

Not a Modi breakthrough, Australia approved uranium sales to India in 2011: Congress

The Congress criticised the BJP's claim that Australia's uranium supply deal was a Modi-era breakthrough, saying the process began in 2011 after the India-US nuclear agreement under the previous UPA government.

New Delhi. (Agency)

The Congress on Friday hit out at the BJP over its claim that Australia's decision to supply uranium to India was a breakthrough achieved under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying the process had begun years earlier under the previous UPA government. The opposition party said former Australian prime minister Julia Gillard had secured her Labour Party's approval in December 2011 to allow uranium sales to India, following the India-US Civil Nuclear Agreement signed in October 2008. The exchange followed BJP IT department head Amit Malviya's remarks that India and Australia had reached a uranium export agreement under Modi's leadership. Congress leader's comments came after India and Australia signed a civil nuclear energy pact on Thursday, among several agreements



announced following talks between Modi and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese. Rejecting the BJP's claim, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said the party's ecosystem was attempting to portray Australia's uranium exports to India as a Modi-era achievement. "On Dec 4, 2011, Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard got approval of her party to sell uranium to India following the India-US Nuclear Agreement of Oct 2008," Ramesh said in a post on X. He added that BJP leaders and

supporters "need to do their homework better" and shared screenshots of media reports from December 2011 stating that Australia's Labour Party had backed opening up uranium sales to India. Earlier, Malviya had said on X that Australia had refused to sell uranium to India in 2010 due to New Delhi not being a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), but that the agreement was now possible under Modi's leadership. "This isn't just about uranium. It reflects India's transformed global standing. From being viewed through the prism of restrictions to being treated as a trusted strategic partner," Malviya said. Ramesh also reiterated on Thursday that the Congress had created "turning points", while accusing the BJP of specialising in "U-turning points". He said the India-Australia civil nuclear cooperation agreement was made possible by the India-US Nuclear Cooperation Agreement, which came into force.

Cong rejects 'Modi breakthrough' claim, says Australia's ruling party approved uranium sales to India in 2011

BJP IT department head Amit Malviya had said that in 2010, Australia refused to sell uranium to India, but under Modi's leadership, the two countries have struck a uranium export agreement.

Mumbai. (Agency)

The Congress on Friday rejected the BJP's claim that Australia's uranium sales to India were a diplomatic breakthrough under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and pointed out that in December 2011, then Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard secured her party's approval to sell uranium to India following the Indo-US Nuclear pact. The opposition party's assertion came after BJP IT department head Amit Malviya said that in 2010, Australia refused to sell uranium to India, but under Modi's leadership, the two countries have struck a uranium export agreement. Rejecting the BJP's assertions, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said, "The BJP ecosystem is on an overdrive to show that Australia's uranium sales to India are a Modi breakthrough. On Dec 4 2011, Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard got approval of her party to sell uranium to India following the India-US Nuclear Agreement of Oct 2008." "The BJP trolls that include some of its MPs too need to do their homework better," he said and shared a screenshot of media reports from December 2011 that stated that Australia's Labour Party had endorsed plans to open up uranium sales to India. Earlier, Malviya said, "In 2010, Australia refused to sell uranium to India, citing our non-signatory status to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)."



Jharkhand signs 14 MoUs, attracts Rs 99,639 crore in proposed investments

RANCHI. (Agency)

In a major boost to its investment drive, Jharkhand secured proposed investments worth Rs 99,639 crore by signing 14 Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) during the valedictory session of the National Stakeholders' Consultation on Thursday in New Delhi. Officials said the agreements are expected to strengthen the state's industrial ecosystem, digital infrastructure and tourism sector, further positioning Jharkhand as an emerging investment destination. The Industries Department signed major investment agreements with leading companies, including Jindal Steel Ltd., which committed Rs 40,000 crore, and Jindal Nuclear Power Pvt. Ltd., with a proposed investment of Rs 30,000 crore, reflecting growing investor confidence in Jharkhand's industrial potential. In the tourism sector, pioneering collaborations were established with Tata Motors for the promotion of mining tourism and EaseMyTrip.

'Glorifying separatism': J&K CM Omar seeks scanning of all govt school libraries

SRINAGAR. (Agency)

Amid a row over the inclusion of two books in government school libraries that allegedly glorify militancy and separatism, the Jammu and Kashmir government has directed heads of all government and private schools and coaching centres in Kashmir to screen books in their premises for "inappropriate or objectionable content." According to a circular issued by Director of School Education (Kashmir), Heads of Institutions (HOIs) of all government & private schools and coaching institutions have been directed to conduct a comprehensive screening of all books available—recently acquired or older publications—in their offices, classrooms, staff rooms and school library. "The purpose of the screening is to ensure that no book contains inappropriate or objectionable content," it states. "The HOIs have been directed to identify books that may hurt religious sentiments, be it inappropriate content for students, contents against prevailing laws with potential to harm national interest, affect educational values, and established norms.

Corruption Allegations Rock Vadodara Unchecked Illegal Mining and Dairy Scam Spark Outrage

Narmada sand plunder & ₹60-lakh dairy scam expose Vadodara's political mafia

MAHANAGAR METRO VADODARA/KARJAN: Despite the Gujarat government's frequent proclamations of a "zero-tolerance policy" against corruption and slogans like "Na khaunga, na khane dunga" (neither will I take bribes, nor let anyone else), a starkly different reality is emerging from the ground in Vadodara district. Massive corruption allegations stretching from village-level sarpanches to senior district panchayat officials have surfaced, casting a shadow over the state administration's claims of clean governance. At the center of the political storm is Vasant Rabari, husband of th Vadodara District Panchayat President, Jyotsnaben Vasantbhai Rabari. He faces serious allegations, backed by purported documentary evidence, of running illegal sand mining operations, extortion, and evading crores of rupees in government royalties. The apparent lack of strict administrative action against these influential figures has raised sharp questions about the impartiality of local authorities. According to highly placed sources, massive illegal stockpiles of sand have been set up along the main route leading from Nareshwar to Palej without any valid government approvals or royalty passes. Excavators



(JCBs) and dump trucks are reportedly operating around the clock, extracting natural resources directly from the bed of the sacred Narmada River. This unchecked mining activity poses a severe ecological threat to the river's ecosystem. Observers and local whistleblowers are questioning why top administrative and law enforcement officials—including Karjan Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Shivam Baria, the Vadodara District Collector, the District Superintendent

of Police (SP), the local Tehsildar, and officials from the Mines and Minerals Department—have failed to intervene. The brazen nature of the operation has led to public speculation regarding systemic collusion and administrative apathy. The allegations of exploitation extend beyond environmental resources to the region's cooperative milk sector, affecting local farmers and cattle rearers. An official audit report of the Baroda Dairy has uncovered a major financial scam at its Subdol village

chilling center. The audit reveals an institutional fraud amounting to approximately **INR 50 to 60 lakh**. Despite clear official findings proving financial irregularities with public and cooperative funds, the Baroda Dairy management has yet to file a formal First Information Report (FIR) against the accused individuals. This delay has fueled allegations of a protective network shielding corrupt local politicians at the expense of poor milk producers. Detailed written complaints detailing these scams, accompanied by corroborating evidence, were formally dispatched to Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel. However, no definitive or stringent action has been initiated by the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) against the Vadodara-based syndicates so far. The complete inaction by both local administrative bodies and police forces suggests either extreme political pressure or systemic compliance. As public frustration grows, the local press and citizens are demanding immediate accountability and questioning when the state government will back its anti-corruption rhetoric with concrete legal action against its own party functionaries.

Abnormal Demographic Change In Border Areas Due To Infiltration: Amit Shah

New Delhi. (Agency)

Union Home Minister Amit Shah has linked demographic changes in India's border regions to infiltration and stated that the Modi government will deal firmly with the issue. Addressing the Border Districts Superintendents of Police Conference 2026, Shah launched a new security plan which includes border protection, infrastructure development, intelligence cooperation and participation of local communities. Shah also stated that the government has launched a Demography Mission to analyse the factors behind abnormal demographic changes in border areas. "Abnormal demographic change in

border areas is due to infiltration and we need to act upon it," Shah stated. The conference was attended by Union Ministers of State for Home Nityanand Rai and Bandi Sanjay Kumar, Superintendents Of Police, Directors General of Police of border states, senior officers and representatives of intelligence and security agencies. The Home minister said border security cannot be viewed in isolation and requires a national effort. "This conference has now become an institutional mechanism for addressing border issues and formulating policy responses," Shah said. The Centre, he said, is developing a new



security strategy which involves border-guarding forces, district administrations, state governments, central agencies and local citizens. This strategy will make India's border management proactive and preventive, he asserted. Shah said that the government's vision is to

develop a Smart Border system which will use technology, infrastructure and intelligence to strengthen surveillance and response. "In the coming years, the security architecture of India's border will be one of the best in the world," he said. The minister also referred to multiple security threats in border regions, including infiltration, drug trafficking, smuggling, drone threats, organised crime, cybercrime and radicalisation. "We are not only securing our borders, but making border districts economically strong and socially resilient," he said, adding, "A secure border, a prosperous border region and a vigilant society can secure our nation."

News box

Online admissions blocked at 1k schools, 99 of them in Gurgaon

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Haryana govt has blocked management information system (MIS) portal access for 1,107 private schools, preventing them from admitting students to the 2026-27 academic session. While 693 of these had issues related to compliance with the Right to Education admission process, 269 were rejected by district elementary education officers (DEEOs). Also on the list were 145 schools that had got DEEO approval but did not obtain recognition. Officials said Gurgaon accounted for 99 such schools, including prominent ones like Imperial Heritage School in Dhankot, GD Goenka Signature School on Sohna Road, and Narayana e-Techno School in Sector 49. The official summary showed that Kaithal had the highest number of blocked schools at 162, of which 126 were rejected by the DEEO. It was followed by Gurgaon (99), Hisar (98) and Panipat (92). Among the districts with relatively low numbers were Panchkula (14), Nuh Mewat (15), and Rewari and Sirsa (both 16). At 10, Fatehabad recorded the fewest blocked schools in the state. Education department officials will review cases as schools complete documentation and recognition-related formalities. Officials said investigations had revealed that many unrecognised institutions functioned as "dummy schools" or coaching centres. Students were officially enrolled in recognised schools for board registration but attended classes at these unauthorised establishments. An official said, "Most of the 1,107 schools failed to obtain recognition because they do not meet the infrastructure and land norms prescribed under Haryana School Education Rules, 2003. Many operate from residential houses or commercial shops with only a few rooms, and lack land, campus facilities, and safety infrastructure."

Journalist on way to work stalked, harassed in Noida Film City

Noida.(Agency)

A biker allegedly stalked a journalist on her way to office in an auto-rickshaw on Wednesday morning, made obscene gestures and lewd remarks, and repeatedly rode alongside the vehicle in broad daylight in an area of Film City lined with media offices. Police said they have identified the accused through CCTV footage and are tracing him. The journalist later filed a complaint at Sector 20 police station. SHO Aravind Kumar told TOI that CCTV footage had helped identify the accused and that his address was traced to a slum cluster in Delhi. "We are probing the case and expect to arrest him within a day or two. The FIR will be registered after his arrest," the SHO said. Recounting the incident, the woman said she was travelling to her office at Express Tower around 10am when the biker began peering into her auto before following it. "He came close to the auto, made obscene gestures and passed lewd remarks while riding alongside me," she alleged. "At first, I wasn't sure if he was stalking me. But when he drew level with the auto and began making vulgar gestures, it became clear. I wanted to chase him, but the auto driver couldn't match his speed," she added.

Life term for man who ripped wife's tongue, stabbed her to death in front of sons

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

A sessions court has sentenced a man to life imprisonment for stabbing his wife in the mouth, ripping her tongue apart, and then fatally attacking her with a knife in front of their two sons after a domestic dispute in 2021. The court held that while the crime was heinous, it did not fall within the "rarest of rare" category warranting the death penalty. Additional district and sessions judge Lokesh Varun on Tuesday convicted Anand Kumar of murder and illegal possession of a weapon, sentencing him to life imprisonment and imposing a total fine of Rs 15,000. "Keeping in view the gravity of the crime... this court is of the opinion that the ends of justice will be served by punishing the accused Anand with life imprisonment," the judge said. On May 1, 2021, an FIR was registered at Loni police station on a complaint by the couple's son, Harsh Kumar, who witnessed the attack along with his younger brother.

Bootleggers Unleashed in Karjan
Proliferation of Illicit Liquor & Gambling Scams Sparks Outrage as Police Remain Mute Spectators

Police-mafia nexus exposes 'Addiction-Free Gujarat' claims

Mahanagar Metro Desk

VADODARA / KARJAN: Despite the Gujarat government and the Home Department's tall claims of stringent law enforcement and strict prohibition laws, a grim reality is unfolding in the Karjan taluka of Vadodara district. The complete breakdown of law and order has turned the region into a safe haven for bootleggers and gamblers, directly undermining the "Nasha-Mukt Gujarat" (Addiction-Free Gujarat) campaign spearheaded by Minister of State for Home Affairs, Harsh Sanghavi.

At the center of this illicit multi-crore network is a notorious intermediary (*Vahiwardar*) with a criminal record. This individual, who was previously suspended and jailed in connection with major liquor cases, reportedly dictates terms to the local police department. Despite open violations occurring right under the nose of the local administration, the law enforcement machinery appears paralyzed.

Whistleblowers and local sources have revealed specific details and locations of the illegal operations flourishing within Karjan, some operating barely two kilometers from the police station:

Karamdi Village: Located just two kilometers from the Karjan Police Station, this village reportedly houses over 15 active country liquor manufacturing units (bhattis) supplying illicit alcohol across the region.

Kulari Village: Near the water tank in the Nayi Nagri area, a notorious bootlegger named Nagin is allegedly running an open 'Varli-Matka' gambling syndicate without any



fear of the law.

Sapa Village: Similar large-scale gambling operations are reportedly active in the Nayi Vasahat (colony).

Ranpur Village: In a striking revelation, Parth Shah—the local village Sarpanch and President of the BJP Yuva Morcha—is accused of spearheading a major foreign (English) liquor syndicate across Karjan taluka. Reports suggest a massive stockpile of illicit liquor is hidden along the secluded route connecting Simdi and Ranpur villages.

Kandari Village: An individual identified as Amit Vasava is reportedly running a brazen foreign liquor trade on Vemardi Road near the Tower in Society No. 2.

Bariyavas and Baria Vago Areas: A smuggler named Paresh Chunawada is allegedly operating freely, distributing consignments of English liquor.

The mastermind behind this coordinated syn-

dicate is allegedly Hanubha Kamadiya (alias Hanu Bootlegger), who operates as the trusted intermediary (Vahiwardar) for Karjan Police Station's Police Inspector (PI) Patel. Kamadiya has a history of major liquor offenses, including previous arrests, a suspension from the department, and prison time. Despite his criminal past, he has managed to amass massive undocumented wealth through the proceeds of these illegal gambling and liquor hubs. Observers allege that this financial muscle has effectively silenced top district officials, including Vadodara Superintendent of Police (SP) Sushil Agrawal, the Vadodara Local Crime Branch (LCB), and Karjan police officers.

