



Forget the post, not the leader, says former Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot

New Delhi. (Agency)

He may no longer hold any official post, but former Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot is making sure he stays at the centre of Rajasthan Congress politics. From touring Marwar and meeting agitating student leaders to inducting Bharat Adivasi Party (BAP) workers at his own residence instead of the state Congress headquarters, Gehlot's moves have sparked fresh chatter within the party. With civic polls approaching and Assembly elections just two years away, three-time chief minister Gehlot appears keen to not only stay in media and social media but also to convey that, post or no post, he remains the party's biggest face in Rajasthan.

Gen Z stir: From Jantar Mantar to Jaipur

The Gen-Z protest culture that captured national attention at Delhi's Jantar Mantar appears to have found followers in Rajasthan. Student activism is suddenly back in the spotlight, with both the NSUI and the ABVP launching agitations over the suspension of student union elections. Yet, the biggest buzz surrounds independent student leader Shubham Rewad, whose.

Priyank Kharge warns against vigilantism over migrants, urges public to share information with police

New Delhi. (Agency)

Karnataka Minister Priyank Kharge has issued a strong warning against conducting self-styled investigations into migrants in Bengaluru, posting videos on social media and criticising the government without verification. Kharge said the government would not tolerate forms of "vigilantism" or "moral policing" carried out in the name of monitoring migrants or protecting the state.

Social media posts could hamper investigations

The minister said collecting information and publicly sharing videos or details on social media could alert international networks and potentially interfere with confidential government operations.

He urged people who have genuine information about suspicious individuals or activities to share it directly with the police or relevant authorities, rather than posting it online.

According to Kharge, people who genuinely care about national and state security should cooperate with law enforcement agencies instead of conducting independent investigations.

A morning to cherish: Raghav Chadha meets PM, sparks buzz over Punjab role

New Delhi. (Agency)

The meeting

between Raghav

Chadha and Prime

Minister Narendra

Modi has generated

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assembly elections.

BJP MP Raghav Chadha's surprise meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday set tongues wagging, with the former AAP leader describing the interaction as "a morning to cherish". The meeting has generated considerable interest, coming months ahead of the Punjab assembly elections. On Friday, Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) chief Sukhbir Singh Badal also met the Prime Minister.

While Chadha, who rebelled against the AAP and joined the BJP with six other MPs earlier this year, did not reveal what was discussed, he said it was an "enriching interaction". A report in The Tribune said the prevailing situation in Punjab was among the issues discussed. "Had the privilege of meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi. A detailed and enriching interaction. Deeply grateful

for his generous time and for the opportunity to benefit from his insights and guidance," Chadha said.

WHY RAGHAV CHADHA MET PM MODI?

The meeting comes at a time when the BJP



has ramped up political activity in Punjab ahead of the Assembly elections. Chadha, who represents Punjab in the Rajya Sabha and has ancestral roots in Jalandhar, is expected to play a prominent and active

role for the BJP in the state. Chadha, who has been with the AAP since its inception, triggered a major political shake-up in April when he and six other MPs merged with the BJP. Of the seven, six were from Punjab. Once seen as the "de facto Chief Minister" of Punjab, Chadha's exit came as a body blow to the AAP in the only state it presently holds power.

While Chadha did not contest the 2022 Punjab polls, he worked behind the scenes as a strategist and helped the AAP script a historic victory in the state amid challenges from behemoths like SAD, BJP and the Congress.

Now with the BJP, Chadha is likely to get an active role in the poll-bound state. Not only does he have a grasp of Punjab's electoral dynamics, his urban appeal could also help the BJP strengthen its presence in cities such as Amritsar, Ludhiana, and Jalandhar.

MAHANAGAR METRO EXCLUSIVE INVESTIGATION

Mega Exposé: Multi-Crore Liquor Smuggling Racket Uncovered on Gandhi's Gujarat 'Railway Safe Line'

Public Questions Mount: Will the Government Take Strict Action Against Corrupt Officials and Bootleggers?

