submitted a representation to health minister C Damodar Raja Narasimha, requesting relaxation of existing rules to facilitate the implementation of waiting lists in the current recruitment process.

According to the association, the absence of waiting lists often results in vacancies remaining unfilled when selected candidates fail to attend counselling, decline appointments or do not join after selection. Such situations delay the filling of critical posts and place additional strain on already stretched healthcare institutions.

Members pointed out that recruitment agencies in several states, including Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala, maintain category-wise waiting lists to address such contingencies.

"The system allows authorities to quickly fill vacancies from a pool of eligible candidates, preventing seat wastage and ensuring continuity in public services. Adopting a similar mechanism in Telangana would improve the efficiency of the recruitment process, ensure better utilisation of qualified candidates and help address staff shortages in govt hospitals and medical colleges," a member said.

He added that the timely filling of vacancies is essential for strengthening healthcare delivery and ensuring uninterrupted patient care across the state's public health system.

Cartography of India's future

CP Surendran

In his one-paragraph fable 'On Exactitude in Science', Jorge Luis Borges imagines an empire whose cartographers become so obsessed with accuracy that they produce a map as large as the empire itself. It matches the territory point for point. The result is a masterpiece that nobody can use. Borges's point is simple: every map leaves something out. When a map claims to represent everything, it stops helping us understand where we are. In India, we now live with two such maps. One is drawn by the cartographer of dreams, Narendra Modi. The other is sketched by Rahul Gandhi, who sees in the same dreams the makings of a nightmare. These maps are laid over the same territory, and yet they do not line up. The result is a peculiar double vision: we inhabit two countries at once and are at home in neither.

Modi's map is bright with ambition, infrastructure and civilisational purpose. He claims to have lifted India from an era of drift into an era of execution. Roads, bridges, expressways, factories, digital payments and welfare schemes all form part of a narrative in which "stability and development at an unprecedented speed and scale" have replaced the instability and "mis-governance" of earlier regimes. What makes Modi's map attractive is not merely its optimism but its legibility. Roads lead somewhere. Airports appear where there were none. The citizen can point to a bridge, a welfare transfer, or a railway station and say: there, that is the future. The map offers destinations. It tells Indians not merely where they are, but where they are headed. Rahul Gandhi's map is dominated by institutional decay and ecological loss. He sees a democracy in which "the BJP controls the institutions of the State... the legal system... the bureaucracy... the intelligence agencies" and even the Election Commission. The distance between election and selection, he argues, is shrinking. Level playing fields are history.

Yet the difficulty for Rahul Gandhi is not that his map is necessarily false. It is that a map made entirely of hazards is difficult to follow. A traveller may wish to know where the swamps and cliffs are, but he also wants to know where the road leads. Gandhi identifies dangers that many independent observers would acknowledge, but he struggles to show citizens what lies beyond the warning signs.

You could say the problem is also one of persuasion. Rahul Gandhi, for all his courage, may never be Prime Minister; he is like the salesman who turns up at your door and tells you the vacuum cleaner he is offering probably will not work. A moment later, Modi appears with the same machine and sells you two by showing you an image of your soon-to-be spotless house. The first model requires effort—you, the citizen, must roll up your sleeves and resist, organise and demand accountability. The second offers something closer to the ideal: buy the product and trust the company. 'Bharat' was recently represented at an innovation jamboree in Nice, where the leaders of India and France jointly inaugurated 'Bharat Innovates 2026', a showcase for Indian startups and venture capital. As a reasonable citizen of this cartographic wonderland, one might be forgiven for asking: what exactly have we innovated that is not packaging and scale? Yet, the spectacle works. Modi is an effective peddler of this dream. Rahul Gandhi's latest map, outlined in his speech to the INDIA bloc partners on June 8, is harder to inhabit. He spoke of "unity and resistance" and compared today's unequal playing field to the colonial period. He may be substantially right. There is mounting evidence, from Great Nicobar to the managed dismantlement of opposition parties, that the system is skewed. Yet his own allies—Mamata Banerjee, Akhilesh Yadav and others—do not fully buy the argument that every defeat is the product of rigging.

Give-and-take shapes India-US ties

Évian encounter witnesses a transactional recalibration by PM Modi and President Trump

Manoj Joshi

The 52nd summit of the Group of Seven (G7) in Évian (France) is consequential for the world and also for India. The event has come at a time when the world, turned upside down by the Trump tornado, is trying to regain its footing. And within this storm is India's own field of turbulence with the US. That Prime Minister Narendra Modi's first meeting with US President Donald Trump since February 2025 came with a firm handshake — rather than the trademark hug — said it all. India was an outreach partner of G7 from 2003 to 2009. Later, it was again invited by France in 2019 and has since been a consistent invitee. The French connection has been special; this time round, it has seen PM Modi being given a position of prominence next to Trump and the host President Emmanuel Macron at the outreach meeting.

The G7 has a large agenda of its own — geopolitical conflicts and security, economic imbalances and supply chain disruptions, energy transition and climate change, global health and development, trade, global stability, energy issues, AI and cybersecurity. With Trump in the picture, they are hardly a politically united grouping, but the summit is an invaluable forum for world leaders, even though China and Russia are missing.

But the Indian focus has been on the Trump-Modi meeting after a 16-month period that has seen the India-US relationship reach a nadir of sorts. Relations between the two countries soured following Trump's repeated claims that he had helped broker a ceasefire between India and Pakistan in May 2025 following the four-day war. Thereafter, two tranches of tariffs, one on account of India buying Russian oil, made India among the most tariffed countries. For these reasons, Modi has been avoiding a direct meeting with Trump. He refused the US President's invitation to visit Washington DC following the 2025 G7 summit in Canada. He skipped the ASEAN summit in Kuala Lumpur. He also avoided the Gaza Peace Summit in Sharm El-Sheikh last October, hosted by Trump and Egyptian President Fattah El-Sisi. Tuesday's meeting between the two leaders was a brief encounter followed by Modi's outreach speech that Trump heard attentively sitting next to him. The two leaders had a more substantive bilateral meeting on Wednesday evening. The PM's remarks highlighted the

interconnections in a world where energy, food, health, cyber and economic security are intertwined. He said the Global South sought equal partnerships based on trust rather than a traditional donor-recipient mindset and called for lasting solutions to the regional conflicts through dialogue, diplomacy and international cooperation.

But Modi's main message for Trump was contained in his remarks on the impact of disruptions to maritime trade



through the Strait of Hormuz on the global economy. With an eye on his domestic audience, he also referred to the loss of Indian lives there. He said that the protection of seafarers was a collective responsibility since they connected nations through global trade. Modi underscored his subliminal message to Trump by declaring that "mutual trust is the most important strategic asset today."

Trump must have heard what the Prime Minister had to say, but it's unlikely that it registered with him that "trust" somehow related to him and that most Indians blame trigger-happy Americans for the death of three seafarers. As per reports, the issue of seafarers' safety was raised at the Trump-Modi meeting. With a touch of generosity, the PM claimed that India-US relations had "gained new momentum, new energy". His most important task was to get Trump to send a clear and favourable signal that both leaders were committed to sealing the first tranche of their trade deal next week. On June 23-24, American negotiators led by US Trade

Representative Jamieson Greer will meet their Indian counterparts, led by Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal, to resolve the remaining sticky issues, including those related to tariffs on agriculture, dairy and increased US energy exports to India. This will be the first tranche of their trade agreement that will set the stage for their economic relationship being firmed up through a Bilateral Trade Agreement. It is important for India to push back now against the protectionist Section 301 proceedings that have suddenly come up and could add 12.5% tariff to Indian goods. The G7 Summit and the high-powered meetings come at a time when the India-US relationship is in need of a reset. The bruises from the past 16 months — Trump's India-Pak ceasefire grandstanding, the tariff escalation, the deaths of Indian seafarers in American strikes — will not heal easily. But both sides have structural incentives to move forward. Washington needs a credible democratic partner in the Indo-Pacific as it manages its rivalry with China, and New Delhi needs American technology, capital and strategic cover as it navigates an increasingly contested neighbourhood.

The Modi-Trump bilateral at Évian was, therefore, less about warmth than about utility — a transactional recalibration by two leaders who have understood that their interests, however differently weighted, continue to converge. The immediate test will be whether the Évian encounter imparts the political momentum required for the trade negotiations to produce a workable first tranche. India enters those talks carrying a structural disadvantage: the clock is running, the Americans know it, and Washington's negotiators have shown little inclination to soften their positions on agriculture, dairy or the Section 301 proceedings.

On Wednesday, there was another not-so-good signal to India — the US Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM) will revert to its earlier name, US Pacific Command (USPACOM). It was during President Trump's first term that the name was originally changed in 2018 to signal the US commitment to an Indo-Pacific strategy. Beyond the trade deal, the larger strategic canvas matters. India's ability to position itself as an indispensable partner in spheres such as AI governance, critical minerals' supply chains and Indo-Pacific security will continue to shape the India-US relationship. But it will be on a different, more transactional and perhaps difficult plane.

Syrup prescription

Quality control remains a challenge

The Centre's decision to end the over-the-counter sale of cough syrups and other syrup-based medicines is a timely and necessary intervention. While many consumers have long treated such medicines as harmless remedies for seasonal ailments, recent events have underscored the risks of weak regulation and indiscriminate use. The move follows a series of tragedies that exposed serious lapses in drug safety. Contaminated cough syrups manufactured in India were linked to the deaths of dozens of children in countries such as Gambia, Uzbekistan and Cameroon. Closer home, reports of fatalities linked to substandard medicines have repeatedly raised questions about quality control, testing and oversight. These incidents tarnished India's reputation as a trusted supplier of affordable medicines worldwide. Many people routinely consume cough syrups without understanding their ingredients, possible side effects or interactions with other drugs. A



doctor's consultation can help ensure that treatment is appropriate and that serious underlying illnesses are not overlooked. However, tighter rules alone will not

guarantee safer outcomes. India has no shortage of regulations governing the sale of medicines, yet prescription drugs often remain easily available without proper scrutiny. The real challenge lies in enforcement. Unless pharmacies are regularly inspected and violations attract meaningful penalties, the latest notification risks becoming another well-intentioned rule with limited impact on the ground.

The government should therefore treat this measure as part of a broader effort to strengthen public health safeguards. Greater vigilance over manufacturing units, stronger state drug-control authorities, routine quality checks and public awareness campaigns are essential. Consumers, too, must move away from the culture of self-prescribing medicines for every cough and cold. The new prescription mandate is a welcome step. But its success will depend on whether it leads to a more accountable system.

A meal, a video and the weight of centuries

The Dev Samaj retreated because it feared legal consequence. Constitutional literacy campaigns can do more

Tikender Singh Panwar

Caste ostracism in the Himalayas is not a relic. It is a living system and it is fighting back. In a small settlement near Shimla in Himachal, two men sat for a meal. They ate with a Dalit family, whose member was contesting a zila parishad election. Someone recorded the meal on a phone. Someone else posted the video. Soon, it had travelled networks across the valley, and a centuries-old disciplinary machinery became operational. The two men, Sonu and Bali (names changed, along with the name of the settlement Mohri and the deity) are Khashas, the dominant caste with a big presence across Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Nepal. They had supported the Dalit candidate in an open seat, campaigned for her and broken bread with her family. In the grammar of the Dev Samaj — the deity-based social order that governs the Khasha community life — this constituted a sin grave enough to warrant social death. What followed is a story about caste in the Himalayas, about power, about which forms of life the Constitution can reach and which forms it cannot and about what it takes and costs to build a challenge from within. What makes this system durable is its organisational architecture. The Dev Samaj — the deity system — is not a vague cultural force. It is a precisely structured institution. Khasha social life is organised through clans called Khunds. Within each Khund, families form the base unit; villages are governed by a Siana, an elder whose authority is typically hereditary, drawn from one or two dominant families. Several villages together are presided over by a Jetha. Above them sits the Dev Samaj committee, headed by the Vazir, assisted by the Bhandari and the priest. Pronouncements are delivered through the gur, the oracle — who channels the deity's will. The chain is male, and exclusively Khasha. Dalits appear in this system only at its margins: carrying drums, performing menial labour, present in body but absent in voice. Here lies a crucial

fracture that is easy to miss. The Dev Samaj governs social life with near-total authority — marriage, ritual, belonging, the movement of deities through villages, the question of who may enter whose home. But it does not govern the economy. Mercantile transactions, land use, contractual relationships — these fall under constitutional jurisdiction. The Khasha will not eat with a Dalit, but he will sell to him, buy from him, employ him under the law. This split between the social and the economic is not incidental. It is what allows the system to persist: it imposes social costs of enormous gravity while leaving the material world untouched. The caste order is reproduced not through economic coercion alone but through the far more intimate coercion of belonging.