The most alarming aspect of the racket involves the systemic subversion of the State Monitoring Cell (SMC) based in Gandhinagar. Whenever vigilant citizens register online complaints with the state-level anti-prohibition department, corrupt elements within the Vadodara LCB allegedly intervene. Sources state that local handlers leak the locations and movement details of raiding teams to Kamadiya and PI Patel via WhatsApp, warning them to shut down operations before the state vehicles arrive. This nexus suggests that the LCB has shifted its focus from crime prevention to systematic extortion. The blatant impunity enjoyed by this bootlegging network directly challenges the authority of the state government. Public frustration is mounting, with local citizens demanding a thorough, independent inquiry into the administrative-bootlegger alliance destroying the region.

Akhil Bharat Hindu Kranti Sena Appoints Avneesh Srivastava as National Coordinator

Mahanagar Metro Desk

Prayagraj: In a significant step towards strengthening the organizational structure and expanding its activities across the country, the National President of Akhil Bharat Hindu Kranti Sena, Mr. Anand Soni, and the National General Secretary, Mr. Pawan Makan, have appointed Mr. Avneesh Srivastava, a resident of Prayagraj (Uttar Pradesh), as the National Coordinator of the organization. According to the appointment order issued by the organization, Mr. Avneesh Srivastava has been actively associated with the organization's ideology and has consistently contributed to social, religious, and nation-building initiatives. Considering his dedication, organizational skills, and ability to establish coordination across various states, he has been entrusted with this important responsibility. It is noteworthy that Mr. Avneesh Srivastava had previously served successfully

as the National Co-Coordinator of Akhil Bharat Hindu Kranti Sena. In recognition of his experience, commitment, and disciplined working style, he has now been promoted and appointed as the National Coordinator. National President Mr. Anand Soni stated that the organization is continuously expanding its activities across the country and is assigning key responsibilities to dedicated members who work with complete commitment towards the nation, religion, and social service. National General Secretary Mr. Pawan Makan said that the organization always recognizes and respects the hard work and dedication of its members. He expressed hope that Mr. Avneesh Srivastava would discharge his new responsibilities with



sincerity, commitment, and responsibility, playing a vital role in taking the organization to new heights. On being appointed as the National Coordinator, Mr. Avneesh Srivastava expressed his gratitude to the national leadership of the organization for reposing their trust in him. He said that he would make every effort to live up to their expectations and work wholeheartedly to spread the organization's ideology among the people, connect the youth with the organization, and accelerate activities dedicated to national interest and social service. On this occasion, various office-bearers and members of the organization congratulated Mr. Avneesh Srivastava on his appointment and expressed confidence that under his leadership, the organizational expansion of Akhil Bharat Hindu Kranti Sena would become even more effective and stronger.

3 migrant workers from Bihar die in hit and run, driver held

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Three agricultural labourers from Bihar were killed in a hit-and-run incident on Jewar-Khurja road on Wednesday. Police have seized the Scorpio SUV allegedly involved in the crash and also arrested the driver. Police said the accident occurred around 10.30pm near Neemka village in Jewar. Karan (22), Vishwajeet (24) and Mithun (25) were returning home on foot after finishing their work in the field when the SUV that was allegedly being driven at a high speed by Deepanshu (32) ran them over. The driver fled with the car. The three men died before any medical assistance could reach them. Police reached the spot and sent the bodies for autopsy. An initial investigation has found that the three men were from Araria district in Bihar and had come to Jewar about a month ago to work as labourers engaged in paddy transplantation during the



monsoon. They were working on contract in nearby villages and depended on the seasonal income to support their families back home.

Eyewitnesses told police that the Scorpio hit the men from behind. Based on CCTV footage from the surrounding area and other

technical evidence, investigators identified the vehicle involved in the crash. The victims' families were informed, and they turned up to collect the bodies. A case was registered under BNS sections for causing the death of a person by driving in a rash and negligent manner and endangering the life of a person by driving negligently, based on a complaint filed by the victims' family members at the Jewar police station. Officers said multiple teams conducted raids and arrested Deepanshu, a resident of Dastampur village, on Thursday.

The city has recorded 68 road crashes till May this year, in which 36 people were killed and 43 injured.

The cops earlier identified nine police station areas and two high-risk road corridors, which together accounted for nearly 54% of all road accident fatalities in the district. The first corridor included areas under the police stations at sectors 39, 58, 113 and Bisraakh.

THRC directs Tripura govt to pay compensation to cyber fraud victim

Agartala. (Agency)

The Tripura Human Rights Commission (THRC) has recommended filing an FIR and providing compensation of Rs 10,000 to a woman who was defrauded of Rs 97,631 in a cyber scam. THRC stated that the police's inaction in response to the woman's complaint was a violation of her human rights. This recommendation came after a complaint from Surabhi Mukherjee, who fell victim to fraudsters impersonating officials from the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) and convinced her to transfer the money via UPI.

Despite promptly reporting the incident to the national cybercrime helpline and providing a written complaint with evidence to the West Agartala Police Station, no FIR was filed despite her persistent efforts at both West Agartala and Cyber Crime police stations.

In response to a report requested from the Director General of Police, THRC highlighted that the police investigation confirmed the fraud, with requests already issued to banks for transaction tracing. The Commission emphasised that an FIR must be registered when a cognisable offence is recognised by police authorities, and responsibility should not be shifted onto the victim, dismissing the police's argument that no cognisable offence was apparent initially.

Bangladesh High Commissioner proposes to screen acclaimed films in Tripura

Agartala. (Agency)

Agartala, July 10 (UNI) Bangladesh has put forward a proposal to screen its acclaimed films in Tripura, which is part of a larger effort to enhance the connection between people and strengthen cultural ties between the two nations.

The proposal was brought up during a meeting held last night on the sidelines of Destination – Tripura Business Conclave 2026, here between Bangladesh High Commissioner M Riaz Hamidullah and Tripura Chief Minister Dr Manik Saha.

The initiative aims to facilitate cultural exchanges through film and nurture deeper social and artistic connections between Bangladesh and Tripura. While discussing the idea, the High Commissioner pointed out the necessity of expanding cultural interactions and promoting more engagement among the populations on both sides of the border before going for an aggressive business deal. Hamidullah mentioned that they also talked about the potential for Bangladeshi films to be screened in Tripura, emphasising that cinema serves as an impactful way to improve mutual understanding and reinforce deep-rooted cultural ties. He indicated that such endeavours could open up valuable opportunities for artists, filmmakers, and audiences in both regions.

Maha: Youth dies in wild animal attack in Chandrapur

Chandrapur. (Agency)

A 30-year-old youth was killed in a suspected wild animal attack in a forest area of Chandrapur district, marking the 25th death due to human-wildlife conflict in the district this year, officials said on Friday. The deceased, identified as Anil Divate, a resident of Ballarpur, had entered the Padmapur forest area under the Bhuj forest range of South Chandrapur Forest Division to collect wild vegetables when the animal attacked him on Thursday.

The victim sustained serious injuries and died on the spot. Forest officials reached the area after receiving information about the incident and began an investigation.

Officials suspect that the attack was carried out by a wild animal based on the nature of the injuries. Efforts are underway to identify the animal responsible by examining evidence collected from the spot. The incident has created panic among residents of nearby villages, who have been advised by the forest department to remain cautious while venturing into forest areas. The forest department has initiated further action and the process for providing compensation to the victim's family will be undertaken as per government guidelines, officials said.

Plea in Punjab and Haryana HC wants ‘Satluj’ back on OTT platform: ‘Can citizens be deprived of artistic, historical expression?’

Petitioner say film withdrawn without disclosure of any statutory, judicial or governmental order

Chandigarh. (Agency)

A 36-year-old has moved a public interest litigation (PIL) in the Punjab and Haryana High Court seeking directions to restore the feature film ‘Satluj’ on the ZEE5 OTT platform, contending that its withdrawal shortly after release was effected without disclosure of any statutory, judicial or governmental order. The matter is yet to come up for hearing.

Sharwan Singh has filed the petition through advocates Hakam Singh, Ajayvir Singh Randhawa, Shruti and Anmol Jeevan Singh Gill against the Union of India, the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC), the State of Punjab, Zee Entertainment Enterprises Limited, and ZEE5. Seeking issuance of a writ under Article 226 of the Constitution, the petitioner has prayed for directions to the

respondents to “forthwith restore the feature film ‘Satluj’ for public viewing on the OTT platform throughout India, there being no disclosed statutory, judicial or other lawful order prohibiting its exhibition and to ensure that the fundamental right to freedom of speech and expression guaranteed under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution of India, including the right of the public to receive information and view a duly certified cinematographic work, is not curtailed except in accordance with the procedure established by law.”

According to the petition, “recognising the vast historical and social significance” of late human rights activist Jaswant Singh Khalsa’s life, filmmaker Honey Trehan produced a biographical feature film depicting his

struggles and sacrifices, with actor-singer Diljit Dosanjh portraying the lead role. According to the plea, the film was originally titled “Punjab ’95”, but its release remained delayed for several years



due to certification issues before the CBFC, with reports indicating that numerous modifications and cuts were

sought. The petition states that the film was eventually released digitally on ZEE5 on July 3 under the title “Satluj” but was withdrawn from the platform on July 5.

The petition submits that “the abrupt removal of the film, without disclosure of any statutory order, judicial direction or lawful authority, has not only curtailed the fundamental right of the public to receive information and artistic expression under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution of India but has also deprived thousands of bona fide subscribers of access to content for which they had already paid consideration. Such deprivation, in the absence of authority of law, is arbitrary, unreasonable and contrary to the constitutional mandate of fairness, transparency and the rule of law.”

AAP denies any proposal for premature release of convicts in Jaswant Singh Khalsa murder case

Says no such file signed by Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann or is pending approval with the Governor

Chandigarh. (Agency)

The Aam Aadmi Party on Thursday rejected the allegations that its government in Punjab had approved any proposal for the premature release of convicts in the activist Jaswant Singh Khalsa murder case, claiming that no such file had been signed by Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann or is pending approval with the Governor.

Addressing a press conference, Punjab AAP’s media in-charge Baltej Pannu termed reports claiming that the state government had recommended the premature release of former DSP Jaspal Singh, a convict in the murder case, as “false propaganda” aimed at misleading the public. “The case was investigated by the CBI, and under Section 477 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), corresponding to Section 435 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC),

any proposal for premature release in a CBI-investigated case falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). The Punjab government has neither received nor processed any



proposal from the MHA regarding the premature release of the convicts,” said Pannu. The AAP leader said that Jaspal Singh had first moved MHA for premature release in 2017. The MHA rejected the application in 2018 and the

Governor also turned it down later that year. A fresh proposal was again sent to the MHA in 2019 following a recommendation from the DGP’s office, he said, adding that similar proposals by other co-convicts Satnam Singh, Surinder Singh and Jasbir Singh were rejected by the MHA in March 2023. He said the cases were again referred to the MHA in October 2023 and no concurrence has been received so far. “As no proposal has come back from the MHA, no file has been placed before the Punjab government or the Governor. Therefore, the claim that Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann signed a file for the premature release of the convicts is entirely false,” Pannu said, and alleged that Opposition parties, particularly the Shiromani Akali Dal, were spreading misinformation by claiming that the Punjab government had signed a remission file and sent it to the Governor.

3,000 gas cylinders get washed away in Patalganga river in Raigad district

Kolhapur. (Agency)

In a shocking incident, as many as 3,000 gas cylinders from Hindustan Petroleum were washed away into the Patalganga river in Raigad district, due to the strong flow of water. The Hindustan Petroleum LPG bottling plant located in the MIDC area of Chavane in Panvel taluka was badly affected by the floods. Due to the heavy rains, as many as 3,000 gas cylinders from the plant got washed away into the Patalganga river. These included filled and empty cylinders. After this incident, there was a stir in the entire area, and the administration issued an

immediate alert to the villages along the river.

Taking cognizance of this serious situation, Raigad District Collector Kishan Javale made an important appeal to the citizens. He explained that cylinders washed away in the river or on the banks can be extremely dangerous. “There is no guarantee whether there is gas left in the cylinder flowing in the river or whether it is safe.

Therefore, picking up these cylinders, tampering with them, or taking them home just out of curiosity or for domestic use can be extremely dangerous. Citizens should not risk their lives and take any

risks,” Javale appealed.

Currently, the administration and HPCL company officials are trying on a war footing to find the washed away cylinders. Due to the flow of Patalganga river, there is high possibility that these cylinders will be washed away in Khalapur, Pen and the surrounding coastal villages in Raigad.

“If anyone finds such gas cylinders in the river or on the banks, they are instructed to immediately deposit them with HPCL company or the nearest authorized gas distributor at the Tehsildar office in Khalapur, Pen, instead of keeping them,” he urged.

Moga police station blast: Stopped from ‘inspecting’ site, says Bittu; Congress demands CM’s resignation

Bittu entered into heated arguments with police officers and sat on road in protest along with BJP workers. Later, in a post on Facebook, Bittu said that after his protest, police "gave him the way" to reach the police station.

Ludhiana. (Agency)

Union Minister Ravneet Singh Bittu Thursday claimed that Punjab Police tried to stop him from inspecting the Moga Sadar police station where a low-intensity blast took place Wednesday.

Bittu entered into heated arguments with police officers and sat on road in protest along with BJP workers. Later, in a post on Facebook, Bittu said that after his protest, police “gave him the way” to reach the police station.

“Such blasts will occur everyday if we will try to hide them. What is there in it to hide? Why are they not letting me visit the spot? Now will you stop common people also from visiting the police station,” asked Bittu, as police officers including SP (investigation) Bal Krishan Singla tried to placate him. Bittu said: “Already 22 such blasts have happened on police stations

alone. Ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Punjab visit on July 17, such things are happening. Common people are scared. Black days in Punjab will return if this is how the AAP government continues to hide such incidents. Punjab Police has become the stooge of AAP and Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann. They have not been able to ban a single accused in series of blasts at police stations”.

A low-intensity blast was reported at the Moga Sadar police station on Wednesday, though there was no injury to anyone or damage to property. A high alert was sounded after the incident. Speaking to The Indian Express, Moga SSP Gurbans Singh Bains said, “Two suspects have been captured in the CCTV while throwing some object towards the police station building but we cannot say as of now if it was a

grenade or something else”. “Windows of 1-2 vehicles suffered damage but there was no other loss of life or property,” said the SSP, adding that a forensic probe has been



initiated and an FIR against unidentified persons has been registered under the Explosives Act. Asked if it was a grenade attack and if a pro-Khalistani group has taken responsibility, SSP said: “All are

assumptions for now.”

On Bittu visiting the police station, the SSP said that “there was some confusion.”

“We have not sealed the building and nothing is being hidden. The police officers on the spot thought that Bittu wanted to go inside the police station, which would have hampered our probe. But later when he clarified that he only wanted to visit till the entrance of the police station, I personally accompanied him.” Meanwhile, demanding CM’s resignation over the “series of blasts”, state Congress chief Amrinder Singh Raja Warring said: “If police stations in Punjab are not safe, then imagine the plight of common people. CM Mann has terribly failed as home minister and chief minister, and his government is taking these blasts too casually.

Punjab's harsh truths can't be wished away

IN a country that ranks 110th out of 165 nations on the global Human Freedom Index, the removal of a film from a digital platform should not be surprising. The surprise, if any, was the sudden, quiet release of *Satluj*, a film highlighting unpalatable truths. It requires a special disconnect from reality to believe that once a movie is released, it can be banned. Diljit Dosanjh has noted with satisfaction that the movie has reached the people it was meant for. However, the financial setback is enormous for the filmmakers, who had to fight the censor board and legal wrangles.

