



CJP protesters near Parliament, face barricades, lathicharge, tear gas

NEW DELHI. (Agency)

Chaotic scenes erupted across central Delhi on Monday as security forces fired tear gas shells, resorted to lathi charges and deployed anti-riot vehicles after protesters participating in the Cockroach Janta Party's (CJP) 'Chalo Sansad' march attempted to breach security barricades in the high-security zone surrounding Parliament. The protest, which coincided with the opening day of the Monsoon Session of Parliament, witnessed repeated clashes between demonstrators and police as authorities enforced one of the largest security operations in the national capital in recent months. The initial scuffle broke out near Jantar Mantar after protesters breached police barricades to begin their march towards Parliament. As the protest intensified, agitators attempted to push through multiple barricades erected in the high-security area near Parliament. A scuffle ensued, during which several protesters and police personnel sustained minor injuries. Protesters and police clashed at

multiple locations, including Jantar Mantar, Constitution Club, Rail Bhawan, Shastri Bhawan, Janpath, Connaught Place and near the Reserve Bank of India, as thousands of demonstrators converged on central Delhi despite extensive security arrangements.



Near Shastri Bhawan, security forces fired tear gas shells after several protesters attempted to break through barricades to reach Jantar Mantar and join the Parliament march.

With the Monsoon Session underway inside Parliament, security was further intensified around the Parliament complex. Rail Bhawan, located adjacent to Parliament, witnessed a

massive deployment of Delhi Police and paramilitary personnel as protesters attempted to move towards the high-security zone. Security forces used tear gas shells to disperse demonstrators and prevent them from advancing towards Parliament, while multiple layers of barricades remained in place to secure the route. Visuals from Rail Bhawan showed tense scenes as large crowds gathered while police repeatedly made announcements asking protesters to disperse. As sections of the crowd attempted to move past barricades, security personnel intensified crowd-control measures, using tear gas and later resorting to lathi charges to push back demonstrators. Clashes also broke out near the Constitution Club, where security personnel baton-charged protesters and fired tear gas shells to disperse the gathering after demonstrators attempted to march towards Parliament. Another group of CJP protesters reached the area near the Reserve Bank of India, close to Parliament, where they raised slogans before security personnel used mild force to disperse them and prevent them from entering.

Assam floods worsen as 57,000 affected, Army and Air Force on standby

Guwahati. (Agency)

The flood situation in Assam worsened on Sunday, with one person dying and the number of affected people rising to more than 57,000 across seven districts, officials said. The state government has asked the Army and the Air Force to remain on standby for possible evacuation and rescue operations in the worst-hit areas.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said four ministers have been sent to Upper Assam to supervise rescue and relief work in the three worst-affected districts. According to the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA), the latest death in Sivasagar has taken this year's flood toll in the state to five.

The ASDMA said more than 57,100 people have been affected by the floods in Charaideo, Dhemaji, Dibrugarh, Jorhat, Sivasagar, Tinsukia and Udalguri districts. Charaideo is the worst hit with nearly 24,000 people affected, followed by Dhemaji with 22,000 and Dibrugarh with 4,000. Till Saturday, nearly 24,000 people were affected across four districts.

In a social media post, Sarma said the government had requested the Army and the Air Force to stay ready to support the state administration. "As the flood situation in Sivasagar, Charaideo and Jorhat continues to worsen, the Assam government has requested the Indian Army and the Indian Air Force to be on standby to support evacuation and rescue operations, if required," he said.



Man accused of killing 4-year-old shot dead in encounter after attack on police

Anand. (Agency)

A man accused of kidnapping and murdering a minor girl was killed in an encounter in Gujarat's Anand district after he allegedly attacked police personnel with a concealed knife while trying to escape from custody, an official said on Monday. Two policemen were injured in the attack on Sunday night. The accused, whom the police shot in self-defence, later died during treatment, Inspector General of Ahmedabad Range Raghavendra Vatsa said.

"A person accused of kidnapping and killing a minor girl has been killed in an encounter as he tried to escape after attacking police with a concealed knife on Sunday night. Two policemen received injuries in the knife attack," Vatsa told reporters.

Police identified the deceased as Suresh Parmar, in his late 20s. He was accused of kidnapping and murdering a four-and-a-half-year-old girl from Vasad in Anand district.

Kerala man handed death sentence for killing 2 while out on bail in murder case

Chennai. (Agency)

A court in Kerala on Monday awarded the death penalty to a 61-year-old man convicted in the sensational 2025 Nenmara double murder case, describing the crime as falling within the "rarest of rare" category.

Palakkad Additional Sessions Judge Kenneth George sentenced Chenthamara to death for the January 27, 2025, murders of his neighbour Sudhakaran and Sudhakaran's mother, Lakshmi, at Pothundi near Nenmara. The court also imposed a fine of Rs 20 lakh on the convict. The court found Chenthamara guilty under Section 103(1) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) for murder and Section 126(2) for wrongful restraint. While pronouncing the sentence, the court observed that the case warranted capital punishment as the convict had killed multiple members of the same family.

The double murder took place shortly after Chenthamara was released on bail in January 2025 in connection with another murder case. He had previously been arrested for the 2019 killing of Sudhakaran's wife, Sajitha, whom he allegedly held responsible for his marital problems.

MAHANAGAR METRO EXCLUSIVE

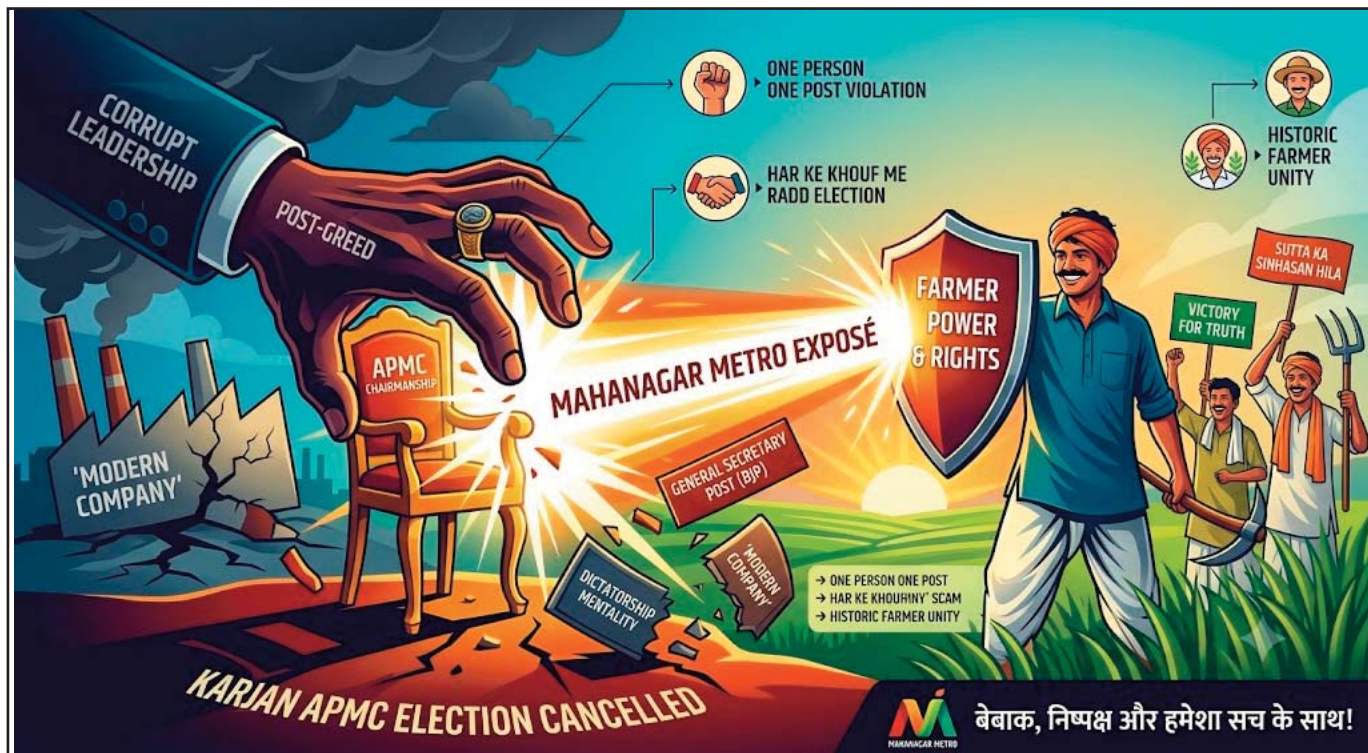
Karjan APMC Election Cancelled: Exposé by 'Mahanagar Metro' Shakes the Seat of Power!

A historic victory for farmer power against post-greed, corruption, and dictatorship; BJP cancels election fearing imminent defeat!

MAHANAGAR METRO KARJAN/VADODARA:

What leaders sitting in the corridors of power feared has finally come to pass! When 'Mahanagar Metro' brought its hard-hitting investigative journalism down on the greed for power, financial scams, and political conspiracies surrounding the Karjan Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC), it sent shockwaves throughout the Vadodara District BJP. The devastating impact of our continuous exposés left the high command reeling, forcing them into a hurried announcement to cancel the Karjan APMC election. This isn't merely the postponement of an election—it is a resounding victory for 'Mahanagar Metro' and conscious farmers against the corrupt mindset that exploits agricultural communities! The BJP high command makes grand claims from public platforms about discipline and its 'One Person, One Post' principle. However, in the Vadodara District BJP unit, these rules appear to have been tossed into the trash bin. Jaideep Chauhan, who already holds the lucrative post of General Secretary in the Vadodara District BJP organization, is currently entrenched as the Chairman of the Karjan APMC. Yet, driven by an unyielding desire for power, he staked his claim for the Chairman position once again. What happened to the party's rules and regulations? Where did the tall claims of organizational discipline go?

Do rules simply not apply to influential party insiders? Witnessing this arbitrary power-grab, even loyal BJP workers are seething with internal anger. Multi-Crore Scam in Modern Company: A Running Unit Forced to Shut Down! Jaideep Chauhan's past is no secret. His track record is stained with dark allegations surrounding a multi-crore financial fraud in 'Modern Company'. A once-profitable venture that pro-



vided a livelihood to hundreds of families fell victim to corruption, leading to its complete shutdown and a distress sale at throwaway prices. Now, the farmers of Karjan are directly asking:

"How can the keys to the APMC treasury—funded by the hard-earned money of farmers—be handed to someone who sank a thriving company through corruption? Isn't that like putting a fox in charge of the hen-house?"

Farmers Demand Answers: "Is There No Genuine 'Son of the Soil' in the BJP?"

Outraged local farmers have put the BJP state leadership directly in the dock:

1. Shortage of Clean Workers? In a party claiming millions of members, is there not a single clean, honest, and unblemished candidate left?
2. Why Disrespect Farmers? Why isn't the leadership of the APMC handed over to a genuine farmer's son? Do those who build political careers using the name of farmers lack

faith in actual farmers' children?

3. Why Repeatedly Favor Tainted Faces? Why is there a constant push to mandate disputed, corrupt, and out-of-touch figures?

Final Warning from the Farming Community

Farmers have issued a clear ultimatum: If a clean and qualified farmer's son is not given an opportunity, an intense agitation will begin from Karjan whose echoes will resound all the way to Gandhinagar and Delhi. Furthermore, farmers threaten to boycott BJP leaders and bar their entry into local villages in upcoming assembly elections.

Questions Raised Over the Roles of State President Jagdish Panchal and District Leadership

The entire state now watches the BJP leadership closely:

Will the party leadership strictly enforce its 'One Person, One Post' norm? Will strict action be taken against leaders facing multi-crore corruption allegations, or will tainted figures continue to hide behind the party

flag?

Meanwhile, the organizational failure of Vadodara District BJP President (Bramhbhatt) stands exposed. Discipline within the district unit appears to have collapsed amidst rampant internal factionalism.

Political analysts believe that had the Karjan APMC election taken place, public anger and internal party rebellion would have ensured a crushing defeat for Jaideep Chauhan. With defeat clearly on the wall, the midnight decision to cancel the election was staged simply to avoid a public embarrassment and save face.

Truth Will Not Bow — A Note of Thanks from 'Mahanagar Metro' 'Mahanagar Metro' has stood—and will continue to stand—as a shield in the fight for farmers' rights, truth, and justice against exploitation. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our readers and the vigilant farmers of Karjan for trusting our reporting and standing with the truth. Remember... the voice of truth will continue to rise against power!

News box

Six girls enrol as Jewar gets its first govt women's degree college

Noida.(Agency)

Jewar has got its first govt women's degree college. Six students enrolled on the first day of admissions after the college was inaugurated on Thursday, bringing higher education closer to home for girls from the town and surrounding villages.

"The opening of this college will ensure girls from Jewar and surrounding villages do not have to travel long distances to pursue graduation. It will make higher education more accessible and encourage families to educate their daughters further," MLA Dhirendra Singh said while inaugurating the college. Affiliated to Chaudhary Charan Singh University, Meerut, the college was built at a cost of Rs 11 crore under the Centre's Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram. The project was sanctioned in 2019, with 60% of the funding provided by the Centre and the remaining 40% by Uttar Pradesh govt, with the vision of strengthening educational infrastructure and expanding opportunities for women in the region. The college has begun admissions for its BA programme for the current academic session, offering courses in eight subjects — Hindi, English, education, sociology, history, Sanskrit, economics and home science. Three assistant professors have been appointed, along with a staff member. Officials said admissions would continue over the coming weeks. Residents said the college would reduce the burden of commuting and help curb dropouts among girls after school.

Ramesh Singh, a resident of Kanigarhi village, said the new college would particularly benefit students from rural areas. "Daily travel is expensive and time-consuming. Some girls discontinue their education because of distance.

Residents protest hike in upkeep fee at Godrej Oasis

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Residents of Godrej Oasis in Sector 88A staged a protest on Saturday against a steep hike in common area maintenance (CAM) charges, alleging poor maintenance services, lack of financial transparency, delays in resolving long-pending society issues and non-payment of salaries to housekeeping staff. Residents said they have been raising concerns with the developer for several months through emails and meetings but have received no satisfactory resolution.

According to them, the CAM charges were increased from around Rs 4.79 per square foot to Rs 6.58 per square foot, excluding 18% GST. They alleged that the hike was imposed without any detailed justification or consultation with residents. On Saturday, the housekeeping services were disrupted in the society after sanitation workers stopped work over unpaid salaries. A group of residents gathered outside the management office and placed garbage there as part of the protest to highlight the deteriorating situation. "We are paying substantially higher maintenance charges, but the quality of services has only deteriorated. We repeatedly sought a detailed breakup of expenses and audited financial records to understand the reason behind the increase, but no satisfactory explanation has been provided," said Rajnikanth Patri, general secretary of the residents' association.

Weeks after a hill was flattened, fresh road work breaches Mangar Bani core

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Weeks after a hill was flattened in the Mangar forest landscape, another alleged violation has surfaced inside its most protected pocket. A road is now being laid through the core area of Mangar Bani — Haryana's ecologically significant sacred grove — despite multiple legal safeguards, reigniting concerns over repeated attempts to alter one of Aravalis' most fragile forest ecosystems.

A TOI visit on Saturday found heaps of stone aggregates spread along a forest track and stacks of interlocking paver blocks inside the forest, indicating that construction was underway in the core zone. Local residents said forest guards stopped the work on Friday evening, but it resumed next morning. The road is being constructed from the valley in Mangar Bani to the temple in the hills. Work was stopped on Friday evening, but resumed again on Saturday morning," said Harender Nagar, a villager. Forest officials said no permission had been granted for any construction inside the protected forest. Divisional forest officer Jhalkar Uyake said the department would seize the construction material. "The material will be seized and action will be taken in keeping with law," he added. Conservator of forests (south Haryana) Raj Kumar also said action would be initiated against those responsible. The latest episode marks the third reported instance this year of alleged ecological damage in the Mangar landscape.