MAHANAGAR METRO GANDHINAGAR. Amid bold state claims regarding Gujarat's strict prohibition policy, a stark reality has emerged that challenges the effectiveness of law enforcement along transit routes. Vast consignments of foreign and country-made liquor—worth crores of rupees—are entering Gujarat from neighboring states and union territories, including Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Daman, and Silvassa. Rather than relying on highway routes subject to routine check-posts, bootleggers have shifted their strategy. Railways have increasingly become the primary transit line for organized smuggling networks. An investigative report by Mahanagar Metro sheds light on the mechanics behind this network: Extortion Allegations and the Role of 'Administrators'. According to serious allegations raised by local citizens and observers, rogue elements within the Railway Protection Force (RPF) and Government Railway Police (GRP) allegedly facilitate this illicit movement in ex-



change for regular monthly payouts. Designated 'administrators' operating on behalf of officials allegedly coordinate the system to ensure liquor consignments pass through key railway hubs without recorded detection during unloading. Major Railway Stations Functioning as Transit Hubs: Consignments packed into passenger luggage and train compartments reportedly pass through major stations spanning South Gujarat to Ahmed-

abad—including Vapi, Valsad, Navsari, Surat, Ankleshwar, Bharuch, Vadodara, Ahmedabad, and Sabarmati. These major transit hubs are reportedly being exploited by bootlegging operations to distribute illicit alcohol across the state. The Social Impact and Accountability: With illicit liquor trade operating at scale daily, local communities express growing concern over the impact on families and youth across the state.

Despite existing enforcement frameworks, questions continue to be raised regarding the level of oversight at train stations and transit points. Key Questions for the Chief Minister, Home Department, and SMC: Policy & Enforcement: Will the Chief Minister and the State Home Department initiate high-level inquiries and strict measures to curb systemic bribery and illicit transit lines? Accountability for Operations: Will the State Monitoring Cell (SMC) and senior Railway authorities execute targeted raids at these key stations to dismantle local 'administrators' and trafficking networks? Public Trust: As allegations implicate elements of law enforcement, what immediate recourse and protection exist for citizens demanding transparency? If enforcement standards are to be upheld, decisive action against illegal transit operations along railway lines remains imperative. Mahanagar Metro will continue to follow this story and report on further developments.

Rahul Gandhi draws up 2027 UP strategy as Congress eyes state revival

For Rahul Gandhi, the road to 2027 is not just about winning seats. It is about building a young voter base, strengthening the Congress' own organisation and ensuring that its alliance with the SP does not become a liability before the electoral battle begins.

New Delhi (Agency)

With the crucial 2027 Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections drawing closer, Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi is working on a three-layered strategy to expand the Congress' footprint in the politically crucial state: build a new youth constituency, revive the party's organisational machinery and secure the Samajwadi Party alliance before seat-sharing negotiations trigger friction.

BID TO TURN STUDENT OUTREACH INTO VOTES

Rahul Gandhi is set to address the third edition of his 'Chhatron Ki Goonj' programme in Prayagraj, a choice the

Congress sees as significant given the city's historical and emotional association with the Gandhi family. A party insider said Prayagraj was chosen over other cities partly because of its deep connection with the Nehru-Gandhi family. Anand Bhawan, the ancestral home of former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, served as a Congress office during the freedom struggle and was later donated to the Indian government by Indira Gandhi in 1970.

Within the Congress, there is a growing belief that Rahul Gandhi's increasingly visible interventions on student issues, both inside Parliament and on the streets,



are helping the party connect with Gen Z and young voters.

According to internal party feedback, a significant number of young people from Uttar Pradesh participated in the student protests at Jantar Mantar. This is

emerging as a constituency Rahul Gandhi could seek to bring into the Congress fold ahead of the 2027 polls. **SEAL SEAT DEAL WITH SP BEFORE FRICTION**

Congress leaders in Uttar Pradesh are also pushing for an early closure of the party's seat-sharing talks with the Samajwadi Party.

Party insiders told India Today that Congress MPs from Uttar Pradesh, during a meeting convened by Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi at 10 Janpath on Tuesday, urged the leadership to finalise the seat-sharing arrangement with the Samajwadi Party at the earliest.

The meeting was attended by all six Lok Sabha MPs from the state, along with Rajya Sabha MPs Imran Pratapgarhi, Pramod Tiwari and Rajiv Shukla.

"Parliament is ending on August 13. By August 20, a coordination committee should be announced between the SP and Congress so that seat-sharing talks can conclude in time. Any further delay will only harm Congress' electoral prospects in Uttar Pradesh," one of the MPs who attended the meeting told India Today. While Rahul Gandhi and SP chief Akhilesh Yadav share a good rapport, leaders in the second rung of both parties have been publicly sparring over the seat-sharing formula.