The punishment the Dev Samaj was prepared to inflict on Sonu and Bali was, in its social weight, a form of civil death. They would have been barred from entering their homes — their families, under community pressure, would have refused them. They would have been excluded from all social and religious functions: no weddings, no funerals, no communal labour. The deity's procession, which visits homes in rotation through the year to bestow blessings, would have passed their thresholds without stopping. Their children's chances of marriage within the community would have been destroyed. And over all of this hung the theological threat: those who defy the deity will perish, Gal Jana in the local tongue — and worse, those who associate with the defiant risk the same fate. The sanction is social and sacred simultaneously, which is precisely why it is so difficult to break. And yet, Sonu and Bali did not break. When the Dev Samaj committee convened and moved to censure them, both men refused to perform the ritual apology: the Naak Ragadna, the rubbing of the nose. They did something more subversive: they asked for a written show-cause notice, and for a meeting of the Desh, which is the full house

comprising all family heads. The committee understood what this meant. A written notice would constitute evidence of a parallel governance structure operating in violation of constitutional protections. It could invite criminal proceedings. The committee retreated. It tried a different route: pressuring



the gur to declare the verdict through the oracle. The gur demurred: this was a political matter, he said, not a spiritual one. It then reached out to four other Khunds, asking them to enforce the social boycott. They too declined, insisting this was an internal matter of one Khund. The outsiders visited Sonu and Bali at home. It is worth asking why these two men had the knowledge and the nerve to do what they did. The answer lies in a history that the official narrative of Himachal's peaceful hill culture tends to erase: the radical student movement that, through the 1980s and 1990s, worked in precisely these communities, building political consciousness among young Khashas, teaching them to read the Constitution as an instrument of their own liberation

rather than a distant abstraction. Sonu and Bali are, in some sense, its long-term product.

They knew that a written notice was a legal weapon. They knew which provisions of the SC and ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act could potentially be invoked. They knew that the gur's evasion and the committee's retreat were not spontaneous, but induced by the spectre of accountability. This matters enormously for the question of strategy. The caste order in the hills has survived seven decades of democracy not because the Constitution is irrelevant but because its provisions have been applied selectively, partially and only when someone knows how to invoke them. The architecture of atrocity legislation exists. What has been missing is the political formation that can make that architecture legible and usable to those it is meant to protect. This episode revives a question that Ambedkar posed and Himachali progressives have long sidestepped: can the Dev Samaj be reformed from within, or must it be confronted as a system whose foundational premise — the hierarchical ordering of human worth by birth — is incompatible with constitutional democracy?

The evidence from Mohri suggests that the answer cannot be deferred by incrementalism. The Dev Samaj did not moderate itself out of conscience. It retreated because it feared legal consequence. The moment that fear recedes, the moment the Sonus and Balis of these hills are isolated, without the backing of a political formation or the knowledge of their rights, the system reasserts itself. What Sonu and Bali demonstrated is that the system can be outmanoeuvred by those who have been politically prepared to do so. That preparation is not accidental. It is the slow, unglamorous work of building consciousness in communities where caste presents itself as a divine order. The radical student movement did some of that work. Constitutional literacy campaigns can do more.

5 workouts that don't feel like

Workouts



up to domestic help, but there is no reason for us not to make them part of our weekly routines, if only just to ingrain more activity into our busy schedules.

However, we are not suggesting that you replace regimented strength and cardio workouts with the following five activities. This post is meant to encourage daily chores or activities that offer variations in your body's activity levels, and not offer any alternatives to real workouts.

1. Clean your house:

Start with your bedroom. Rearrange furniture, pick things up, bend, squat, lift heavy things. Cleaning your house and rearranging furniture has all the elements of a good gym session though you may not even know it. This may not be a weekly routine, but it can certainly be made part of something you do on a regular basis, when you have time to yourself at home.

Not to mention, this one is truly therapeutic with good music to keep you moving.

2. Go on a hike:

This one's clearly not for people well encased within miles and

miles of metro city traffic. But perhaps even city dwellers can find some park, nearby town, or natural feature to visit over weekends? Try and incorporate hiking into your weekend activity.

Sunday's are a great day to take off outside the city and spend time hiking, climbing a hill. Take a picnic basket and soak in all the vitamin D that you have missed out on during the week.

3. Bathe your dog:

Even better, bathe your cat. If you have a larger dog, or a cat, you will know what a great exercise it is. First the battle to hold on firm, the usage of your body weight to get the upper hand, the scrubbing, the rinsing, and then the drying. All the while holding on to dear life. If this isn't a workout, then we don't know what is!

4. Play with your kids:

Anything goes. Your kids will truly love it and there will be no dearth of action. Pillow fights, go to a park and throw a ball around, go to a pool and have races, and of course ask the kids for more ideas. Physical playtime is a great workout and also an unparalleled family bonding time.

5. Walk in a mall:

Ladies, the ideal workout! For the men, a nice way to spend time in a mall while your better half disappears. Of course the idea is to walk, climb stairs, and keep a decent pace. Walking is a good exercise to stay active and to stay on your feet more.



For most of us, the word 'workout' conjures up images of sweat soaked t-shirts, bulging muscles, a gym trainer, or running shoes. This image may not be entirely real because there are a few

things you can do in your daily life, or maybe weekly life, which have the ingredients of a good workout without necessarily being one.

Many of these chores are left entirely

2. Go on a hike:

This one's clearly not for people well encased within miles and

Top 5 low-calorie Indian foods

Globally, Indian food has a reputation to be oily, spicy and heavy to digest. Is this really true?

We take a look at popular Indian dishes that are delicious and healthy at the same time. Remember that there are certain rules; you must control the levels of oil, butter, spices, cream and cheese. Find out which Indian foods come under the top 5 low-calorie Indian foods list: Buttermilk - This thick delicious dairy product goes well with any dish and is relished by family members.

Calorie intake - 30 calories per glass

Ragi dosa - A popular South Indian dish that is



made from ragi and not from rice. It is still a winner among dosa lovers.

Calorie intake - 87 calories per dosa

Oats idli - Idlis are a great way to begin your day. Again, it is a South Indian delicacy that has Indians lapping it up with hot sambar. If you are going the healthy way prepare the idlis from oats, it is healthy and a great way to start your day.

Calorie intake - 26 calories per idli

Sprouts salad - Sprouts are healthy; add a dash of sour lime and a pinch of spice and you have a great combination sprout

salad.

Calorie intake - 93 calories per 100gms



Belly fat is a return gift that our haphazard lifestyle and wrong eating habits give us. It not only destroys your image but also increases your risk to many health ailments. Try these Ayurveda tips to lose the fat deposits around your belly.

Start your day with lemon juice:

This is one of the best therapies to eliminate belly fat. Pinch some yellow juice into a glass of warm water and add some salt to it. Continue drinking this every morning to boost your metabolism and to get rid of that paunch.

Stay off from white rice:

Replace white rice with various wheat products. Include brown rice, brown bread, wholegrains, oats and quinoa in your diet.

Avoid sugary substances:

Stay away from sweets, sweetened drinks and foods rich in oil. Consuming these foods can increase body fat around various areas of your body like abdomen and thighs.

Drink plenty of water:



If you want to get rid of your belly, then drink sufficient amount of water every day. Drinking water, after regular intervals will help to boost your metabolism and remove toxins from your body.

Eat raw garlic:

Chew two to three cloves of garlic every morning, and drink a glass of lemon water after that. This treatment will double up your weight loss process and make your blood circulation smooth in your body.

Avoid non-veg food:

To eliminate belly fat, it is recommended that one should avoid

Top 8 home remedies to reduce Belly fat

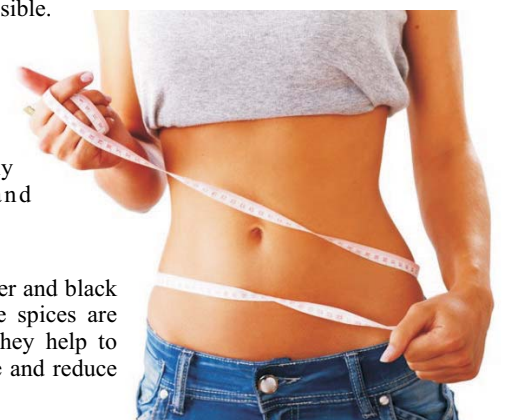
non-vegetarian food as far as possible.

Load up on fruits and vegetables:

Eat a bowl of fruits daily in the morning and evening. This will fill you up with many antioxidants, minerals and vitamins.

Spice up your cooking:

Use spices like cinnamon, ginger and black pepper in your cooking. These spices are loaded with health benefits. They help to improve your insulin resistance and reduce levels of sugar in your blood.



Combat dehydration with home-made Flavoured water

So do you think your eight glasses of water can be substituted with coffee, tea, milk or other beverages? Well, experts say that all kinds of drinks and fluids do the job of hydrating our body to some extent, but there are some that could work otherwise, due to the components they have. You need to choose hydrating fluids that are not just healthy and low in calories, but are also full of flavours which prompt you to reach out for them throughout the day. Here is a list...

Water

Pure water is one of the best hydrants. But since it is tasteless, adding flavour might compel you to reach out for it frequently.

Flavoured water

This is great for replenishing your dehydrated body during hot summer months. Flavoured water helps to refresh and revitalise you, thanks to the fresh herbs and fruit pieces they are infused with.

Iced tea

You could try sipping on herbal iced teas made with pre-flavoured water. Herbs and flavours like mint, chamomile, cardamom, jasmine, verbena etc., can add a pleasant aroma and make the drink a refreshing one.

Fresh juices

Juices of fresh fruits and vegetables have a host of nutritional

benefits but they have unwanted calories and high concentration of sugars too. So, if you want to avoid calories, opt for fruit waters with minimal calorific value.

Caffeinated drinks

If you have coffee, tea, and drinks that have caffeine frequently during the day, it increases your toxin content. So you must have ample water along with these drinks to eliminate the toxins through urination and perspiration.

Herbs, fruit flavour and juice infused H₂O is one of the best bets when it comes to quenching your thirst

Do It Yourself

-You will need filtered pure water Herbs that complement your chosen fruits

-For maximum flavour and sweetness pick the best quality, ripe fruits n You will need pitchers or large glasses to steep fruits Wooden spoon to mash and mix fruits and herbs in your pitcher n Place chosen ingredients in a pitcher and mash them very lightly with a wooden spoon. n Top with water and let it stand for a few hours before serving.

-Use sliced lime, mint leaves, two drops of ginger juice and lemon juice

-Strawberry slices, mint leaves, and a few drops of lemon juice

-Sliced cucumber, lemon, lemon juice and a pinch of cinnamon powder



Tips to stop biting your nails

- If nothing works, try applying a deterrent like a neem paste or black pepper.
- Get rid of the habit by wearing a wrist band and keep snapping it each time you have the urge to bite your nails.



Some people have a horrible habit of biting their nails. It not only damages your nails but teeth as well. Here are a few tips to get rid of this habit.