Green Initiative: More Than 500 Seed Balls Thrown by Nomadic and Denotified Tribe Children in Viramgam

Children of the Educational Centre Run by Gujarat Kalyan Parishad Trust, Inspired by Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, Prepared Seed Balls

(Vandna Nilkanth Vasukiya)

Viramgam : As part of a meaningful environmental conservation initiative, children from the educational centre for Nomadic and Denotified Tribe communities, operated in Viramgam by the Gujarat Kalyan Parishad Trust, Surendranagar, an organization inspired by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), launched a Green Initiative by preparing and dispersing more than 500 seed balls. Under the guidance of Nilkanthbhai Vasukiya and Dilipbhai Mehta, the



children of the educational centre prepared over 500 seed balls. On Sunday, the children themselves scattered these seed balls along roadsides and at locations suitable for tree growth. During the activity, the children were educated about the importance of trees in protecting the environment and were also taught the process of making seed balls. A few days earlier, the children had collected neem fruits (nimbolis), which were later used to prepare the seed balls. It is worth noting that once the seed balls receive

rainwater, the clay covering will gradually dissolve, allowing the seeds to germinate and grow into saplings. The initiative also helped instill a sense of love, care, and responsibility for plants and nature among the young children. Within just a few minutes, the children dispersed more than 500 seed balls, making a valuable contribution toward creating a greener environment. The joy and sense of accomplishment visible on their faces after completing the activity served as an inspiration to everyone present.

Two from Noida lose 54L in stock trade frauds

Noida.(Agency)

Two residents, one from Noida and the other from Greater Noida West, lost a combined Rs 54 lakh to separate cyber scams after they were lured into making fake stock market investments through WhatsApp in exchange for lucrative returns. According to police, the accused promised lucrative returns on investments, displayed fabricated profits on a bogus trading platform and encouraged the victims to transfer increasing amounts of money. The frauds came to light only when the victims attempted to withdraw their funds and found that no money could be recovered. Rajesh, an employee of a private company, was contacted by two women on WhatsApp a year ago. They posed as representatives of TCS Capital Group and claimed their advice on stock market investments would generate high profits for him.

Rajesh was asked to download a mobile application and initially encouraged to make small investments. They allegedly transferred modest profits to his bank account in the early stages to

gain his confidence. Believing the investment scheme to be genuine, the complainant continued investing and transferred nearly Rs 33 lakh by Aug 8, 2025. When he later tried to withdraw



both his investment and the accumulated profits, the fraudsters demanded additional payments in the name of taxes and warned that his account would be frozen if he failed to comply. After he refused to make further payments, they stopped all communication with him. In a similar

case, an elderly homemaker from Greater Noida West was contacted through WhatsApp on June 9, 2025. She was added to a stock investment group and persuaded to download a trading application. Lured by promises of substantial profits, she transferred nearly Rs 21 lakh. When she attempted to withdraw the amount, the fraudsters stopped responding to her calls. Both victims lodged complaints on the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal (NCRP) as well as with the Cyber Crime police station. A senior police officer said separate cases have been registered and an investigation is under way. Police are tracing the bank accounts used in the transactions, analysing the money trail and collecting details of the digital platforms involved. Officials said efforts are being made to identify and arrest the accused at the earliest.

Police have advised citizens to verify the authenticity of investment platforms and avoid transferring money based solely on unsolicited WhatsApp messages or promises of unusually high returns.

E-rick carrying rods that impaled cab driver drove 3km on Dwarka away undetected

Noida.(Agency)

The e-rickshaw carrying iron rods that killed a 22-year-old cab driver should never have been on Dwarka Expressway in the first place. Yet, police have found that it travelled nearly 3km on the access-controlled highway undetected — much of it in the fastest right lane — before its protruding rods pierced the windscreen of a Hyundai Aura and impaled Shivendra Kumar. The

findings have raised questions about enforcement and checks on one of NCR's fastest corridors, where vehicles routinely travel at 100kmph or more. Police are now scanning CCTV footage from the expressway and adjoining roads to establish exactly where the e-rickshaw entered the speedway and identify its driver, who fled after the accident. Police suspect the e-rickshaw accessed the expressway either from Delhi-Jaipur Highway or Southern Peripheral Road. From there, it is

estimated to have travelled around 3km before the collision near Sector 36A. What has surprised cops even more is the lane the driver chose. Instead of staying to the left, the e-rickshaw was allegedly moving in the overtaking lane on the extreme right — meant for the fastest traffic — despite carrying iron rods protruding several feet beyond its rear. The crash occurred around 1.30pm when Shivendra's Hyundai Aura rammed into the rear of the e-rickshaw.

At Ghaziabad mall construction site where 7-year-old was raped-murdered, children are on their own

Noida.(Agency)

A tin sheet separates a jhuggi settlement from a mall being built 200 metres away, where a seven-year-old girl was raped, savagely assaulted and murdered earlier this month. The child was snuck away by two men, both workers at the mall site, people she knew. Nearly 50 families — mostly migrant workers from Bihar, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand, brought in by contractors to plaster, paint, and lay wires and bricks for the mall — live in rows of one-room shanties. Many of these families have two or three children. The rooms hold little more than a bed and a few utensils. Two washrooms at the end of the compound serve everyone, their gates left open and unattended. A single pipe supplies the water for cooking, washing and drinking. There is no crèche at the site. So, like the child who was raped and murdered, all other children living here are on their own through the day as parents go to work from 9 am to 5.30 pm. For most of the day, they play in ones and twos, dragging empty plastic bottles tied to string or simply passing

around mobile phones.

It is often the oldest children who fill in for the parents. Nandini, who came to the city from Madhya Pradesh, said her 14-year-old daughter looks after her two younger siblings when she is at work. "There's no facility for us here," she said. Since the rape-murder, she has told her children to stay inside, to speak to no one when she is away. "Everyone is a stranger here. We do not know who to trust," she said. Her husband has suggested she stop working entirely, at least until they find someone to watch the children. Khushbo (26) from Bihar's Saharsa district said staying at home was not an option for her. "We are poor people, we've come here for work, and if one of us stays back to look after the children, who earns for the family?" she said. "We cannot take them to the site. We work between bricks and cement." She hopes to enrol her three children in a school, but the nearest one, a govt-run composite school, sits in the neighbouring Sikri Kalan village. A girls' inter college lies four or five kilometres off, in Raj Nagar and Shastri Nagar. "For most families

here, that distance is itself a kind of wall," she said. Lal Babu, a migrant from Bengal with two children, said restrictions have also been imposed on the movement of labourers at the



site since the incident. The only tin gate to the settlement closed after 6 pm, a measure, workers said, meant less to protect the families than to keep them from speaking to the media. "But there are many small girls here. They run to play around, and we cannot run after them all day," Babu said. Many families, he said, were now weighing whether to leave altogether. The jhuggi where the murdered girl

lived with her parents and two elder brothers for the past two years now stands locked. The family has moved out. Neighbours said no one had seen the two men lead her into the mall on the evening of July 11.

The girl suffered more than 25 injuries, including 17 to her head and two fractures to her left leg, the autopsy found. She was allegedly assaulted with an iron rod before her body was thrown into a shaft from the mall's third floor. Two labourers, Vinay Kumar (18) and Sahibuddin (22), have been arrested so far. Police said Vinay had often played with the girl and her brothers, offering them chips and toffees, and that both men lured the child on the promise of snacks and a soft drink. They were sent to judicial custody on Sunday. Nandu, another worker, said all they could do was pray that nothing happened to the kids while they were at work. "Since the girl's death, my mind keeps going back to my own daughter, alone at home. Every evening when I come back, I check on her first before I even wash my hands," he said.

Five people killed, one injured as truck rams car near Wardha

Wardha. (Agency)

Five people were killed and one sustained serious injuries after an Eicher truck rammed into a car from behind on the Samruddhi Expressway near Wardha district in Maharashtra on Monday, police said. The accident occurred at around 6 a.m. when the truck hit the car from the rear, leaving the vehicle badly mangled.

Four occupants of the car, including the driver, died on the spot, while another succumbed to injuries during treatment.

One injured person has been admitted to a nearby hospital, where his condition is stated to be critical.

Police, highway patrol personnel and rescue teams rushed to the spot, extricated the victims from the wreckage and shifted them to a hospital. A case has been registered and investigation is underway to ascertain the exact cause of the accident. The name of the deceased and injured couldn't be ascertained till the filing of the report. Further details are awaited.

Nurpur Police arrest woman proclaimed offender in two NDPS cases

Dharamshala. (Agency)

Nurpur Police have arrested a woman who had been declared a Proclaimed Offender (PO) in two cases registered under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, marking a major breakthrough in the district's anti-drug campaign.

According to an official release issued by the Office of the Superintendent of Police, Nurpur, the district's PO Cell arrested Rajesh Kumari (50), wife of Rakesh Kumar and a resident of Tamota village in Indora tehsil of Kangra district, from Tibba in Ludhiana, Punjab, on July 18.

The accused was wanted in FIR No. 123/2019 and FIR No. 38/2020, both registered under Section 21 of the NDPS Act at Indora Police Station. She had earlier been declared a Proclaimed Offender by the competent court.

Following her arrest, the accused underwent a mandatory medical examination at Civil Hospital, Indora. Her son was informed of the arrest over the telephone, after which she was handed over to the Investigating Officer at Indora Police Station for further legal proceedings.

Police said the accused will be produced before the competent court on Monday.

The Additional Superintendent of Police, Nurpur, said the drive against proclaimed offenders would continue and that no person attempting to evade the law would be spared.

Punjab: Debt-ridden farmer commits suicide in Sangrur,

Sangrur. (Agency)

A 45-year-old farmer, allegedly distressed over a debt of around Rs 20 lakh, died during treatment after consuming sulphas tablets in Punjab's Sangrur district, police said today. The deceased, identified as Darshan Singh, son of Dalip Singh and a resident of Khadial village, allegedly consumed the poisonous substance in his field. He was rushed to the Civil Hospital in Sunam, where he succumbed during treatment. According to the farmer's brother, Satnam Singh, Darshan Singh owned around three acres of agricultural land and is survived by his wife and three children. He said the farmer had borrowed money from banks, commission agents and other sources to meet cultivation expenses and family needs as farm income remained insufficient. The family alleged that the outstanding debt had mounted to nearly Rs 20 lakh, leaving him under severe financial stress for a prolonged period. Sub-Inspector Balkar Singh, in-charge of Mehlan Chowk police post, said proceedings under Section 194 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) were initiated on the statement of the deceased's son, Amrik Singh. Further investigation is underway, he added.

Meanwhile, leaders of the Bharatiya Kisan union (Ekta-Ugrahan), Ram Saran Singh Ugrahan and Sukhpal Singh Manak Kanakwal, expressed grief over the incident and urged the Punjab government to waive the deceased farmer's entire debt and extend adequate financial assistance to the bereaved family.

25 transfers in 20 years: Meet Tukaram Mundhe, the IAS officer Mumbai's restaurants fear

Mumbai. (Agency)

Every working day between 4 and 5 pm, the door to the commissioner's office at Maharashtra's Food and Drug Administration (FDA) headquarters in Bandra Kurla Complex opens to anyone who walks in. On the afternoon The Indian Express visited, the owner of Noor Mohammadi, the century-old Mohammad Ali Road institution, was there with his son, the restaurant's fourth-generation custodian. Days earlier, the FDA had suspended their licence. They had come to understand how to get it revoked. Many who arrive with that question end up going to the commissioner himself.

Getting an audience with Maharashtra's FDA Commissioner, Mumbai's food industry has learnt, is easy. Getting leniency is not. In his first official press

note after taking charge, Mundhe declared: "No leniency whatsoever will be shown by the administration to any person or establishment that plays with the health of the public." In the weeks since, the department's enforcement drive has sought to demonstrate exactly that.

Since taking charge on May 25, the FDA has carried out 1,131 inspections across Maharashtra, averaging more than 20 a day. It has seized food stock worth Rs 49.57 crore, including 1.6 lakh litres of allegedly adulterated milk, invoked the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) against organised gutkha networks, and suspended the licences of 56 restaurants.

Not just any restaurants.

Among those facing action were the 73-

year-old K Rustom & Co., Noor Mohammadi, Shalimar, Aditya Birla New Age Hospitality's Waarsa and Flint, run by chef Rahul Akerkar and most recently the



110-year-old Parsi Dairy Farm. The crackdown has also prompted statewide protests by pan shop owners, who allege

indiscriminate use of stringent criminal laws against small retailers.

But for Mumbai, the arrival of its new FDA Commissioner was first visible not through inspections, but through WhatsApp.

An almost-silent FDA media group suddenly began buzzing with a steady stream of press notes, photographs and videos documenting raids across Maharashtra. The first press note under Mundhe's charge issued on May 28, three days after he assumed office, announced a statewide drive against food

adulteration. It referred to him as "Shri Tukaram Mundhe". Both details would prove telling.

Leopard spotted inside Ahmedabad housing society, rescue operation underway

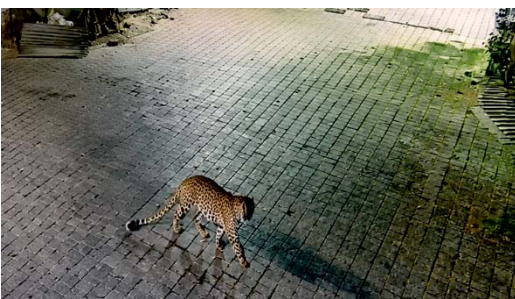
Ahmedabad. (Agency)

Panic struck a residential neighbourhood in the Ghuma area of Ahmedabad early Monday morning after a leopard was spotted roaming inside a housing society. Following the sighting of the big cat, emergency teams from the Gujarat forest department and Kankaria Zoo rushed to the spot to launch a massive rescue and capture operation.

Confirming the development, Ahmedabad Mayor Hitesh Barot said the sighting occurred at Sharandeep Society in Ghuma at the dead end of VIP Road.

Speaking with The Indian Express, Barot said, "The leopard sneaked into the society late in the night. A girl from the society saw the leopard around 1 pm. After that, all the members of the society gathered. And eventually, the leopard was spotted in the CCTV of the society at around 2.45 pm."

"A team each from Kankaria Zoo and the state forest department rushed to the spot to carry out the search and rescue operation," Barot added. "The leopard was recently sighted near House No. 20 of the



society. The operation to safely trap and relocate it is currently underway and should be completed shortly." The mayor confirmed that no injuries to residents or domestic animals have been reported so far. Ghuma is a rapidly developing

residential hub of southwestern Ahmedabad adjacent to the Sanand town of Ahmedabad district which is emerging as auto and semiconductor hub of Gujarat.

Rise in human-leopard conflicts

The sighting of the big cat comes at a time when instances of human-leopard conflict are increasing in Gujarat.

In April, a man from a village in Chhota Udepur district wrestled a leopard with his bare hands, forcing open its jaws, and rescuing his four-year-old daughter from death. In January, a four-year-old girl was attacked by a leopard near her house in Dang district's Dahar village, and she died during treatment at the Valsad Civil Hospital later.

In February, The Indian Express covered the issue of leopards on the prowl in detail, talking to several experts.

SIT to probe Ahmedabad blast & fire that killed 9, cracker unit owners held

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

A day after nine persons were killed and six others injured in a blast and fire at a firecracker factory in Ramol area, the Ahmedabad city police on Sunday arrested three persons who were running the illegal unit.

Police Commissioner Anupam Singh Gahlaut said that the licence of the firecracker unit had expired in March and that the accused were illegally operating it for the past 20-25 days, taking advantage of police's preoccupation in the bandobast for Rathayatra (held on July 16).

The three arrested accused have been identified as Ramila Dodiya, her son Mehul and their partner Sadiq Saiyyed. They are expected to be produced before a court in Ahmedabad on Monday.

Addressing a press conference, Gahlaut said Mehul was operating the firecracker unit and his mother Ramila was handling its administration.

"This (unit) was ordered to shut on March 4, 2026. And it was completely shut. It was being checked from time to time. However, for the past 20-25 days, taking advantage of police's preoccupation in Rathayatra, they had brought labourers

from different parts of Dahod district and were making (firecrackers). ...they got orders of firecrackers from some places in connection with the upcoming immersion ritual of Lord Ganesha (Ganesh Visarjan).

And these people were making (the firecrackers) from there. And the blast happened," Gahlaut said.

"It has also come to notice that in 2014, when Ramilaben was operating a firework unit at the same place (from the year 2013), one person had died in a fire incident. She was arrested and her licence was cancelled.

IMD forecasts widespread rain across north India, warns of extremely heavy rainfall in hill states

Panchkula. (Agency)

The India Meteorological Department (IMD), in its morning bulletin issued at 0809 hours IST on Monday, forecast fairly widespread to widespread rainfall across large parts of northwest, central and east India over the next week, with isolated extremely heavy rainfall warned for Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh in the initial days of the spell.