News box

Suspected short circuit sparks fire in locked Vaishali flat

Noida.(Agency)

A fire broke out in a locked flat on the second floor of Green Street Apartment in Vaishali's Sector 5 early on Friday. The flat owner, Sanjay Kumar, and his family were not present in the flat at the time of the incident. The fire department officials were told they had been away for a week. While there were no injuries, the family's belongings were burnt. An official said the likely cause of the fire was an electrical short circuit. Chief fire officer Rahul Pal said they were informed of the fire around 3.40am by Kumar's neighbours, who saw smoke coming out of the outer windows of the flat. "The flat in which the fire broke out had two iron doors because of which the fire did not spread outside. People living on the first and second floors had come out of the building while some others on the third and fourth floors did not even come to know about the fire. We evacuated the people who were living in the flats closest to Kumar's flat," he said. During the firefighting operation, a small gas cylinder kept in the kitchen exploded but it did not cause more damage, he added.

No suitable bidders: YEIDA extends deadline for hospital plots around Noida International Airport

Noida.(Agency)

Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA) has extended the deadline for the e-auction scheme to allot plots for hospitals and child welfare and maternity centres till Aug 30. Earlier, the scheme's last date was Feb 25. The authority did not get suitable bidders and hence it extended the deadline. The scheme includes two hospital plots in Sector 18, measuring 5,300 sqm and 6,378 sqm, with reserve prices of Rs 14 crore and Rs 17 crore. Another hospital plot measuring 10,900 sqm has been offered in Sector 20 with a reserve price of Rs 29 crore, making it the costliest plot under the scheme.

YEIDA has also put up for auction a 10,115-sqm hospital plot in Sector 22D with a reserve price of Rs 27 crore. Besides these, the authority has earmarked a 5,000 sqm plot for a child welfare and maternity centre in Sector 20, carrying a reserve price of Rs 13 crore. The reserve allotment rate for all the institutional plots has been fixed at Rs 27,330 per sqm. The hospitals shall be developed in a maximum of five years and the child welfare and maternity centre in six years. The applicants need to submit 10% of the premium as an earnest money deposit while the remaining amount shall be paid in instalments. The officials said 40% of the premium shall be paid within 60 days of issuance of the allotment letter, and the remaining 60% shall be paid in four equal half-yearly instalments. The scheme aims to strengthen healthcare infrastructure around Noida International Airport, which is witnessing rapid development.

Wall collapses at school site, 2 taking shelter from rain die

Noida.(Agency)

Two labourers who had taken shelter from the rain near a wall inside an under-construction school were crushed to death when it collapsed on Friday afternoon. It was the first day at the construction site for Suraj (38) and Dayanand (45) — both from Meerut in Uttar Pradesh — who had been hired for landscaping work on the upcoming Vasant Valley School campus in DLF Phase 2. Suraj is survived by his wife and two daughters, aged five and two, while Dayanand leaves behind his wife and a son.

According to police and workers at the site, six labourers had reported for work on Friday — their first day on the project — to shift plants around the premises, where an old school building is being renovated and redeveloped. Work began around 11.30am but was repeatedly disrupted by intermittent rain. As the showers intensified around 1.30pm, Suraj and Dayanand moved inside the partially renovated building and sat near a wall to escape the rain. The remaining workers took shelter elsewhere. "Suddenly, the wall gave way and buried the two men under its debris. Other workers raised an alarm and informed emergency services," a police officer said. The fire department received a call at 1.58pm and rushed rescue teams to the spot. Police also reached soon after. The two labourers were pulled out from under the rubble and taken to a nearby hospital, but both had suffered fatal injuries. Ahmed Ali, the contractor who engaged the workers, said Friday was their first day at the site. "They had come only for landscaping work. Rain interrupted the work, and the accident happened while they were taking shelter," he added. A guard on the premises said construction activity had remained suspended for the previous two to three days because of continuous rain. "Only smaller jobs, such as removing plants, resumed on Friday after the weather improved. But it rained again in the afternoon."