As the outrage on social media indicates, the movie has a special appeal for youngsters. For those aged 50 or above, it is a revisit of a horrid chapter from Punjab's history. *Satluj* is the powerful story of State tyranny that convulsed Punjab for a decade and a half, beginning in the early 1980s. Equally repulsive and self-destructive was terrorism, culminating in the assassination of Chief Minister Beant Singh in August 1995. The CM paid the price for giving then DGP, KPS Gill, a free hand to stamp out terrorism. The police ultimately succeeded, partly by resorting to lawless methods and partly because Punjabis had got tired of living with daily bloodshed. Khalistanis abroad tend to portray Punjab militancy as a movement for a separate state. Actually, it started as a reaction to systemic injustices. The Parkash Singh Badal government, ignoring intelligence warnings, allowed a risky "Vaisakhi Samagan" in 1978 at Amritsar where a dozen Sikhs were killed in a clash with Nirankaris. The killings went unpunished. This infuriated young Sikhs. Subsequently, Punjab saw the emergence of militancy and the rise of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale.

Police repression was let loose and rural Sikhs provided food and shelter to gun-wielding youth. Coming of age in a society that had a flexible rule of law, dysfunctional institutions and bleak prospects for meaningful economic participation, young people turned to terrorist gangs in growing numbers. The film is based on the life of a bank employee from Khalsa, a village near Bhikhiwind in Tarn Taran district. Jaswant Singh Khalsa began investigating mysterious disappearances of his friends and acquaintances and discovered, to his horror, extrajudicial killings of about 25,000 Sikh youths. Majha in general and Tarn Taran district in particular were the worst hit by militancy. Having spent my growing-up years in Majha, I remember some of the brutal killings, both by terrorists and the police, that happened in the area.

In October 1993, a few terrorists had crossed over from Pakistan. An encounter ensued and two youths were killed. Their bodies were sent to the Patti Civil Hospital, where one of them turned out to be alive. Valtaha SHO Sita Ram took him away, shot him again and returned the body to the hospital. There was a communal flare-up when Hindu passengers were pulled out of buses, lined up and shot. Being clean-shaven, I was told by my relatives either to grow my hair and wear a turban or stop visiting them and stay in Chandigarh. Such killings led to the migration of some of my friends from Hindu families. Such was the environment of fear that terrorists ruled Punjab at night. After dark, police stations were locked up. There was no night patrolling. Bus services were suspended after sunset. When asked about staged encounters, a police officer who was close to Sumedh Singh Saini, then Ludhiana SSP, told me: "If we don't kill them, they will kill us". Then DGP Julio Ribeiro's "bullet-for-bullet" statement was taken seriously. One officer who had earned particular notoriety in abductions, torture and extrajudicial killings was Ajit Singh Sandhu, then SSP of Tarn Taran. In the film, the character named SSP Sugga is based on him. Sandhu allegedly committed suicide by jumping in front of a speeding train in 1997. Some reports attributed to Amnesty International say that he was murdered because his testimony could have revealed big names. In the movie, Diljit Dosanjh talks about the killings of around 2,000 policemen for refusing to take part in fake encounters.

What war means to children

When children witness war and become victims, they reproduce the same when they grow up

THE central plot of the film *The Voice of Hind Rajab* is a complex telephonic conversation between the volunteers at Red Crescent (the equivalent of the Red Cross in Muslim-majority countries) and Hanood, a little girl who was trapped inside a car surrounded by bodies of her relatives. She was petrified and constantly asked the woman on the call to come and take her to safety. The volunteer struggled for words capable of comforting a terrified small girl. In one scene, she gently tells Hanood that others are sleeping as they are tired and need rest. Adults often attempt to soften human reality for children, but Hanood responds, "They are dead, all of them are dead". There is no hesitation, no confusion rather a quiet statement of a fact.

In that single sentence, the fragile architecture of childhood collapses. It wasn't a scripted dialogue. It was the real voice of Hanood and her repeated requests and arguments that someone should come and save her. The film brings home a well-known point that children do not witness violence politically. Hanood did not ask who is killing or who ordered the tank to kill her family. She was only concerned with anyone coming and saving her. The film makes the audience dive in the emotional world of a child, where the greatest violence lies not only in bullets but in the gradual collapse of trust and the belief that adults can protect her. The volunteer can comfort, but cannot rescue. Her family cannot protect her. The tragedy, therefore, is not simply that a child is exposed to death before her time, but that the very structures of adulthood entrusted with preserving childhood are rendered incapable of fulfilling their fundamental responsibility. Violence thus signifies not only the premature end of childhood but also the failure of adulthood itself, a profound rupture in the moral and social order. In Hanood's story, adults are neither absent nor indifferent; they are tragically powerless. The brutality of killing remains largely outside the frame, but its impact becomes immediate through the child's voice. Children in the conflict zone are typically spoken about by journalists, governments and humanitarian organisations. By centering Hanood's voice, this film offers an epistemological transformation. We do not just learn about the violence, we experience its agony through her voice. The film does not expand the scope of violence by documenting thousands of victims, rather narrows it down by compelling us to be with one frightened child. The film insists that before there is a statistic, there is a child. Before there is a casualty report, there is a frightened voice and psyche. Before history records a conflict, a little girl experiences it.



when children witness it and become victims, they reproduce the same when they grow up and the world inevitably reverts to its habit of war. It is not just the children like Hanood, her brother and cousins who get trapped and face violence as an existential reality every day. It is also the children everywhere including India who are witnessing the use of brute force through an endless stream of breaking news alerts, satellite imagery and sensational social media coverage almost like a spectacle. The spectator children are also internalising the occurrence of extreme violence as a human activity. Paradoxically, despite unprecedented visibility, the real human suffering often becomes invisible.

This emerged as a reality in a study that we conducted with school children in Delhi. We investigated how children construct meaning around conflict and humanitarian crises by taking the case of Palestine-Israel. We

interviewed children studying in Grades V and IX of different schools in Delhi. It emerged that about 80% children had heard of Palestine, Gaza and also 'war' and 'dispute'. However, Grade IX children described Palestine and Gaza as religious communities within Israel. Several Grade IX students wrote that "Palestine was a community residing in a place called 'Hummus' (sic)" and "Gaza and Palestine are two poor minority communities in Israel". They had heard about the killing of hundreds of people including small kids. Their sources of information were television (50%), newspaper (30%), social media (30%), family (30%) and friends (20%), but not the teachers. No one mentioned them. They felt sad and pitiful for the children of Gaza and wanted the war to stop but with a faulty understanding that they are the

protesting minority within Israel. The absence of violence is not peace. Even if the episodes of direct violence stop, structural violence continues in the form of idea of violence. If Hanood, her brother and millions of other Gaza children are coping with direct violence, children in other countries including in India are experiencing structural violence. This is what forms the habit of war and gives rise to its continuity. Our study revealed that children are not mute spectators but they lack the understanding and real ideas for imagining a better world. One reason is that their teachers had not considered it as valid knowledge worthy of attention in the classrooms. The Dalai Lama invests his hope in teachers. He says that teachers make a mistake if they take up teaching simply as a way of making a living. If there is no human love in classrooms, and teachers merely explain each subject without affection or a sense of responsibility then education fails. It is extremely important for teachers to acknowledge that altruism and kindness indicate a mind intent on benefiting others. If each person possesses the intention to serve others, as we all have to live together in human society, the resulting society will be a much happier one. Teachers should not simply focus on creating individuals who are only well-spoken and efficient, rather educate children to be altruistic, kind and compassionate, to understand the nature of life and make the world peaceful for everyone. Teachers must teach knowledge by integrating human values of compassion, tolerance and mutual understanding. Children in India need to understand the struggles of their counterparts in Gaza as valid and essential knowledge about this world. It will be a befitting tribute to the teachings of the Dalai Lama, who turns 91 this month and to the spirit of Hanood.

Mountain mess : NGT censure must spur durable reforms

Tourists must also recognise that preserving the Himalayan environment is a shared responsibility, not merely the government's

KULLU's garbage crisis shows how poor waste management can undermine both environmental protection and public health in ecologically fragile hill regions. The recent findings of a committee constituted by the National Green Tribunal (NGT), exposing glaring lapses in solid waste management, point to systemic governance failures. They also underscore an uncomfortable truth: India cannot promote sustainable tourism while neglecting basic civic infrastructure. The panel found indiscriminate dumping of waste, untreated legacy garbage, poor segregation at source and leachate contaminating nearby water bodies, in violation of the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016. Such practices threaten the Beas river ecosystem, pollute groundwater, attract disease vectors and increase methane emissions. In a geologically sensitive Himalayan region, environmental degradation quickly translates into public health risks. The NGT has repeatedly pulled up Himachal Pradesh over waste management. Last year,

it had sought stricter compliance and time-bound action. The recurrence of such violations suggests that



official assurances have not translated into meaningful improvements. Kullu's predicament also reflects a

wider challenge confronting popular hill destinations such as Shimla, Manali, Mussoorie and Nainital, where seasonal tourist inflows routinely overwhelm local waste-handling capacities. The solution demands more than periodic clean-up drives. Urban local bodies need scientific waste-processing facilities, decentralised composting, material recovery centres and engineered landfills for residual waste. Segregation at source must become non-negotiable, while the "polluter pays" principle and extended producer responsibility should be enforced rigorously. Hotels, restaurants and tourism operators must also minimise single-use plastics and manage waste responsibly. Equally important is behavioural change. Waste segregation cannot succeed without sustained public participation, awareness campaigns and strict enforcement. Tourists must also recognise that preserving the Himalayan environment is a shared responsibility, not merely the government's obligation. The NGT's intervention must spur durable reforms.

Will theft affect Hindutva, UP poll?

With elections approaching in Uttar Pradesh—the epicentre of national renaissance—the objective of the detractors is crystal clear: use the theft to fracture the temple movement which recalled and reinstated the pre-independence political philosophy of Hindu nationalism.

The Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust had outsourced the cash-counting process to the local SBI branch, which in turn hired an external agency, 'Sainik Security Services'. SBI deployed 19 personnel, which included the few recommended by the Trust.

Of the eight arrested, six were from this counting team, and two were Trust employees—one of whom betrayed the immense trust placed in him by Trust general secretary Champat Rai on the quintessential RSS ethos that 'trust breeds trust.' The theft occurred because of over reliance on personal trust instead of systemic rigour. The counting protocols were overly relaxed, allowing for collusion. This led to administrative negligence, paving the way for the theft. As Champat Rai himself noted, he was betrayed by someone he trusted deeply.

Bulldozer action

To date, Rs 80 lakh out of the stolen cash has been recovered. The special investigation team (SIT) set up by the UP government is actively tracking the remaining assets of the accused and investigating if any other valuables were compromised. The government's resolve against the wrongdoers is manifest in the move to bulldoze a Rs 80-lakh house built by one of the thieves whose salary was a mere Rs 20,000. evolve. India's task is to recognise that evolution before it becomes conventional wisdom, and adapt accordingly.

Stolen cash a small sum?

The Ram Mandir is said to have received over Rs 3,000 crore in donations to date, with reportedly more than 90% arriving securely via bank transfers. Between April 2025 and February 2026, Rs 74 crore was reportedly collected in cash via the Hundi. It was only from this

cash pool that theft occurred.

Based on internal audits and preliminary SIT reports, the embezzled amount was reportedly estimated at Rs 7 crore to 7.5 crore initially. The latest estimate of the theft gathered from Trust sources is far less, out of which most has been recovered partly in cash and partly traced as properties. Trust sources confirm that there is not a single gram of jewellery lost. The latest estimate of the stolen cash, and the absence of any loss of jewellery, if finally established by SIT, will be a serious blow to the reckless opposition charge of a huge Rs 200 crore scam. Already, their demand for a court-monitored investigation ignores the stark contrast between inaction in government Trust cases forcing the courts to step in to initiate the probe and the super promptness of the Mandir Trust's action. Now come to the politics and ideological clashes triggered by the theft that is inevitable as the Mandir battleground of UP goes to polls early next year. Hindu nationalism: Preached by Vivekananda, accepted by Gandhi, reclaimed by Ram

Even a single rupee stolen is a tragic betrayal of Shri Ram. Ram is not merely an idol. He is the very soul of this ancient nation. He is the very symbol of the Ayodhya movement that decisively course-corrected the pseudo-secular polity, which fractured our civilisational ethos. To recall how the Ram Mandir movement reoriented our national life, here is a bit of history that the media often forgets. After independence, the inspiring ideals and symbols of the freedom

movement—the concept of Hindu nationalism expounded by Swami Vivekananda and Maharishi Aurobindo, Mahatma Gandhi's vision of Ram Rajya, the rallying freedom battle cries of Bharat Mata Ki Jai and Vande Mataram—were marginalised. The Ram Mandir movement catalysed their renaissance. Most of



those guiding the national discourse are unaware that the concept of a 'Hindu Rashtra' (Hindu nationalism) is not an invention of the RSS. Yes, it is not the RSS' conception. Decades before the RSS was formed, this nationalism was preached by Vivekananda and Aurobindo. It became the driving force of the freedom struggle. It was thoroughly embraced by leaders like—believe it!—Gandhi, Nehru, and even

Communist stalwart Rajani Palme Dutt.

In his seminal work *Hind Swaraj* (1909), Gandhi wrote that Hindu theerth yatra, pilgrimage to Chardhams and reverence to Ganga Jal symbolise and proclaim our national integration and nationalism. He wrote that they "make us as one in the sense in which no two Englishmen are". When asked about Muslims, he said they must be assimilated into the overarching national mainstream. How many in the media know this? Jawaharlal Nehru hailed Swami Vivekananda as the pioneer of India's freedom movement. He wrote in his *Glimpses of World History* (1935), "the Hindu nationalism preached by the Swami was rooted deeply in Hindu religion and culture, yet was in no way anti-Muslim." (p. 437).

Further, Nehru acknowledged, "It is not easy to draw a line between Hindu nationalism and true nationalism. The two blend together, as India is the only home of the Hindus and they form a majority there." (p. 720). How many participants in public discourse today have read Nehru's *Glimpses of World History*? Rajani Palme Dutt, the Indian who founded the Communist Party of Great Britain, wrote in his book titled *India Today* that even if Indians had grown up in monastic isolation learning only the Sanskrit Vedas, they would have undoubtedly drawn inspiration required for the freedom struggle from them. How many in the media know his name, know that he wrote that book in 1939 and revised it in 1973 and still did not change what he had said in 1939?



8 ways to get off the beaten track in Thailand

Thailand is a major travel destination, and as a result, much of its once-untouched landscape and island culture has been modernised. Yet, it still seems remarkably easy to get 'off the beaten track' in Thailand. This is due, in large part, to the fact that many first- and second-time visitors simply choose not to (as knowing the language quickly becomes a legitimate necessity and the transportation infrastructure degenerates aggressively farther from the tourist hotspots). The majority of the wonders to be seen in Thailand have become top tourist traps by default, so getting off the beaten path is an undertaking for a different kind of thrill—the experience of true Thai life, synced with the ebb and flow of the weather and seasons. This makes exploring and experiencing the 'unseen' Thailand a great opportunity to break from the hustle of 9-5 culture, and to often find more eco-friendly and fulfilling experiences.