According to the IMD, heavy to very heavy rainfall at a few places, with extremely heavy rainfall at isolated places, is likely over Uttarakhand on July 20; over Jammu and Kashmir during July 20-22; and over Himachal Pradesh on July 20 and 21.

The department cautioned that the red-colour warning used for such alerts does not denote a "red alert" but signals that authorities and residents should "take action." The weather office said fairly widespread to widespread rainfall is likely over Himachal Pradesh, Jammu-

Kashmir-Ladakh-Gilgit-Baltistan-Muzaffarabad and Uttarakhand during July 20-26. Isolated thunderstorm, lightning and gusty winds reaching 40-50 kmph, gusting to 60 kmph, are also forecast over Jammu-Kashmir-Ladakh-Gilgit-Baltistan-Muzaffarabad during July 20-23, while isolated thunderstorm and lightning are likely over Uttarakhand through the week and over Uttar Pradesh during July 20-22.

For Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi and Punjab, the IMD forecast fairly widespread to widespread rainfall during July 20-23, tapering to isolated to scattered rainfall during July 24-26.

Uttar Pradesh is expected to receive fairly widespread to widespread rainfall during July 20-24, with isolated to scattered rain on July 25 and 26. East Rajasthan is likely to see fairly widespread to widespread rainfall during July 23-26, while West Rajasthan will see isolated to scattered rainfall through the week, and East Rajasthan isolated to scattered rain during July 20-22. The bulletin also

flagged isolated heavy rainfall over several northwestern states between July 20 and 26, including Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi and Punjab on July 23; Uttar Pradesh during July 23-26; West Rajasthan during July 21-24; and East Rajasthan through the week. Isolated very



heavy rainfall is additionally likely over Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh during July 20-22, apart from Jammu-Kashmir-Ladakh-Gilgit-Baltistan-Muzaffarabad on July 23, Himachal Pradesh on July 22 and Uttarakhand on July 21. Isolated

thunderstorm, lightning and gusty winds of 30-40 kmph, gusting to 50 kmph, are forecast over Rajasthan throughout the week.

In central India, the IMD said isolated to scattered rainfall is likely over West Madhya Pradesh during July 20-21, and over Vidarbha during July 20-21 and again on July 25-26. This will give way to fairly widespread to widespread rainfall over West Madhya Pradesh during July 22-26, over Chhattisgarh and East Madhya Pradesh through the week, and over Vidarbha during July 22-24. Isolated thunderstorm, lightning and gusty winds of 30-40 kmph, gusting to 50 kmph, are forecast over Madhya Pradesh during July 20-23, along with isolated thunderstorm and lightning over Chhattisgarh and Vidarbha during the same period. Isolated heavy rainfall is likely over West Madhya Pradesh on July 20 and during July 22-23, over East Madhya Pradesh during July 20-23, over Vidarbha during July 22-23 and over Chhattisgarh during July 20-23.

Race to the podium: And then there were four

A hundred and two matches down and only two to go. Let's bring on the countdown, the excited announcer, the tacky music and the inevitable Trumpian overtones for the last couple of times. Will Lionel Messi and his gravitational aura, for one last time, bend the arc of history Argentina's way, or will Spain—often so frugal, at times so gossamer—further cement the current epoch as theirs? The final 90 minutes on Sunday night will be so layered, so luminous and powered by so much stardust that the spectacle itself may ultimately feel understated. That is, unless Messi & Company re-engineer the joyride of the last World Cup final, when Argentina's talisman went head-to-head with Kylian Mbappé in a superlative six-goal thriller. This time, Messi faces the teenager Lamine Yamal, who is yet to fully explode at the tournament. What better time than the final? The showpiece event is, however, instructive for another reason. The Old World still has a firm grip on the World Cup, even in its supersized 48-team form. The scale, length, debutants, locality—three North American nations—and some early results had suggested a shift in power, or at least that the outlines of a different future. But ultimately, the illusion faded and the powerhouses reasserted authority. Nine out of 10 African teams progressed from the group stages. While that seemed a testimony to their progress, one by one they fell in the round of 32—except for Morocco. The continent's last representative exited in the last-eight stage. The Moroccan Football Association is well-resourced and organised. Their quarter-final run proved that Morocco's third-place finish in Qatar was no fluke. There was no shame in their elimination by France, but the makeup of Morocco's squad highlighted part of the structural problems facing African football: 19 of the 26 players were born outside the country. Just one player of their starting XI against Brazil was born in Morocco. Congo, Tunisia and Algeria also fielded rosters with more than half the players born abroad. Tournament sensation Cape Verde selected 14 diaspora players and took Argentina to extra-time in a valiant defeat. Fifa held up the Cape Verdians as proof that they are living up to their mission statement by distributing development money. Yet, before the tournament, manager Bubista had told me that there was still a vast amount of work to do on the ground to develop the domestic league and infrastructure in the island nation.

Under Fifa president Gianni Infantino, more than \$5 billion has been distributed in development money to the 211 member associations. It's a strategy replicated from Sepp Blatter and is key to his political survival: in return for financial support, Infantino receives votes.

African nations are a generous beneficiary of Fifa development money. In the 2016-2022 report on Forward Development funds, African member associations were the largest recipients, receiving \$518 million in total. But with such a heavy reliance on the diaspora to bridge the qualitative gap with Europe, it begs the question of how African federations run their national team setups and football at large in their countries. Crucially, the audits of these forward development funds are never made public. At least, Africa had a proper presence in the knockout phase. Japan had enjoyed gushing reviews from the world media, but for all their perceived mobility, agility and speed, they could not dislodge a disjointed Brazil in the round of 32. The Samurai Blues failed to defend a 1-0 lead and, as Asia's last representative, exited ignominiously. Perhaps Japan have stagnated in recent years and Asian football at large has failed to progress. Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Iraq, Jordan, Uzbekistan—and even South Korea, whose campaign collapsed amid internal strife—had little business at this tournament.

The constitutional amendment we aren't debating

Like earlier constitutional amendments linked to delimitation, the one being proposed reaches into Clause (3) of Article 81, which determines the census to be used. None touches Clause (2)(a), which determines the relation between a state's population and its representation

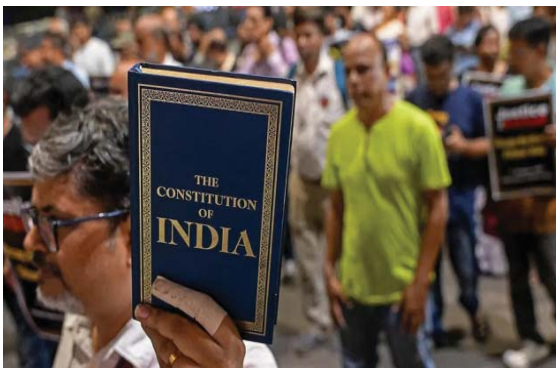
The BJP wants to amend the Constitution. The 131st Amendment Bill and its companion Delimitation Bill do essentially one thing. They change which census we count. Seats today are frozen to the headcount of 1971. The Bill will be fought clause by clause, state by state, party by party. Parties are being broken to find a two-thirds majority. Everyone is arguing about which census, whose headcount. Whichever way the vote falls, we will not have debated the one sentence that decides the outcome.

Article 81 in the Constitution is the reason for this major upheaval in India's politics. The BJP wants to amend it to reflect an increase in total number of seats that would automatically trigger a delimitation exercise. Clause (2)(a) of Article 81 says: seats shall be allotted to each state so that "the ratio between that number and the population of the state is, so far as practicable, the same for all states". That is the engine. Clause (3), that all parties are debating, is merely the footnote—it tells you which census the word "population" happens to point to. Now look at what we have actually amended in 75 years. The Forty-second. The Eighty-fourth. The Eighty-seventh. Every one of them reached into Clause (3) and changed a census year. Not one has ever touched Clause (2)(a). The current Bill before Parliament does the same thing again. We are about to hold a constitutional war over the definition of a word. The word is not the problem. The rule is. Article 81 does not merely say population matters. It says population—and nothing else—decides a state's voice in Parliament. Why should that be so? Begin with what Parliament is for. Its first power is the power of the purse. The Union cannot raise a rupee or spend a rupee without Parliament's sanction, and Parliament's central task is to scrutinise both halves of that—how the money comes in, and where it goes. Population is a fair proxy for one half. A state with more people needs more schools, more trains, more grain. That is real, and it should count.

But it is a proxy for one half only. On the other side of the ledger sits the question of who actually fills the kitty—and there, population is not a good proxy. Over the four years from 2022-23 to 2025-26, Maharashtra averaged 21.7 percent of India's total

GST collections while carrying 9.1 percent of its people. Karnataka: 8.8 percent of the tax, 4.8 percent of the people. Tamil Nadu: 8.8 and 5.5. Now run it the other way. Uttar Pradesh, with 17.1 percent of Indians, contributes 6.7 percent of GST. Bihar, with 9.3 percent of the population—one in eleven Indians—contributes 1.9 percent. Madhya Pradesh, 6.3 percent of people, 2.7 percent of tax.

So Parliament exists to watch how the Union's money is raised and spent. Its composition reflects only the spending side. The raising side—the entire other half



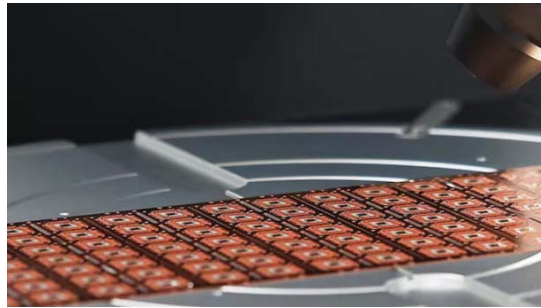
of its own mandate—counts for zero. Why should one side of the ledger be worth everything and the other worth nothing? Suppose it were not. Suppose Article 81(2)(a) allotted seats on two factors instead of one, weighted equally: a state's share of the population, and its share of what it puts into the national tax pool. I did the arithmetic—population as projected for 2026, GST averaged over the last four years, 50-50. The Lok Sabha would look like this. Maharashtra 84 seats, up from 48. Uttar Pradesh 65, down from 80. Gujarat 39, up from 26. Karnataka 37, up from 28. Bihar 30, down from 40. West Bengal 32, down from 42. Telangana 19. Kerala 15. And Tamil Nadu—39 seats. Exactly what it holds today. Look at what leaps out of this exercise: it is not a southern story. The biggest gainer by a mile is Maharashtra, and much of that is Mumbai booking tax the rest of India generates, an artefact of where head offices sit rather than where value is made. Gujarat and Haryana gain too. Kerala and Andhra still lose. Any

New mission hits right note with boost for chip design, research

The country's much-ambitious Semiconductor Mission 2.0 is a humble attempt to shift India from a services-led design base to be a creator and producer of microchips that drive everything from devices to defence equipment

India's ambitious microchip production plans got a second wind with Semiconductor Mission 2.0. At ₹1.28 lakh crore, the sum is nearly twice the allocation in the first phase and extends the mission to a wider ecosystem, from design to fabrication and packaging. Importantly, it will focus on domestic production of chips and related materials, along with the development of Indian intellectual property. The latter is crucial given that over a fifth of the world's chip design workforce is in India; it will help elevate our standing in the global technology space.

Moreover, if the first phase established the foundational infrastructure for fabrication and assembly, the second shifts focus towards deepening domestic capabilities through indigenous design, specialised materials and industry-led research centres. It means, Semiconductor Mission 2.0 is a humble attempt to shift India from a services-led design base to be a creator and producer of microchips that drive everything from devices to defence equipment.



During phase one, the scheme attracted about four fabrication units, though production is expected to begin only after 2028. Besides, all the planned units will produce chips built on a 28-nanometre process, as against the 3-7 nm range needed by advanced technologies including artificial intelligence and supercomputers. Though the proposed production line is not cutting-edge,

domestic production of even 28 nm range will help withstand supply shortages like those seen during the pandemic when global pipelines stalled for a few weeks caused massive losses. Now, the global semiconductor market is witnessing a massive, AI-driven supercycle that is projected to exceed \$1-1.5 trillion in size. China, South Korea and Taiwan dominate the production chain at present, operating specialised, capital-intensive foundries, while the Indian market is projected to surge to over \$100 billion by 2030. For a growing market, local production offers security and scale. In particular, India's critical aerospace and defence industries will benefit as several semiconductor parts for their equipment are currently imported. But as a recent Niti Aayog report noted, our semiconductor ecosystem is not equipped to meet domestic demand and efforts to strengthen local manufacturing need significant capital. Currently, the government is offering over 50 percent subsidy for chip production plants. But besides capital, efforts should be made to ensure policy continuity.

Should Sonam Wangchuk be left to die

THE GREAT GAME: He continues to fast at Jantar Mantar, unmoved by the political shenanigans around him

ABOUT a stone's throw away from Jantar Mantar in the heart of Delhi, where Sonam Wangchuk is on a hunger strike, sits the Parliament of India, now preparing for its monsoon session on July 20. Wangchuk's fast, aimed at securing the resignation of Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, has entered its 21st day today. He could die "in two days," said a public interest litigator two days ago, if he doesn't get any food inside his system soon. A medical team is now at hand, several Opposition leaders are telling Sonam to end his strike, saying he's made his point, but a heavy silence continues to hang in the heart of Delhi. Should Sonam Wangchuk be left to die? After all, no one asked him to go on a fast-unto-death, demanding Pradhan's resignation. Some would say the strike has the flavour of blackmail, others that it's a cry of hopelessness in a world ruled by powerful people. Certainly, Wangchuk & Friends believe that someone should be held responsible for the avoidable NEET mess which has affected lakhs of students. That some heads should roll—otherwise what was the point of all the sound and fury if it was going to signify nothing? In Wangchuk's vicinity, at the same Jantar Mantar space, on the day the monsoon session begins, Jammu & Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah is planning a day-long protest over Delhi's refusal to commit to statehood. Omar hasn't got permission yet to hold the protest. Moreover, his party MP from Srinagar, Agha Ruhullah Mehdi, has just accused Omar of going back on his promise to fight for the return of Article 370. Special status for Kashmir, Mehdi has thundered, is far more important than statehood. Blame it on the weather. It's so hot that cynicism reigns, especially when the rains fail, as they seem to be doing. Perhaps the gods are angry. There's been thieving in Ayodhya too. Does Mehdi's rant, then,

indicate that he's so angry with Omar he may even split the National Conference (NC)? Maybe Mehdi will bide his time and hope to flip the coin on dynasties. Or he could remain inside the NC, but vote in favour of the BJP whenever it plans to bring back the Delimitation Bill that seeks a 33% women's quota in an expanded Parliament—make no mistake, the Bill seeks to reshape constituencies and therefore how India votes, including a fundamental overhaul of the Lok Sabha. To undertake such an overhaul, a cursory reading of the Constitution will tell you, the BJP-led NDA needs a two-thirds majority—this means 360 out of 543 seats in the Lower House, of which today it has 293. If it wants to bring back The Bill, which was defeated on the floor of the House only in April, it needs to persuade another 67 to fall in line. And as the one and only Chanakya once said, everything is fair in love, war and politics. That's why the decimation of the TMC helps—as many as 20 MPs out of 28 have floated an independent party that will support the BJP from outside; as does the annihilation of the Shiv Sena (UBT), where six out of nine MPs have left to join the pro-BJP Eknath Shinde faction of the Shiv Sena; while the awful fear persists in Sharad Pawar's NCP that it will be destroyed if it doesn't vote in favour of the Delimitation Bill.