- Cut your nails from time to time. This way you will have short nails and you won't have anything to bite!
- Be committed at letting go of this habit. Keep a reminder on your phone or put up sticky notes in front of your desk. They do help.
- Get a manicure often. Will you have the heart to bite those pretty nails, now?
- Cut your nails from time to time. This way you will have short nails and you won't have anything to bite!
- Be committed at letting go of this habit. Keep a reminder on your phone or put up sticky notes in front of your desk. They do help.
- Get a manicure often. Will you have the heart to bite those pretty nails, now?

Is your metabolism lagging behind? Here's what will help

Don't be under the impression that you cannot boost your metabolism. While it is true that ageing slows it down, you can improve it with these effective tips...

- Depending upon the workout you're doing, increase the pace in the middle of the routine for about 30 seconds to a minute. This results in your body burning more energy because you inhale more oxygen.

- Pay attention to your diet. Ensure that you consume lots of foods that are rich in omega-3 fatty acids because they not only lower inflammation in the body but also keep blood sugar levels in check.

- Don't shirk away from building muscle. Women assume that weight training will give them unsightly muscles, so they prefer other forms of workout. Experts, however, say that muscles use more energy and hence should be a part of your workout.

- Green tea is known for its antioxidant properties and one of the ingredients present in it — catechin — is said to boost metabolism.

- Don't embark on a strict diet because

that gives a signal to your body to start saving energy and this, in turn, lowers how fast it burns fat. Instead, make sure you eat the right things in the right amount.

- Never ever skip your breakfast. In fact, make sure that it is packed with essential nutrients that will keep you going till lunchtime. This will also ensure that your metabolism stays on track.

- Instead of eating three large meals a day, break them up into several smaller ones. This will keep hunger pangs at bay, ensure you don't overeat and also keep your blood levels in check, which results in better metabolism.

- Some studies also recommend you switch to organic products to rev up your metabolism. This is because foods that are grown naturally, without the use of pesticides, ensure that your metabolism runs at full gear without allowing your body to get affected by harmful toxins. And instead of piling your plate with carbs and fats, opt for protein, which keeps you full far longer.



Yoga can be helpful in prevention and management of type 2 diabetes mellitus in adults, scientific reviews of over 25 trials conducted globally shows.

Systematic reviews of trials conducted on Indians as well as Americans show yoga can help control blood sugar levels, improve the lipid profile and manage body weight, all of which can be very effective in preventing type 2 diabetes. The reviews were recently published in two international medical journals - Elsevier and the Journal of Diabetes Research.

"Findings suggest yogic practices may promote significant improvements in several indices of importance in DM2 (type 2 diabetes) management, including glycaemic control, lipid levels and body composition," said a review published in Journal of Diabetes Research. Analysis of data from these trials suggest that yoga may also lower oxidative stress and blood pressure, enhance pulmonary and autonomic

Yoga may help to control Diabetes



function, mood, sleep and quality of life. With regular practice, yoga can also reduce medication use in adults with type 2 diabetes.

However, the reviews suggested because of the methodological limitations of existing studies, additional high-quality investigations are required to confirm and further elucidate the potential benefits of yoga in diabetics.

Doctors say yoga can be considered as an add-on intervention for management of diabetes. However, currently it cannot replace moderate intensity aerobic exercises prescribed to diabetic patients as more scientific evidence is required. "If ancient yogic practices (diet, yogic asanas, simple way of life) are performed, it will benefit any lifestyle disease. However, currently yoga has to pass through more rigorous scientific scrutiny before any definitive recommendations can be made regarding adding to mainline therapy," said Dr Anoop Misra, chairman, Fortis-C-DOC Centre of Excellence for Diabetes. The health ministry has also commissioned similar large-scale studies in India through S-VYASA, an Indian university for Yoga.



Security ramped up in Delhi ahead of 2nd Cockroach party protest at Jantar Mantar

The CJP protest led by founder Abhijeet Dipke will begin at 1 pm, with supporters expected from Delhi and neighbouring states after authorities approved the demonstration.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Heavy security arrangements have been put in place across Delhi ahead of the Cockroach Janta Party's second protest at Jantar Mantar on Saturday, with police deploying extensive surveillance and crowd-control measures, officials said.

The protest, led by CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke, is scheduled to begin at 1 pm. Supporters are expected to arrive from different parts of Delhi and neighbouring states, and authorities have granted permission for the demonstration, officials said. CCTV cameras have been installed in and around the protest venue to monitor the gathering in real time. Around 270 body-worn cameras will also be used by police personnel deployed at the site to ensure transparency and document proceedings, according to officials. Delhi Police videographers have also been stationed at the venue to record the protest and track

developments on the ground, they said. Multiple layers of barricades have been placed around Jantar Mantar and



adjoining roads, while vehicles are being checked at key entry and exit points across the city as part of preventive measures.

Senior Delhi Police officers, including top brass, have been assigned field duties to oversee the arrangements and ensure law and order, police sources said. Reserve forces have also been kept on standby to deal with any untoward situation.

"Delhi Police has made adequate arrangements, and we appeal to protesters to maintain peace and cooperate with law enforcement," a senior officer said.

The Special Branch is keeping a close watch on developments at the protest site as well as related activity on social media, officials said.

Security has also been tightened at major transport hubs, including the Indira Gandhi International Airport, railway stations, interstate bus terminals and border points, as a precautionary

measure.

Traffic diversions have been planned in parts of central Delhi depending on the size of the gathering, while metro services are continuing normally, officials added.

On June 15, Dipke was slapped multiple times and manhandled by miscreants while he was being carried on supporters' shoulders during a protest in Jaipur.

The CJP began as a satirical online campaign after remarks made by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant during a court hearing last month. It has since grown into an organised protest platform and drawn considerable traction on social media. In sum, the second CJP protest at Jantar Mantar is set to take place under heavy security, with police putting in place surveillance, barricading and traffic measures while keeping transport hubs under close watch.

First women police station in Delhi, L-G says milestone

New Delhi.(Agency)

In a bid to strengthen women's safety, Lieutenant Governor Sardar Taranjit Singh Sandhu inaugurated the capital's first-ever dedicated Women Police Station (WPS) in Subzi Mandi, North District, on Thursday.

The newly established police station will exclusively handle cases involving crimes against women and children across North District, including cases of domestic violence, dowry harassment, sexual assault, molestation, stalking, rape and other related offences. The station started functioning as a full-fledged police station from June 19, with the existing Crime Against Women Cell of North District subsumed under it. The lieutenant governor called the initiative a "significant milestone," while adding that the true success of the station would not be measured by the number of cases investigated, but by the confidence it inspires among women and girls.

"A safe environment empowers women to participate fully in education, employment, entrepreneurship and public life," Sandhu said. He added that ensuring women's safety is a shared responsibility of both the law enforcement agencies and the society.

The station is designed as a women-and-child-friendly facility and will provide a supportive environment for complainants. Furthermore, it will be predominantly staffed by women police personnel who are trained to handle cases with sensitivity and professionalism.

Delhi Police Commissioner Satish Golchha highlighted the force's four-pronged strategy for women's safety—prevention, protection, prompt investigation and participation.

He further pointed out that the Delhi Police has strengthened its women-centric initiatives through 116 Pink Booths, all-women PCR vans and self-defence training programmes that have reached over 3 million women and girls in the city. Officials said the Women's Police Station is expected to serve as a model for gender-sensitive and victim-centric policing in the capital.

CISF returns Rs 22.77 lakh lost valuables, reunites 69 children in Delhi Metro

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) has recovered and returned lost valuables worth more than Rs 22.77 lakh, reunited 69 missing children with their families, and intercepted five weapon-related security violations in the Delhi Metro during the first six months of this year.

The figures, released by the CISF's Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) unit on Friday, highlight the force's role in maintaining security across the Capital's mass transit network while also assisting thousands of passengers through lost-and-found services, emergency response and humanitarian interventions.



According to operational data released by the CISF DMRC unit, its personnel intercepted five attempts to carry prohibited weapons into the

Metro system since the beginning of the year. During routine security screening, CISF teams recovered four firearms and one round of live ammunition, preventing the items from entering the transit network.

The recoveries made by the security personnel included Rs 15.77 lakh in cash, a bank cheque worth Rs 7 lakh, and foreign currencies such as British pounds, Nepalese rupees, Singapore dollars and Indonesian rupiah. In addition, the forces found and returned a range of personal belongings, including gold jewellery, silver ornaments, 32 laptops, 68 mobile phones and nine watches. CISF personnel were also involved in humanitarian interventions.

Walking a fundamental right: Supreme Court wants footpaths for all roads

New Delhi.(Agency)

In a landmark judgment, the Supreme Court on Friday declared that the right to walk on safe and demarcated footpaths is a fundamental right guaranteed under Articles 19 and 21 of the Constitution, holding that it takes precedence over the privilege of motorised vehicles on public roads.

A Bench comprising Justice PS Narasimha and Justice AS Chandurkar ruled that public authorities have an enforceable duty to provide and maintain footpaths wherever roads exist. "If a road exists, there must then be a duty to ensure that a footpath is demarcated and maintained for the walkers. This is an enforceable duty. The fundamental right to walk on demarcated footpaths shall override the privilege of a motorised vehicle,"

the Court said. The Bench observed that Indian cities have historically prioritised motorised transport over pedestrians, leaving walkers vulnerable and marginalised. It



described the lack of safe and accessible footpaths as a "civilisational problem" and noted that urban planning has long focused on vehicles at the expense of human movement. Stressing that common public spaces cannot be monopolised

by motorists, the Court said the freedom to walk is a constitutional guarantee, subject only to reasonable restrictions. It added that pedestrians have increasingly been treated as a nuisance on roads dominated by vehicles. This should stop from now on as we declare the fundamental right to walk on demarcated footpaths alongside motorised roads," the Bench stated.

The Court identified Urban Development Authorities, Municipal Corporations, Municipalities and Panchayats as the primary duty-bearers responsible for creating and maintaining pedestrian infrastructure. It further held that citizens can seek legal remedies if authorities fail to provide safe walking spaces, apart from claiming compensation.

'Conflicts of interest': CJI urged to re-look at Aravalli panel composition

New Delhi.(Agency)

Acclaimed scientists, environmentalists, policy experts, bureaucrats, and conservation organisations across the country have submitted at least 10 letters in the past two days to the Chief Justice of India seeking modifications to the new Aravalli committee composition. In the letters, the authors alleged that the new committee is biased, has conflicts of interest, and lacks independent domain experts. They demand that the committee be expanded with a broader range of expertise in fields of environmental science, ecology, hydrology, public health, and livelihood issues.

Constituted on May 25, 2026, the new committee is headed by Kanchan

Devi, director general of the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE). Its members include Dr Subhash Ashutosh, former Director General of the Forest Survey of India; Dr Rajendra Kumar Sharma,



former Director of the Geological Survey of India; Brij Mohan Singh Rathore, former Joint Secretary, MoEFCC; and Ashok K Bhatnagar, former Head of Botany at DU. They report to the secretary of the Union

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. The same secretary's committee had previously defined the Aravalli Hills as any landform that rises 100m or more above local terrain. This definition permits mining and was the basis for the SC's final order, which has faced significant criticism.

Prakruti Srivastava, former IFS officer, writes in her letter to the CJI, "The head of the ICFRE reports directly to the Secretary, MoEFCC, and is therefore unlikely to be able to take an impartial view of a report prepared by a committee chaired by the same secretary. Given that the incumbent holds the post of secretary, MoEFCC, they may be in a position to influence the new report, raising a serious conflict of interest."

Top ex-health official in Delhi ACB net in medical procurement scam

Dr Vinod Kumar Ranga was arrested over alleged tender irregularities involving medicines and equipment purchases; over 100 officers may face scrutiny.

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Delhi government's Anti-Corruption Branch (ACB) has arrested Dr Vinod Kumar Ranga, a senior officer formerly associated with the Directorate General of Health Services, in a corruption case linked to medicine and medical equipment procurement. The arrest follows a probe into alleged irregularities in purchases made by the Central Procurement Agency (CPA), where Dr Ranga served as head of office.