Travel till you run out of English speakers
This seems pretty obvious, but what acts as a deterrent to most travellers is a fantastic guide to determine your level of off-track-ness. Yes, it will mean you'll need to learn a few key phrases (such as 7-Eleven yoo nai

You know you're on the right track when the Wikipedia page for Isaan lists 'Buddhist monks' as the first subcategory under 'Notable natives or residents'. Literally translating to 'north east direction', this massive section of north-eastern Thailand is home to a third of the

and time should be allotted to teasing apart the Laotian and Burmese influences on Thai regions. Backpackers gravitate to the north to lose themselves in the legendary trekking and motorcycling circuits (such as the well-known ones in Chiang Mai, and the lesser-travelled ones in Nan), so it's a perfect place to get outdoorsy and carve your own path. The remote Nan province in particular, right at Laos border, is a great place to explore between its three major towns and six national parks.

Follow the coast
Thailand's beach culture is justifiably legendary, considering its 2,000 miles of coastline and 85-degree summer days. This becomes incredibly evident when travelling to any of the many heavily populated beaches, such as the majority of the Krabi coast. But follow that coast a little farther, and you'll discover beaches that don't make to the 'top 10' lists, but wind up more beautiful in their isolation. Take Railay Beach in Southern Thailand, for example. It's a killer beach, and many make a day trip out there for sun, surf, cave exploration, and climbing. As a result, it's also become home to a dozen or more luxury resorts and is now super touristy. Follow the coast north a bit, however, and you'll wind up at Tonsai Beach—just as sweet, less than a third as populated. Plus, Tonsai is super laid-back, and a great place to grab a freshly ground chai or coffee and learn some slacklining or fire dancing.

Explore the islands
Thailand has a ton of islands. For example, the island group in Phang Nga Bay comprises 67. Some islands are big enough to house full

best are the islands in Trat province off the Andaman coast. Take Ko Kut, which has been described as 'so off-the-beaten-path you might get bored', or Ko Chang, the second largest Thai island after Phuket and the last 'cheap' island—large enough to find some solid secluded spots.

Don't rule out any day trips
Many incredible Thailand experiences remain incredible because they don't, at the very first glance, seem quite as appealing. Take Doy Din Dang pottery studio, 7 mi north of Chiang Rai. Meaning 'Red Clay Hill', Doy Din Dang is a pottery studio in the middle of jungle nowhere, and is home to Somluk Pantiboon—an internationally renowned master potter. He gathers every material he uses from the land and supplies a lot of the ceramic ware you'll encounter at local restaurants. You can also sample some home-grown coffee that's supposed to be quite epic, so all around, it's an awesome trip that would likely never have occurred to you in the shadow of white temples and giant golden buddhas. Alternatively, check out Bo Klua salt wells outside of Nan. They're thought to have been in use for over 800 years and tap into brine from ocean water trapped underground for millennia. The water is pulled up to the surface and boiled off to access the salt. Again, totally remote and not terribly exciting at first glance, but an awesome way to get utterly off the tourist grid.

Ask the locals
If you must start your trip in one of the huge touristy cities in Thailand, fear not, there are still some amazing 'unseen' areas and neighbourhoods well within the city limits. Want to find where all the locals hide when the sea of tour buses shows up? Ask someone (and enjoy the benefit of being able to communicate with them in your native language). Of course, be wary, as some locals in the tourist districts will have their own agendas, but for the most part, you're likely to discover some legit locals-only spots by talking to the notoriously friendly people of Thailand. Want some peace? Try spending a stint at a wat and explore the Buddhist culture of the country. For something altogether different, have someone direct you to the part-store, part-museum Papaya Vintage Shop in Bangkok, or go to Phang Nga in Phuket on your own between tours. Finally, when you've exhausted all the resources within the city, venture just outside them—for example, to Amphawa, just west of Bangkok, where you'll find a kickass floating market on weekends.

Travel slow
The best way to get off the beaten track in virtually any destination is to give yourself enough time to do so. Sometimes this means having enough time to find that fork in the road that takes you to San Kamphaeng Hot Springs outside Chiang Mai. Sometimes it means having enough time to let a two- or three-day stay at Wat Suan Mokkh become a week-long experience. The only way to find what you're looking for, to touch those furthest obscure regions, is to be around long enough to identify what those regions are, and the idiosyncrasies that define each and its inhabitants. If you've come to experience true Thai living, you really have to give yourself the opportunity to live it—slow down, stay awhile.



krap—where is the 7-Eleven?), keep some key photos on your phone (you know, like a bathroom door), or perhaps have a pencil and paper handy for notes and drawings; but the only way to get properly remote and utterly off the beaten track is to cut yourself off from the world, you and more importantly, all the other tourists are comfortable with. This will not only help you accomplish your travel goals and facilitate that proper adventure, but it will also seriously help the local economy, which suffers in areas not immediately adjacent to key tourist destinations.

Travel by motorbike
One of the easiest ways to traverse Thailand and the easiest way to find the path-less-travelled is by motorbike. Even on well-worn circuits (like the 3-hour stretch from Chiang Mai to Pai via Route 1095) becomes very much an individualised experience as you

travel farther north and with the freedom a motorbike provides. Additionally, the motorbike is probably the most ideal way to explore the multitude of islands surrounding Thailand. Yes, some may get a little hairy if you're an inexperienced biker (like the rougher and steeper roads to the better beaches on the northern and eastern edges of Ko Pha Ngan), but by and large, the best (and most cost-effective) way to set out is on a motorbike—particularly since the cost of motorbike freedom is about 600 baht (\$18.61) daily out of Chiang Mai, and fuel only 39.27 baht (\$1.22) per gallon.

Go north (east)
Generally, the northern half of Thailand is the best place to leave the souvenir stalls behind and enter the true 'land of smiles'. Some key regions to visit when planning your trip off the beaten path are Isaan and North.

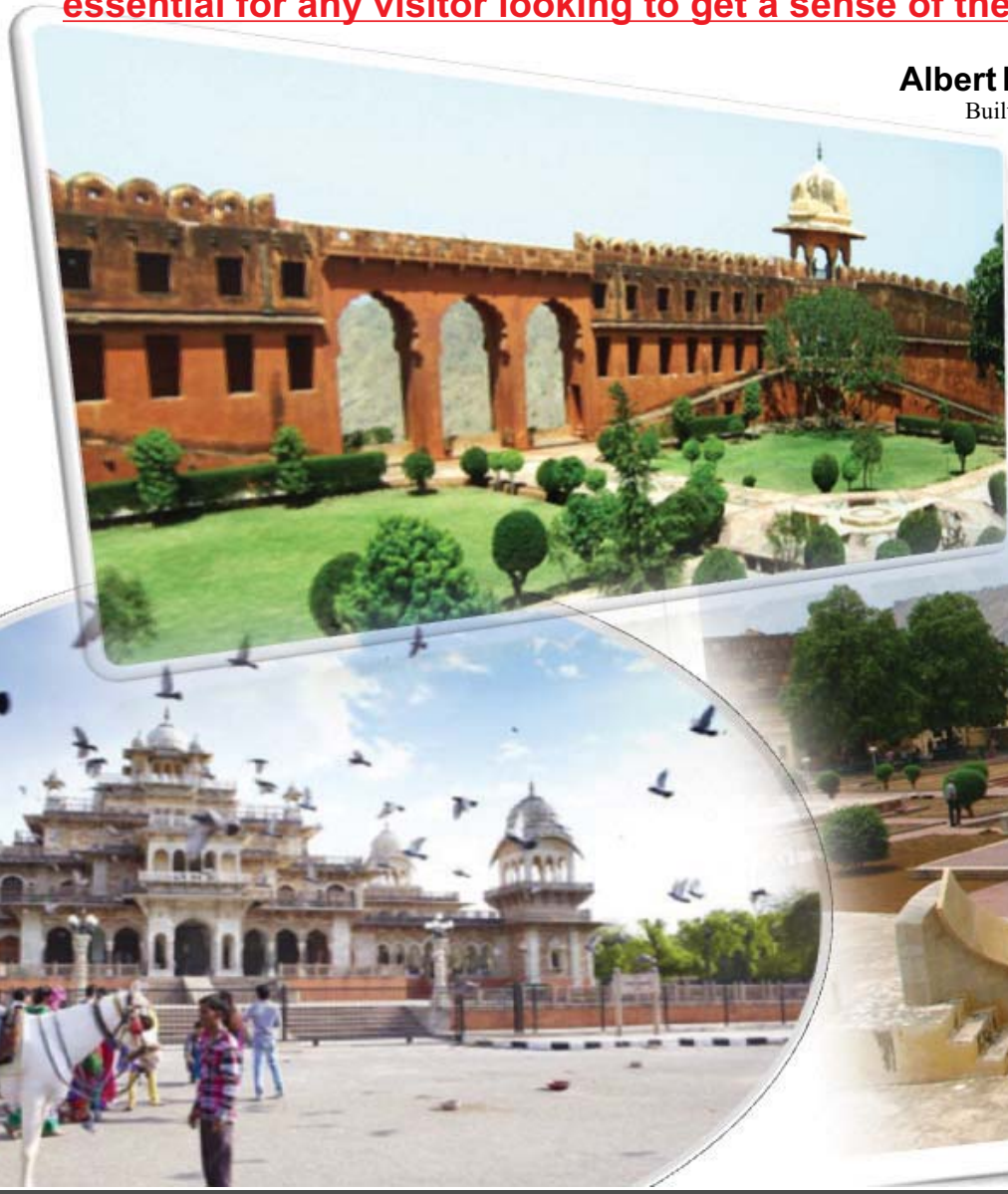
native population, but only sees about 0.31% of the nation's overall annual tourists. Sure, there are some key tourist hotspots in Isaan, but even those get routinely skipped over by the week- to week-and-a-half traveller starting in Bangkok. Perhaps you'll hit up the Mekong riverside in Sangkhom to do a little hammock lounging. Perhaps you'll go to Nakhon Phanom province to see the oldest temple in Thailand (That Phanom), before reaching Loei province at the northern tip of Isaan, to explore its many peaceful river towns. Regardless of where you wind up, Isaan has it all—national parks, mountains and rivers (often with accompanying temples, like the Wat Phu Tok mountain temple and Erawan shrine), ruins, and a near-endless sea of rice paddies. Moreover, Northern Thailand is something of a hub for backpackers and long-holidayers. As the nexus between Thailand, Laos, and Myanmar, Northern Thailand is a cultural blend of the three,



resorts, while others (many of which are privately owned and readily and cheaply available for rent) are much smaller and have accommodations for only a few, but are as off-the-beaten-track as they are ideal getaways for a peaceful and remote stay. Among the

6 places that reveal Jaipur's exciting history

Most of Jaipur's attractions are clustered together, either located within the boundaries of the walled city built by Sawai Jai Singh II in the 18th-century, or around the former capital at Amber. These six attractions are essential for any visitor looking to get a sense of the city's history.



Albert Hall

Built in 1876 to commemorate the visit of the Prince of Wales, this colonial museum was modelled on London's Victoria and Albert Museum. The impressive building was designed by the British engineer Samuel Swinton Jacob in an Indo-Saracenic style, which drew upon elements of Mughal, Rajput and British architecture. It

exhibits a large collection of miniature paintings, royal portraits, Indian arts and crafts, sculptures, musical instruments, coins, carpets and arms and armour. The surrounding Ram Niwas Garden was laid out later as part of a famine relief project, and now encloses a zoo, an aviary, a greenhouse and a herbarium.

Jaigarh Fort

Located next to the Amber Fort, this well-preserved military fort was built in the 18th century and housed the royal treasury. Its highlight is the Jai Vana, one of the world's largest cannon on wheels. Made around 1720, it has an impressive firing range of around 30km. The fort also houses an armoury and museum, which display weapons, old photographs and maps, and royal objects. Since the fort is located on a hillock called Cheel ka Teela (hill of eagles), it is an ideal vantage point to take in stunning sights of the Amber Fort and the Maota Lake. Climb up the Diwa Burg watchtower for a bird's eye view of the sprawling plains around.

Jantar Mantar

This astronomical observatory, like its counterpart in New Delhi, was built by Jai Singh II in the 18th century. It is the largest and the best preserved of the five he built across the country. It contains 14 structures or astronomical instruments, each with a specific function: either to measure time, track solar and lunar eclipses and the movement of stars and planets. Its name is derived from jantar (meaning instrument) and mantar (meaning formula in context to calculation).

You can marvel over the striking architecture, but we also recommend taking a tourist guide to understand how the instruments are used.

Hawa Mahal

The city's most striking landmark is famous for its pink latticed windows and balconies which offer panoramic views of the city below. This 'Palace of Winds' as it is often called, was constructed in 1799 by Maharaja Sawai Pratap Singh, and used by the women in the royal family to observe the city's processions without being seen. Built with red and pink sandstone, the five-storey monument was designed by Lal Chand Ustad who drew upon several Mughal architectural elements. An important note for visitors: entry to the Hawa Mahal isn't from the façade but through a side road at the rear end of the monument.

Amber Fort

This hilltop fort complex lies on the dusty Aravalli hill range, 11 km outside Jaipur. It was the capital of the Rajputs for 700 years and the original residence of the royal family, before Jaipur was constructed. Built in a combination of Hindu and Islamic architectural elements, it encloses pretty palaces, imposing gates and several official buildings. These are decorated with wall murals, carvings, and mirror and glass work. Take a moment to admire the magnificent inlay work in the Sheesh Mahal or Hall of Mirrors. The fort truly comes alive in the evenings with a light and sound show, which narrates its history in Hindi and English.

City Palace

Located in the old part of the city, the City Palace encloses several palaces, courtyards and gardens. These have been built over the last two centuries, and are a blend of the Rajput and Mughal architectural styles. The royal family continues to live in a part of the palace, and this impressive complex still exudes a regal aura.

Your first major stop inside will be the Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum, which has a good collection of royal costumes, weapons, miniature paintings, manuscripts and sculptures. Other highlights include the Diwan-i-Am or the Hall of Public Audience, where durbars (royal courts) were held, and which still has painted walls and ceiling, marble pillars and glass chandeliers. Another hall, the Diwan-i-Khas, was used during ceremonies, and exhibits the largest silver water containers in the world.

5 interesting excursions to take in

Kodaikanal

One of Tamil Nadu's most picturesque hill stations, Kodaikanal is located at an altitude of 7,200 ft in the Palani hills in the Western Ghats. Comprising of densely wooded jungles, cascading hill slopes, circuitous rivers and green rolling valleys, it is a favourite amidst tourists visiting the country's south. Though a trip to Kodaikanal is all about revelling in nature, here are a few things to take in during your time there.

Kukkal Caves

This is one of the most interesting excursions from Kodaikanal. Located at a distance of about 40 km from the city, the journey will take you through thickly forested areas abounding with orchids and shoal trees. The Kukkal caves are amongst the oldest carved caves in the region. Situated at an altitude of 1500 m, they offer the most breathtaking views of the Manjampath valley down below. The caves themselves form a rock shelter with an overhang of stalactites and stalagmites rising from the base.