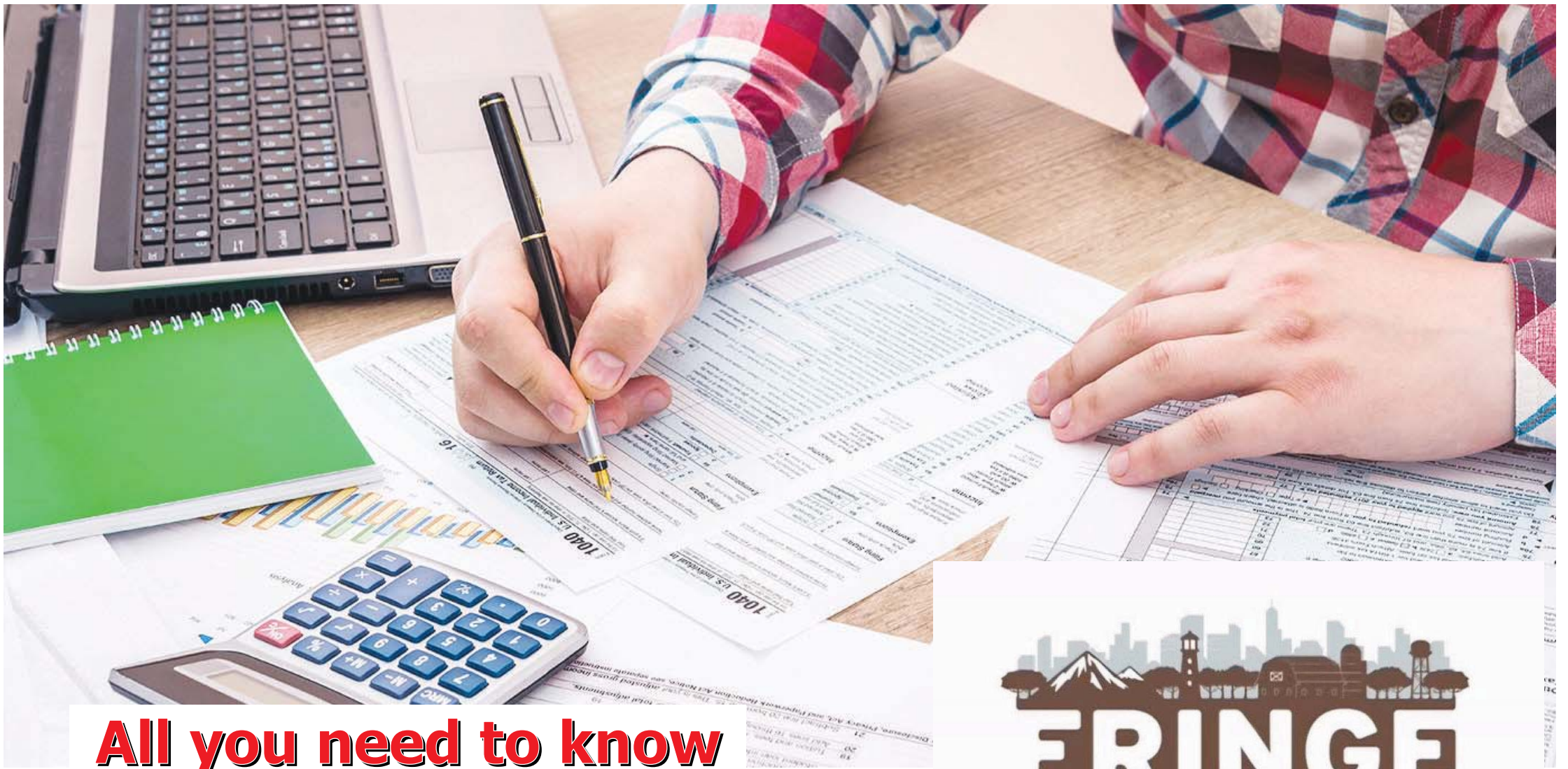
That's how, even though the monsoon clouds have failed to gather, the 18th Lok Sabha has already been significantly recast. When the monsoon session opens on Monday, it will look very different from the one that

was elected two years ago by we, the people, and all without firing a ballot. In some states, like in J&K, the story is easier. The NC only has 2 seats out of 5 in the state—2 belong to the BJP and one, Engineer Rashid



from Baramulla, is an Independent MP. If Mehdi is amenable and Engineer Rashid can be persuaded—who in their right minds this 21st century isn't in favour of gender equality? Note that Rashid has been given permission by the Delhi High Court to attend Parliament only two days ago. Perhaps it's time to re-read your favourite Julius Caesar. Back in Bengal, TMC leader Madan Mitra, who swore fealty to Mamata Banerjee and called the leader of the TMC breakaway faction Ritabrata Banerjee names that would make animals in the animal kingdom blush—has, one day later, jumped

ship and joined Ritabrata Banerjee. It reminds me of stories of why Punjab's MPs who once belonged to AAP, quietly caved in. (They wanted to live happily ever after.) Mitra denies his great leap forward has anything to do with the fact that the Enforcement Directorate questioned his family the day before he jumped. TMC MPs, the few that remain, say the ED has been busy in Bengal. Certainly the ED has been busy in Punjab, slowly wiping out corruption, one politician at a time—former AAP minister Sanjeev Arora has just been charged with a huge scam in mobile phones. As for Sharad Pawar, if he's nervous about what the next 24 hours will bring and whether he will be left holding the rump of the NCP, Omar Abdullah has come out and accused the BJP of trying to break his party, saying MLAs are being offered Rs 20-30 crore to switch sides. The BJP has responded by sending him a legal notice for Rs 100 crore. Meanwhile, Sonam Wangchuk continues to fast at Jantar Mantar, unmoved by the political shenanigans around him. The rest of the nation, bewildered by this real-life demonstration of satyagraha, is being forced to turn its attention towards this man—who is he, anyway? And could he die if some food doesn't go inside his system? As for Rahul Gandhi, this much must be said for the Congress party's most powerful leader. After returning from a three-week summer holiday, he clearly has one thing in common with the BJP: Both have nothing to say on Sonam Wangchuk.



All you need to know about fringe Benefits

The corporate drone operates at every level across sectors in the industry. Fringe benefits are a new buzz doing the rounds of corporate halls. It is generally combined or part of the total rewards system. Fringe benefits broadly include health, security and retirement benefits offered to all full-time employees. They are offered in addition to the defined compensation structure. Recent explosion of the digital platform industry led to an epiphany among the top executives and leadership teams at large, on talent management. To increase the level of attraction for young and exceptionally skilled talent, the focus on leading edge practices has become critical. Thus, an innovative bucket of fringe benefits is introduced in the market. Some of these are voluntary and taxable in nature, but aid the employee in different aspects of his/her life. Some of the popular ones are education assistance, adoption

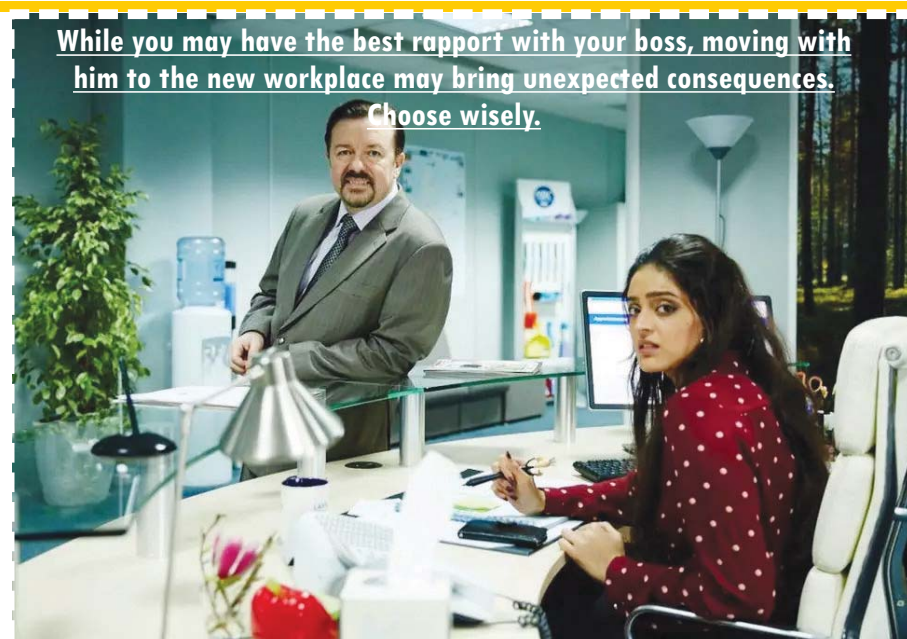
assistance, Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), bonus allocated, meals offered by the organisation, flexible hours, transport facility provided, etc. Elango R, president HP Business Unit and chief human resources officer, Mphasis shares his views on the fringe benefit that people appreciate the most. He suggests, "It is anything that includes employees' family, that has high social and peer recognition. We should encourage giving a compensation that benefits their whole family. For instance, where an employee gets promoted or recognised for their work, without telling it to them, we can send a letter to their parents or spouse informing about the same. This gives them surprise and happiness. Second, at senior levels, people still like exclusive club memberships and offers which are difficult for them to get individually. This has a huge impact on them. The third is giving people enough opportunities to get together and socialise as peers either through conferences or

similar learning exercises. Many people cut it calling it an expense, but it is really a fringe benefit because others like to travel with their peers and their group and they look forward to these events. It is just another way to renew their relationships with their colleagues. The distinction in company size relates more prominently to the extent to which initiatives are implemented and the processes relating to how they are implemented. But acting as an outlier to this industry trend, these benefits are more popular among the start-ups who aspire to operate at a global level with employee-friendly policies and compensation structure. This aspect offered as an additional perk is often used as a bargaining chip with the prospective employees. The emphasis on the subject has increased to such an extent that some universities have actually started designing dedicated courses around the same. It can help manoeuvre the employee value proposition to the

external and internal population and benefit the organisational repute. While the benefits offered are enjoyed by the employees and employer bears the expense, it's a mutually-beneficial programme for both involved parties. Healthy and secure employees will have better productivity, attendance, and vigour to take on new challenges. This will help the organisation perform better. Generally, the scale of operations also determines the benefits offered as volume or headcount helps to spread the cost and gain discounts or workout better deals through collective bargaining for higher employee base. Also, these benefits are subject to Fringe Benefit Tax (FBT) which takes away time, energy and requires the expertise or knowledge to be there in the tax audit team. In the ultimate user experience, fringe benefits can be viewed as a distributed consensus system that allows management and employees at different levels to come on the same page and concur to achieve common organisational goals while contributing in their capacity. Industry experts advocate further growth and penetration of fringe benefits in the industry at large in the long range. While certain deficits are overlooked by the fact that an increase in the percentage of fringe benefits in the compensation structure will reduce the

Fringe benefits not only help the employees in terms of long-term growth, they are also equally important for the organisations for various reasons.

cash pay, an ideal scenario would be where benefits and cash components both increase at a similar pace, but that is too idealistic in a crunch economy like ours.



While you may have the best rapport with your boss, moving with him to the new workplace may bring unexpected consequences. Choose wisely.

The manager of your team has been the best mentor you ever had in your professional life. He has guided you through all the ups and downs that you faced in this organisation and has been a strong pillar of strength for you during your present stint. You have prospered well and feel totally in control of things at work. But now, he has decided to move on to explore better avenues and things have suddenly become not so clear for you. As you prepare yourself to deal with situations without having him around, you get an offer to join him at his new workplace. Now, the big question haunts you as to whether or not to join him in his new venture. Although, the most obvious and natural

progression in this situation would be to instantly grab the offer and move along, there might be certain pros and cons that need to be weighed before one takes the plunge. Working with the same boss would definitely mean the same old level of comfort and understanding. Sandeep Budhiraja, CEO of DOOR Training & Consulting India Pvt Ltd, puts it into perspective as he says, "Change brings uncertainty and the manager who has moved to a new role may be driven by his or her own need to establish himself quickly. Therefore, he would also be interested in bringing the trusted team members along. Also, it is well understood in HR circles that when people move together to a new organisation, they are taking the same risk as the organisation they are coming

from. Unless the company is desperate for that kind of talent, it is highly avoidable for them. Groups come with their own cultural and political issues. So, the new company that the employee has followed his manager to, will already start discounting the capabilities and trustworthiness of the employee, which does not bode well in the long run."

Any change will always have uncertainties associated with it. Nonetheless, it cannot be ruled out that moving out with your boss may bring in some good results for you as the rapport you share with him will also help you settle down better in the new role. With him already working to create a credibility for himself, chances are high that you will benefit alongside. However, in such work relationships, the employee often loses his own ability to take the best decision for himself. Moving to a new role would definitely mean risking the growth opportunities that might have come your way in your present assignment. At the same time, it would also mean losing on the remaining support systems that one might have in the present organisation.

Shalini Pillay, head-people, performance and culture, KPMG India, says, "If you understand and believe in the growth platform that your present organisation provides, it is not difficult to see the wider landscape of opportunities that present themselves in such a context too. What might seem like an easy path of going with the flow, might actually quite often be walking away from the imminent opportunity besides having to establish oneself in an entirely new organisational ecosystem. Similarly, the rapport that an individual builds with his manager and the trust he has in his ability to support

Should you follow your boss to his new Workplace?

individual growth is an outcome of a larger ecosystem. This ecosystem is a result of the culture and values that the organisation believes in. It may not be realistic to believe that similar culture-value systems exist in all organisations." The same is reckoned by Geetika Joshi, a senior HR professional. "Not only will such a move bring uncertainty along, it will affect most other relationships that you might have fostered over time, and

your relationship with your boss may even affect the relationships you make at your new workplace. Therefore, it is extremely essential to choose wisely and think deep before taking this plunge." While an opportunity to work with your existing boss may sound extremely good at the first time, it is extremely crucial to weigh the pros and cons and then take an informed decision about the same.





Things to consider before quitting Your job

A higher salary should not be your only consideration while moving jobs. you need to carefully evaluate the perks your current job offers before deciding to finally make the switch.

According to a recent study by LinkedIn, Indians are more proactive at job search and job switch on a regular basis. For Gen Z, a higher salary is the biggest draw. Getting a job and holding on to it is no longer a matter of pride; job hopping is no longer considered frivolous but as an opportunity to learn and climb the corporate ladder faster. Often, employees do not seem to think that an opportunity similar to the one they are seeking outside can exist in the company they are

currently employed with. To avoid this, firms should encourage employees to be more open about their professional aspirations. Even in the digital age, there needs to be more focus on increased face time, which would make everything else fall in place as the employees will be well-informed.

Here are a few perks you can miss out on when you plan to quit your current job for another opportunity:

TRAINING SESSIONS AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Before you make a switch, you need to think if the new company offers you training that is more like spoon feeding aimed at only skilling you enough to go by a checklist or does it have a learning centric environment that allows you to grow as a professional and add life skills that can transferred in any type of setting.

COMPANY CULTURE

Take a moment to think whether you feel disconnected to the company's culture. If you feel engaged in the work that you do and the space you are in and think highly of your peer group, do you really want to move? Given how much time you spend with your peers, good relationships at the workplace can boost your morale. Once you are in a comfortable zone with your peers, you are

definitely more productive. Changing to adapt to a culture and engage with a new workforce that you don't feel at ease with could lead to a difficult transition. Shift gears only if you are ready.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND OFFICE SPACE

This may seem trivial but note how it makes a difference to your day-to-day work and productivity. A healthy workspace layout and well ness initiatives offered on the job will keep you fit and productive for the long-term.

DOES YOUR COMPANY TRUST YOU?

Think about the level of empowerment you have at your level. Do you feel confident in your independence to get things done and do you feel trusted by your seniors and team mates? An organisation that enables you to step up and interact with the leaders is an indication of the trust it places in you: How valuable are you to the company and does it appreciate and recognise that? Think over it before you take a leap.

MEASURING PERFORMANCE

Pay attention to the performance management system of the organisation. Most follow a model that is based on the principle of forced rankings.

This means your success will depend on how good or bad your peers on the project are. Firms that have performance review processes that are anchored in ongoing feedback and truly measure your impact and potential through a competency model are a better way of gauging your growth.

The competency model of your firm must allow for your growth through learning opportunities.



Facebook can now stalk you everywhere on the Internet



A new Facebook privacy policy allows the site to track your activity even after you've left it — and all users have automatically signed up to it.

The change enables it to gather data from activity across the internet, as well as the normal data it gathers on information you and your friends have added to the site. It also allows the site to pass on that information with its other branches, including Instagram.

Facebook does not share data with WhatsApp or vice versa, the company said.

The company said in November that the

change would come into effect, when it mentioned that it would be implemented on January 30. Facebook says that it showed notifications to users, and sent them emails, informing them that the change was coming into effect.

It also ran a seven day comment period, allowing users to discuss the change. Facebook says that the data used will help personalise advertising and stop users being shown information that they don't want.

Advertising is key to Facebook's revenues, and drove the surging profits that the company reported last week.