Sources indicated that over 100 doctors and officers could end up under scrutiny. More than 20 doctors have already been questioned. The investigation spans multiple committees involved in the procurement process, including the Specifications Committee, GeM Bid Formation Committee, Pre-Qualification Evaluation Committee, Technical Evaluation Committee, Price Bid Evaluation Committee and Justification Committee.

These panels comprised heads of departments, senior specialists, professors, associate professors and junior faculty members from government hospitals and medical colleges.

A complaint from the Directorate of Vigilance alleged that certain public servants and private individuals entered into a criminal conspiracy to manipulate procurement procedures, tender conditions and technical specifications to favour selected firms and suppliers, causing huge loss to the government exchequer.

According to investigators, the irregularities involved the procurement of portable X-ray machines, bed sheets and linen items, radiological equipment, anaesthesia workstations, oral rehydration solution (ORS), surgical consumables and medicines at highly inflated rates.

Custodial interrogation necessary to recover missing files, says agency

Tailor-made specifications were allegedly drafted to benefit preferred suppliers, genuine competitors were excluded from the bidding process, and substantial government funds were misused. The ACB registered an FIR on June 2 under the Prevention of Corruption Act and the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. Officials examined procurement records and other documentary evidence during the investigation. The probe found that several key procurement files linked to the purchases under scrutiny were allegedly withheld by Dr Ranga, who is accused of keeping them in his personal custody.

MCD to roll out zero-waste plan across nine Delhi hospitals to cut landfill burden

New Delhi.(Agency)

Civic hospitals are set to see a major boost in waste management as the Municipal Corporation of Delhi is preparing to launch a zero-waste-to-landfill initiative across nine major healthcare facilities.

Zero waste to landfill is a waste management strategy that aims to eliminate the disposal of waste materials in landfills by recycling and reusing the waste products.

The civic body has just completed its baseline waste-management surveys at four of its hospitals and has identified pathways to strengthen segregation, resource recovery, composting and recycling systems within healthcare facilities.

As per data available on the Delhi government website, the capital city generates 13641.22 kg of biomedical

waste per day. This comes from around 2070 healthcare establishments in the city.

Officials said, the project is being undertaken with technical support from a women-led non-profit organisation working in sustainable waste management. It aims to ensure that waste generated at hospitals is scientifically managed through source segregation, on-site processing of organic waste and recovery of recyclable material, thereby reducing burden on the landfill sites.

Speaking on this matter, a senior MCD official said, "The objective is to create a model that can be sustained and replicated. The surveys have helped identify hospital-specific requirements

and the interventions needed to move towards a zero-waste-to-landfill framework." The baseline surveys were



conducted between April and May and covered Hindu Rao Hospital, Maharishi Valmiki Sankraman Rog Hospital

(MVID), Mata Gujri Hospital and Swami Dayanand Hospital. Together, these facilities generate around 1,700 kg of solid waste every day, the survey revealed.

The assessment focused on waste generation patterns, existing infrastructure, manpower deployment, processing capacity and opportunities for improving segregation and resource recovery at the facilities, officials informed.

They further mentioned, "The hospitals already have the basic infrastructure required for better waste management. The next phase will focus on strengthening systems, training personnel and institutionalising best practices so that maximum waste can be diverted from landfill sites."

BHAVINI holds industry conclave to advance fast breeder reactor expansion

New Delhi.(Agency)

In a bid to lay the groundwork for the next phase of the Fast Breeder Reactor (FBR) programme and widen its industrial supplier base, Bharatiya Nabhikiya Vidyut Nigam Limited (BHAVINI), a company under the department of atomic energy convened manufacturers, engineering firms and technology partners at Mahabalipuram on Friday.

PA Suresh Babu, BHAVINI's chairman and managing director, told delegates that the project's progress owed much to the same model that underpinned India's earlier reactor fleets: close coordination between nuclear institutions and domestic suppliers, paired with consistent quality and safety standards.



The conclave was held shortly after the Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) achieved criticality, marking a significant milestone in India's nuclear energy programme.

Discussions centred on the challenges of scaling up the Fast Breeder Reactor programme, including the creation of new manufacturing capacity, increasing the domestic production of critical components, and strengthening quality assurance across an expanding supply chain. Participants also examined ways to ensure sustained engagement from both public- and private-sector enterprises, addressing a longstanding challenge in large-scale nuclear projects that span several decades.

Officials from BHAVINI and the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR), the programme's principal research institution, outlined the roadmap for future reactor projects while reviewing the development and key milestones of the PFBR.

Nifty, Sensex post nearly 1.7% weekly gain over hopes of US-Iran peace pact

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Indian equity benchmarks posted second consecutive week of strong gains, over investor optimism about improved geopolitical situation following the US-Iran peace agreement, and decline in Brent crude prices. Nifty added 1.65 per cent during the week and lost 0.64 per cent on the last trading day to reach 24,013. At close, Sensex was down 607 points or 0.78 per cent at 76,802. It added 1.69 per cent during the week.

Domestic markets witnessed consolidation on the last trading day of the week largely dragged by a sharp sell-off in IT stocks after recent three sessions of benchmark gains.

Brent crude, which dipped below the \$80 per barrel level on hopes of a potential US-Iran peace agreement, saw a sudden halt in price decline after abrupt cancellations of peace talks and profit booking toward the close of the week.

The rupee strengthened by roughly 79 paise during the week to around 94.35 per dollar. The improved geopolitical backdrop is expected to lend support to market sentiment next week, analysts said.

A 14-point US-Iran MoU signed during the week included the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, removal of the naval blockade and restoration of commercial shipping. On the sectoral front, consumer durables, real estate, pharma and defence were notable gainers. Defence sector rallied 6.6 per cent over the past week, supported by strong underlying fundamentals, market participants said.

Accenture's weak Q3, West Asia conflict impact cloud FY27 start for Indian IT

New Delhi.(Agency)

Accenture's Q3FY26 miss is likely to cast a shadow over Indian IT peers as the start to FY27 looks softer, with delayed deal closures and prolonged client decision cycles emerging as key concerns, Prabhudas Lilladher said in a research report.

According to the brokerage, Accenture's Q3 revenue growth came in below consensus estimates, while bookings were weaker than anticipated due to delayed closure of large deals amid disruptions caused by the Middle East conflict. The company's management highlighted a US\$100mn revenue impact in Q3FY26 from the Middle East conflict, with continued disruption expected in Q4FY26, leading to a 100bps reduction in the upper end of its FY26 revenue growth guidance. The impact was also visible in bookings, particularly within managed services, where several large deals were deferred into FY27, highlighting elongated decision-making cycles.

For Indian IT services companies, the read-through is incrementally negative, the brokerage said. "For Indian IT services companies, the read-through is incrementally negative as the results suggest a softer start to FY27, with limited direct revenue exposure to the Middle East but potential indirect impact through delayed deal closures, slower project ramp-ups and prolonged client decision cycles," PL Research noted.

Accenture reported Q3 revenue growth of 3 per cent YoY in constant currency, driven by the CMT segment and APAC region. Managed services growth moderated to 5 per cent YoY CC, with deal wins softening to USD 9.1bn, down 15 per cent YoY vs USD 10.8bn in Q2. Overall bookings saw marginal degrowth at USD 19.3 billion, down 3 per cent year-on-year in constant currency terms, while consulting bookings stayed strong at USD 10.3 billion, up 13 per cent year-on-year.

Buying home jointly? Know the risk behind a few benefits before investing

Personal finance advisers often highlight the benefits of buying a home jointly. Indeed, there are a few. But there are also a few risks. One must know all of them before investing. It takes hell of a lot of money.

New Delhi.(Agency)

There are a few tangible benefits that a joint ownership of a home confers on the buyers. Among these are higher loan eligibility and possibly lower EMI repayment obligations. Therefore, one can decide on buying larger properties, get tax benefits and benefit from stamp duty exemptions. However, there are it also comes with a few risks. One must be aware of these before one takes a decision

to invest. After all, decisions must be based on a clear understanding of all pros and cons. Buying a home — be it building a house on a plot of land or purchasing a stand-alone house or buying an apartment — is perhaps the biggest financial decision of most of us. Property prices are rising and the amount of home loans is rising too. Therefore, the urge to go for joint purchase of property is an attractive option.

What is joint ownership

A property is said to be owned jointly when it is registered in the name of more than one person. It describes the rights and responsibilities of all co-owners.

In India, spouses, family members, or business partners often purchase real estate on these lines. When a property is purchased jointly, the financial burden is shared among the number of owners.

Usually, the cost of repairing the property, upkeep and other expenses too are shared among co-owners. In a few states, women co-owners are entitled to stamp duty exemptions. It reduces overall cost of the

former.

Risks of co-owned property

Despite the benefits, joint ownership of a property also comes with challenges. Joint ownership automatically indicates joint decision making and often this becomes a trouble spot. It means the owners have to concur on decisions to sell, rent or make any change to the property. Even if it has to be offered as a collateral for raising loans, the co-owners have to come to a single decision. In case of disagreements, no actions can be taken for anything — renting out to selling it off. Or even painting a piece of real estate or repairing it becomes a trouble. There are other points too. If a piece of real estate is purchased through a home loan, all co-borrowers are responsible for repaying instalments. If one defaults, it can lead to problems for all applicants since they can all suffer.



property. Now if the property is rented out, the proceeds are divided among co-owners, often at a pro-rata basis. If the co-owners happen to be in the same family, ownership often passes directly from one co-owner to another in the case of death of

Education loan: Compare interest rates, other terms of major banks before applying

New Delhi.(Agency)

Rising education costs are often beyond the reach of families to fund without opting for a loan. Therefore, a lot of families enquire about education loans from banks. Like all loans, education loans vary from lender to lender on quite a few parameters. Obviously the most prominent of these is the rate of interest it charges. There are also other parameters to be checked like moratorium period offered to the student for him/her to find a rewarding job and start repayment of the loan.

Source of empowerment

Education loans can be a great source of empowerment for families who do not have enough savings/surplus income to fund the higher education of its son or daughter. Prominent public and private sector banks come forward to fill the funding gap by offering loans at competitive interest rates. Like all other



loans, the lenders sanction loan depending on the applicant's profile and particulars of the institution and course for which the student is seeking admission, credit score, repayment capacity and other factors. Obviously the focus of the lender is to get the repayment instalments within the due dates without any EMIs being missed or delayed.

There are a few points that every applicant of education loan should keep

in mind, according to personal finance advisers. The first is obvious. One should not rush to the nearest lender to finalise a loan. One has to compare interest rates since even a small difference in interest rates can significantly alter the total repayment amount. One should also read the fine print of the repayment terms and moratorium. It should be especially enquired if the lending institution provides sufficient grace period after completion of the course to find a rewarding job. Like the interest rate, one also has to review processing fees, charges and other expenses since all education loans are accompanied by hidden fees, prepayment charges, processing fees and other associated expenses. One should also understand collateral requirements as some loans may require collateral for security reasons.

Royal Enfield Flying Flea C6 deliveries begin: Check on-road price, range, battery and other details

The Flying Flea C6 costs Rs 2.79 lakh (ex-showroom) if you buy it outright. Riders who want to save money upfront can instead opt for the Battery-as-a-Service (BaaS) plan, which brings the price down to Rs 1.99 lakh.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Royal Enfield's electric mobility brand, Flying Flea, started handing over its first motorcycle, the C6, to customers in Bengaluru on June 19, 2026. The Flying Flea C6 marks the brand's entry into India's electric two-wheeler space, and the company is rolling it out one city at a time, with Bengaluru leading before other cities get their turn.

The launch is important for buyers because it offers a pricing option that can reduce the amount they need to pay

upfront to own an electric motorcycle. The Flying Flea C6 costs Rs 2.79 lakh (ex-showroom) if you buy it outright. Riders who want to save money upfront can instead opt for the Battery-as-a-Service (BaaS) plan, which separates the battery cost from

3.91kWh battery pack and has a claimed range of up to 154km on a single charge. It can go from 0 to 100% in around 2 hours and 15 minutes. It uses a permanent magnet synchronous motor that produces 15.4kW of power and 60Nm of torque. According to Royal Enfield, the electric motorcycle can accelerate from 0 to 60kph in 3.7 seconds and reach a top speed of 115kph. The bike weighs 124kg, making it lighter than many motorcycles currently on sale in India.