Subrahmanya temple

Also referred to as the Karthikeya temple and the Palani temple, this place of worship is a major draw for tourists. Located about 65 km ahead of Kodaikanal, it is dedicated to Lord Subramanian. One of south India's most famous

temples, the Subrahmanya temple is perched at an altitude of 135 m, and is approached by 659 steps, or alternatively by using the winch facility. The festivals of Tai Pusam (January) and Panguni Uttaram (April) are carried out on the premises with great pomp and show.

Bryant Park

Named, conceptualised and landscaped after the British officer Glenn Bryant back in 1980, Bryant Park is a botanical garden located to the east of the Kodaikanal Lake. The park holds an annual flower and vegetable show in May, which is the best time to visit. In addition, there is a glasshouse on the garden grounds, which houses a wide

variety of beautiful blooming flowers and ferns.

Pillar Rocks

One of Kodaikanal's most famous attractions, these three mammoth rock pillars stand shoulder-to-shoulder, looming 400-ft-high in the sky. Affording a bird's eye view of the surrounding vista, these granite structures are located at a distance of about eight km from the lake tower, and encompass little hidden nooks and crannies within them, which are great to explore. The chambers between the pillars are referred to as the devil's kitchen, and there's a beautiful public garden just adjacent that offers a great view of the structure.



Army Chief visits forward areas along LoC in Jammu & Kashmir, reviews security

Army Chief General Dhiraj Seth reviewed security and operational preparedness across LoC formations in Jammu and Kashmir during his first Northern Command visit.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), General Dhiraj Seth, reviewed the security situation and operational preparedness of Indian Army formations deployed along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir during a three-day visit to the Northern Command from July 7 to 9. The visit marked his maiden tour of the Command since taking over as Army Chief. During the visit, General Seth assessed the prevailing security environment, combat readiness and operational preparedness of formations deployed along the LoC as well as in the hinterland. He visited the Headquarters of the Chinार Corps,

formations across the Kashmir Valley, the Headquarters of the White Knight Corps, and forward areas in the Jammu region, including Poonch, Rajouri and Sunderbani. In Srinagar, the Army Chief was briefed on the Northern Command's operational perspective and the preparedness of the Chinार Corps. He also met the Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and held interactions with various stakeholders to discuss issues concerning security, stability and inter-

agency coordination in the Union Territory. At the Chinार Corps headquarters, inter-agency coordination, evolving security challenges and arrangements for the ongoing Shri Amarnath Yatra. He also assessed initiatives aimed at technology integration, capability enhancement and maintaining integrated combat readiness across the full spectrum of military operations. The Army Chief later visited formations in Kupwara, Uri and Manasbal, where he was briefed on the prevailing security situation, the counter-terror grid, surveillance mechanisms, field-level innovations and overall operational preparedness. During his interaction with troops, he

appreciated their professionalism, dedication and commitment to maintaining peace and stability under challenging conditions. General Seth also witnessed a display of indigenous technological innovations during the visit. He lauded the Army's emphasis on technology absorption and capability enhancement, stressing the importance of adopting emerging technologies to improve operational effectiveness. The Army Chief also reviewed efforts by Army formations to support communities in India's first villages through people-centric initiatives. He appreciated the contribution of troops towards nation-building, community engagement.



General Seth reviewed operational deployments, counter-terror operations, and his interaction with troops.

n a first, DU launches one-year PG programmes for four-year graduates

New Delhi. (Agency)

Delhi University (DU) has introduced one-year postgraduate (PG) programmes for the first time, marking a major shift in its higher education framework from the 2026-27 academic session. The programmes will be available only to students who have completed the university's four-year undergraduate programme under the Undergraduate Curriculum Framework (UGCF) 2022. As part of the initiative, DU will offer admissions to 46 one-year postgraduate programmes across multiple disciplines. These include MA in Arabic, MA in Bengali, MCom and MSc in Biochemistry, among others. The university has advised prospective students to refer to the official admission notification for the complete list of programmes and course-specific eligibility criteria. Eligible students will now have the opportunity to complete their master's degree within a single academic year, in line with the academic structure envisioned under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The newly launched programmes will offer more than 1,100 seats across various departments. At the same time, the university will continue admissions to its existing 74 two-year postgraduate programmes, which together account for nearly 13,500 seats. With both one-year and two-year options available, DU's total postgraduate intake will increase to approximately 14,600 seats for the 2026 admission cycle. The university clarified that the introduction of the new courses will not replace the existing two-year postgraduate programmes.

Inderlok-Indraprastha metro work kicks off, to run fully underground

New Delhi. (Agency)

The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) on Thursday began construction of the Inderlok-Indraprastha Metro corridor, with the diaphragm wall work starting at the proposed Sarai Rohilla Metro Station in the presence of Chief Minister Rekha Gupta. The 12.377-kilometre corridor is being developed as a fully underground extension of the Magenta Line and will have 10 underground stations. Once completed, it will extend the Magenta Line from Botanical Garden to Inderlok, making it the longest corridor in the Delhi Metro network at nearly 89 km, DMRC said in a statement. The entire Magenta Line will operate as a driverless corridor after the extension is completed, the statement added. Sarai Rohilla Metro Station is expected to improve connectivity to Sarai Rohilla Railway Station, Karol Bagh market, Desh Bandhu Gupta Road, educational institutions and nearby commercial and residential areas. The new corridor will provide interchange facilities with seven Metro lines. Commuters will be able to change to the Green and Red Lines at Inderlok, the existing Magenta Line at Nabi Karim, the Yellow Line and Airport Express at New Delhi, the Violet Line at Delhi Gate, and the Blue Line at Indraprastha. The route will also improve access to key locations, including New Delhi Railway Station, Delhi Secretariat, Arun Jaitley Stadium, Jhandewalan Mandir, India Gate, Kartavya Path and the Central Vista area. **Magenta Line extension** The 12.377-kilometre corridor is being developed as a fully underground extension of the Magenta Line and will have 10 underground stations. Once completed, it will extend the Magenta Line from Botanical Garden to Inderlok, making it the longest corridor in network.

Congress asks Bhupendra Yadav to take 'moral responsibility' over aides' removal

New Delhi. (Agency)

The Congress on Friday intensified its attack on Union Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav over the removal of four aides from his office, saying a minister should take "moral responsibility" when close associates are dismissed over alleged corruption and fulfil their "rajdharm". Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh invoked former prime minister Lal Bahadur Shastri, arguing that the principle of moral responsibility in public life had steadily eroded. His remarks came a day after the party alleged that a "gigantic scandal" had triggered the removals and accused the Environment Ministry of a complete collapse in governance. In a post on X, Ramesh said, "Is the idea of moral responsibility alive in Indian politics? Lal Bahadur Shastri set the highest standards when he resigned as Railway Minister exactly 70 years ago following a train accident in Tamil Nadu. His example



Indian politics? Lal Bahadur Shastri set the highest standards when he resigned as Railway Minister exactly 70 years ago following a train accident in Tamil Nadu. His example

Noida mayhem: Locals stay stranded as heavy rain inundates streets

New Delhi. (Agency)

As overnight rainfall inundated parts of Noida, residents faced severe waterlogging in areas including Sector 16, Sector 62, and Sector 93 during peak office hours, stranding commuters and slowing traffic. Residents of few housing societies also reported power outages due to flooding. For Thursday, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) had issued a red alert for Delhi, warning of extremely heavy rainfall, while an orange alert was sounded for parts of Ghaziabad, Noida, Meerut and Gurugram. The worst affected were office commuters with Sectors 16 and 18 reportedly waterlogged. One of the commuters, Kumar Surya, a media professional, said, "The monsoon has



just arrived and the city is already struggling. Travelling from Noida to Delhi felt like a battle. Riding a bike was near impossible, and cab fares on platforms like Ola and Uber shot

up to more than double the usual rates." He said, "A trip that usually costs around Rs 110-120 was priced at Rs 300-350. To make matters worse, long traffic jams brought roads to a crawl." Similar conditions were witnessed outside the Noida Sector 62 metro station. Commuters were seen wading through the waterlogged streets, and the water also reportedly seeped inside the station. Another commuter, Dia Negi, who stepped outside the Sector 62 metro station flustered in the rain in the morning, said, "Due to the rain, we couldn't reach our office, even though it is just 6-7 minutes walking distance."

Chandni Chowk at the centre of Old Delhi revamp

The avenue was designed by his favourite daughter, Jahanara Begum, who imagined a broad boulevard with a canal flowing through its centre.

New Delhi. (Agency)

The government is trying to redevelop a 376-year-old marketplace that has outlived empires, survived the making of modern India, and remained the beating heart of Old Delhi through every chapter of its history. Barely 1,400 yards long, Chandni Chowk stretches from the Red Fort—whose ramparts become the nation's stage every Independence Day as the Prime Minister addresses the country—to the 17th-century Fatehpuri Mosque. Few streets in India have witnessed so much history, and fewer still continue to carry lakhs of people daily. When Mughal emperor Shah Jahan founded Shahjahanabad in 1650, Chandni Chowk was planned as the commercial heart of his new capital. The avenue was designed by his favourite daughter, Jahanara Begum, who imagined a broad boulevard with a canal flowing through its centre. The water collected in a square pool that reflected the moonlight, giving the market its enduring name—Chandni Chowk, the Moonlight Square. The centuries changed almost everything except the street's purpose. The charm waned. The havelis slowly became shops, warehouses, offices and hotels. Chandni Chowk grew into one of India's largest wholesale and retail markets, famous for its textiles, jewellery, spices, old eateries and Paranthé Wali Gali.

Every day, lakhs of people come for business, shopping, religious visits and tourism. With the crowds came familiar problems. Narrow lanes struggle to accommodate pedestrians, cycle rickshaws and delivery vehicles. Parking is scarce. Public conveniences have never kept pace with the growing number of visitors. The old city remains full of life, but

also of congestion. Earlier attempts to bring order to its streets never fully succeeded. That is the challenge now before the government. CM Rekha Gupta began with a symbolic decision: the Shahjahanabad Redevelopment Corporation, created to conserve and redevelop Old Delhi, was renamed the Indraprastha Virasat Punarvikas Nigam. **CM asks officials to establish control room to help Chandni Chowk visitors** Officials reminded the meeting that Old Delhi covers just 7.12 square kilometres, yet contains one UNESCO World Heritage Site, 10 nationally protected monuments, 10 state-protected monuments.



I invested Rs 60K yearly in Sukanya Samriddhi A/c for 4 years. I want to make the investment corpus Rs 1 lakh now. What are the options?

New Delhi. (Agency)

Sukanya Samriddhi scheme is a government-backed savings scheme for girl child. It allows parents of girl child to open account at any post office or designated commercial bank branch. Starting with a minimum initial deposit of Rs 250, subsequent deposits can be made in multiples of Rs 50, provided that at least Rs 250 is deposited in a financial year. The total annual deposit limit is capped at Rs 1,50,000; any excess amount will not earn interest and will be returned. Deposits can be made for a period of up to fifteen years from the account opening date.If you had opened an account early at the child's age, but the corpus was small, you can top it up on SSY account. To increase the value of your existing Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana (SSY) savings, you can change when you deposit money, how often you deposit and how much you deposit. The SSY interest rate is fixed by the government every quarter (currently 8.2 percent) so you cannot change the rate of return. However you can grow your savings by planning your deposits wisely. Let us assume you invested Rs 60,000 yearly in Sukanya Samriddhi A/c for 4 years. Now, you want to make the investment corpus Rs 1 lakh. You can increase your yearly SSY investment to Rs 1 Lakh by simply depositing more money into your existing account.

Rupee rises 15 paise to 95.32 against the US dollar in early trade

New Delhi. (Agency)

The rupee rose 15 paise to 95.32 against US dollar in early trade on Friday as the greenback weakened and oil prices eased despite intensifying tensions in West Asia. FII outflows and uncertainties over fresh tensions in West Asia weighed on the local unit while a strong start to the day's trade at the domestic equity markets provided support, according to forex traders.The US launched new airstrikes against Iran on early Thursday, and Tehran responded by targeting US-allied West Asian countries in an exchange of fire that threatened an interim deal intended to help end the war.Back-and-forth attacks, including a day earlier, have repeatedly threatened the ceasefire. But Thursday's appeared bigger all around, with sirens sounding at least three times in Bahrain, home to the US Navy's 5th Fleet headquarters, and missiles targeting Kuwait and Qatar.At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 95.27 against the greenback before slipping to 95.32, up 15 paise from its previous close.The rupee appreciated by just 1 paisa to settle at 95.47 against the US dollar on Thursday."Traders reported dollar selling by state-run banks, widely viewed as acting on behalf of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Gold and silver prices decline further: Check prices of both metals in your city

New Delhi. (Agency)

In keeping with the trend over the past few weeks, the price of both gold and silver showed a downward curve today, July 10. slight weakness is seen in the prices of gold and silver. Gold expiring on August 5, 2026 is trading at Rs 1,44,813 per 10 grams, down by Rs 487 on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX). At the same time, silver expiring on September 4, 2026 slipped by Rs 254 to trade at Rs 2,26,123 per kg. So if you are planning to buy gold or silver, then know what are the latest prices today in the retail market, international market and major cities of the country. **Retail prices of gold and silver** In the retail market today, the prices of gold and silver fell by a small extent. The rates of 24 carat gold declined by Rs 540 to reach Rs 1,45,330 per 10 grams. Silver is also selling at Rs 2,26,270 per kg registering a dip of Rs 450. If you are planning to buy gold or silver or jewellery, then there has been some relief in the prices compared to today. It must be kept in mind that prices of precious metals fluctuate according to international market and local demand apart from strength of the US dollar.Gold, silver prices on MCX A slight decline in gold and silver prices today were witnessed on MCX too. Gold contracts expiring on August 5, 2026 is trading at Rs 1,44,813 per 10 grams, posting a decline of Rs 487 compared to the previous closing price.

Why TCS may have to rethink its dividend to win the AI race

TCS is winning more AI work, but analysts say scaling it will need heavier investment. That could push the company to rebalance dividends and future growth spending.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) may be winning more artificial intelligence (AI) projects, but analysts believe that alone may not be enough to drive the company's next phase of growth. The country's largest IT services company reported steady deal wins and strong growth in AI-related

revenue in its June quarter earnings. However, experts say the bigger challenge now is scaling those AI capabilities fast enough to make a meaningful difference to the business—something that could require significantly higher investments.The assessment comes at a time when TCS shares have remained under pressure, falling about 36% so far in 2026, even as the company continues to generate healthy cash flows and reward shareholders through generous dividends.

AI IS GROWING, BUT IT'S STILL A SMALL BUSINESS

AI has emerged as one of the fastest-growing areas for TCS.TCS reported a

13.6% sequential increase in annualised AI revenue during the June quarter. However, AI still contributes only around \$2.6 billion, or roughly



8.5% of the company's annualised revenue of \$30.5 billion.That means AI remains a relatively small part of TCS's overall business despite all the excitement around the technology.The company will have to

substantially expand its AI capabilities and partnerships before AI can become a meaningful driver of revenue and profits.WHY MORE AI MAY REQUIRE MORE MONEY Building AI capabilities isn't cheap. According to ET Intelligence report, TCS may need to spend significantly more on technology, infrastructure and partnerships if it wants to remain competitive in an industry being reshaped by AI.That raises an important question: where will the money come from? The report suggests TCS may eventually have to reconsider its long-standing practice of returning most of its cash to shareholders through dividends.