Users can opt out of some parts of the new policy by customising privacy settings. The site has a special settings page for ads, where users can opt

out of advertising that is shown on third party sites or is selected by comparing you with your friends. Adjustments can also be made on mobile devices.

To opt out of the site tracking your use across the internet, Facebook asks users to opt out through the European Digital Advertising Alliance, in the UK and Europe, or its equivalent in the US. Going through that service will allow users to opt out of the tool entirely, and once they have done so the preference will stay everywhere that Facebook is used.

Fortune favours the survivors - The first rule in business is to survive. The longer you are around, the higher are your chances of being acquired or good things happening to you. Valerie Wagoner and Amiya Pathak (ZipDial founders) stuck it out through thick and thin. If they had folded their cards at the first hiccup, they would not have made history. Set your horizons for at least seven years. In the case of ZipDial, it happened to them in Year 5. If you want to start something and flip it in two years, you better be extremely lucky!

Traction, not just technology -- Amiya (Pathak) built an amazingly scalable architecture that wowed Twitter. But unlike most technology companies I see, they had 60 million users, a strong sales team, growing revenues and ubiquitous presence. These must have been compelling factors when someone inside Twitter did a build-versus-buy decision.

Armchair matchmaking never works -- At AngelPrime, I hear entrepreneurs telling me why Facebook or Google or some other company would acquire them because of this-that-or-the-other. It never works that way. Based on my own experience in selling Snapfish and being the acquirer of startups, most large companies operate like independent fiefdoms ruled by fiercely protective leaders whose idea of what is best for them and what is best for the overall company are typically at odds. It is these leaders, not the M&A team, that makes buying decisions, especially in technology.

How to get Acquired

Bala Parthasarathy, managing partner at seed-stage fund AngelPrime, an early investor in ZipDial, writes about the 7 things they learned from Twitter's acquisition of the Bengaluru-based venture



Sow the seeds and be patient -- You should cultivate a business relationship with the potential acquirer that makes business sense for you and the company. Specifically, you should engage with one or more teams for which your technology or product would be interesting. Think business first, not acquisition first. And focus on why partnering with you helps them. In the process, get to understand the company's internal goals, the people and culture. ZipDial had a two-year business relationship with Twitter where they had worked together on various campaigns, including Bollywood and Indian elections. People, not companies -- People, not companies, do deals. Valley

companies are generally very insular and rarely do deals outside Bay Area, let alone India (Israel is an exception to the rule). They first need to build a relationship with you as a person before they see the value in your technology and business. The ZipDial team had solid relationships at multiple levels with different teams at Twitter, long before the deal was conceived. Luckily, there are plenty of people who can help you connect, if you're not the networking type. iSpirt M&A Connect is a very well designed programme which can formally help you forge relationships with many Valley companies.

Date many, marry one -- Though there might be one perfect company for you in the end, you should engage with multiple companies. And when I say engage, I mean build a business relationship. There are so many rational and irrational factors that go into an acquisition decision from the acquirer's end that you'll never know about and thinking that THE ONE will eventually scoop you up, is foolish. Plus, your chances of being acquired are much higher when multiple companies court you. ZipDial had plenty of other business relationships, each of which could have been THE ONE.

Don't sell, be bought -- This cliché is certainly obvious to anyone who has ever bargained in a bazaar. If you're desperately looking to be sold, your chances of being acquired are very, very low. And even if you do get acquired, the price will be pathetic. Indeed, the best way to be acquired is to go around building a solid business with traction, being patient and cultivating the relationships. And then, let the Gods of Luck play their role!

A Yo-Yo Monsoon In India Is Threatening Crops And Power Grid

El Nino and global warming are causing erratic monsoon rainfall in India, disrupting crop sowing, rural incomes and driving up power demand.

Delhi. (Agency)
An intensifying El Nino and global warming are driving a shift in India's monsoon rainfall, creating more erratic weather patterns that threaten to dent agricultural output and strain power grids. This year's monsoon opened with India's fifth-driest June on record and rainfall almost 40% below normal levels, followed by a sudden deluge early this month - when about a month's worth of precipitation was dumped on cities like Mumbai in a single week.

Since then, the weather system has stalled into another break, with national rainfall about 24% lower than usual for the time of year as of July 19. "The number of rainy days and how they are distributed used to be smoother. That's how farmers developed their crop calendars over the years," said Raghuram Murtugudde, visiting professor at the Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur and an emeritus professor at the University of Maryland. "Global warming combined with El Nino makes



the atmosphere act like a sponge that soaks a lot of water and then pours it all in one place." With roughly half of the country's farmland still dependent on rainfall for irrigation, swings between dry spells and violent downpours are disrupting

summer crop sowing, jeopardizing rural incomes and raising risks of higher food costs. At the same time, the sudden monsoon pauses are trapping urban corridors in stifling humidity, driving up power demand for cooling. "India's monsoon is a long season, so obviously it has a pulsating effect, but this time it's behaving a bit more aberrantly," said G.P. Sharma, president of meteorology at private forecaster Skymet Weather Services. "It has become a little mysterious." The erratic shifts are being dictated by steering currents 20,000 feet to 25,000

feet above sea level. Rain-bearing systems are encountering atmospheric blocking patterns at that altitude, causing monsoon depressions to stall or to deflect off course, according to Sharma. Unlike last monsoon, which largely traveled along its normal path, the current one is not following that track. It is getting blocked," he said. The prolonged breaks in typical monsoon rainfall are being exacerbated by the impacts of El Nino, which is forcing air over the subcontinent to sink rather than rise, according to Murtugudde.

UP minister stokes row with population remark after 5 killed in house collapse

New Delhi. (Agency)
A controversy has erupted over apparently insensitive remarks made by Uttar Pradesh minister Kapil Dev Agarwal after he linked a fatal house collapse in Muzaffarnagar to concerns over population growth. His comments came after a mud house in the district caved in amid heavy rainfall. A 52-year-old man and his four children were killed in the incident, which took place on Sunday. Those who lost their lives have been identified as Islamuddin and four of his children - eight-month-old Zeeshan, two-year-old Ahad, five-year-old Alshifa, and 12-year-old



Rukhsar. Two other children from the same family sustained serious injuries and are undergoing treatment at the hospital. While visiting the survivors at the hospital, Agarwal spoke to the media and said, "The population is increasing. People get permanent houses, and then another new family is formed. Now they have nine children, so the government also has its limitations." The comments triggered a controversy. He, however, said that the government was working towards providing permanent houses to everyone and said that fulfilling this objective was also a leading priority for Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Janakpuri school faces regulator heat

New Delhi. (Agency)
The Delhi government has issued a show cause notice to the management of a private school in Janakpuri following safety violations, illegal branch operations, and financial irregularities. On April 30, a nursery class girl child was allegedly sexually assaulted in the school's pre-primary wing.



The government has directed the Directorate of Education (DoE) to take the strongest possible action against the school's managing trust and its leadership. The school has been given seven days to reply, failing which the proposed severe actions will be initiated immediately. A multi-phase official inquiry conducted by a DoE committees said that there was a complete breakdown of administrative, financial and moral responsibility at the school, besides covering up sexual molestation. When the police visited the pre-primary branch to investigate the crime, all 64 CCTV cameras installed on the premises were found to be non-functional. The school has been illegally operating its nursery and KG classes from a private residential building in Narang Colony without any authorisation.

SC stays HC order permitting Devangana Kalita to inspect unrelieved-upon documents in Delhi riots case

New Delhi. (Agency)
The Supreme Court on Monday stayed a Delhi High Court order allowing Delhi riots accused Devangana Kalita to inspect documents not relied upon in the alleged larger conspiracy case linked to the 2020 violence. A bench of Justices Aravind Kumar and Vipul M Pancholi issued notice to Kalita on a plea filed by the Delhi Police challenging the June 5 high court order. "You will not conclude your arguments even in 10 years, and then you say there is delay in trial," the bench observed orally. Additional Solicitor General SV Raju, appearing for the Delhi Police, submitted that Kalita is not entitled to any document until charges are framed. "They can't ask for any other

document. What is the purpose of inspection at this stage?" Raju asked. Kalita's lawyer referred to a Supreme Court judgment and said the list of documents that are not relied on



must also be furnished prior to framing of the charge. After hearing the parties, the Supreme Court bench issued notice to Kalita and stayed the Delhi High Court order. The matter will now be heard after two weeks. On June 5, the high court had lifted its earlier stay on framing of charges

in the alleged larger conspiracy case related to the 2020 riots and allowed the trial court to pass a final order. The high court had vacated the court's order while dismissing Kalita's plea seeking direction to the police to provide her certain videos and WhatsApp chats in relation to the case. The court, however, allowed a separate petition by Kalita and permitted her to inspect unrelieved-upon documents in the UAPA (Unlawful Activities Prevention Act) case. Kalita had moved high court in 2023, claiming that Delhi Police had commissioned certain persons to record the February 2020 protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act and National Register of Citizens, and the footage should be supplied to her before the trial court proceeds to hear the arguments as it would.

DDA plants over 6L saplings, logs 30% target under drive

New Delhi. (Agency)
The Delhi Development Authority (DDA) has achieved nearly 30 per cent of its target under its Mega Plantation Drive within days of its launch, planting over 6.62 lakh saplings, including more than 37,000 trees and 6.25 lakh shrubs, officials said. The plantation drive is being carried out under the guidance of Lieutenant-Governor Taranjit Singh Sandhu, who has consistently emphasised ecological restoration, environmental sustainability and the expansion of Delhi's green

infrastructure. The progress of the drive is being closely monitored to



ensure effective implementation and the long-term survival of the saplings. The L_G has directed all departments to ensure continuous monitoring so that the planted saplings survive and

contribute to the city's green cover. The plantation campaign began in the first week of July and will continue till mid-September 2026. It focuses on planting native and climate-resilient species to improve biodiversity, strengthen carbon sequestration, enhance microclimatic regulation and increase ecological connectivity across Delhi's green spaces. According to the DDA, the initiative is also expected to improve air quality, support groundwater recharge, create habitats for wildlife and enhance the overall urban environment.

NGT pulls up authorities over illegal dairy farms on Yamuna floodplains

New Delhi. (Agency)
The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has pulled up the authorities concerned over the continued operation of illegal dairy farms on the Yamuna floodplains, observing that its earlier directions have not been fully implemented. A Bench comprising NGT Chairperson Justice Prakash Shrivastava and expert member Afroz Ahmad directed the MCD and the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) to file fresh action taken reports after finding continued violations despite clear directions issued earlier. The order was passed on July 15 while hearing a petition alleging that authorities had failed to implement the Tribunal's April 2024 directions for the removal of illegal dairy farms from the



Yamuna floodplain, including those in Chak Chilla village near Mayur Nature Park. The Tribunal examined a status report submitted by the DPCC following inspections in the protected O-Zone, where no construction is permitted. During inspections below the DND Flyover, the Namu Bharat RRTS corridor and near New Friends Colony, officials found scattered encroachments, temporary cattle sheds, fodder, heaps of cattle dung and 50-60 bovine animals grazing in open grasslands. "The reply of the DPCC reveals that the order of the Tribunal has not been complied with," the Bench observed. During the hearing, the Delhi Development Authority submitted that demolition drives had been carried out repeatedly but encroachers resumed keeping cattle at the same locations or beneath the flyover. The DDA said the MCD and the Animal Husbandry Department were responsible for impounding the cattle, but no action had been taken despite the authorities being informed.

Yamuna floodplains shrank by a third in a century, study links it to higher flood risk

New Delhi. (Agency)
Yamuna's shrinking floodplains and increasing flood vulnerability in Delhi are the result of changes that have unfolded over more than two centuries, according to a study published in April this year in the Journal of the Geological Society of India by researchers from the University of Delhi (DU) and the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), Bhopal. Reconstructing the river's evolution using historical maps and satellite imagery, the study noted that barrages, embankments, and rapid urbanisation have altered the Yamuna's natural seasonal flow and

its ability to accommodate high flows during heavy rainfall. The study has estimated that rapid urbanisation has narrowed the river's channel by about 68%, reduced its long-term channel-maintaining, or formative discharge by nearly 89%, and disconnected around one-third of its floodplains. Formative discharge is crucial, as it provides the flow a river needs to naturally shape its channel, remove accumulated sediment, and maintain its capacity to safely accommodate heavy rains. "These changes in river width, discharge, and land use... have reduced the natural capacity of the river to adjust to extreme events,"

the authors wrote.

How the study was carried out

The study, authored by researchers Tanya, Sampat Kumar Tandon,



Kumar Gaurav, and Vimal Singh, analysed a 50-km stretch of the Yamuna flowing through Delhi using historical maps dating back to 1799, Survey of India records, and satellite imagery up to 2024. By tracing changes in the river's width

over time, the researchers reconstructed its hydrogeomorphic evolution, meaning how evolving landforms dictate water flow, and estimated changes in its formative discharge. In doing so, they studied the long-term average flow that shapes a river channel over decades. **Key findings** The construction of the Tajewala, Wazirabad, and Okhla barrages has been a key driver of the Yamuna's altered flow regime, according to the study. It noted that nearly 90% of the Yamuna's flow is diverted at the Hathnikund Barrage upstream, leaving the Delhi stretch of the river with very little freshwater during the lean season.

Oil hits one-month high as West Asia war keeps investors on edge

New Delhi. (Agency)

Brent crude hit on Monday its highest price since June due to renewed fighting between the United States and Iran, while Asian equities were mixed as investors weighed the fallout of a prolonged West Asia war.Crude has surged over the past week as Washington and Tehran traded fire, raising fears of a sustained disruption in the Strait of Hormuz, which carries around a fifth of the world's seaborne oil.Both Brent crude and US benchmark West Texas Intermediate extended their gains after climbing more than four percent at the end of last week. Brent rose above \$91 a barrel, its highest price since June 11. The latest moves came afer another weekend of escalating fighting, with the United States carrying out fresh strikes on Iranian targets and Tehran responding with attacks on regional military assets in the Gulf.The conflicting signals have left investors struggling to gauge the outlook for markets.Higher crude prices have revived concerns that inflation could remain elevated and complicate the path to lower interest rates, but some analysts argue the broader economic backdrop is becoming more supportive."Markets are once again being forced to trade two seemingly contradictory stories on the same screen," said .

Rupee falls 12 paise to 96.42 against US dollar in early trade

MUMBAI. (Agency)

The rupee weakened 12 paise to 96.42 against the US dollar in early trade on Monday due to a surge in crude oil prices and strong demand for the American currency amid the worsening West Asia crisis.Foreign capital outflows from domestic equity markets also weighed on the Indian currency, forex traders said. At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened lower at 96.53 against the previous close of 96.30 to dollar. The local unit pared some losses to trade at 96.42 later, down 12 paise from its previous close.On Friday, the rupee gained 12 paise to settle at 96.30 against the US dollar, supported by positive domestic market sentiment and a decline in US Treasury yields. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading marginally down by 0.05 per cent at 100.54.Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading 2.45 per cent higher at USD 90.26 per barrel in futures trade, as the US and Iran have inched closer to all-out war, as last month's interim deal meant to permanently end the fighting has crumbled and shipping traffic in the Strait of Hormu has largely stalled. The United States conducted a new round of airstrikes early Monday targeting Iran after announcing the death of another American service member, and Iran fired missiles towards Jordan that risked widening the conflict into neighbouring Israel..

DoPT issues revised order on Children Education Allowance; here's what's new on hostel subsidy

New Delhi. (Agency)

The Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) has issued a revised order on the Children Education Allowance (CEA) and Hostel Subsidy for central government employees. The amount of both the allowances remains the same but the new order clarifies how hostel expenses will be reimbursed. Under the revised rules, hostel subsidy will be reimbursed at Rs 8,437.50 per month per child or the actual expenditure incurred on boarding and lodging, whichever is lower. This replaces the wording used in the April 2024 order which had said that the hostel subsidy would be paid as a fixed amount irrespective of actual expenses.The corrigendum issued through an Office Memorandum dated June 30, 2026, revises a provision in DoPT's earlier order dated April 25, 2024. It is regarding the revision of rates of children education allowance and hostel subsidy consequent upon enhancement of Dearness Allowance (DA) to 50 percent. What has DoPT clarified regarding reimbursement rules? According to the corrigendum, "The amount for reimbursement of Children Education Allowance shall be 2,812.50 per month (fixed) per child, irrespective of actual expenses incurred by the Govt employee. The reimbursement of Hostel Subsidy per child shall be 8,437.50 per month or the actual expenditure incurred on boarding and lodging, whichever is lower."