Preterm baby's 'disconnected' food pipe joined in rare surgery

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

A premature baby born with a significant gap in his food pipe has undergone a rare single-stage surgery at a Ghaziabad private hospital in which doctors joined the two ends, making ingesting easier for the infant. One of a pair of twins, the newborn was also diagnosed with a congenital heart condition that added to the risks of the operation. His twin was healthy. The baby, born at 34 weeks and weighing 1.4kg, was brought in for treatment after the parents saw excessive frothing near his mouth, increased oral secretions and difficulty in breathing. An X-ray confirmed oesophageal atresia with a

distal tracheo-oesophageal fistula (Type C TEF). In simple terms, the baby was born with an oesophagus — the tube that carries food from the mouth to the stomach — that was disconnected. The lower segment, instead of ending normally, was connected to the windpipe, or trachea. This meant that the baby could not swallow milk or even saliva normally and secretions could enter the lungs, increasing the risk of choking, breathing difficulty, aspiration and pneumonia. In many such cases, doctors may consider multiple-stage procedures, particularly when the baby is premature or has a very low birth weight. However, in this case,



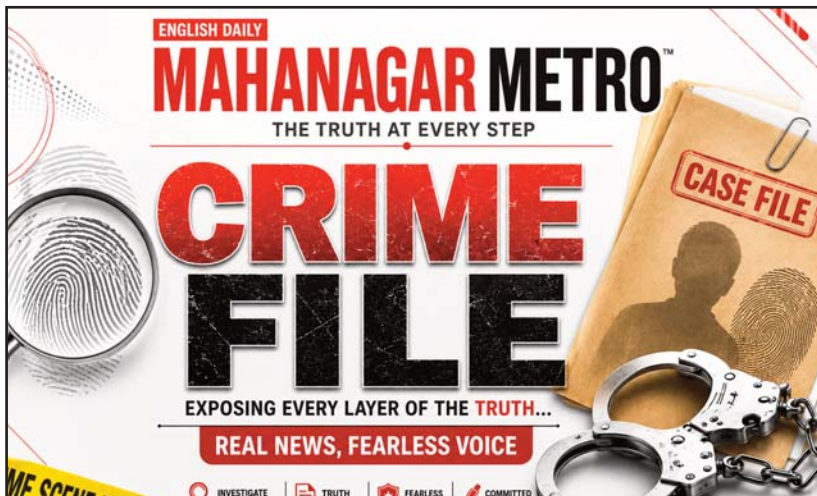
surgeons performed a single-stage primary repair, bringing the baby's own oesophageal ends together. "No artificial material or graft was used.

The procedure took around two hours," said Dr Minu Bajpai, principal director and head of paediatric surgery and paediatric urology at Yashoda Cradle & Children Hospital, Yashoda Medicity. "The baby's prematurity and weight made the operation particularly challenging. His organs were extremely small and required delicate handling and very fine suturing. He also had patent ductus arteriosus (PDA), a congenital heart condition in which a blood vessel that normally closes after birth remains open. Maintaining stable blood pressure and circulation during surgery required close coordination between the anaesthesia and neonatal intensive care teams," she said.

Sunday Special Crime Story: 'A Dark Night, a Railway Track, and an Unsolved Mystery'

Mahanagar Metro Desk

A dusty, yellowed file lay on the desk of Inspector Vikram Rathore, a special officer with the Ahmedabad CID Crime Branch. Written across it in red letters was: Case No. 407: Gondal Railway Track Murder Mystery. The incident took place four years ago. Near Gondal station, close to Gir Somnath, the body of a 45-year-old woman was found on a dark stretch of railway tracks. Her head had been crushed by a train, leading local police to dismiss it as an accident or suicide and close the case. Unwilling to accept the finding, the victim's son appealed to the High Court. He insisted his mother would never take her own life and pointed out that her jewelry was missing. Taking note, the court transferred the case to the CID Crime Branch, placing Inspector Vikram Rathore in charge of unraveling the cold case. First Clue: The Flawed Medical Report Reopening the file, Vikram immediately scrutinized the forensic analysis. His sharp eyes caught a critical anomaly: instead of typical train impact injuries, the victim's body bore blunt force marks on her hands and faint pressure marks from fingers around her neck. "This wasn't a suicide," Vikram told his team. "This was a meticulously planned murder." Second Clue: The Mid-