EPF Scheme 2026: What it is, who benefits and what it means for you

From simpler withdrawal rules to new safeguards for retirement savings, the EPF Scheme, 2026 brings several important changes. Here's a quick look at who stands to benefit and what the new rules mean for you.

New Delhi. (Agency)

-- For most salaried employees, Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) is something they rarely think about until they switch jobs, need money for a medical emergency or start planning for retirement. Every month, money quietly goes into the account and stays there. But the rules governing that money have now changed.The government has notified the EPF Scheme, 2026,

replacing the Employees' Provident Funds Scheme, 1952. While your monthly PF contribution remains largely the same, the new framework changes how you can



withdraw money, introduces more flexibility for voluntary contributions and puts safeguards in place to protect your retirement savings.It also brings in special one-time schemes to help employers resolve old compliance issues.

A NEW RULEBOOK REPLACES THE

1952 SCHEME

The EPF Scheme, 2026 has been notified under the Code on Social Security, 2020 and replaces the Employees' Provident Funds Scheme, 1952, which governed provident fund operations foApart from laying down the operational framework for EPF, the government has also notified three special schemes alongside it, i.e., Employees' Enrolment Campaign, 2026, Vishwas, 2026 and Amnesty, 2026. These are largely aimed at helping employers settle old disputes and improve compliance, says Grant Thornton.For employees, however, the biggest changes relate to contributions and withdrawals.r more than 70 years.

World Bank approves financing for India's solar rooftop program

The financing package for the program includes an \$820 million loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), a \$60 million concessional loan from the Clean Technology Fund, and a \$10 million grant from IBRD's Livable Planet Fund.

New Delhi. (Agency)

The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors approved

financing to accelerate India's national program for solar rooftops to bring clean energy to millions of homes and create 1.7 million job opportunities across the renewable energy manufacturing, installation, and services value chain. India has committed to achieving 'net zero' by 2070 and increasing non-fossil-fuel-based energy resources to 60 per cent of its electricity mix by 2035.eated as business income.While large-scale solar has grown rapidly, residential solar adoption has been limited. To unlock this potential, the government of India established the 'PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli

Yojana' program to incentivise solar rooftop installation for 10 million rural and urban households nationwide, reduce household electricity costs, and encourage local manufacturing of solar rooftop equipment.

"The World Bank has been supporting India's solar rooftop sector for over a decade, mobilising more than \$2 billion to catalyse market growth from 500 MW to over 27 GW of installed capacity," said Paul Proccee, World Bank Acting Country Director for India, on Friday.

"This new financing will help India scale up residential solar, while creating job opportunities.

Home loan on a rented house? Here's what you can still claim under new tax regime

As taxpayers file their ITRs, understanding home loan tax rules has become more important than ever. In this edition of 'KNOW YOUR TAX', we explain what you can still claim on a rented property under the new tax regime.

New Delhi. (Agency)

If you own a house that you have rented out and are still repaying a home loan, chances are you've wondered whether the new tax regime has changed the tax benefits available on your loan. The good news is that the deduction continues, although the new regime treats it differently in certain situations.The good news is that taxpayers can still claim the entire

interest paid on a home loan for a let-out property. However, while the deduction remains available, the way losses are treated under the new tax regime is different from the old one. That distinction could have a direct impact on your tax bill.FULL INTEREST DEDUCTION CONTINUES FOR LET-OUT PROPERTIES

The Income-tax Act, 2025 has not taken away the deduction on home loan interest for rented properties. Tax experts say the method of calculating income from a let-out property remains largely unchanged.Taxpayers can continue to deduct municipal taxes paid, claim the standard deduction of 30% on the Net Annual Value and deduct the entire interest paid on the home loan while computing income from house property."Taxpayers can claim home loan interest deductions on let-out properties under Section 24(b) under



both the regimes," said Anita Basrur, Partner, Direct Taxation, Sudit K. Parekh.Sharing a similar view, Chakravarthy V., Cofounder & Executive Director, Prime Wealth Finserv Pvt. Ltd., said the Income-tax Act, 2025 has retained the existing provisions relating to let-out properties."The Income-tax Act, 2025 continues to allow taxpayers to claim the full amount of interest paid on a home loan for a let-out property, with no upper monetary limit. Taxpayers can continue to deduct municipal

taxes, claim the 30% standard deduction and deduct the entire home loan interest without any monetary cap," he said.WHERE THE NEW REGIME DIFFERSAlthough the deduction itself remains intact, the treatment of losses is where the old and new tax regimes differ.Suppose the interest paid on your home loan, along with other eligible deductions, is more than the rental income earned during the year. In such a case, a loss arises under the head 'Income from House Property'.Under the old tax regime, taxpayers could adjust this loss, up to 2 lakh, against income from salary, business or other sources during the same financial year. This often resulted in lower taxable income and immediate tax savings.The new tax regime, however, does not permit such cross-head adjustment.Explaining the difference, Basrur said,he said.

Political power is master key to Dalit empowerment: Mayawati

Lucknow.(Agency)

Lucknow. Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) national president Mayawati on Friday said that political power is the "master key" to the empowerment of Dalits, backward classes, tribals, and other deprived communities.

She said that Baba Saheb Bhim Rao Ambedkar also considered political power essential for the effective use of the rights of these communities.

In a statement issued here on Friday, Mayawati described Dr. Ambedkar as the messiah of millions of Dalits and deprived communities and the chief architect of the Indian Constitution. She said that through his vision, wisdom, and struggle, he ensured numerous constitutional and legal rights for communities suffering from caste discrimination and oppression.

She said that Baba Saheb believed that merely acquiring rights does not achieve the objective; their effective use is possible only when political power is in the hands of the deprived communities.

The BSP chief said that Kanshi Ram founded the Bahujan Samaj Party, carrying forward this ideology and mission.

Ninth batch of over 8,500 Shri Amarnath Yatra pilgrims leaves from Jammu

Jammu.(Agency)

The ninth batch of more than 8500 Shri Amarnath Yatra pilgrims on Friday left here from the Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas base camp for the twin base camps of the cave shrine in the South Kashmir Himalayas amid tight security arrangements.

Officials said that 8,796 pilgrims early this morning left the Jammu base camp in a fleet of 354 vehicles comprising light motor vehicles and heavy motor vehicles.

The batch comprised 3450 pilgrims for Baltal and 5346 for Pahalgam and left for the pilgrimage under a multi-layered security grid, with coordinated arrangements by the civil administration, police, security forces and the Shri Amarnath Shrine Board to ensure the Yatra is conducted safely, securely and smoothly.

However, a total number of 1,71,501 yatris from different parts of country visited cave shrine during the last seven days since the yatra started.

The Jammu and Kashmir administration has also appealed to the pilgrims to perform the pilgrimage only after confirmed registration and on the scheduled date of yatra as no unregistered pilgrim shall be allowed to proceed to the base camps.

Four criminals killed, one injured in Gurugram police encounter; three policemen sustain bullet injuries

Panchkula.(Agency)

Four alleged armed criminals were killed, and one was injured in an encounter with the Gurugram Police Crime Branch in the Sushant Lok Phase-II area.

Three Gurugram Police personnel also sustained bullet injuries during the exchange of fire, a Haryana Police spokesperson said on Thursday.

According to the spokesperson, Crime Branch teams rushed to the area after the Police Control Room received information that a suspicious Scorpio vehicle carrying armed criminals had entered Sushant Lok Phase-II. When the police teams reached the spot, the suspects had allegedly started firing with sophisticated weapons at the residence of a businessman.

The businessman had reportedly been receiving continuous extortion messages from a wanted gangster operating from abroad. The Crime Branch teams warned the armed assailants to surrender. However, the suspects allegedly opened indiscriminate fire at the police party and attempted to escape. Acting in self-defence and with the objective of apprehending the accused, the police retaliated.

Thane doctors' assault case: Corporator arrested after hospital discharge, to be produced before court

The Shiv Sena corporator, one of the accused in Dombivli's Shastri Nagar Hospital doctors' assault case, was arrested on Friday after he was discharged from a Thane hospital.

Mumbai.(Agency)

The Thane City Police on Friday, July 10, arrested Shiv Sena Corporator Ramesh Mhatre in connection with an alleged assault on doctors and nurses at Dombivli's Shastri Nagar Hospital after he was discharged from the hospital at around 9 am. Ramesh Mhatre, who was arrested on Wednesday, was rushed to the Thane Civil Hospital after he complained of chest pain.

A senior Thane Civil Hospital doctor, who was treating Mhatre, said, "Mhatre was discharged from hospital at 9 am. He is stable, no episodes of blood pressure fluctuations, vomiting and breathlessness anymore." "He will be produced before the court where we will seek his custody," a senior officer

said. Besides Mhatre, three of his associates were also arrested in connection with the alleged assault at the Dombivli hospital. They have been booked under Bharatiya



Nyaya Sanhita Sections 132 (assault or criminal force to deter public servant from discharge of his duty), 121(1) (voluntarily causing hurt), 351(1) (criminal

intimidation), 352 (intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of peace), 189(2) (unlawful assembly) and 191(2) (rioting).

In his first statement after a video of the incident went viral on social media, Mhatre denied the allegations of hitting the woman doctor. He did, however, express regret over the altercation. "I regret the physical altercation that took place but I state again that I did not raise my hand against the female doctor. You are seeing the incident through a particular camera angle of the CCTV," he said. Mhatre claimed, "She was on the phone and not listening to our grievances, so I tapped her hand. We follow Balasaheb's teachings; we have never raised a hand against women, nor will we ever do so in the future."

After 11-year-old's death in Mumbai, BMC plans major tree protection reforms

A BMC committee, formed after 11-year-old Vihaan Srivastava's death due to a tree fall in Chembur, has recommended that contractors and civic departments be held responsible for protecting tree roots during infrastructure works.

Mumbai.(Agency)

In the wake of the fatal Chembur tree collapse that killed 11-year-old Vihaan Srivastava, an internal committee appointed by Mumbai Municipal Commissioner Ashwini Bhide has proposed sweeping reforms to strengthen the protection of the city's trees, including making contractors and civic departments responsible for safeguarding trees affected by infrastructure projects.

The committee has recommended that all future civic infrastructure tenders include clauses making contractors and executing departments accountable for the upkeep and protection of trees, particularly their root systems, throughout the execution of

projects. The report was submitted late on Thursday night to the office of an Additional Municipal Commissioner, civic sources confirmed.

"The roots of trees often get damaged while executing civic infrastructure works, leading to its collapse.

Therefore, as part of the recommendations, the committee has proposed that clauses should be included in the tender to make both the contractor and civic department responsible for the upkeep and protection of tree roots falling in alignment of any civic project," a civic source told The Indian Express.

The committee was constituted after a series of tree collapses across the city, including the June 30 incident in Chembur in which a

tree fell on a school bus, killing Vihaan Srivastava. It was asked to submit recommendations within eight days to prevent similar incidents.

According to sources, the panel has also proposed making it mandatory to scientifically assess the impact of roadworks and utility-laying projects on tree root systems before work begins. It has recommended empanelling arborists and tree surgeons to supervise infrastructure projects that could affect trees and suggest changes in execution methodology wherever necessary to ensure tree roots receive adequate aeration and water and do not decay during construction.

"So far, such clauses were not included in civic tenders," a civic official said.

Maharashtra seeks to amend a central criminal law. Can states do that?

The proposed amendments would extend preventive custody from 24 hours to up to 30 days, among other changes to the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita. Here's how states can amend Central laws, and what happens next.

Mumbai.(Agency)

The Maharashtra Legislative Council on Wednesday, July 8, passed key amendments to the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Samiti (BNSS) – the legal framework for criminal procedure in India, which regulates the procedure for investigation, inquiry and trial of offences under criminal law – from gathering evidence to presenting it in a criminal trial. The state of Maharashtra proposed amendments to some of the provisions to the Central law which were later passed by the Legislative Council (yet to be passed by the Legislative Assembly). The BNSS amendments

Section 15 of the BNSS grants powers to certain officials, not below the rank of Superintendent of Police (SP), for certain operational roles in



investigations. The state has proposed to change this to an Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP), stating that this post is more relevant in investigations. While the ACP also is a

senior post, it is a lower rank than the Superintendent.

Section 98 has provisions for the state government to forfeit or seize any newspaper, book, or document, which publishes content that violates certain criminal laws, including those which 'endanger sovereignty, unity, integrity of the nation, or promote enmity between religious groups, harm national integration, or are obscene in nature. The amendment proposes to include electronic and digital records, which would mean bringing online content, including news websites, and social media., in its ambit.

Haryana's Tele-ECG network flags 131 critical heart cases in six weeks

Panchkula.(Agency)

Haryana's ambitious Tele-ECG programme has made a strong start, with the state identifying 131 critical cardiac patients within just six weeks of its launch, demonstrating how digital technology is reshaping emergency healthcare and improving access to specialist heart care in rural and remote areas.

Official figures show that 2,688 patients have already benefited from the service since its launch on May 29, 2026. Health officials say the early detection of 131 life-threatening cardiac cases enabled timely medical intervention during the crucial "Golden Hour" after a heart attack—a period considered vital for saving lives

and preventing permanent heart damage. The Tele-ECG service was inaugurated by Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini in Panchkula in the presence of Health Minister Aarti Singh Rao as part of the state's drive to strengthen digital healthcare infrastructure.

The programme has been rolled out across 600 government healthcare facilities, including 71 District and Sub-Divisional Civil Hospitals, 121 Community Health Centres (CHCs) and 408 Primary Health Centres (PHCs), creating one of Haryana's largest technology-enabled public health networks. Under the initiative, ECGs conducted at government hospitals and health centres are transmitted electronically to specialist cardiologists,

who analyse the recordings and send back expert reports within 10 minutes. The rapid reporting system enables doctors at peripheral health facilities to quickly diagnose acute myocardial infarction (heart attack), arrhythmias and other serious cardiac disorders, allowing immediate treatment or referral to higher medical centres.

Officials said the programme is expected to significantly reduce treatment delays, particularly for patients living in villages who previously had to travel long distances merely to obtain a specialist opinion. Another key feature of the initiative is affordability. Each Tele-ECG examination, including specialist interpretation, is available for ₹89, making advanced cardiac diagnostics

accessible through the public healthcare system at a nominal cost.

The project has received approval under the Government of India's Record of Proceedings (RoP) 2026-27 under the National Programme for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NP-NCD), with a sanctioned outlay of ₹2.92 crore. Health Department projections indicate that the statewide network will perform nearly 3.28 lakh ECG examinations annually. Of these, 2,30,400 ECGs are expected to be conducted at 192 District Hospitals, Sub-Divisional Hospitals and CHCs, while another 97,920 ECGs will be carried out at 408 PHCs, substantially expanding access to early cardiac diagnosis across Haryana.

After dogs, registration of pet cats a must in Ahmedabad

Ahmedabad.(Agency)

After dog registration, Ahmedabad on Thursday announced that pet cats must be registered, too. The city has an estimated 5,000 pet cat population, said the head of Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation's cattle nuisance control department (CNCD) Naresh Rajput.

The civic body has announced Rs 200 as fee for the online registration to take place from July 9 to September 30 this year. As part of the procedure, a cat



owner must submit his Aadhaar or voter ID details, tax bill, electricity bill, photographs of the pet, his house and his own, and pet vaccination certificate issued by a registered veterinarian.