Why has Apple increased music subscription prices in India?

Apple Music users in India will now have to pay more for their subscriptions. Why has the company decided to increase prices now?

CHENNAI. (Agency)

Apple has increased the prices of its Apple Music and Apple One subscription plans in India for both new and existing subscribers. The revised rates are already in effect across Apple's platforms and cover almost all subscription options, including Individual, Student and Family plans.The move comes less than two years after the company last revised Apple Music prices. It also

follows recent price increases for some of Apple's hardware products. **WHY HAS APPLE INCREASED SUBSCRIPTION PRICES?** Apple has attributed the latest price hike to rising music licencing costs. Music streaming companies pay licencing fees to record labels, publishers and artists to offer songs on their platforms. According to Apple, these costs have gone up, leading the company to increase subscription charges.Apart from the higher prices, Apple has not introduced any new features or additional benefits for subscribers. **HOW MUCH HAVE APPLE MUSIC PLANS BECOME COSTLIER?** The Apple Music Individual plan now costs Rs 139 per month, compared with Rs 119 earlier.The Student plan has been increased from Rs 59 to Rs 69 per month.

The biggest increase is for the Family plan, which now costs Rs 229 per month, up from Rs 179. The plan allows up to six family members to use



Apple Music through Apple's Family Sharing feature, with each user getting their own music library, playlists and recommendations. **APPLE ONE PLANS ALSO SEE A PRICE REVISION** Apple has also increased the prices of its Apple One bundles, which combine several Apple services under a single

subscription.The Individual plan now costs Rs 195 per month, up from Rs 175. The Family plan has been raised from Rs 365 to Rs 445 per month. The Premier plan has seen the highest increase in rupee terms. It now costs Rs 595 per month, compared with Rs 499 earlier.Apple One includes services such as Apple Music, Apple TV+, Apple Arcade and iCloud. Users can also choose different storage options based on their requirements, which affects the final subscription cost. **PRICE HIKES SEEN IN OTHER COUNTRIES TOO** India is not the only market where Apple has increased subscription prices. Similar price revisions have also been reported in the UK, Europe and the US.However, the company has not issued an official statement on the latest price changes in these markets.

EPFO pension stopped Submit your Digital Life Certificate from home in 6 easy steps

Has your EPFO pension stopped unexpectedly? One reason could be that your Digital Life Certificate (Jeevan Pramaan) has not been submitted. Here's how to complete the process from home in six easy steps.

New Delhi. (Agency)

If an EPFO pension has stopped coming into your bank account, one possible reason could be that the Digital Life Certificate (DLC), also known as Jeevan Pramaan, has not been submitted. The good news is that pensioners no longer need to visit an office to complete the process. They can now submit the certificate from home or even book a free doorstep service.

EPFO URGES PENSIONERS TO SUBMIT JEEVAN PRAMAAN ON TIME

In a post on X, EPFO said, "Need to submit your Jeevan Pramaan? It's now easier than ever! Simply schedule a doorstep Jeevan Pramaan with a phone call and complete process from comfort of your home."In a video shared by the organisation, Alok Yadav, Regional

PF Commissioner at EPFO, explained that every EPFO pensioner must submit a Digital Life Certificate every year to



continue receiving pension without interruption.The certificate acts as proof that the pensioner is alive. Once submitted, it remains valid for one year from the date of submission.

HOW TO CHECK WHETHER YOUR DLC IS STILL VALID

Pensioners can check the validity of their Digital Life Certificate by visiting the Pensioner Portal on the

EPFO website. This helps them know when the next certificate needs to be submitted. **HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR DIGITAL LIFE CERTIFICATE FROM HOME** EPFO has explained that pensioners can complete the process using a smartphone.First, download the UMANG app and the Aadhaar Face RD app.Open the UMANG app and go to the Jeevan Pramaan Certificate section. Select Generate Life Certificate and choose the Face Authentication option.Enter your Aadhaar number and mobile number, then verify the OTP received on your phone.Next, fill in your PPO number, sanctioning authority, bank name and account number. Select the correct options for Re-employed and Remarried, tick the checkbox and allow permission for the Aadhaar Face RD app to access your camera.

SBI Funds Management IPO lists tomorrow with 18% GMP: Is it a long-term buy?

Kolkata. (Agency)

SBI Funds Management is set to make its stock market debut on July 21, and the IPO is already generating strong interest in the grey market. After receiving an overwhelming response during the subscription period, the company's shares are now trading at a healthy grey market premium (GMP), indicating a positive listing.The latest GMP stands at Rs 101 per share. Based on the IPO's upper price band of Rs 574, the estimated listing price is around Rs 675,

suggesting a potential gain of 17.6% over the issue price.IPO SUBSCRIBED OVER 41 TIMES The Rs 9,813-crore IPO was open for subscription from July 14 to July 16 and was subscribed 41.66 times overall.According to SBI Funds Management, the issue received bids for 5,18,95,41,032 equity shares against 12,45,63,536 shares on offer.Institutional investors led the demand. The Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIB) category was subscribed 140.11 times, while the Non-Institutional Investor (NII) portion was subscribed 22.51 times.

The Retail Individual Investor (RII) category was subscribed 3.60 times. The Employee Reserved category saw a subscription of 4.65 times, while the Shareholder Reservation portion was subscribed 9.52 times. Overall demnd for the IPO touched nearly Rs 2.98 lakh crore, making it India's fifth-largest IPO by total bid value. **WHY ARE ANALYSTS POSITIVE?** Geojit Investments believes SBI Funds Management is well placed to benefit from the long-term growth of India's mutual fund industry.

Why the government is cracking down on restaurant service charges now

The government has stepped up action against restaurants that add service charges by default. The move signals stricter enforcement after court backing and consumer complaints.

Kolkata. (Agency)

The government has stepped up its action against restaurants that continue to levy mandatory service charges, signalling that establishments flouting consumer protection rules could face stricter scrutiny.Consumer Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi on Monday said restaurants cannot force customers to pay a service charge. His remarks came as the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) expanded its crackdown after receiving

complaints that several restaurants were automatically adding service charges to customers' bills.The CCPA has initiated suo motu action against 41 restaurants across the country based on complaints received through the National Consumer Helpline. For many diners, however, the obvious question is: Wasn't service charge always allowed?The answer is yes, but only if it is voluntary. The confusion exists because service charges have appeared on restaurant bills for years, leading many customers to believe they are compulsory. In reality, the government has consistently maintained that restaurants cannot force customers to pay them.The issue first came to the fore in July 2022, when the CCPA issued guidelines stating that restaurants cannot automatically add a service charge to food bills. According

to the regulator, customers are legally required to pay only for the food they order, applicable taxes and any



charges authorised by law. A mandatory service charge, it said, amounts to an unfair trade practice under the Consumer Protection Act.Restaurant associations challenged these guidelines in the Delhi High Court, arguing that service charges were part of their business model and that customers were

informed about them through menus and notices displayed at their outlets. However, in March 2025, the Delhi High Court upheld the CCPA's guidelines, clearing the way for stricter enforcement. With the legal uncertainty removed, the government has now begun acting more aggressively against restaurants that continue to add service charges by default.The latest action against 41 restaurants reflects that shift. According to the CCPA, several establishments were automatically adding service charges to bills without customers' consent or refusing to remove them when requested.The government has repeatedly clarified that it is not against tipping. Customers are free to leave a tip or voluntarily pay a service charge if they are happy with the service they receive.

Machinery malfunction kills labourer at pvt plant in Ennore; second industrial accident in one week

CHENNAI.(Agency)

A 45-year-old contract worker died after a machine malfunctioned at a private fertiliser company in Ennore on Saturday evening. The deceased was identified as G Dharanitharan of Tiruvallur, who had been working at the company for the past one-and-a-half-year.

According to the Ennore police, Dharanitharan was working on the inside of the machinery when it malfunctioned, causing its conveyor belt to move abruptly. “He sustained severe spinal injuries and collapsed,” a police officer said. Fellow workers rushed him to Government Stanley Hospital where he was declared dead. The police recovered the body and sent it for autopsy. “Based on a complaint, we have registered a case and a probe is under way to ascertain whether any safety lapses led to the accident. The contractor is being questioned,” the police officer added.

Meanwhile, the company is in talks with the victim's family with regard to compensation. Dharanitharan is survived by his wife, a daughter and a son, the police said. This is the second industrial accident this week within Chennai and its outskirts. On Tuesday, a 24-year-old worker from Bihar died and seven others were injured after a boiler exploded at a scrap recycling unit in the SIPCOT Industrial Estate located in Gummidipoondi in Tiruvallur.

MTC bus overturns in Sholinganallur; driver, four passengers injured

CHENNAI.(Agency)

A Metropolitan Transport Corporation (MTC) bus (route 99) bound for Tambaram from Adyar veered off the road and toppled in a marshland in Sholinganallur on Sunday afternoon, leaving five people, including the driver, with minor injuries.

According to Pallikaranai Traffic Investigation Wing, the accident occurred around 2 pm on Perumbakkam High Road, where one carriageway has been converted into a two-way stretch due to ongoing roadworks. Police said the driver swerved left to avoid an incoming lorry and lost control of the vehicle.

The bus, carrying 20 passengers, plunged nearly five feet off the road into the marshland and fell on its side. On information, the fire and rescue services personnel rushed to the spot and rescued those trapped inside.

While three of the injured are undergoing treatment at a private hospital, the driver and another passenger have been admitted to the Tambaram Government Hospital. Police said none of the injuries are life-threatening. The bus was later retrieved using cranes, while traffic on the stretch remained disrupted for over an hour.

Shamshabad police book protesters for attack during bullet train land survey

HYDERABAD.(Agency)

The Shamshabad police registered a case against several individuals for allegedly attacking police personnel and other government officials during a protest against the proposed takeover of around 650 acres of land for a bullet train project.

According to the complaint lodged by sub-inspector P Vanaja, police were deployed on July 18 to provide security to Revenue and HYDRAA officials carrying out fencing work on government land in survey Nos 28 and 62 at Bahadurguda village in Shamshabad mandal.

Police said a group of protesters, who had erected a tent at Lakshmi Thanda, allegedly pelted stones and chairs at officials, threw chilli powder into the eyes of police personnel and obstructed them from discharging their duties.

The complaint further alleged that while SI Vanaja was informing other personnel about the incident through her government-issued Very High Frequency (VHF) communication set, some protesters forcibly snatched it from her.

During the inquiry, police identified some of the accused as Jatavath Ravinder, Jatavath Kamli, Jatavath Mani, Pamenayayathri, Mudavath Neelamma, Elugani Jyothi and Devender.

‘Unable to achieve goal’, Kanpur B.Tech gold medallist dies by suicide; father says was addicted to online games

He graduated in electrical engineering from a college and also completed an apprenticeship at a private firm, says family

Mumbai.(Agency)

A 24-year-old B.Tech gold medallist preparing for competitive examinations died allegedly by suicide after hanging himself at his residence in Kanpur, police said. The victim, Anand Kumar, was alone at home when the incident occurred, it is learnt.

Police said they recovered a purported suicide note from the room in which Anand, addressing his parents, wrote that despite repeated efforts he had been unable to achieve his goal and therefore decided to end his life. The note also stated that no one should be held responsible for his death.

Police added that Anand had been distressed over his inability to secure a government job, particularly as his elder brother and sister were both employed in government

service. Kanpur Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Deependra Nath Chaudhary said the body was handed over to the family after post-mortem.



Originally from Buxar district in Bihar, Anand had moved to Kanpur and was living in Govind Nagar area for the last several years. “The family told us that Anand had been preparing for government recruitment examinations but was unable to clear them.

His elder brother Amit Kumar and sister Priya are government school teachers in Bihar,” said Sub-Inspector Shiva Singh of Govind Nagar police station. The purported suicide note recovered from the house was addressed to the victim's parents, the S-I said.

Speaking to The Indian Express, Anand's father Raj Kumar Gupta, a retired employee, said that although his son had been preparing for competitive examinations, he did not believe his failure in securing a government job was the reason behind the suicide. “Anand was also addicted to online games,”

Kumar claimed, without elaborating further. He said Anand graduated in electrical engineering from a college and around two years ago was awarded a gold medal by the Uttar Pradesh Governor after securing third rank among universities across the state.

Police keep eagle eye on rowdy sheeters in Bengaluru

BENGALURU.(Agency)

To curb the activities of rowdy elements, the Bengaluru City Police have been conducting surprise raids and invoking stringent laws such as the Karnataka Control of Organised Crimes Act, Goonda Act and externment proceedings against them.

The police are also closely monitoring 2,381 active rowdy sheeters out of the 6,815 rowdy sheeters listed across the city as part of an intensified drive to curb organised crime and anti-social activities. In the last six months, the police opened 172 new rowdy sheets. According to data from the police, the city has 11 police divisions, with the East Division having the highest number of active rowdy sheeters at 518, followed by Southwest Division with 355 and West Division with 275.

Speaking to , City Police Commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh said the police are conducting simultaneous surprise visits to the houses of rowdy sheeters in two or three divisions at a time. This strategy is aimed at

preventing rowdy sheeters from fleeing to other areas after being alerted about police checks. During the inspections, the police verify the current occupation of rowdy sheeters, the vehicles they use and other relevant details. The Central Crime Branch also keeps a close watch on rowdy sheeters



and shares intelligence with the respective police divisions.

The commissioner added that the police have initiated Preventive Action Register proceedings against rowdy sheeters by binding them with bonds to ensure good behaviour. Legal action has also been initiated against those who violated the bond conditions, he said.

CCB foils six gang rivalries

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime-1) Srihari Babu H L said CCB sleuths are actively surveilling rowdy sheeters across the city. Those found indulging in anti-social activities are reported to the respective police divisions, which initiate action under stringent laws, including the Goonda Act, KCOCA Act and externment.

He added that the police are also closely monitoring budding rowdy sheeters, with many being brought under the Preventive Action Register. This year, 78 rowdy sheeters violated the conditions of their bonds. Of them, the bond amount has been forfeited in the case of 30 persons, while 20 were remanded to judicial custody for failing to comply with the bond conditions.

A senior CCB officer said the police are also monitoring the financial transactions and assets of rowdy sheeters to identify illegal sources of income. Based on intelligence inputs and continuous surveillance, the police have prevented six to eight gang rivalries from escalating this year.

Fugitive of 27 years wanted for killing 2 cops cut off all contact with Agra family, assumed new identity

Lucknow.(Agency)

He evaded arrest for 27 years by assuming a new identity in Madhya Pradesh, cutting off all contact with his Agra-based family who eventually presumed him to be dead.

The decades-long hunt for Bhura, now 48, wanted for killing two police constables in 1999, ended on Saturday with his arrest from Bhopal district, police said. Acting on a tip-off, a police team travelled to Bhopal last week and placed the suspect, who had assumed the name Jamil, under surveillance for several days, officials said.

He lived along with his wife and son, they added. “After an extensive search to track him down, we established his real identity. During interrogation, he admitted he is Bhura,” said Aditya, Deputy

Commissioner of Police (DCP), Agra. The DCP said police would seek his remand for further questioning, as they are still trying to recover one of the three rifles allegedly looted during an attack on police personnel in 1999.



Two of the firearms were recovered during the course of the investigation, he added. Bhura never contacted his family nor visited them during this period, police added.

Though Bhura initially denied that he was the fugitive the police were searching for, he caved in after prolonged interrogation, the officials said.

According to police, Bhura told during questioning that he had been a member of the Ramesh Kushwaha gang. In 1999, he and four other gang members, including Ramesh Kushwaha and Dhadhu, travelled to Agra in a jeep to carry out robberies and dacoities, they added.

The gang spotted three police personnel with service rifles warming themselves around a fire near Nagla Kamal crossing, the officials said, adding the criminals decided to snatch the firearms.

Ammonia gas leak reported at Kasimedu ice factory



CHENNAI.(Agency)

A minor ammonia gas leak was reported at an ice factory in Kasimedu on Sunday evening, causing eye irritation to people in the vicinity. No injury was reported, police said. According to the Kasimedu police, the incident occurred around 7 pm. Police and personnel from the Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services (TNFRS) rushed to the spot after receiving information.