Royal Enfield Flying Flea C6: Safety and tech

It comes with dual-channel ABS and traction control as standard safety features. It also gets a 3.5-inch circular colour TFT display that shows riding and trip information. Riders can choose from five riding modes, while adjustable regenerative braking allows them to change how much energy is recovered during deceleration.



the vehicle and brings the price down to Rs 1.99 lakh. The bike comes in two colour options: Storm Black and Flea Green.

Royal Enfield Flying Flea C6: Battery, range and performance
The Flying Flea C6 is powered by a

IPO king size: Jio Platforms valued at \$137 billion, to mobilise about Rs 37,700 crore

Nothing about the Jio Platforms IPO is small. The draft papers filed with Sebi mentions the value of the company at \$137 billion and the issue is designed to raise Rs 37,000 crore, making it the largest Indian IPO.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Jio Platforms filed its DRHP (draft red herring prospectus) to raise Rs 37,700 crore and announcing a valuation of \$137 billion, dwarfing the NSE IPO, for which the initial papers were submitted on June 17, and snatching the title of "the biggest IPO" from NSE within 72 hours. According to the draft papers, Jio Platforms can issue up to 27 crore new shares, which will mark about 2.9% of its post-issue equity capital.

"The proposed listing of Jio will demonstrate to the world that India can build technology companies of global scale, global capability, and global value,"

Reliance Chairman Mukesh Ambani said at the company's annual shareholder meeting. It will be the first IPO from the Reliance group in about 20 years. With IPOs such as NSE and Jio Platforms hitting the market, the stock market might feel a shot in the arm if the US-Iran truce becomes durable.

Issue price band

Jio Platforms issue price will be determined through a book-building process, the common route of declaring a price band which almost all IPOs opt for now. Investors bid for the shares within the band. Meta and Google feature among the largest foreign investors, apart from private equity funds such as KKR, Silver Lake, Vista Equity Partners, General Atlantic and sovereign wealth funds such as Mubadala, Abu Dhabi Investment Authority and Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund. Reliance Industries currently owns 66.43% of Jio Platforms.

Use of IPO proceeds

The proceeds of the issue will be

substantially used to repay debt to its telecom subsidiary, Reliance Jio Infocomm. The outstanding loans have ballooned to Rs 71,529 crore. "An aggregate amount of up to Rs 27,500 crore from the net proceeds is proposed to be

At the end of FY26, Jio's telecom unit had 52.44 crore subscribers including 26.85 crore users on its 5G network, the DRHP mentioned. In FY26, the workforce went down about 21% Y-o-Y to stand at 27,935. Jio was launched in 2016 and it is known

as a price warrior in the market. Jio plans to accelerate the adoption of its JioTrue5G network and will push India's role in the development of 6G standards.

The document also said that it will expand high-speed broadband access through JioAirFiber, its fixed wireless access service. It will also try to digitise small and medium-sized businesses through products such as JioPC, which is a cloud computing service delivered via a set-top box. Jio has also launched Jio Intelligence. It is a wholly-owned subsidiary which intends to increase access to AI services through large-scale data centre infrastructure and edge computing capabilities. Earlier in the year, Mukesh Ambani had said that his company will make AI as cheap as data. Jio Platforms will be the primary.



utilised towards prepayment, in full or in part, of the principal amount outstanding of certain borrowings availed by RJIL," the DRHP mentioned.

Jio Platforms business

In FY26, Jio Platforms posted a net profit of Rs 30,000 crore on a revenue of Rs 1.47 lakh crore.

Short news

Leopard attacks dog inside IIT-Bombay campus

Mumbai.(Agency)

An adult leopard was seen on CCTV footage attacking a dog inside the IIT-Bombay campus in Powai in the wee hours of Friday.

A resident lecturer informed that the leopard came inside a staff hostel at around 2.30 am and attacked a local community dog, and later dragged it away towards the bushes.

No humans were harmed in this



incident. The honorary wildlife warden and founder of RAWW NGO, Pawan Sharma, said: "We will have to get further details about this leopard sighting from the campus security. Leopards are often sighted at the Powai campus over the years because the Sanjay Gandhi National Park is quite close by."

Sharma added that they are in regular touch with the IIT-B administration in order to advise them about various precautions to be taken in case of a human-wildlife encounter.

Earlier this year, a leopard was also seen at Raheja Heights complex in Dindoshi, and at Wagle industrial estate in Thane. Leopards often come out towards human settlements late at night in order to hunt for food.

Vigilance raids find Koraput engineer with 14 acre land, 49 plots

BHUBANESWAR/JEYPORE.(Agency)

Vigilance on Friday unearthed assets worth crores of rupees including two farmhouses spread over 14 acre land and 49 high-value plots from the possession of an assistant executive engineer posted in Kotpad block of Koraput district.

The anti-corruption agency raided seven properties linked to Satyanarayan Sethy in Koraput, Khurda and Kendrapara districts to ascertain his disproportionate assets. During the searches, Sethy and his family members were found to own two farmhouses at Taragaon in Borigumma.

While one farmhouse, spanning 10 acre land, was being used for cultivation of mango and eucalyptus, another 4.35 acre farmhouse was being used for eucalyptus plantation. Sethy's parental house in Derabis of Kendrapara district, and his government quarter and office chamber in Kotpad were also raided.

The official was also found in possession of 49 plots under Jeypore, Borigumma, Kotpad and Pottangi tehsils, one 2 BHK flat in capital city's Jatni area and another 2 BHK flat in Jeypore. Deposits to the tune of Rs 60.92 lakh, household articles worth Rs 5.52 lakh, cash amounting to Rs 5.48 lakh besides 940 gram gold and 2.5 kg silver were also seized from him. "Initial investigation revealed out of the total plots belonging to Sethy, 17 are benami which he had purchased in the names of his relatives.

Pollutants in groundwater threaten drinking water sources in several districts in Telangana

HYDERABAD.(Agency)

Improved groundwater levels across Telangana have not translated into safer drinking water. Despite groundwater rising in 98% of monitored wells following excess rainfall and strong recharge, the latest assessment by the groundwater department has found persistent fluoride and nitrate contamination across several districts.

The report recorded fluoride levels as high as 13.9 mg/l in Mancherial district and nitrate concentrations of 697 mg/l in Nizamabad and 683 mg/l in Kamareddy. According to World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines, the permissible limits are 1.5 mg/l for fluoride and 50 mg/l for nitrate in drinking water.

A report by the Ministry of Jal Shakti further revealed that 28 districts in Telangana have excess fluoride, while 32 of the state's 33 districts exceed safe nitrate limits, making Telangana the third-worst state in the country for nitrate pollution.

The assessment, based on more than 2,200 groundwater samples collected during pre- and post-monsoon seasons, found contamination from fluoride, nitrate and salinity in several parts of the state.

Fluoride contamination remains one of Telangana's most significant groundwater quality concerns. Affected districts include Nalgonda, Rangareddy, Siddipet, Yadadri Bhuvanagiri, Hanamkonda, Jangaon, Bhadradi Kothagudem, and parts of Nagarkurnool and Mahbubnagar. Fluoride concentrations ranged from 0.01 mg/l in Komaram Bheem Asifabad district to 13.9 mg/l in Mancherial during the pre-monsoon season.

Kerala Budget: Mission Samudra pitches state as a global maritime hub

KOCHI.(Agency)

The budget proposal to launch 'Mission Samudra', a visionary project aimed at elevating the state into a formidable power on the global maritime map within the next five years, has found favour with the leading players in the maritime sector. The mission proposes to integrate Kerala's 600-kilometre coastline, two international seaports, a container transshipment terminal, 17 non-major ports, and numerous other aquatic resources.

The project -- aimed at positioning Kerala as a cohesive 'Port City' -- will integrate the road, sea, rail, and inland waterway networks with manufacturing zones and greenfield cities, thereby fundamentally transforming the state into a thriving maritime economy. Chief Minister V D Sathesnan, who also handles the finance portfolio, has set aside Rs 400 crore in the

budget for Mission Samudra.

The budget proposes to expedite the Balamapuram-Vizhinjam underground railway and the Vizhinjam-Navaikulam



Outer Ring Road projects to provide road and rail connectivity for the Vizhinjam Transshipment Terminal. Manufacturing zones, stuffing centres, and dry ports will be established in the vicinity of the Vizhinjam and Kochi ports.

Capitalising on the global shipping industry's transition toward eco-friendly fuels, Vizhinjam will be developed as India's primary port offering green bunkering services.

A shipbuilding hub dedicated to the construction and maintenance of mother ships will also be established. The requisite land will be acquired, and the necessary infrastructure will be developed to support these ventures. A specific percentage of the employment opportunities generated through these initiatives will be reserved for coastal communities, the chief minister said in the budget speech.

The government will formulate a comprehensive 'Kerala Maritime Policy' to catalyse the development of the state's four primary non-major ports -- Vizhinjam-Kovalam, Kollam, Bepore and Azhikkal. This policy will promote seaborne freight transport, port-led industries, logistics, and allied shipping activities.

Ahead of monsoon, BMC orders 24-hr pothole fix

Mumbai.(Agency)

BMC has directed its ward-level officials to ensure that all pothole-related complaints in the city are resolved within 24 hours.

Additional municipal commissioner (projects) Abhijit Bangar instructed engineers to make sure that potholes are repaired strictly as per the prescribed technical standards and quality norms, and that damaged road patches are resurfaced without delay. The directions were issued during a review meeting of the roads and traffic department at the civic headquarters on Friday. According to BMC, nearly 1,700km of the total 2,000km of roads in Mumbai have already been concretised. Remaining stretches are currently under progress and are scheduled for completion after the monsoon, said officials.



damage instead of waiting for citizens' complaints. Each of the 227 appointed beat engineers has been tasked with daily field visits to ensure timely pothole detection and repairs. The civic body has also instructed

contractors to use scientifically approved methods, including mastic laying, to ensure durability of repairs. Officials have been asked to monitor availability of equipment, material, and repair schedules, and to address potholes when they are still small to prevent further road damage.

BMC reiterated that pothole repairs on roads under the defect liability period must be carried out by contractors at their own costs and no payment will be made for such work. Action, including penalties, will be taken if pothole formation is found to be excessive on such stretches. Key arterial roads such as Eastern Express Highway, Western Express Highway and Eastern Freeway have been placed under strict monitoring to ensure they remain pothole-free. The civic body has encouraged citizens to use the MyBMC MARG complaint system, allowing users to upload photos and location details of potholes for faster redressal.

Kerala Budget: Health sector gets lifeline with Rs 2,076-crore booster shot

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM.(Agency)

The health sector received a significant boost with an allocation of over Rs 2,000 crore in the revised budget, heavily prioritising preventive healthcare and super-specialty services with a keen focus by V D Sathesnan on reducing the high out-of-pocket medical expenses that heavily burden the public.

This intervention is considered highly relevant in Kerala's current context, where rising morbidity rates and escalating treatment costs remain a primary concern for common citizens.

Dr Althaf A, a public health expert and professor of community medicine at Thiruvananthapuram Government Medical College Hospital, lauded the

long-term vision of the budget, stating that initiatives like the cancer-prevention programme, road accident reduction schemes, senior

would make high-quality, life-saving care far more accessible to ordinary people.

To position Kerala as a premier global medical hub, the budget introduced the mega Health and Life Science City project -- modelled after international benchmarks like Dubai Healthcare City and Navi Mumbai International MediCity -- to attract global healthcare brands and provide immense opportunities for local human resources. However, the budget drew sharp criticism from the Opposition regarding its flagship welfare promise.