night Call The CID team pulled the victim's Call Detail Records (CDR) from that night. At 11:50 PM, she received a call from an unknown prepaid number, with the cell tower locating both caller and victim at the Gondal railway track. Though the SIM card was registered under a fake ID, tower logs revealed a second number active at the exact same location at 12:15 AM. It belonged to a jeweler from Surendranagar named Ramesh Jhaveri. Third Clue: The Hidden Motive Inspector Vikram raided Ramesh's home late at night. Initially, the jeweler feigned ignorance, but under intense interrogation, he broke down and confessed to a plot that shocked the investigation team. Ramesh revealed that the victim possessed a collection of pure gold antique coins inher-

ited from her family. He and an accomplice—a night guard working for the railways—hatched a scheme to steal the treasure. They lured the woman to the tracks late at night under the pretense of evaluating her gold coins for a high-value sale. When they seized the coins, she screamed. The railway guard choked her to death and shoved her body onto the path of an oncoming train to stage an accident. The Verdict A four-year-old cold case buried under police files was solved within 48 hours thanks to Inspector Vikram Rathore's sharp instincts and technical analysis. Both the jeweler and the railway guard were arrested and sent to prison. The case stands as a reminder: no matter how cleverly a crime is disguised, the reach of the law goes further.

Mob storms farmhouse in Gurgaon, assaults staff and vandalises property

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A group of around 50 people allegedly stormed a farmhouse in Bhondsi on Aug 5 night, assaulted its staff and a pet dog, damaged property, stole valuables and threatened those living on the premises. The accused sexually harassed a woman staffer and forcibly occupied the farmhouse for nearly 13-14 hours before police teams arrived and arrested 13 men. Police said the accused were sent by a local property dealer, while the farmhouse staff said the incident stemmed from a property dispute that has dragged on for over 20 years. Caretaker of the farmhouse, Arvind Tiwari (40), who filed the complaint, claimed the men arrived at the farmhouse in Mahendwara village around 9.30 pm in trucks, a tractor and a car (registration number HR26 BS 00002). He said the men forcibly entered the premises and created a fracas for several hours. While some of them demolished a room used by the farm staff, others ripped off CCTV cameras, broke the nameplate and stole household articles and valuables, Tiwari said. The accused, he said, also attempted to molest a woman staffer and threatened others present there. Based on Tiwari's complaint, an FIR was registered at Bhondsi police station on Aug 6 under Section 25(1-B)(a) of Arms Act and BNS sections 74 (assault or criminal force against a woman with intent to outrage her modesty).

'I begged two Ghaziabad hospitals to treat my daughter. They flatly refused. She died in my arms'

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

"Where would a father take his dying child to a hospital or a police station?" asks the father of a four-year-old girl who died after two hospitals refused to treat her even as she bled heavily after being sexually assaulted in Nandgram on March 16. The child died without treatment that night, on the way to the district hospital, a tragedy that was brought to Supreme Court's notice through a petition from the father and has since been in jurisprudence as a headline case of cold medical apathy. "She died in my arms," the child's father, a daily wage, told TOI. "She was the youngest of my three children." The trial against the main accused — a neighbour who allegedly lured the child with a treat, carried her to a nearby ground, raped her and bludgeoned her with a stone — is yet to begin. "Hospitals and doctors are meant to save lives. In our country, doctors are regarded as gods, yet they flatly refused to save my child. She was

in severe pain and bleeding from several parts of her body, but doctors still declined to provide treatment," he said. The case drew the sharpest of reactions from Supreme Court. In its first hearing on April 10, a bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi said the case not only revealed a diabolical offence but also exposed an approach by the two private hospitals — Khajan Singh Manvi Health Care and St Joseph's Hospital — that was "completely indifferent, inhuman, and insensitive". After a court-instituted special investigation team (SIT) found credence in the charge that both hospitals had refused immediate treatment to the grievously injured child, Supreme Court asked the two hospitals to voluntarily compensate her parents. On July 17, it warned the hospitals that if they failed to pay the compensation voluntarily, it would impose costs that would have a "chilling impact". On Aug 7, the court said it would consider issuing 'must

treat' guidelines for hospitals in rape cases.

The two hospitals have, meanwhile, told the court they will donate Rs 12 lakh to the girl's family.