A preliminary inquiry revealed that a malfunction in the factory caused liquid ammonia to leak from one of the machines. A worker who noticed the leak allegedly attempted to dispose of the liquid by emptying it into a sewage drain, which resulted in the release of ammonia gas. Police said an investigation is underway to determine the cause of the machinery malfunction that led to the ammonia leak.

50 spotted deer translocated from Sasan Gir to Mandvi forest to increase prey base, reduce human-wildlife conflict

Ahmedabad.(Agency)

Aimed at mitigating incidents of human-wildlife conflict, the Gujarat Forest department has translocated 50 spotted deer from the Sasan Gir Wildlife Division to the Mandvi Forest Range in Surat district. The initiative is intended to strengthen the natural prey base for carnivores, enhance biodiversity, and support long-term ecological balance in South Gujarat, an official release said on Sunday.

“The translocation was carried out in three phases between May and June this year. A total of 21 spotted deer were released on May 23, followed by 16 on June 18 and another 13 on June 24, taking the total number to 50,” the release said.

Conservator of Forests (Surat Circle) Puneet Nayyar said that forest officials had carried out detailed habitat assessments to identify sites capable of sustaining the released animals.

“To ensure year-round water availability, the department has developed 10 permanent water points across the release area, providing reliable drinking water for the deer,” Nayyar said.

“The Forest Department has also established an intensive post-release monitoring programme. Dedicated forest guards and trained trackers are conducting continuous field monitoring, while strategically placed camera traps are being used to assess the deer's movements, habitat use, health,

and survival in the wild,” the release said.

Quoting Forest and Environment Minister Arjun Modhwadia, the release stated, “...the Gujarat Forest Department



is implementing a range of science-based conservation measures to reduce human-wildlife conflict. Strengthening the

natural prey base in forest habitats is a key component of this strategy. The translocation, carried out under the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection)

Act, 1972, is part of the state's long-term efforts to restore ecological balance by increasing herbivore populations in suitable forest landscapes.”

Minister of State for Forest and Environment Pravin Mali said, “A healthy prey base enables predators to meet their food requirements within forest habitats, reducing the likelihood of their movement into human-dominated areas in search of prey. This, in turn, can help lower the incidence of human-wildlife conflict.”

NEWS BOX

Messy, not Messi: 0 shots, 0 spark as Argentina great goes missing in final

New Delhi. (Agency)

The promise of every Lionel Messi match is wonderfully uncomplicated. Give him the ball often enough and, sooner or later, he would conjure some magic that nobody could have dreamt of in their wildest of imaginations. Spain did not spend the World Cup final in New York worrying about that possibility. They simply played their own game. By the end of the regulation 90 minutes, Messi had become less a conductor than a commuter, forever travelling between Argentina's midfield and attack in search of the pocket of space that had brought him eight goals, four assists and countless defining moments over the previous month. More often than not, by the time he turned to face goal, Spain already had their shape back and



another passing option had disappeared. That, perhaps, was the most impressive part of Spain's display. They were never consumed by the idea of stopping Messi. Instead, they trusted their structure, monopolised possession and forced Argentina to play the game on their terms. Messi still found the ball, but rarely in the places where who could pull off maybe another winner against England or Egypt. For one of the few times in his career, he looked like a player reacting to the game rather than controlling it.

HOW SPAIN STOPPED MESSI

You rarely judge Messi's influence by numbers alone, but this was one of those evenings when they painted an accurate picture.

Lionel Scaloni unlikely to continue as Argentina coach after World Cup heartbreak

New Delhi. (Agency)

An emotional Lionel Scaloni hinted that he may step aside from the Argentina job following the FIFA World Cup final loss to Spain on Sunday, July 19. Scaloni's side were beaten 0-1 in extra time as their bid to win a second consecutive World Cup ended in despair. Scaloni was appointed as the manager of Albiceleste in 2018 and guided them to two Copa America titles and a World Cup win in 2022. The former right-back was an emotional mess right after the loss, failing to complete his press conference. However, he spoke with the reporters later on. Scaloni was asked about his future and said that he would continue until the end of the year



and then talk to the federation president on which step to take next. While Scaloni admitted that it was his dream job, he also said that it will be fair for someone else to take over and continue the work and left the decision in the hands of the federation. No, no. I'll stay until December, and after that I'll most likely step aside. I'll continue until then, and afterward I'll speak with the federation president. The idea is to take a break and slow down a bit. That's the plan."

"This is an incredible place, a dream. I hope more people get the chance to experience it because any Argentine would love to be here. It has been a pleasure to be here, an honour beyond anything I ever imagined in my wildest dreams." "No, I hadn't really thought about it before."

FIFA World Cup Final: Luis de la Fuente takes Spain back to promised land

Luis de la Fuente completed one of international football's greatest managerial runs as Spain beat Argentina to win the FIFA World Cup 2026. The veteran coach hailed the unity and values of the Spanish squad that transformed a talented generation into world champions.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Spain have returned to the promised land. Sixteen years after Andres Iniesta's famous strike against the Netherlands delivered their first FIFA World Cup title, La Roja are champions once again. They dethroned defending champions Argentina 1-0 after extra time at the MetLife Stadium, capping a tournament that reaffirmed Spain's place at the summit of world football. At the centre of

it all stood Luis de la Fuente. At 65, the oldest coach to win the FIFA World Cup, De la Fuente has completed one of the greatest managerial runs in international football. Since taking charge of Spain, he has led the country to the UEFA Nations League, Euro 2024 and now the FIFA World Cup, with Spain also extending their unbeaten run to 38 matches, the longest ever by a European or South American national team. But for De la Fuente, Sunday's triumph was about much more than tactics or trophies. "In the past people were surprised about footballers being talented and skilled and being good people," De la Fuente said after the match. "We are the most united team and that is thanks to having people with solidarity and values."

Spain's football has long been admired for its elegant, possession-based style,



but this generation has added another dimension to it. The passing remains crisp, the movement relentless, but beneath it lies a team built on trust and togetherness. Long before these players became European and world champions, De la Fuente was working with many of them in Spain's youth setup. He guided a young generation featuring players who would go on to become senior internationals through the ranks, winning the UEFA Under-19 European

Championship in 2015 and helping shape the identity of the side that now rules world football. Players such as Unai Simon, Rodri and Mikel Merino grew under his watch before becoming the backbone of this Spain team. "I'm so proud of this generation of footballers who have grown up with this philosophy, remained true to it, made it even better, and set an example as a team and a family. They're excellent, world-class footballers with exceptional talent," De la Fuente said. "I'm very moved. Looking back and thinking about them, we've won everything, absolutely everything, with this generation of players." Spain's latest triumph came in fitting fashion. They dominated possession against Argentina, limiting Lionel Messi's influence throughout the contest before substitute Ferran Torres struck the winner in the 106th minute.

No noise, no fun: Rohit Sharma puts retirement rumours to bed in explosive interview

New Delhi. (Agency)

Former captain Rohit Sharma has emphatically dismissed persistent rumours surrounding his international future, delivering a defiant message to his critics following his historic century at Lord's on Sunday. Speaking after becoming the first Indian to hit an ODI hundred at the Home of Cricket, the veteran batsman made it clear that retirement is nowhere on his horizon. Speculation regarding Rohit Sharma's future in the ODI format had reached a fever pitch ahead of India's third ODI against England. Facing intense media scrutiny and whispers that the match at Lord's would be his final appearance in the blue jersey, Rohit responded in the most definitive manner possible: with his bat. Speaking to the BCCI in a

powerful post-match interview, Rohit drew a sharp line between the external chatter and his internal focus. "My job is with the bat. Come and play, represent



my country. That's what I have been told to do since I made my debut. That's what I am going to do," Sharma stated flatly. "Since I made my debut, the noise was there. Till the time, I am going to be there, the noise will be there. Doesn't matter to me. What matters is what I do on the field. I want to try and contribute

to the success of the team. That's all my focus is." Rather than being weighed down by the intense public discourse, the veteran opener revealed that he thrives on the pressure that comes with representing India on the global stage. "If there is no noise, there is no fun," Sharma added with characteristic candour. "My job is inside. Their job is outside. That's how I look at it."

A LORD'S SPECIAL

This philosophical shrug at the public pressure followed a masterclass with the bat. Chasing a daunting target of 388 set by a formidable England line-up, Rohit defied his detractors by smashing a magnificent 138 off just 110 deliveries. The innings, studded with 17 boundaries and five towering sixes, made him the first Indian batter to score an ODI century at the historic Lord's Cricket Ground.

Lamine hug, paparazzi poses: How Keyne Yamal celebrated Spain's World Cup win

New Delhi. (Agency)

Keyne Yamal was the heartthrob of the FIFA World Cup 2026 and he got to celebrate Spain's win like a champion, which included many viral-worthy moments. Keyne became Spain's lucky mascot and won over the fans with his infectious energy and cute moments. Keyne's most memorable moment came during Spain's Round of 32 clash against Austria, when he lit up the stadium after appearing on the giant screen enthusiastically shouting "Vamos!" from among the sea of La Roja supporters. Throughout the tournament, the youngster was always up for some playful antics whenever the cameras found him. Whether it was



waving to the crowd or pulling hilarious expressions, Keyne embraced the spotlight. In the quarterfinals, he even cheekily stuck his tongue out at the broadcast cameras, drawing a laugh from his older brother, Lamine Yamal. On Sunday, after Spain's 1-0 win over Argentina in the World Cup final, he was ready to celebrate and started

things off with a cute reunion with his elder brother. This was followed by some poses for the paparazzi. Keyne engaged in some football as well on the field, showing that there could be a new talent coming up from the Yamal household. The three-year-old's fun didn't end there as he found time to interact with a police officer on the field, who was sweet enough to let Keyne wear his officer's cap. LAMINE HAPPY WITH KEYNE'S STARDOM Lamine has been happy to see his younger brother get all the adoration from the fans all around the globe. Both men are often captured dancing for videos and goofing around and Spanish star said that his little brother is more like a son to him.



Argentine maestro being well ahead of his Portuguese counterpart. There has never been a bigger brand in football than Cristiano Ronaldo. Take it or leave it. He is probably the biggest brand FIFA has ever enjoyed. For the last 10 years, FIFA has sold him. Leagues have marketed themselves through him as well. "Now, if you look at Lionel Messi... I know I'm being a bit blunt here. But Messi is the biggest... yes, he's on another level. Ronaldo is nowhere close to Messi in terms of football. Just watch Messi's gravitational pull on the pitch. He gets knocked down, gets back up, and keeps going. Ronaldo is incredible too, look at the work he has done. But again, Messi is different," said Akhtar.

Marc Cucurella promised to tattoo Luis de la Fuente's face if Spain won the World Cup, and now the coach expects him to follow through. Spain defeated Argentina 1-0 in the World Cup final on Sunday, July 19

New Delhi. (Agency)

Marc Cucurella made a promise before the FIFA World Cup final between Argentina and Spain took place on Sunday, July 19. The Spanish defender is known to make such vows after he coloured his hair red after La Roja won

the Euros in 2024. But this time, he went a step further. Cucurella boldly claimed that if Spain won the World Cup final, he would get a tattoo of manager Luis de la Fuente on his body. The Spanish defender wanted to get it to thank his boss for the work he had done with the team and even revealed where he was planning to get it. "I'm thinking about getting a tattoo if we win the World Cup. It will be the face of Luis de la Fuente, for everything he has done for us. It would be something truly wonderful. Now that the match is done and Spain have their second World title, De La Fuente isn't ready to let Cucurella go off the hook. Speaking after the win, De la Fuente said that the defender made a mistake in making that promise. The 65-year-old joked that he

wasn't that ugly and he will have to stick to his word. "I am too old for tattoos but my players are men of their word and I



know they will stick to their word," De la Fuente told at the press conference, as quoted by Reuters. "They made a mistake and they will stick to it. I am not that

ugly." DE LA FUENTE PROUD OF SPAIN De La Fuente came in and, instead of taking Spain away from tiki-taka, helped them to evolve the philosophy and make it better. The Spanish tactician said that he was proud of his players for staying true to their mantra and setting an example as a team and a family. "I'm so proud of this generation of footballers who have grown up with this philosophy, remained true to it, made it even better, and set an example as a team and a family – they're excellent, world-class footballers with exceptional talent," De la Fuente said. "I'm very moved. Looking back and thinking about them, we've won everything, absolutely everything, with this generation of players."

Kareena Kapoor

**Calls Priyanka Chopra 'Extraordinary',
Wishes Aitraaz Co-Star On Her 44th Birthday**

Bollywood star Kareena Kapoor Khan has penned a heartfelt birthday wish for professional contemporary and food friend Priyanka Chopra Jonas on the actress' 44th birthday on July 18. The actress, calling the global icon "extraordinary", took to her social media account and shared a monochrome throwback picture featuring herself and Priyanka from an episode of filmmaker Karan Johar's popular celebrity chat show 'Koffee with Karan'. Alongside the picture, she wrote, "Happy birthday to the extraordinary PC.. Sky will always be the limit for you... Have the best day @priyankachopra."

The picture is from Season 6 of Koffee with Karan, where Kareena and Priyanka appeared together in 2018. The episode, back then, had grabbed headlines as the two actresses put years of reported rivalry behind them and were seen engaging in laughter and displaying their renewed friendship.

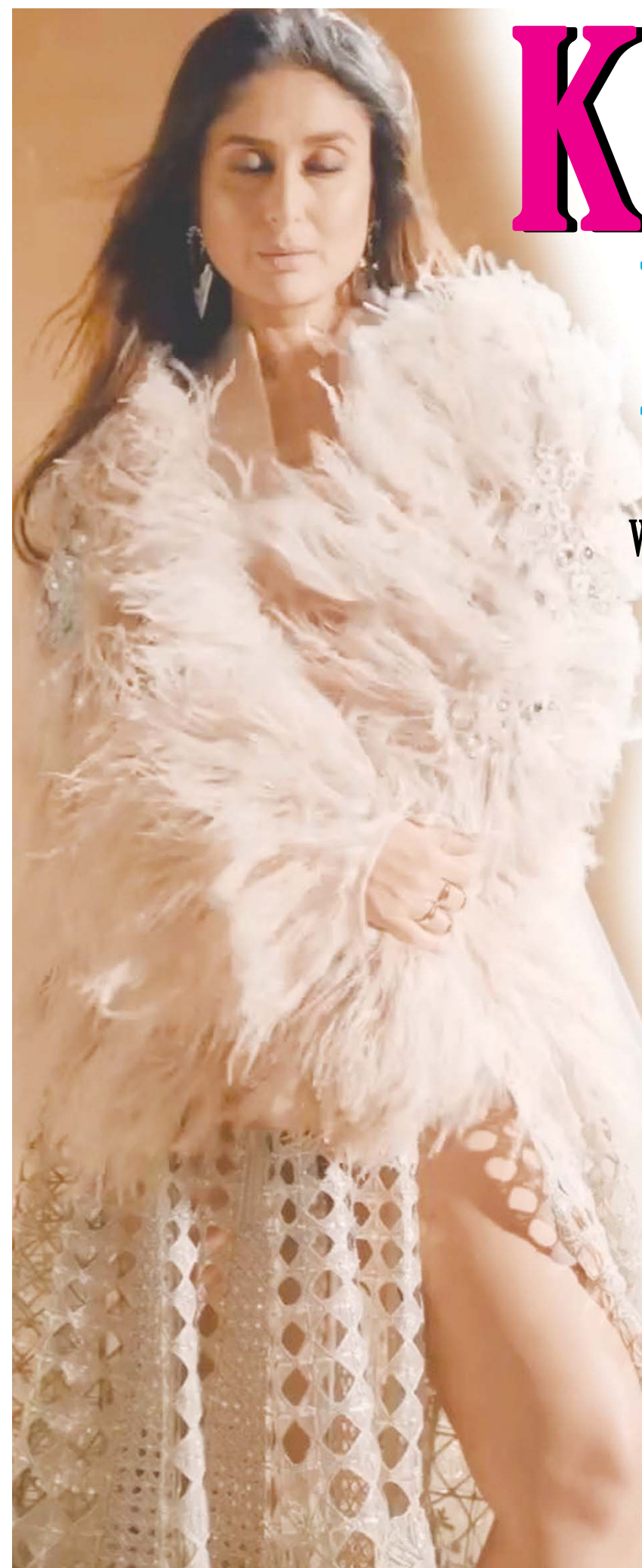
For the uninitiated, Kareena and Priyanka's equation had once been the subject of intense media attention.