The registration of pet cats is in accordance with the guidelines of the Animal Welfare Board of India, the Animal Birth Control (ABC) Dogs Rules-2023, and the National Action Plan for Dog Mediated Rabies Elimination, 2030 (NAPRE). As per the official data, dog registrations, which started in the city on January 1 last year, have seen 17,286 people registering 19,643 pets. The highest 3,867 registrations are of Labradors, followed by 1,490 German Shepherds, 1413 Shitzus, 1,367 Golden Retrievers and 346 Rottweilers. Most registered dogs are from the west zone (4,971), followed by 4,078 from the city's north-west and 777 from the central zone.

IMD forecast signals vigorous monsoon revival across north India; heavy rain, thunderstorms to lash Haryana, Delhi and Uttarakhand

Panchkula.(Agency)

Panchkula, July 10 (UNI) The southwest monsoon has gathered fresh momentum, setting the stage for an intense spell of rain across large parts of North India. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast widespread rainfall, thunderstorms, lightning and strong winds over several states during the next six days, with the potential for localised flooding, waterlogging and disruption to normal life in vulnerable areas. According to the All India Weather Summary and Forecast Bulletin issued by the **National Weather Forecasting Centre (NWFC), India Meteorological Department, at 8:01 AM IST today, monsoon activity is expected to remain vigorous across Northwest India, bringing much-needed rainfall while also necessitating heightened preparedness in areas prone to heavy precipitation.

The IMD has forecast fairly widespread to widespread rainfall over Haryana, Chandigarh and Delhi on July 10, with isolated to scattered rainfall likely from July 11 to July 15. The region is also expected to experience isolated heavy rainfall on July 10 and 13, accompanied by thunderstorms, lightning, and gusty winds, increasing the risk of temporary waterlogging in low-lying areas and traffic disruptions.

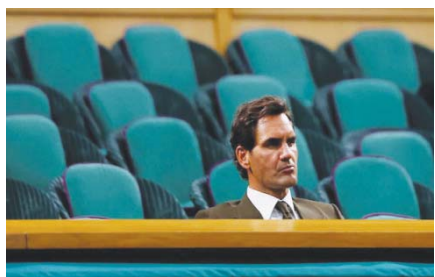
NEWS BOX

Thought Roger Federer was alone at Wimbledon? His cheeky reply says otherwise

New Delhi. (Agency)

Roger Federer's return to Wimbledon this year created plenty of buzz, but one image from Centre Court captured the imagination of tennis fans around the world. The eight-time Wimbledon champion was spotted sitting alone in the Royal Box during the latter stages of play, long after most of the celebrities and guests had left. The sight of Federer quietly soaking in the action soon went viral on social media. Former world No.1 Andy Roddick has now shed light on the moment, revealing that Roger Federer had a cheeky response when asked about his viral appearance at Wimbledon.

Speaking on the Served podcast, Roddick recounted an exchange with his longtime rival and friend. "I sent him a text and asked, 'What's going on?' He was like, 'Oh, you know, just watching the tennis and hanging out with all my friends'. There's no one around him. It was great," Roddick said. Federer, who retired from



professional tennis in 2022, was present at the All England Club during the tournament's second week. The 44-year-old remained in the Royal Box even as the action stretched late into the evening, watching Alexander Zverev's fourth-round clash against Jiri Lehecka after Arthur Fery's marathon victory over Grigor Dimitrov. Play was eventually suspended because of Wimbledon's 11 p.m. curfew.

ROGER FEDERER'S ENDURING BOND WITH WIMBLEDON

Few players share a relationship with Wimbledon quite like Federer. The Swiss maestro won a record eight men's singles titles at the grass-court major and collected 20 Grand Slam crowns during his glittering career.

Rubbish: Gautam Gambhir's oldest insult in England just got a new meaning

New Delhi. (Agency)

As the curtains came down on India's cricket team on Thursday in Bristol, captain Shreyas Iyer sat down for a long conversation with head coach Gautam Gambhir. What was said cannot be known for certain, but the intensity of it, the stillness, the lack of gesturing, suggested two men deep in thought after their side had slumped to a fifth loss in six games. It has been a horror tour, unlike anything India's white-ball side has produced in recent memory. For the first time since 2018/19, India have lost back-



to-back T20I series. For the first time in years, India were swatted away, as if they were never in the contest to begin with. That needed reflection.

The first loss of the tour, against Ireland in Belfast, was a blip. The second rang the alarm bells. Newly appointed captain Shreyas Iyer admitted India were underprepared, that they hadn't reckoned with how far Ireland had come. The third game, the first of the England series, was washed out, so there was nothing to read into it either way. The fourth ended in defeat. The fifth, a 125-run mauling at Trent Bridge, confirmed this was no longer a rough patch but a crisis.

IND vs ENG Highlights, 4th T20I

India were bowled out for 76, their second-lowest T20I total in history, behind only the 74 they made against Australia in 2008, and the fastest they have ever been bowled out in the format. Not one batter reached 20.

Morocco coach eyes World Cup revenge after second straight defeat to France

After a historic five-hour Wimbledon marathon, Novak Djokovic delivered a cheeky nod to fellow 39-year-old icon Lionel Messi, joking that he envies football's strict 90-minute limit after enduring his own open-ended epic.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Morocco coach Mohamed Ouahbi said his side would use Thursday's World Cup quarter-final defeat to France as motivation for the future, declaring that the Atlas Lions would aim to knock out Les Bleus when the two teams next meet on football's biggest stage. France secured a 2-0 win at Gillette Stadium near Boston to book a place in the semi-finals, with second-half goals from Kylian

Mbappe and Ousmane Dembele ending Morocco's campaign. It was the second successive World Cup in which France eliminated the Atlas Lions by the same scoreline, having beaten them in the semi-finals in Qatar four years ago. Despite the disappointment, Ouahbi refused to dwell on the defeat and instead looked ahead to the 2030 World Cup, which Morocco will co-host alongside Spain and Portugal. "France are a really great side. We were playing a country who have been to the last two World Cup finals, and they have rarely had as much talent as they do now," Ouahbi said. "It is clear today that France was stronger. But we can progress and improve further and maybe eliminate them in four years' time. We know we can compete, and what we want to do is work even harder to try to do even better next time. Morocco had hoped to at least equal their historic run to the semi-finals

at the 2022 World Cup, but once again found France standing in their way. Ouahbi, who had insisted on the eve of the match that a quarter-final finish



would not satisfy his ambitions, said the result was difficult to accept but believed his players had left everything on the pitch. "I think it's important to do everything to try to win and I think we did try everything," he said. "We want to go even further and win the World Cup, so we are disappointed because we have lost, but we have to accept it."

The Belgian-born coach was appointed in March after replacing Walid Regragui, who stepped down following Morocco's Africa Cup of Nations campaign earlier this year. With another AFCON scheduled to be held in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania next year, Ouahbi said that tournament would be Morocco's immediate focus before attention shifts to the 2030 World Cup on home soil. "Before that we have an AFCON and if we want to do well we need to keep building, try to qualify for that and win it," he said. "We have a huge hotbed of talent and a strong federation, so we have everything you could need to keep improving and moving forward." Morocco's youthful squad, which included French-born teenage midfielder Ayyoub Bouaddi, showed promise throughout the tournament, but Ouahbi admitted France's quality ultimately made the difference.

England's Quansah served ban, US's Balogun didn't: FIFA decision sparks debate

New Delhi. (Agency)

England defender Jarell Quansah will miss the World Cup quarter-final against Norway after FIFA handed him a two-match suspension for his red card against Mexico. Just days earlier, United States striker Folarin Balogun escaped an immediate ban despite being sent off for a similar challenge



against Bosnia. The contrasting outcomes have sparked fresh questions over FIFA's disciplinary process, with former international referees unable to explain why two incidents that appeared similar on the field resulted in different punishments. Quansah was sent off during England's Round of 16 win over Mexico after VAR upgraded his studs-up challenge to serious foul play. FIFA's Disciplinary Committee later imposed a two-match suspension, with the Football Association confirming that the decision could not be appealed.

Balogun, meanwhile, was dismissed during the United States' Round of 32 victory over Bosnia for a studs-up tackle that was also judged to be serious foul play. FIFA initially handed him a one-match suspension before suspending the ban on probation for one year under Article 27 of its disciplinary code. The decision allowed Balogun to feature against Belgium in the Round of 16. FIFA, however, has not publicly explained why it chose to apply Article 27 in his case. The controversy intensified after reports revealed that US President Donald Trump

Messi's World Cup message takes centre stage at Argentina Independence Day Mass

Buenos Aires. (Agency)

Lionel Messi's influence on Argentina has long stretched beyond football. On the country's 210th Independence Day, it reached one of its most symbolic stages yet, as the national captain's words were read aloud inside Buenos Aires Cathedral during a special Mass attended by President Javier Milei.

With Argentina preparing for a FIFA World Cup quarter-final against Switzerland, Archbishop Jorge Garcia Cuerva invoked Messi's message from the 2022 World Cup triumph in Qatar, using it as a call for national unity on one of the country's most important public holidays. "Let us keep our shirts on, and with passion, let us bring to life the message that Lionel Messi once posted

on his social media," Garcia Cuerva told the congregation before reading the captain's now-famous words. "When we Argentines fight together and stand



united, we are capable of achieving whatever we set our minds to. It was a fitting tribute to a footballer who, more than four years after leading Argentina to World Cup glory in Qatar, continues to embody much more than sporting success.

Haaland's pressure prank? England smile and call it mind games

Miami. (Agency)

Erling Haaland has attempted to pile the pressure on England ahead of Saturday's FIFA World Cup quarter-final, insisting the Three Lions have everything to lose while Norway have nothing but belief. England, however, are refusing to bite, with defender Nico O'Reilly dismissing the striker's comments as little more than "mind games." The Manchester City forward has been the face of Norway's stunning World Cup run, scoring seven goals in four matches to fire his country into their first quarter-final since 1998. Fresh from knocking out Brazil, Haaland is now eyeing



another heavyweight scalp. And he believes England should be feeling the weight of expectation. "Yes, definitely," Haaland said when asked if all the pressure was on England. "I think there's some clear favourites out there, England's one of them." The 25-year-old

even encouraged the media to crank up the scrutiny on Thomas Tuchel's side. "I think all of you should put every single pressure on the English lads." They should be confident of progressing, definitely. It's England. "England, meanwhile, insist they are not getting distracted before one of their biggest tests of the tournament.

ENGLAND BRUSH OFF HAALAND'S 'MIND GAMES'

Nico O'Reilly, who is expected to line up directly against his Manchester City teammate, smiled when Haaland's remarks were put to him. "Could be mid games," O'Reilly said. "But look, they're a good team as well."

India vs England: All you need to know about historic Lord's Women's Test

India and England will make history by playing the first-ever women's Test at Lord's, with Harmanpreet Kaur's side eyeing only their second Test win over England despite the absence of

New Delhi. (Agency)

When India and England walk out at Lord's on Friday, they will do much more than contest a one-off Test. The two sides will script history by featuring in the

first-ever women's Test at the iconic venue, often referred to as the Home of Cricket. Exactly 50 years after Rachael Heyhoe Flint led England Women onto the Lord's outfield for the first time, the ground will finally stage a women's Test, marking another significant milestone in the growth of the women's game.

More than 30,000 tickets have already been sold, underlining the growing popularity of women's cricket. The build-up, however, has not been without setbacks. India suffered a major blow after opener Pratika Rawal was ruled out of the landmark Test with a knee injury sustained during the recent



India A tour of England. Head coach Amol Muzumdar revealed that Rawal required stitches after suffering a cut to her knee while fielding in Taunton.

The Women's Selection Committee has drafted in Priya Punia as her replacement. The experienced top-

order batter, who impressed with successive half-centuries for India A in England, is in line for her maiden Test appearance.

The occasion carries added significance for India, who will be aiming to register only their third-ever Test victory over England.

Their first cam at Bristol in 2006 under Mithali Raj, while the most recent meeting between the two sides ended in a memorable 347-run victory at the DY Patil Stadium in December 2023. Led by Harmanpreet Kaur, India will hope to continue their resurgence in the longest format after also defeating Australia in Perth earlier this year.

Janhvi Kapoor's

Sweetest Tribute To Beau Shikhar Pahariya At Anshula Kapoor's Reception Is Unmissable

Janhvi Kapoor, who attended the wedding ceremony of her sister Anshula Kapoor, was also present at the newlyweds' reception. For the reception, the actress wore a stunning Manish Malhotra ensemble that left fans gushing over her beauty. But that's not the only thing social media noticed. Eagle-eyed netizens spotted Janhvi's sweet tribute to her beau, Shikhar Pahariya, through her mehendi.

Today, Janhvi Kapoor took to her Instagram and shared a series of pictures, and her special henna art is simply unmissable because it features a sweet tribute to her boyfriend. The pictures shared by Janhvi show that her henna has Shikhar Pahariya's nickname, "Shikhu," written in Hindi, accompanied by a simple, intricate, and minimal design. Take a look at the pictures below.

Janhvi and Shikhar's Relationship Timeline

Janhvi Kapoor and Shikhar Pahariya have been linked for several years. According to reports, the two first started dating in 2016 but later parted ways after Janhvi made her Bollywood debut in 2018. Rumours of their reconciliation began doing the rounds again in 2023 after they were spotted together on multiple occasions. Since



then, Janhvi and Shikhar have often been seen attending events, visiting temples, and spending time together, fuelling constant interest in their relationship.

Janhvi has also hinted at her bond with Shikhar during several public conversations and has lovingly referred to him as "Shikhu." Their frequent appearances and social media moments have made them one of the most talked-about rumoured couples in Bollywood.

There were also rumours that Janhvi and Shikhar were planning to tie the knot this year. However, the speculation was later denied by Janhvi's father, producer Boney Kapoor.

Janhvi Kapoor's Work Front

On the work front, Janhvi Kapoor was recently seen in Peddi. The film became a topic of discussion after a section of the audience felt that the actress's character had been hypersexualised. Following the criticism, director Buchi Babu Sana apologised to viewers and reportedly made changes to the film.



Maniesh Paul's Mother Urmil Paul Passes Away At 77 In Delhi



Actor Maniesh Paul's mother passed away at the age of 77 in Delhi on Wednesday. The actor's team shared the news as she left for heavenly abode. They shared, "With great grief, we regret to inform you that actor Maniesh Paul lost his 77 year old mother today in Delhi. We request you to please pray for the departed soul. May she rest in eternal peace". Maniesh Paul shares a close-knit family life, and has not revealed much about it in the public domain. He is married to Sanyukta Paul, his childhood friend and longtime partner. They have two children, a daughter, Saisha, and a son, Yuvann. Despite his busy career, the family maintains a low profile and values togetherness.

Earlier, Maniesh Paul had shared a string of black and white pictures from the sets of his film featuring him, Phadnis and actress Saiyami Kher. The film also stars Tahir Raj Bhasin.

He wrote, "Have known @vikramphadnis for over a decade now (Well done, me!) We were full of insane conversations, until he gave me this role... My god!!! He is a different guy on the set... full of conviction, full of emotions, full of sensibilities and the vision of a pro director. So proud of you, Vikram (I will never say it again) And thank you for this role and this FILM! Loved every minute on the set! Can't wait for the audience to see the magic you created".