The Oommen Chandy Health Insurance Scheme, which promises an ambitious Rs 25 lakh coverage per family, received a mere Rs 10 crore allocation.



citizen fitness parks, and formation of School Health Brigade are crucial, forward-thinking steps aimed at reducing the state's overall burden of illness.

He pointed out that the project ensuring "golden hour" emergency treatment

Rs 3.1 crore Annadata Sukhibhava aid rollout today in Andhra Pradesh's Chilakaluripet mandal

VIJAYAWADA.(Agency)

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu will release Rs 3,125.47 crore under 'Annadata Sukhibhava-PM Kisan' scheme from Linganguntla village in Chilakaluripet mandal of Palnadu district on Saturday, benefiting a total of 46,85,838 farmers.

The beneficiaries include 45,69,817 land-owning farmer families and 1,16,021 RoFR (Recognition of Forest Rights) farmer families cultivating land under the Forest Rights Act.

During the previous year, the government distributed Rs 8,985.41 crore under the scheme, including Rs 6,560.18 crore from the State government and Rs 2,425.23 crore from the Central government.

Implemented as part of the Super Six promises, the scheme provides financial assistance of Rs 20,000 annually to every eligible farmer family. In which the State government contributes Rs 14,000, while the Central government provides Rs 6,000 through the PM-Kisan scheme. The assistance is disbursed in three instalments by the State and Central governments. As part of the first instalment for this year, the State government will provide Rs 5,000 and the Central government Rs 2,000 under PM-Kisan, resulting in a total credit of Rs 7,000 to each eligible farmer's account. As per the schedule, the Chief Minister will arrive at Linganguntla village in Chilakaluripet Mandal at 12:15 PM tomorrow. At 12:30 PM, he will visit the Anganwadi Centre in the village and inspect the facilities.

Odisha govt issues SOP for smooth and transparent registration of pre- and post-RERA apartments

BHUBANESWAR.(Agency)

The state government on Friday issued a fresh standard operating procedure (SOP) to make the apartment registration process for pre-RERA and post-RERA projects transparent and uniform.

The government also clarified that the existing one per cent concession in stamp duty for apartment transfers executed in favour of women will continue. Similarly, nominal stamp duty and registration fees have been prescribed for deeds relating to the transfer of common areas and amenities in favour of Associations of Allottees.

Officials said the SOP, jointly formulated by the Revenue and Disaster Management



department and the Housing and Urban Development department, aims at eliminating ambiguities arising from varying interpretations of the Odisha Apartment (Ownership and Management) Act, 2023, the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016 (RERA) and the

Registration Act, 1908, while ensuring a standardised registration process across the state.

Under the new SOP, apartment registration has been categorised into three distinct segments such as resale of pre-RERA apartments, first sale of unsold flats in pre-RERA projects and post-RERA apartments. The SOP also specifies the required documents, verification procedures and registration conditions applicable to each category.

The registration of sale deeds relating to apartments in the pre-RERA projects completed prior to October 5, 2016, in which the unsold inventory of such projects continue to be held by the

promoter or landowner, will be governed by the special order issued under section 35 of the Odisha Apartment Ownership and Management Act 2023.

Registration in these projects will be allowed only where at least 50 per cent of the apartment units had been transferred through registered sale deeds on or before October 5, 2016 and the apartment forms part of the original building plan.

In case of resale, such apartments will be exempted from producing documents prescribed under the Odisha Apartment Ownership Act, though the transferor will produce original registered deed of transfer, title documents and other documents required as per registration law.

NEWS BOX

Now or Never: Yashasvi Jaiswal faces crucial test as India eye series sweep

New Delhi. (Agency)

India have already sealed the ODI series against Afghanistan with wins in Dharamsala and Lucknow. The final match on Saturday, June 20, at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai is technically a dead rubber, but there is still plenty to watch out for. One of the key talking points is Yashasvi Jaiswal, who has been fighting to cement his place in the Indian team.

In Lucknow, Jaiswal returned to the 50-over format after an absence of around six months. With Rohit Sharma rested, the left-hander was given an opportunity at the top of the order. Shubman Gill, one of India's regular openers, dropped down to No. 3, while Ishan Kishan moved up to No. 4 to accommodate Jaiswal's inclusion.

However, Jaiswal failed to make an impact, scoring just four runs before being dismissed by Mohammad Saleem. The dismissal was a setback for the 24-year-old, who is looking to establish himself across formats and stake a stronger claim in India's ODI plans. With only one match left in the series, opportunities are



running short. A strong performance in Chennai could help Jaiswal keep the selectors interested and strengthen his case for future assignments. Another failure, however, would make his path back into the ODI side considerably more challenging, especially with competition for places in India's top order remaining intense.

JAISWAL FIGHTING WITH COMPETITION

Let's be honest, had Virat Kohli been part of the Indian squad, Yashasvi Jaiswal might have had to wait even longer for an opportunity in the ODI setup.

With Kohli expected to return in the near future and Shubman Gill likely to move back to his preferred opening slot alongside Rohit Sharma, the third ODI against Afghanistan assumes added importance for the young left-hander.

Jaiswal's challenge is not a lack of talent but the sheer depth of India's batting resources. Opportunities have been limited, and every outing carries added significance for a player trying to break into a settled top order.

Lionel Messi red card debate grows as Algeria lodge FIFA complaint

New Delhi. (Agency)

Algeria have formally approached FIFA over a series of refereeing decisions during their 3-0 defeat to Argentina at the FIFA World Cup 2026. The North African side believe Lionel Messi should have been sent off during the first half and have questioned why several controversial incidents escaped punishment.

The complaint follows Argentina's victory in Kansas City, where Messi scored a hat-trick to power the defending champions to three points. However, much of the post-match discussion centred on a challenge involving the Argentina captain and Algeria skipper Aissa Mandi.

"The complaint primarily concerns Messi's challenge, which deserved a red card," an Algerian football federation source told AFP. "We are not saying Argentina were not the better team, but we cannot stay silent when we feel certain incidents were handled unfairly."

"There were three situations that we believe warranted stronger action, and VAR did not intervene in any of them." Algeria's concerns are not limited to the Messi challenge. The federation also highlighted a second-half incident involving Argentina midfielder Alexis Mac Allister, who allegedly caught Ibrahim Maza with an elbow during an aerial challenge.

DID MESSI DESERVE A RED CARD?

The incident involving Messi occurred midway through the first half when the forward appeared to catch Mandi on the calf with a raised boot from behind. Algerian players immediately appealed for a red card, while supporters inside the stadium voiced their frustration as play continued without disciplinary action. Neither the referee nor the VAR team opted to review the challenge further.

The debate quickly spilled onto social media, where fans and pundits were divided over whether the challenge warranted a dismissal.

South Africa coach Hugo Broos also referenced the incident while discussing the three-match suspension handed to midfielder Themba Zwane earlier in the tournament. "When I see what happened with Messi, I don't agree with what happened to my player," Broos said. "I don't want Messi sent off because players of that quality should be on the pitch, but I struggle to understand the difference between the two incidents."

Hardik Pandya ruled out of England ODIs, needs more time to regain fitness

India all-rounder Hardik Pandya has been ruled out of the upcoming ODI series against England after failing to attain the required fitness levels for 50-over cricket.

New Delhi. (Agency)

India all-rounder Hardik Pandya has been ruled out of the upcoming ODI series against England after failing to attain the required fitness levels for 50-over cricket, India Today has learnt.

Sources have indicated that Pandya is unavailable for selection for the England ODIs as he is yet to complete a full bowling workload and requires more time to regain ODI fitness. The setback comes just when the 32-year-old appeared close to making his return to the format after a prolonged absence. Pandya had recently undergone an assessment at the BCCI's Centre of

Excellence in Bengaluru as he worked his way back from a back spasm sustained during IPL 2026 while representing the Mumbai Indians. He had even bowled a full quota of 10 overs during training sessions, raising hopes of an imminent comeback.

However, the all-rounder suffered another setback during the rehabilitation process. Earlier this month, Pandya was also ruled out of the three-match ODI series against Afghanistan after sustaining a fresh quadriceps strain. It is understood that the injury may have been linked to the increased bowling workload during his fitness assessments.

Pandya endured an injury-disrupted IPL campaign with Mumbai Indians and missed several matches before returning for the team's final few games. His latest absence has now forced the selectors to look for a replacement at short notice ahead of the England series. The setback

comes at a crucial stage of India's ODI planning. Pandya remains a key figure in the white-ball setup due to the balance he provides as a pace-bowling all-rounder and a powerful finisher with the bat. His absence

has been keen to increase Pandya's exposure to 50-over cricket while carefully managing his workload.

Selection committee chairman Ajit Agarkar had recently underlined the importance of keeping Pandya fit for ODI cricket.

"He is a part of the one-day squad right now in Afghanistan. Like Jasprit Bumrah, if we can get him playing well and keep him fit for one-day cricket, that is the main objective," Agarkar had said. "We can always bring him back. So, there will be a little bit of rest and rotation with regards to T20 cricket in Pandya's case."

Meanwhile, India's search for all-round options continues. Assistant coach Ryan ten

Doeschate recently backed Nitish Kumar Reddy as a long-term successor and backup to Pandya, with the team management closely monitoring the youngster's development as they build towards the 2027 World Cup.



has often left India searching for the right combination, most notably after the ankle injury he suffered during the 2023 ODI World Cup clash against Bangladesh.

With the 2027 ODI World Cup in South Africa firmly on the horizon, the team management

Will Vaibhav Sooryavanshi be in the firing line after Sri Lanka A altercation?

NEW DELHI. (Agency)

Sri Lanka A's run to the Tri-Nation final has once again brought attention back to their last heated clash with India A, where Vaibhav Sooryavanshi found himself at the centre of on-field tension during a dramatic Super Over finish. The two sides meet again in Sunday's title clash, ensuring added scrutiny on how emotions are managed this time around.

The fixture arrives with Sri Lanka A in strong form after a dominant 103-run win over Afghanistan A. While the focus has shifted to the final, the backdrop of that earlier flashpoint involving Sooryavanshi continues to linger in the conversation around the contest. Sri Lanka A captain Sahan Arachchige was quick to distance his team from any suggestion of targeting individuals, including Sooryavanshi, ahead of the final.

"The boys are not targeting anyone or anything. They are just enjoying themselves," said Arachchige told Sportstar. "In a close game like a Super

Over, emotions come out. That's normal. There are a lot of experienced players in this team. They know what to do and they know how to play."

Arachchige stressed that Sri Lanka A's focus remains on their own processes rather than external narratives surrounding players like

think we are in good shape."

Sri Lanka A's consistency has been built on collective performances, with Avishka Fernando and Niroshan Dickwella providing stability at the top, while the bowling unit has delivered across conditions through both pace and spin.

SOORYAVANSHI SPOTLIGHT AS TENSIONS BUILD

Despite Sri Lanka A's attempts to keep things calm, attention remains fixed on Vaibhav Sooryavanshi following the previous clash, where tempers flared and players from both sides exchanged words in a high-pressure finish. However, Arachchige reiterated that his team is not approaching the final with any added focus on individuals. "There are a lot of experienced players in this team.

They know what to do and they know how to play," he said. "They are doing very well and I think they will play the next match in the same way," he added, praising the form of his senior batters.



Sooryavanshi.

"The boys are doing very well, and we're looking forward to having a great match in the final," he said. "With the batting, there is no issue. And with the bowling, every fast bowler and spinner is doing very well. I

The World Cup's identity puzzle: Curaçao, Croatia and football's unique map

New Delhi. (Agency)

'Until a few days ago, Livano Comenencia was a name known largely to scouts, football obsessives and those who closely follow the game in the Caribbean. Then came a moment that would become unforgettable for both him and his country.

When Comenencia scored past Manuel Neuer to level the scores, it was, on the face of it, just another World Cup equaliser. For Curaçao, it was history — one that opens the door to a larger question about football, identity and nationhood.

The strike marked the island's first goal at a FIFA World Cup. It provided a fitting entry point to one of the tournament's more intriguing questions: how can Curaçao compete in the same World Cup as a constituent country of the Netherlands?