During an appearance on Koffee with Karan during the show's initial seasons, Kareena had taken a dig at Priyanka's accent, asking, "Where did she get that accent from?"

Priyanka, in another episode, later responded with equal wit, saying, "The same place her boyfriend gets it from," referring to Kareena's then-boyfriend Saif Ali Khan, who had studied in the UK.

Over the years, both actresses maintained that there is no bad blood between them. The two actresses shared screen space in Abbas-Mustan's 2004 thriller Aitraaz, which also starred Akshay Kumar.

Priyanka earned a great response and acclaim for her negative role as Sonia Roy. Kareena played Priya Malhotra, Raj, aka Akshay Kumar's supportive wife.



Janhvi Kapoor

**Moves On After Peddi Row, Signs
Next Film With Pagglait Director**

Janhvi Kapoor is on a roll. A month after Peddi row, the actress has signed her next big film with Pagglait director Umesh Bist. This will be their first collaboration ever. Meanwhile, Janhvi has still not reacted to the controversy regarding Peddi where a section



of netizens bashed the portrayal of her character, Achiyamma, accusing the makers of objectifying her.

According to Variety India, Janhvi Kapoor's project is untitled as of now. It will be backed by Ekta Kapoor's Balaji Motion Pictures and Guneet Monga's Sikhya Entertainment. The cast and crew will start shooting around October-November this year. There is no additional information yet regarding the

storyline, genre and cast.

On the other hand, Umesh Bist will also be busy directing Pagglait 2 alternatively. It is the sequel to the 2021 Netflix film and Sanya Malhotra is expected to reprise her lead role as Sandhya. The second part will carry the story forward. Meanwhile, Janhvi Kapoor's role in Peddi had sparked a major debate over the objectification of women in commercial cinema. Many viewers criticised the film's camera angles, close-up shots and romantic scenes, saying they reduced her character to a visual object rather than giving her a meaningful role. While some blamed Janhvi, others argued that actors should not be held responsible for a filmmaker's creative choices.

Following the backlash, director Buchi Babu Sana apologised and removed the controversial scenes from the film. The issue also prompted reactions from celebrities including Jaya Bachchan, Kareena Kapoor Khan, Nithya Menen, Jagapathi Babu and Dimple Hayathi, with many calling for better-written female characters and a change in how women are portrayed in mainstream cinema.



Akshay Kumar Congratulates Aanand L Rai After National Award Win For Statue Of Unity: Ekta Ka Prateek



It was a win for many Bollywood personalities on July 18, 2026, as the National Awards were announced. Director Aanand L Rai was declared Best Director in the non-feature film category, for Statue of Unity: Ekta Ka Prateek. Rai's documentary was presented by Akshay Kumar.

In a conversation with HT City, Akshay reacted to this big honour saying, "I am delighted that Aanand L Rai has received this honour for his brilliant direction of Statue of Unity - Ekta ka Prateek. I feel fortunate to have presented such an inspiring documentary on the landmark monument."

The winners were announced by Feature Film Jury Chairperson Jayaraj, Non-Feature Film Jury Chairperson Aseem Sinha, and Best Writing on Cinema Jury Chairperson A. Chandrasekhar. The announcement was made in the presence of Dr. Ajay Nagabhushan M.N., Joint Secretary (Films), and Dharendra Ojha, Principal Director General of the Press Information Bureau (PIB). Meanwhile, here's the complete list of winners:

Best Feature Film: Article 370

Best Actress: Yami Gautam (Article 370)

Best Actor: Kartik Aaryan (Chandu Champion), Mammooty (Bramayugam)

Best Direction: Rajkumar Periasamy (Amaran)

Popular Movie Providing Wholesome Entertainment: Kalki 2898 AD

Best Debut Director: Randeep Hooda (Swatantrya Veer Savarkar)

Best Hindi Film: Srikanth

Best Telugu Film: Committee Kurrollu

Best Tamil Film: Raayan

Best Odia Film: Lahari

Best Marathi Film: Mukkam Post Bombilwadi

Best Malayalam Film: Feminichi Fathima

Best Manipuri Film: Sunita

Why Is Jacqueline Fernandez Trending After Her Song Jugni's Release? Know All About The 'Nip Slip' Row



Jacqueline Fernandez has been making headlines for all the wrong reasons. It all started after her song, Jugni, was released online. While the track has generated buzz for its music and visuals, the conversation on social media soon shifted to an alleged wardrobe malfunction involving the actress. Clips and screenshots from the music video began circulating across X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, and Reddit, with several users claiming that a brief frame showed a "nip slip."

The moment soon sparked widespread debate, with social media divided over the incident. While some users shared the clip and discussed whether it was an editing oversight or a publicity stunt, many others came to Jacqueline Fernandez's defence, arguing that the video was being scrutinised frame by frame to sensationalise a fleeting moment. Several fans also criticised the circulation of screenshots, calling it an invasion of the actor's privacy and urging people to focus on the song instead. Many users later claimed that the sequence on YouTube appeared blurred, prompting speculation that the makers may have edited the video after its release. However, there has been no official confirmation of any such change. As of now, Jacqueline has not reacted publicly to the controversy, nor have the makers of Jugni issued any statement regarding the viral clips. There has also been no official confirmation that the alleged wardrobe malfunction actually occurred. Much of the discussion continues to be driven by cropped screenshots and slow-mo videos shared on social media, making it difficult to independently verify many of the claims.

Meanwhile, Jugni itself has received attention for bringing Jacqueline back to the music scene with a high-energy dance number. The song has been gaining traction across streaming platforms and social media, with many fans praising its choreography, styling and Jacqueline's screen presence. However, the online discourse has largely been dominated by the alleged wardrobe malfunction rather than the song's release. Until Jacqueline or the makers address the matter, the controversy remains based primarily on social media speculation.

Oil hits one-month high as West Asia war keeps investors on edge

New Delhi. (Agency)

Brent crude hit on Monday its highest price since June due to renewed fighting between the United States and Iran, while Asian equities were mixed as investors weighed the fallout of a prolonged West Asia war. Crude has surged over the past week as Washington and Tehran traded fire, raising fears of a sustained disruption in the Strait of Hormuz, which carries around a fifth of the world's seaborne oil. Both Brent crude and US benchmark West Texas Intermediate extended their gains after climbing more than four percent at the end of last week. Brent rose above \$91 a barrel, its highest price since June 11.

The latest moves came after another weekend of escalating fighting, with the United States carrying out fresh strikes on Iranian targets and Tehran responding with attacks on regional military assets in the Gulf. The conflicting signals have left investors struggling to gauge the outlook for markets. Higher crude prices have revived concerns that inflation could remain elevated and complicate the path to lower interest rates, but some analysts argue the broader economic backdrop is becoming more supportive. "Markets are once again being forced to trade two seemingly contradictory stories on the same screen," said.

Rupee falls 12 paise to 96.42 against US dollar in early trade

MUMBAI. (Agency)

The rupee weakened 12 paise to 96.42 against the US dollar in early trade on Monday due to a surge in crude oil prices and strong demand for the American currency amid the worsening West Asia crisis. Foreign capital outflows from domestic equity markets also weighed on the Indian currency, forex traders said.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened lower at 96.53 against the previous close of 96.30 to dollar. The local unit pared some losses to trade at 96.42 later, down 12 paise from its previous close. On Friday, the rupee gained 12 paise to settle at 96.30 against the US dollar, supported by positive domestic market sentiment and a decline in US Treasury yields.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading marginally down by 0.05 per cent at 100.54. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading 2.45 per cent higher at USD 90.26 per barrel in futures trade, as the US and Iran have inched closer to all-out war, as last month's interim deal meant to permanently end the fighting has crumbled and shipping traffic in the Strait of Hormu has largely stalled.

The United States conducted a new round of airstrikes early Monday targeting Iran after announcing the death of another American service member, and Iran fired missiles towards Jordan that risked widening the conflict into neighbouring Israel..

DoPT issues revised order on Children Education Allowance; here's what's new on hostel subsidy

New Delhi. (Agency)

The Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) has issued a revised order on the Children Education Allowance (CEA) and Hostel Subsidy for central government employees. The amount of both the allowances remains the same but the new order clarifies how hostel expenses will be reimbursed. Under the revised rules, hostel subsidy will be reimbursed at Rs 8,437.50 per month per child or the actual expenditure incurred on boarding and lodging, whichever is lower. This replaces the wording used in the April 2024 order which had said that the hostel subsidy would be paid as a fixed amount irrespective of actual expenses. The corrigendum issued through an Office Memorandum dated June 30, 2026, revises a provision in DoPT's earlier order dated April 25, 2024. It is regarding the revision of rates of children education allowance and hostel subsidy consequent upon enhancement of Dearness Allowance (DA) to 50 percent.

What has DoPT clarified regarding reimbursement rules?

According to the corrigendum, "The amount for reimbursement of Children Education Allowance shall be 2,812.50 per month (fixed) per child, irrespective of actual expenses incurred by the Govt employee. The reimbursement of Hostel Subsidy per child shall be 8,437.50 per month or the actual expenditure incurred on boarding and lodging, whichever is lower."

Why has Apple increased music subscription prices in India?

Apple Music users in India will now have to pay more for their subscriptions. Why has the company decided to increase prices now?

CHENNAI. (Agency)

Apple has increased the prices of its Apple Music and Apple One subscription plans in India for both new and existing subscribers. The revised rates are already in effect across Apple's platforms and cover almost all subscription options, including Individual, Student and Family plans. The move comes less than two years after the company last revised Apple Music prices. It also

follows recent price increases for some of Apple's hardware products.

WHY HAS APPLE INCREASED SUBSCRIPTION PRICES?

Apple has attributed the latest price hike to rising music licencing costs. Music streaming companies pay licencing fees to record labels, publishers and artists to offer songs on their platforms. According to Apple, these costs have gone up, leading the company to increase subscription charges. Apart from the higher prices, Apple has not introduced any new features or additional benefits for subscribers.

HOW MUCH HAVE APPLE MUSIC PLANS BECOME COSTLIER?

The Apple Music Individual plan now costs Rs 139 per month, compared with Rs 119 earlier. The Student plan has been increased from Rs 59 to Rs 69 per month.

The biggest increase is for the Family plan, which now costs Rs 229 per month, up from Rs 179. The plan allows up to six family members to use



Apple Music through Apple's Family Sharing feature, with each user getting their own music library, playlists and recommendations.

APPLE ONE PLANS ALSO SEE A PRICE REVISION

Apple has also increased the prices of its Apple One bundles, which combine several Apple services under a single

subscription. The Individual plan now costs Rs 195 per month, up from Rs 175. The Family plan has been raised from Rs 365 to Rs 445 per month.

The Premier plan has seen the highest increase in rupee terms. It now costs Rs 595 per month, compared with Rs 499 earlier. Apple One includes services such as Apple Music, Apple TV+, Apple Arcade and iCloud. Users can also choose different storage options based on their requirements, which affects the final subscription cost.

PRICE HIKES SEEN IN OTHER COUNTRIES TOO

India is not the only market where Apple has increased subscription prices. Similar price revisions have also been reported in the UK, Europe and the US. However, the company has not issued an official statement on the latest price changes in these markets.

EPFO pension stopped Submit your Digital Life Certificate from home in 6 easy steps

Has your EPFO pension stopped unexpectedly? One reason could be that your Digital Life Certificate (Jeevan Pramaan) has not been submitted. Here's how to complete the process from home in six easy steps.

New Delhi. (Agency)

If an EPFO pension has stopped coming into your bank account, one possible reason could be that the Digital Life Certificate (DLC), also known as Jeevan Pramaan, has not been submitted. The good news is that pensioners no longer need to visit an office to complete the process. They can now submit the certificate from home or even book a free doorstep service.

EPFO URGES PENSIONERS TO SUBMIT JEEVAN PRAMAAN ON TIME

In a post on X, EPFO said, "Need to submit your Jeevan Pramaan? It's now easier than ever! Simply schedule a doorstep Jeevan Pramaan with a phone call and complete process from comfort of your home." In a video shared by the organisation, Alok Yadav, Regional

PF Commissioner at EPFO, explained that every EPFO pensioner must submit a Digital Life Certificate every year to



continue receiving pension without interruption. The certificate acts as proof that the pensioner is alive. Once submitted, it remains valid for one year from the date of submission.

HOW TO CHECK WHETHER YOUR DLC IS STILL VALID

Pensioners can check the validity of their Digital Life Certificate by visiting the Pensioner Portal on the

EPFO website. This helps them know when the next certificate needs to be submitted.

HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR DIGITAL LIFE CERTIFICATE FROM HOME

EPFO has explained that pensioners can complete the process using a smartphone. First, download the UMANG app and the Aadhaar Face RD app. Open the UMANG app and go to the Jeevan Pramaan Certificate section. Select Generate Life Certificate and choose the Face Authentication option. Enter your Aadhaar number and mobile number, then verify the OTP received on your phone. Next, fill in your PPO number, sanctioning authority, bank name and account number. Select the correct options for Re-employed and Remarried, tick the checkbox and allow permission for the Aadhaar Face RD app to access your camera.

SBI Funds Management IPO lists tomorrow with 18% GMP: Is it a long-term buy?

Kolkata. (Agency)

SBI Funds Management is set to make its stock market debut on July 21, and the IPO is already generating strong interest in the grey market. After receiving an overwhelming response during the subscription period, the company's shares are now trading at a healthy grey market premium (GMP), indicating a positive listing. The latest GMP stands at Rs 101 per share. Based on the IPO's upper price band of Rs 574, the estimated listing price is around Rs 675,

suggesting a potential gain of 17.6% over the issue price. IPO SUBSCRIBED OVER 41 TIMES

The Rs 9,813-crore IPO was open for subscription from July 14 to July 16 and was subscribed 41.66 times overall. According to SBI Funds Management, the issue received bids for 5,18,95,41,032 equity shares against 12,45,63,536 shares on offer. Institutional investors led the demand. The Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIB) category was subscribed 140.11 times, while the Non-Institutional Investor (NII) portion was subscribed 22.51 times.

The Retail Individual Investor (RII) category was subscribed 3.60 times. The Employee Reserved category saw a subscription of 4.65 times, while the Shareholder Reservation portion was subscribed 9.52 times. Overall demand for the IPO touched nearly Rs 2.98 lakh crore, making it India's fifth-largest IPO by total bid value.

WHY ARE ANALYSTS POSITIVE?

Geojit Investments believes SBI Funds Management is well placed to benefit from the long-term growth of India's mutual fund industry.

Why the government is cracking down on restaurant service charges now

The government has stepped up action against restaurants that add service charges by default. The move signals stricter enforcement after court backing and consumer complaints.

Kolkata. (Agency)

The government has stepped up its action against restaurants that continue to levy mandatory service charges, signalling that establishments flouting consumer protection rules could face stricter scrutiny. Consumer Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi on Monday said restaurants cannot force customers to pay a service charge. His remarks came as the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) expanded its crackdown after receiving

complaints that several restaurants were automatically adding service charges to customers' bills. The CCPA has initiated suo motu action against 41 restaurants across the country based on complaints received through the National Consumer Helpline.

For many diners, however, the obvious question is: Wasn't service charge always allowed? The answer is yes, but only if it is voluntary.

The confusion exists because service charges have appeared on restaurant bills for years, leading many customers to believe they are compulsory. In reality, the government has consistently maintained that restaurants cannot force customers to pay them. The issue first came to the fore in July 2022, when the CCPA issued guidelines stating that restaurants cannot automatically add a service charge to food bills. According

to the regulator, customers are legally required to pay only for the food they order, applicable taxes and any



charges authorised by law. A mandatory service charge, it said, amounts to an unfair trade practice under the Consumer Protection Act. Restaurant associations challenged these guidelines in the Delhi High Court, arguing that service charges were part of their business model and that customers were

informed about them through menus and notices displayed at their outlets.

However, in March 2025, the Delhi

High Court upheld the CCPA's guidelines, clearing the way for stricter enforcement. With the legal uncertainty removed, the government has now begun acting more aggressively against restaurants that continue to add service charges by default. The latest action against 41 restaurants reflects that shift. According to the CCPA, several establishments were automatically adding

service charges to bills without customers' consent or refusing to remove them when requested. The government has repeatedly clarified that it is not against tipping. Customers are free to leave a tip or voluntarily pay a service charge if they are happy with the service they receive.