The actor started his career in Delhi as a host at cultural events in schools and colleges. He made his debut in a lead role of the computer geek Mickey in Mickey Virus.

He was recently seen in 'Sunny Sanskari Ki Tulsi Kumari'. The film also starred Varun Dhawan, Janhvi Kapoor, Sanya Malhotra, Rohit Saraf and Akshay Oberoi. The movie was directed by Shashank Khaitan and produced by Karan Johar.

Ranveer Singh, Arjun Kapoor Recreate Tune Maari Entriyaan At Anshula Kapoor's Reception



Ranveer Singh and Arjun Kapoor turned Anshula Kapoor and Rohan Thakkar's wedding reception into a nostalgic celebration, recreating one of Bollywood's most-loved songs together. Videos from the star-studded evening have been making the rounds on social media, with the duo dancing to Tune Maari Entriyaan, the hit track from their 2014 film Gunday. The reception, held on Tuesday evening after Anshula Kapoor and Rohan Thakkar tied the knot in Mumbai on July 6, brought together family members and several Bollywood celebrities. But it was Ranveer and Arjun's energetic performance that quickly became one of the biggest talking points online. The two actors lit up the dance floor as guests cheered them on while they danced to Tune Maari Entriyaan, a song that continues to be a favourite at weddings and celebrations more than a decade after its release. Their reunion brought back memories of Gunday, the film that introduced audiences to their easy on-screen chemistry and became a box office success.

Ranveer Singh and Arjun Kapoor have also shared a close friendship off screen for years. Since working together in Gunday, the two have often spoken about their bond and have been seen supporting each other's projects, appearing together at events and entertaining fans with their camaraderie.

The celebrations did not stop there. Ranveer and Arjun later joined singer Himesh Reshammiya on stage, where they sang along to some of his biggest hits, including Mujhko Yaad Sataye Teri. Videos from the evening captured the trio entertaining guests as the crowd sang along.

Other clips from the reception showed Ranveer making the most of the celebrations as tracks from his latest film Dhurandhar played in the background. Guests were seen recording the actor as he danced through the evening.

The reception was attended by several members of the Kapoor family, including Boney Kapoor, Janhvi Kapoor, Khushi Kapoor, Arjun Kapoor and Shanaya Kapoor. The guest list also included Bobby Deol, Rekha, Alia Bhatt, Varun Dhawan, Rakul Preet Singh, Jacky Bhagnani, Orry, Jackie Shroff, Riteish Deshmukh and Genelia D'Souza, among others.

Ranveer Singh is currently enjoying the success of his latest release, Dhurandhar, directed by Aditya Dhar. On the work front, Ranveer is now gearing up for Pralay, a big-budget post-apocalyptic zombie thriller directed by Jai Mehta. The film is expected to go on floors in September, with a major shooting schedule planned in Australia, marking Ranveer's first full-fledged venture into the zombie action genre.

Akansha Ranjan Kapoor

Sharan Sharma Wedding: Couple To Skip Pheras, Opts For Registered Marriage



Akansha Ranjan Kapoor and Sharan Sharma are all set to tie the knot in a few hours! We had earlier informed you that the duo has planned on keeping their wedding a low-key, intimate affair that will only be attended by their families and close friends. And now, ahead of the lovebirds becoming wife and husband, News18 has got an exclusive update from their big day.

A little birdie tells us that the Ranjans and the Sharmas have won't be taking the traditional



route. "Akansha and Sharan won't be having traditional pheras or any elaborate religious ceremonies. Instead, they've chosen to keep things simple by opting for a registered marriage.

The legal formalities will take place at the Ranjan residence in Mumbai," the source says. Our source further adds, "The couple will sign the marriage documents in the presence of their near and dear ones. The emphasis is on celebrating the union with loved ones rather

than following conventional wedding customs, making it a deeply personal and low-key occasion." Interestingly, Akansha's childhood best friend Alia Bhatt too had a private wedding at Ranbir Kapoor's Pali Hill residence. "Once the paperwork is signed and the marriage is officially registered, the couple will host a cosy luncheon for their guests. The afternoon gathering will feature toasts and speeches from family and friends," the insider also shares. And tomorrow (July 12), the couple will throw a star-studded affair reception bash at JW Marriott in Juhu that will see the biggest film names in attendance.

Given the warm rapport and longstanding friendship Akansha's parents, actor-director Shashi Ranjan and television producer Anu Ranjan, share with several industry names, many of them are expected. The high-profile guest list at the reception will include Alia and actors like Sonam Kapoor Ahuja, Athiya Shetty and Kiara Advani, among others. Filmmakers Ekta R Kapoor and Karan Johar are part of the guest list as well.

For the unversed, the lovebirds have been dating since 2022 but had kept their relationship under wraps. On the work front, Akansha was last seen in the Prime Video series, Gram Chikitsalay season two and is awaiting the release of the Netflix film Ikka tomorrow. As for Sharan, he had last directed Mr & Mrs Mahi starring Rajkumar Rao and Janhvi Kapoor.

NEWS BOX

Bangladesh relocates refugees after landslide kills at least 5 children

DHAKA.(Agency)

Authorities in Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh used loudspeakers and a network of volunteers and community leaders to relocate people from risky areas to safety Thursday after landslides killed at least 13 refugees in the past few days.At least five children died Wednesday when a landslide caused by monsoon rains swept through an Islamic school at a camp in Cox's Bazar, where more than 1 million Rohingya refugees from neighboring Myanmar live. A teacher at the Islamic school described the scene from the landslide as chaotic, saying girls at the school were preparing for lessons when part of the building collapsed. "Those of us who were on the western side managed to get out, but everyone on the eastern side was buried under the debris," said Begum Jahan, who teaches the Quran, Islam's holy book. "Some suffered broken arm, and some of the girls lost their lives," she said.

People in the refugee camp started rescue operations before emergency services reached the scene, Dollar Tripura, head of the local fire service and civil defense, said Thursday. He added that emergency personnel later rescued the injured and recovered the bodies. The rescue operation was called off Wednesday evening.

Syria captures IS-linked cell behind Damascus blasts during Macron's Visit

DAMASCUS.(Agency)

Syrian officials said late Thursday the country had captured an IS-linked cell responsible for two bomb blasts during French President Emmanuel Macron's visit to Damascus earlier this week. The attacks cast a shadow over the first trip by a European Union head of state since Bashar al-Assad was toppled in late 2024, as President Ahmed al-Sharaa tries to rebuild the country's image after more than a decade of conflict. In a joint press conference with his Syrian counterpart, Macron said we must "not let ourselves be destabilised" by such attacks, and the two leaders vowed to boost ties with new ambassadors to be installed in each country. Syria's Interior Minister Anas Khattab said that "the cell responsible for the terrorist bombings that targeted Damascus two days ago is now in our custody"."Once the investigations are completed, we will reveal to the public the identities of the cell's members, their roles, and all of their affiliations and connections," he wrote on X.ws agency Xinhua reported on Wednesday.

Israel shared intel about 'new' Iran plot to kill Trump: reports

WASHINGTON.(Agency)

Israel shared intelligence with the United States this week about a new and "specific" plan by Iran to assassinate President Donald Trump, US media reported Thursday.The reports come as renewed US and Iranian attacks raised fears of a return to all-out war, and after Trump's puzzling use of an old plane to depart from Turkey after the NATO summit.Washington has monitored "a steady drumbeat" of intelligence about possible plans to assassinate Trump, "but the warning from Israel was new and concerned a specific plot," CNN reported, citing unnamed sources familiar with the matter.The Wall Street Journal, also citing unidentified sources, said the intelligence described a "fresh" plot. Tehran has for years vowed to hit back at Trump for ordering the assassination of Iranian general Qassem Soleimani in January 2020, during his first term.When AFP contacted the White House about the reports, an unidentified official pointed to Trump's remarks from Wednesday. "They want to take out the US leader — me. I'm on whatever list. I saw this morning I'm on every single one of their lists," Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One as he flew home from a NATO summit.Trump used his old Air Force One plane to leave Turkey, where the summit took place, sending his new Qatari-gifted jet on ahead to Britain, where he switched pThe switch from the new jet on its maiden foreign trip sparked speculation it was because its security features were lacking -- particularly as the US launched fresh strikes against Iran, which borders Turkey.lanes for the journey to Washington.

Florida airport renamed 'Trump' in latest push to expand his brand

The airport renaming was signed into law by Florida's Republican governor, Ron DeSantis.

UNITED STATES.(Agency)

A Florida airport was renamed after Donald Trump on Thursday, accelerating a push by the US president and supporters to plaster his name and image on everything from national landmarks to banknotes."This will soon be one of the Greatest and Most Spectacular Airports anywhere in the World!" Trump said in a Truth Social post late Thursday reacting to the change.The Republican leader's son

Eric celebrated by landing in the private family Boeing 757 -- so-called "Trump Force One" -- at what had been known as Palm Beach International Airport for nearly half a century."A beautiful day," a grinning Eric Trump said on Fox News at the newly minted President Donald J. Trump International Airport, a short drive from the family's Mar-a-Lago golf resort and compound.The airport renaming was signed into law by Florida's Republican governor, Ron DeSantis."I don't think there's anybody more synonymous with Palm Beach than Donald Trump and maybe all of Florida," Eric Trump said. He pointed out that the main road leading out of the airport is already called "President Donald J. Trump

Boulevard."And now anyone flying into Palm Beach will have a ticket where "you're going to see 'DJT' in perpetuity." Travelers at the airport Thursday were divided on the name change.Corporate pilot Chris Bailey welcomed the switch, telling AFP that Trump has "certainly done enough to warrant a name of an airport." But some were hostile. "Palm Beach is a better brand. People don't really like Donald Trump," John Manov, a doctor, said. "It seems in poor taste." Banknotes, buildings, bridge - Breaking the long-held US tradition against celebrating living figures -- and particularly serving presidents -- on currency and buildings, the Trump name and image are spreading rapidly. Officials, including US Treasury

Secretary Scott Bessent, unveiled the new Donald J. Trump Bridge in Tennessee on Thursday."The Tennessee license plate used to have a sign on it, or a little motto that said, 'Follow me to Tennessee,'" Bessent said. "Now, everyone who follows those cars is going to go across the Donald J. Trump Bridge on the I-40." Washington already features the renamed Donald J. Trump United States Institute of Peace and giant posters with his face have been hung from the facades of major government buildings.Trump's name was also briefly imposed on the famous Kennedy Center performing arts venue in the capital, before a judge ruled this illegal.In addition, there are Trump-branded visa, medical and other official government programs.

Typhoon Bavi heads towards China coast as storms leave over 50 dead across country

BEIJING.(Agency)

A powerful typhoon was heading toward China's east coast Friday, the latest in a series of deadly storms that have already claimed 50 lives this week in two other parts of the country.Typhoon Bavi, with maximum sustained winds of 162 kilometers (101 miles) per hour, was first expected to pass north of Taiwan, bringing heavy rains to the island of 23 million people from Friday night into Saturday. Schools were closed Friday in Taipei, the island's capital, and fishing boats have been tied up close together in ports in northern Taiwan. Many flights to Japan, Hong Kong and other destinations have been canceled through Saturday, though some were still scheduled, Taiwan's Central News Agency said.The typhoon's current northwest track would take it over some remote Japanese islands

before passing to Taiwan's north on Saturday. It is forecast to make landfall Saturday night south of Shanghai, near the border between Fujian and Zhejiang provinces. More than 17,000 people have been



evacuated in Zhejiang and 170,000 rescue workers placed on standby, the official Xinhua News Agency said. Fujian has suspended some ferry routes because of strong winds and rough seas and called for fishing boats to return to port.Bavi has weakened from supertyphoon strength earlier this week, when it

brought violent winds to Saipan and other U.S. territories in the Pacific. In southern China, authorities announced Thursday that 39 people had died in flooding from Tropical Storm Maysak, which drenched parts of the Guangxi region for days with record rainfall.The rains breached reservoirs, including the dramatic collapse of part of a dam in Hengzhou that inundated a wide area with fast-flowing muddy water. The floods stranded people on the second and higher floors of buildings for days, many without power, until rescuers could reach them.Another 11 people died in central China when severe thunderstorms and tornadoes wreaked havoc in Hubei province on Monday night. Separately, a landslide killed 21 forestry workers in western China's Gansu province on Tuesday in a disaster that was not storm-related.

North Korea to expand nuclear arsenal, boost military intelligence operations targeting South Korea

SEOUL.(Agency)

North Korea will strengthen its nuclear force "both in quality and quantity" and expand the role of its military intelligence agency focused on South Korea, state media said Friday.Pyongyang is under widespread sanctions over its nuclear programme, and the two Koreas remain technically at war as their 1950-53 conflict ended without a peace treaty.The announcement comes after North Korea has repeatedly spurned South Korean President Lee Jae Myung's dovish overtures,



labelling Seoul its "most hostile" enemy and declaring itself an "irreversible" nuclear state.The issues were discussed during an enlarged meeting of the ruling party's central military

commission on Thursday, Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency said.The meeting decided on measures such as "bolstering up the nuclear force both in quality and quantity", the report said.It also called for broadly expanding the functions and missions of the General Reconnaissance and Intelligence Bureau, Pyongyang's military intelligence agency tasked with operations involving South Korea.The unit "plays a pivotal role in controlling the potential enemies' threats and gathering key information.

Chronic illness and diarrhea surge in quake-hit Venezuelan communities as humanitarian crisis builds

The emerging diseases can be tied to crowded living spaces and poor water and sanitation conditions, which in many communities predate the earthquakes.

CATIA LA MAR.(Agency)

Victims of the powerful twin earthquakes that jolted Venezuela last month as well as people spared by the destruction on Thursday flooded relief services offered by nongovernmental organizations in the hardest-hit areas. The demand for help comes as the United Nations launched an appeal for



roughly \$300 million to assist 1.3 million people in urgent need of aid in the South American country where nongovernmental organizations until recently were targets of government repression. Mobile kitchens and clinics as well as field hospitals now dot public spaces in the northern state of La Guaira, where most of the devastation occurred."It is clear at displacement

sites that, particularly after two weeks, that people are turning up because they haven't been able to get their other treatments," U.N. relief chief Tom Fletcher told The Associated Press during his visit to Venezuela. "So, they're not turning up with just the fractures now, they're turning up with those longer-term health needs. And it's vital that we're there for them." Doctors treating people in that state's Catia La Mar community on Thursday reported an increase in skin conditions and diarrheal diseases, as well as of requests for medications for the treatment of chronic illnesses, including diabetes and high blood pressure. The emerging diseases can be tied to crowded living spaces and poor water and sanitation conditions, which

in many communities predate the earthquakes. Irma Echarri showed up at a mobile unit on a sidewalk across the street from a church with the boxes of the eyedrops and pain reliever she usually takes, hoping that doctors there could give her new ones. She also wanted to be seen for the pain she developed in her nose after the June 24 earthquakes. "It hurts a lot," Echarri, 67, said while waiting to be seen. "It hurts because it hurts."Echarri's home was not damaged, but many of her neighbors are living in temporary shelters or outdoors after 190 buildings collapsed and 856 others were damaged, according to Venezuelan officials, in the back-to-back earthquakes that killed 3,889 people.