ONE KINGDOM, TWO TEAMS

To understand how Curaçao and the



Netherlands can share a World Cup stage, one has to travel beyond football. Curaçao is a constituent country within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Although it is not a sovereign state, the island enjoys significant autonomy in domestic affairs while matters such as defence and foreign policy remain the responsibility of the Kingdom. Its residents hold Dutch nationality, yet Curaçao maintains its own

government, institutions and, crucially for football, its own sporting identity. That arrangement has created an unusual reality. While Curaçao is linked politically to the Netherlands, it has long cultivated a distinct cultural identity shaped by its Caribbean history and society. Football has become one of the clearest expressions of that separate identity.

FOOTBALL'S ALTERNATIVE ATLAS

Football has become one of the most visible expressions of that identity. In many ways, this reflects a broader truth about football. The sport's map does not always mirror the political one. The United Kingdom competes as a single state in most international forums, yet England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland field separate football teams. The Faroe Islands do the same despite remaining within the Kingdom of Denmark.

World Cup: Wasteful Turkey crash out as 10-man Paraguay grind out 1-0 win

New Delhi. (Agency)

Turkey became the first team to be eliminated from the FIFA World Cup after a wasteful display ended in a 1-0 defeat to 10-man Paraguay in a tense Group D clash at the San Francisco Bay Area Stadium on Friday. Paraguay produced a spirited defensive performance after being reduced to 10 men before half-time, holding off wave after wave of Turkish attacks to secure a crucial victory and keep their hopes of reaching the knockout stage alive.

The decisive moment arrived just 64 seconds into the contest when Matias Galarza unleashed a powerful low drive from around 25 metres that flew into the bottom corner. The strike became the fastest goal of the

2026 World Cup, eclipsing the 71-second effort scored by Morocco's Ismael Saibari against Scotland earlier in the day.



Paraguay's task became considerably harder in first-half stoppage time when Miguel Almiron was shown a straight red card following a confrontation with Turkey

defender Mert Muldur. The midfielder became the first player dismissed under FIFA's new mouth-covering rule, introduced to prevent players from concealing abusive or discriminatory remarks during on-field disputes.

Despite their numerical disadvantage, Paraguay delivered a remarkable defensive display after the break. Turkey dominated proceedings, registering 32 shots, 51 touches inside the penalty area, 12 corners and nearly 80 percent possession but repeatedly failed to make their superiority count. The Turkish players were left devastated at the final whistle, with several collapsing to the turf after seeing their World Cup hopes disappear. Their best opportunity came late in the match when Merih Demiral headed wide from close range, encapsulating a frustrating evening in front

of goal.

For Paraguay, the victory marked a significant response to their 4-1 defeat against the United States in the opening round. The result lifted them to three points, level with Australia, and kept them firmly in contention for a place in the knockout stages. The United States were also confirmed as Group D winners following Paraguay's triumph. Turkey, meanwhile, became the first team to be mathematically eliminated from the tournament. Having lost to both Australia and Paraguay, they cannot finish above either side regardless of the outcome of their final group match against the United States due to the head-to-head tiebreaker. Paraguay will now face Australia in a decisive final group-stage encounter, with qualification to the Round of 32 still within reach. The expanded format also allows the eight best third-placed teams across the tournament to progress.

Kareena Kapoor's

Daayra To Clash With Kunal Kemmu, Preity Zinta's Vibe



Kareena Kapoor Khan's next film, Daayra, is all set to be released this September. The film is directed by Meghna Gulzar and marks Kareena's first theatrical release after Singham Again in 2024. Interestingly, Kareena Kapoor will face a box office clash with her brother-in-law, Kunal Kemmu's Vibe, starring Preity Zinta.

Kareena Kapoor Khan took to Instagram to share a raw and unseen behind-the-scenes glimpse from the film, offering fans an early peek into Meghna Gulzar's intense cinematic world. Kareena wrote, "This one is for the books... Raw and unseen. A sneak peek behind the scenes of DAAIRA. #Daayra arrives in cinemas on 18th September."

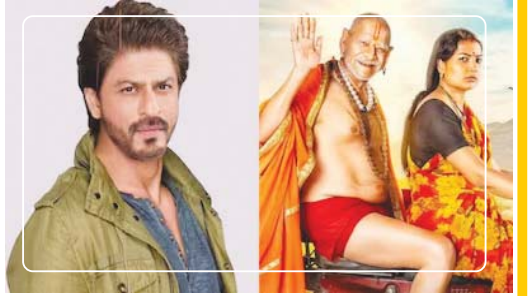
Fans were quick to note that her film, co-starring Prithviraj Sukumaran, will clash with Kunal Kemmu and Preity Zinta's Vibe. Kunal Kemmu and Preity Zinta will be seen sharing the screen space for the first time. Produced by Kunal Kemmu and Chirag Nihalani under the banner of Drongo Films, Vibe will also be out on September 18, and after its theatrical run, it will be available to stream on Amazon Prime Video.

Written and directed by Kunal Kemmu, the drama also marks the return of Preity Zinta to the screen. Joining these two, Sparsh Shrivastava will be seen playing a crucial role in the movie, along with debutant Vanshika Dhir. Vibe focuses on two inseparable friends whose ordinary lives suddenly turn into an unpredictable, high-energy adventure that pushes their survival instincts and friendship to the limit.

Meanwhile, as for Daayra, the film is described as a gritty exploration of crime, punishment, and justice, with an intense focus on societal realities. The movie marks Meghna Gulzar's next project after her 2023 film, Sam Bahadur. While announcing the movie, the director posted a couple of pictures on Instagram, captured alongside the lead stars. "When the lines of Law and Justice cross. Thrilled to embark on DAAIRA with Kareena Kapoor Khan and Prithviraj Sukumaran. A much-anticipated journey with Jungle Pictures and my co-writers Yash Keswani and Sima Agarwal," she wrote.



Shah Rukh Khan Helped Deool Band 2 Reach Theatres By Waiving Off Rs 42 Lakh Bill



Pravin Tarde's Deool Band 2 has become one of the biggest success stories in Marathi cinema this year. Made on a reported budget of Rs 8-10 crore, the film has already crossed Rs 80 crore at the box office and has emerged as one of the five highest-grossing Marathi films of all time. However, before its blockbuster theatrical run, the film reportedly faced a major financial hurdle, and Shah Rukh Khan played an important role in helping it reach cinemas.

According to director Pravin Tarde, Shah Rukh Khan stepped in at a crucial moment and helped the makers of Deool Band 2 by waiving off a bill of around Rs 42-45 lakh related to the film's Digital Cinema Package, or DCP.

Pravin Tarde Reveals How Shah Rukh Khan Helped Deool Band 2

Speaking to Abhijat Marathi Filmy, Pravin Tarde recalled that the makers had approached Shah Rukh Khan's production house Red Chillies Entertainment for the film's DCP, the digital format required to screen movies in theatres.

Tarde shared that the team had initially budgeted around Rs 12 lakh for the process. However, they were later handed an estimate of nearly Rs 42 lakh, which became a major concern for the makers.

Recalling the situation, Tarde said, "The bill came to Rs 42 lakh. We didn't have that kind of money, nor did we have any source from where we could arrange it. We approached Red Chillies and explained our situation. We told them that it was a Marathi film, a regional film, and our budget was limited. But we wanted to release it on a large scale and requested their support." According to the filmmaker, the request eventually reached Shah Rukh Khan.

Shah Rukh Khan Asked Red Chillies To Waive Off The Bill

Pravin Tarde said Shah Rukh enquired about the film from his technical team. The team reportedly told him that Deool Band 2 came from the makers of Mulshi Pattern. Since Mulshi Pattern was later remade as Salman Khan's Antim, Shah Rukh was aware of their work.

Aneet Padda And Vishal Jethwa's Playful Video From Shakti Shalini Sets Leaks Online



Aneet Padda and Vishal Jethwa's leaked behind-the-scenes video from the sets of Shakti Shalini has taken social media by storm. The candid clip captures a fun and lighthearted moment between the two actors and has quickly caught the attention of fans. Soon after the clip surfaced online, fans began reacting to the adorable interaction between the actors.

A leaked video on X handle shows Aneet Padda and Vishal Jethwa running around a tree. She is seen holding Vishal Jethwa's hand. They are laughing and having fun. Aneet is seen dressed in a blue printed shirt paired with a red flowing skirt. Vishal Jethwa is wearing a blue shirt and grey trousers. Fans are super excited and have been sharing it too.

That's why I say I'm in a good space. But can it get better? Of course, it can and I hope it does. But there are so many ways of storytelling and so many stories being told now. At that time, where was the scope of telling these stories? I'm grateful for what's there," she remarks.

Recently, a video claimed to be leaked footage from the sets of Shakti Shalini also went viral on social media, giving fans a possible glimpse into Aneet Padda's upcoming film from the Maddock Horror Comedy Universe. The film has reportedly wrapped up shooting recently. While the makers have not confirmed the authenticity of the clip, it has already sparked discussion online among fans eagerly waiting for the movie's release. In the viral video on X, a young woman can be seen dragging a man before tying his leg to a rope attached to a horse. The short clip has led to speculation about Aneet's character and the film's storyline, with many wondering whether the scene offers a hint about the powerful role teased in the film's announcement.

Interestingly, Mid-day reported that on May 27, director Aditya Sarpotdar wrapped the horror comedy at Chitrarth Studio in Powai, where they filmed an elaborate sequence that sees the celebration of the protagonist's victory over evil. About the last day of the shoot, a source shared, "Massive sets depicting a Rajasthani village and the interiors of a house were built. The sequence shows the village people, especially women, celebrating the defeat of evil."

Sharvari Wagh

And Sunny Kaushal Reportedly Part Ways, Reason Behind Their Breakup Revealed

Sharvari and Sunny Kaushal were often regarded as one of Bollywood's most-loved low-key couples. While neither of them ever spoke extensively about their relationship in public, the two were frequently spotted together and were believed to have grown close after working on Kabir Khan's The Forgotten Army - Azaadi Ke Liye (2020). However, according to recent reports, the actors have reportedly parted ways after several years of dating. While neither Sharvari nor Sunny has addressed the speculation, a fresh report has now shed light on what may have led to their breakup.

However, according to multiple media reports, Sharvari and Sunny Kaushal, once regarded as one of Bollywood's most loved low-key couples, reportedly went their separate ways in 2025. While neither actor has publicly confirmed the breakup, fresh reports suggest that differences stemming from their evolving career trajectories may have played a role in the split. With Sharvari's star rising rapidly in recent years and Sunny still awaiting a major breakthrough, it is being said that the growing disparity in their professional journeys may have created distance between the two. According to a report by Free Press Journal, Sharvari's rising fame and increasingly busy professional commitments may have contributed

to the distance in her relationship with Sunny, who is known for films like Chor Nikal Ke Bhaga, Shiddat and Phir Aayi Haseen Dillruba. The report claimed that as her career gained momentum and she landed bigger projects, the couple gradually grew apart, eventually deciding to part ways. A source told the portal, "Sharvari is more famous than Sunny today. So, it kind of made things awkward



between the two. And, it is one of the reasons that got them to go their separate ways in 2025." Neither Sharvari nor Sunny Kaushal has publicly addressed the reported reasons behind their alleged split.

Meanwhile, amid the breakup reports, speculation has also linked Sharvari to her Main Vaapas Aaunga co-star Vedang Raina, who was earlier dating Khushi Kapoor. However, both actors have maintained that they share a close friendship and have not indicated that there is anything more to their relationship.



NEWS BOX

Meet Andy Burnham: The 'King of the North' eyeing Keir Starmer's job

WORLD. (Agency)

Andy Burnham's dramatic return to the British Parliament has transformed him from a powerful regional leader into the man many in Labour believe could one day walk through the doors of 10 Downing Street. Fresh from a commanding by-election victory in Makerfield, the former Greater Manchester mayor is now being viewed as the strongest potential successor to Prime Minister Keir Starmer, whose leadership has come under increasing scrutiny following Labour's struggles in opinion polls and local elections.

Burnham, 56, secured 54.8% of the vote in Makerfield, comfortably defeating the candidate from Nigel Farage's Reform UK, who finished on 34.5%. The result not only returned Burnham to Westminster after nearly a decade away but also strengthened his credentials as a politician capable of halting Reform UK's rapid rise. Hours after his victory, Burnham delivered what many Labour lawmakers described as a prime ministerial-style speech, outlining a broader vision for Britain. "I did talk about the need to change Labour... and we've got to now take this moment and answer the challenges that have been laid down," Burnham told supporters. "It is our last chance to change but we are going to take it... and we are going to lay out a new path for Britain."

THE MAKING OF A LABOUR HEAVYWEIGHT
Burnham is one of Labour's most experienced politicians. First elected to Parliament in 2001, he served in several senior government positions under former prime ministers Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, including Health Secretary, Culture Secretary and Chief Secretary to the Treasury.

Twice he sought Labour's leadership, in 2010 and 2015, but failed to secure the top job. Rather than remain on the Westminster sidelines, Burnham left Parliament in 2017 to become the first directly elected Mayor of Greater Manchester. That decision ultimately reshaped his political fortunes.

Driver killed, nearly 90 injured after two trains collide in north London

world. (Agency)

Two East Midlands Railway trains collided near the town of Bedford, north of London on Friday evening, in an accident that left one of the drivers dead and 89 passengers injured, several of them seriously, the Associated Press reported. The trains were headed toward London St Pancras station when the accident took place around 5:15 pm, according to rail tracking data.

Passengers described chaotic scenes inside the carriages after the impact. One traveller said the force of the collision threw people forward and revealed injured passengers suffering from broken bones and bloody wounds.

Emergency teams mounted a large-scale response, sending multiple units to the site, including an air ambulance and a hazardous incident team from the East of England Ambulance Service.

"We know that a number of people have been injured, and one person has very sadly died," AP quoted a police statement. "A major incident has been declared, and officers are continuing to respond at the scene alongside colleagues from Bedfordshire Police and the local Fire and Rescue and Ambulance Services".

The East of England Ambulance Service later reported that the crash left 11 people with critical injuries, while 22 others sustained serious wounds and 56 suffered minor injuries. Eddie Dempsey, general secretary of the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers, confirmed that the person killed in the collision was one of the train drivers. Images shared on social media appeared to show the front of one train embedded in the rear of another, while the carriages remained largely upright on the tracks.

Tulsi Gabbard releases documents alleging cover-up of Covid-19 origins, claims Fauci funded Wuhan lab

World (Agency)

Tulsi Gabbard, on her final day as US Director of National Intelligence, released a new set of declassified documents and communications alleging that former top US health official Anthony Fauci played a key role in funding gain-of-function research linked to China's Wuhan Institute of Virology. The release, announced on Gabbard's final day in office, marks her second major declassification effort within days and revives the long-running controversy surrounding the origins of Covid-19. "Today, on my final day as Director of National Intelligence, I'm releasing never-before-seen communications and documents exposing how Dr. Fauci provided millions in US taxpayer dollars to fund dangerous gain-of-function research at the Wuhan lab, worked with politicized elements within the Intelligence Community to suppress the truth about his actions and hide the virus' lab-leak origins, and lied to Congress while under oath in 2024."

According to the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), the newly released material alleges Fauci was involved in funding research associated with the Wuhan Institute of Virology and sought to influence public discussions surrounding the origins of Covid-19.

The documents also claim that certain officials attempted to minimise the possibility that the virus originated from a laboratory-related incident. However, Fauci has not publicly responded to the latest allegations. Democratic lawmakers on the House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic had previously rejected similar claims, saying they were not supported by evidence gathered during the committee's investigation.

Trump reveals why he told world leaders 'I am the boss' at G7 Summit

world. (Agency)

US President Donald Trump loves to dominate public discourse. At the recently concluded G7 Summit in France, Trump ensured he remained the central figure, either with his theatrics or his viral "I am the boss" remark. Now, in an interview with Axios, the eccentric US President has revealed the reason behind the remark, describing it as a funny, light-hearted moment.

Earlier this week, Trump arrived late for a meeting with world leaders at the G7 Summit. As he strutted inside the room, Trump quipped, "I am the boss", drawing laughter from the leaders seated across the conference table. Trump took centre stage at the summit after the US secured a peace deal with Iran, leading to the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, a key global energy corridor that handles 20% of the world's oil flows.

TRUMP EXPLAINS 'I AM THE BOSS' REMARK

When asked by Axios about his viral remark and how many G7 leaders believe that, Trump was quick to assert, "All of them. But I was just being funny."

After a pause, Trump emphasised that he wasn't trying to be the boss, and the remark was meant to be "cute and funny".

He then went on to elaborate on why he made the remark in the first place. "What happened is they were all sitting, and then I walked into the room. It was just sort of funny because there was a very long table, but there were only seven of them. The table was meant for, like, 30 people," Trump said in the interview. Trump said the room looked like a perfect "podium-type set-up". Trump must have felt all the world's a stage for him.

Among the world leaders present for the session on trade and economy were Prime Minister Narendra Modi and France's

allowed to come if they want and sit," Trump said.

While India is not a permanent member of the G7, it is regularly invited as a special guest. It shows how much importance the key bloc now gives to India's voice.

The US President suggested that the remark was a spontaneous one and was not scripted.

"I walked in there, these leaders, and I just looked at them. I said, 'I'm the boss'. And you know that was done as a joke. This thing got carried all over the world. I can't believe it. I was just being cute, funny. I wasn't trying to be the boss," he further said. Trump concluded by saying that the G7 Summit was "tremendous" and "very dominant". Trump said he "got what he wanted".



Emmanuel Macron. "They are all well-known figures, right? The heads of countries -- we had a couple of others in there too, as you know. Some, like, as an example, PM Modi of India - great guy. A lot of people came. They are

1 killed, 1,700 tourists evacuated after massive fire at Dominican Republic hotel

Santo Domingo. (Agency)

A woman was killed and nearly 1,700 tourists were evacuated due to a large fire at a hotel in the Dominican beach resort of Bayahibe, local authorities said on Friday.

Francesca Valentino, a 46-year-old Italian woman, was killed in the fire at the Viva Wyndham Dominican Beach Hotel, the DAEH emergency service said in a statement. Three people were taken to medical facilities and six others were treated on site, DAEH said. Those affected included guests, visitors and emergency responders.

Videos shared by local media showed dark clouds of smoke billowing out above the Caribbean coastline, as



flames engulfed the resort's straw roof.

"Preliminary observations indicate that the fire spread rapidly due to the flammable nature of parts of the roof structures made of palm, as well as wind conditions," the country's Emergency Operations Center (COE) said. Wyndham Hotels and Resorts, which franchises some 8,400 hotels

worldwide, did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The fire was brought under control, but its causes were still being investigated, the operations centre said. Guests were moved to nearby hotels. The Viva Wyndham Dominican Palace, part of the same chain, did not sustain any damage.

"Tourist activities in Bayahibe and the surrounding area remain unaffected and continue to take place safely and as normal," COE added. Famous for its clear water and white sand beaches, the Dominican Republic is the Caribbean's top tourist destination, receiving some 5.6 million visitors in the first five months of this year.

Be quiet or get out: Israeli envoy in shouting match with UN official

world. (Agency)

A public hearing at the United Nations on Friday devolved into a shouting match between an Israeli diplomat and senior UN officials. The clash erupted after Israel's UN Ambassador Danny Danon used the forum in New York to demand the resignation of Pramila Patten, the UN secretary-general's special representative on sexual violence in conflict.

Patten recently authored a report that placed Israel on a UN blacklist for alleged conflict-related sexual violence violations for the first time. When both came face to face at the hearing marking the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict, tempers flared. "You caved to the secretary-general's obsession with targeting Israel," Danon said, referring to UN chief Antonio Guterres.

The remarks triggered an intervention from Vanessa Frazier, Guterres' representative for children and armed conflict, who interrupted with a point of order and accused Danon of

launching "personal attacks". Frazier defended the findings of her office, saying they were based on verified evidence. Danon responded sharply, telling the UN official to remain silent.



"We are a member state, and you work for the UN, and you will be quiet now. You will be quiet... you and your shameful report," the Israeli envoy said.

"We know why you took this position. We will not allow you to be part of this shameful campaign. I will finish my words," he continued as Frazier interjected and meeting organisers

called for order. The tense exchange and the break in diplomatic decorum underscored Tel Aviv's growing anger over a series of UN reports alleging violations by Israeli forces during the war in Gaza. Frazier's report, released this week on behalf of Guterres, warned that Israeli settler groups could also be added to a global blacklist for grave violations against children.

The report cited what the UN chief described as a "staggering" increase in violations against Palestinian children. Israel is already included in the report's so-called "list of shame" annexes for alleged violations against children.

Last month, after Patten's report was released, Danon denounced the findings as politically motivated. "This is a political decision! Disconnected from the facts and reality!" he wrote on X, calling the report "a new low". Israel's Foreign Ministry also vowed to sever ties with Guterres, whose second and final term as secretary-general ends later this year.

Trump envoy Witkoff, Iran's Abbas Araghchi on way to Switzerland for peace talks

Washington. (Agency)

US envoy Steve Witkoff and Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi were both headed to Switzerland for talks, Axios said on Friday, as a ceasefire in Lebanon appeared to revive efforts to turn an interim Iran war pact into a lasting regional deal.

Israel and Hezbollah agreed to a ceasefire in Lebanon on Friday after escalating fighting cast doubt over US-Iran talks critical to reopening the Strait of Hormuz and stabilising oil supplies.

That followed a 14-point memorandum the two sides signed this week to halt fighting and open a 60-day window to resolve disputes over Iran's nuclear programme, as well as other thorny issues needed to forge a more durable deal. US Vice President JD Vance cancelled plans on Thursday to travel to Switzerland for the talks, however, amid rising tension in Lebanon between Israel and Hezbollah, a militant group backed by Iran. With the ceasefire in place, Witkoff is heading to Switzerland to

join Jared Kushner, President Donald Trump's son-in-law, who is already there, Axios said. Araghchi plans to travel there on Saturday, it added. The development may signal that both sides intend to begin technical negotiations aimed at securing a permanent truce. The White House did not respond to questions about Witkoff's travel.

A senior US official said the ceasefire took effect around 4 pm (1300 GMT) in Lebanon following an exchange of fire, adding that negotiators for the United States and Qatar had worked out the agreement with help from Iran.

Two sources from Hezbollah and a senior Israeli official confirmed the ceasefire to Reuters. "If Hezbollah does not attack us, then for us it is not a time of war," the Israeli official said, adding that Israel would keep its forces in southern Lebanon, where it has occupied an area along its northern border.

Two Lebanese security sources said Israel had carried out a dozen airstrikes in the first hour of the ceasefire, but none were recorded after 5 pm.

Lebanon's health ministry said Israeli strikes after midnight into Friday had killed 47



people and wounded 97, while the Israeli military said four soldiers had been killed in an incident in Lebanon, without giving further details.

The conflict in Lebanon could weigh on

negotiations because ending fighting there is a condition for the broader US-Iran accord.

TOUGH ISSUES STILL UNRESOLVED

Following Wednesday's signing of the memorandum of understanding, preparations for technical talks at the Swiss mountaintop resort of Buergerstock were well advanced when the White House said on Thursday that Vance would not attend.

The Swiss foreign ministry said the talks had been postponed, but Switzerland stood ready to facilitate them and preparatory work was continuing.

The broad interim deal requires the United States, Iran and their allies to declare an immediate and permanent termination of military operations on all fronts, including in Lebanon. Israel, left out of the talks, says it is not party to the deal. Araghchi, in a telephone call with his Pakistani counterpart on Friday, said the US would be responsible for any violation.