The court gave a doctor, accused of refusing the child admission at one of



the hospitals, a rap on the knuckles when he pleaded that he was only a Bachelor of Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery (BAMS) practitioner with no wherewithal to treat such a patient. The bench said no doctor worth his salt would refuse treatment to a minor seriously injured because of brutal sexual assault. "What kind of doctor are you? If you cannot give medical

assistance to a grievously injured child, do not prefix 'Dr' before your name. If you had any sensitivity, you would have facilitated her father to enable the child to get emergency medical care," the bench said. In its July 30 hearing, the bench also observed that the hospitals had shown a complete lack of sensitivity and utter negligence in treating the injured child because she belonged to a poor family. The girl's father told TOI the court should make an exemplary case so that no hospital refuses treatment to a patient. "No father should have to go through what I did. I stood there begging them, saying that my child was still alive, and asking them to please treat her. But they refused. My daughter kept bleeding, and they did nothing. She died in my arms, and I could not save her. It was the system that failed me," he said. Ghaziabad chief medical officer Dr Sachin Vaishya said every healthcare facility is legally and ethically bound to provide immediate life-saving treatment in emergencies.

Odisha, MP sign MoU to accelerate renewable energy push

Bhubaneswar. (Agency)

Odisha and Madhya Pradesh on Friday forged a strategic partnership to step up cooperation in renewable energy, energy storage and green hydrogen, with the two states signing an MoU aimed at accelerating the clean energy transition and promoting technology and knowledge sharing.

The MoU was signed by Odisha's Energy Department and Madhya Pradesh's New and Renewable Energy Department on the sidelines of the 7th CII International Energy Conference and Exhibition here. The agreement seeks collaboration in technology transfer, joint research and development, knowledge sharing, policy and regulatory practices, and grid integration. The two states will also explore joint initiatives in solar, wind and hybrid power, energy storage and green hydrogen.

Odisha Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo said the partnership would strengthen inter-state cooperation in clean energy and create a framework for innovation, sustainable development and resilient energy infrastructure.

ACB arrests police head constable, two agents in Rs 1 lakh bribery case in Kolhapur

Kolhapur. (Agency)

The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) arrested a police head constable attached to Kurundwad police station in Kolhapur district and his two private agents for accepting a bribe of Rs 1 lakh from the complainant on Friday night.

The arrested were identified as Santosh Vishwas Salunkhe (43), a police head constable, and his two private agents, Firoz Papalal Vijapure (40) and Zamir Salim Pathan (41), both residents of Kurundwad.

As per an ACB press release, a criminal case was registered against the complainant at Kurundwad police station. The complainant contacted Salunkhe to help in the case, following which Salunkhe demanded Rs 1.50 lakh through his agents. The matter was later settled at Rs 1 lakh.

The complainant subsequently informed ACB officials, who laid a trap in Kurundwad late Friday night. The police head constable and his two agents, Vijapure and Pathan, were arrested red-handed while accepting Rs 1 lakh from the complainant.

Man accused of harassing woman in Mumbai local train arrested

Mumbai. (Agency)

The Government Railway Police (GRP) arrested a man within 12 hours of an alleged incident in which he abused and threatened a woman passenger with a belt inside a Mumbai local train, an official said here on Saturday.

The accused, identified as Rizwan Ansari, was arrested from Govandi after the Borivali GRP took suo motu cognisance of a video purportedly showing the incident.

Police examined CCTV footage and other evidence before tracing and apprehending Ansari, the official said. A case has been registered against him under Sections 74 (assault or use of criminal force against a woman with intent to outrage her modesty), 296 (obscene acts) and 115 (assault) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), police said.

The incident reportedly took place on Thursday aboard a 5.25 pm local train travelling from Goregaon towards Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT). According to the video circulating on social media, the accused allegedly abused the woman during an argument and later removed his belt and threatened to assault her.

'Sadan jhooth da adda nahi': AAP MLA confronts Punjab Minister in Vidhan Sabha

The exchange between Tarunpreet Singh Sond and AAP MLA from Payal Manwinder Singh Gyaspura came during the Question Hour on a discussion on the delayed auction of panchayat land in Daulatpur village.

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

The ruling Aam Aadmi Party legislators turned the heat on their own party's government in the Punjab Vidhan Sabha Friday, with one of them accusing a minister of misleading the House "by telling lies" while offering to resign if the minister could prove his claim.

The exchange between Rural Development and Panchayats Minister Tarunpreet Singh Sond and AAP MLA from Payal Manwinder Singh Gyaspura came during the Question Hour on a discussion on the delayed auction of panchayat land in Daulatpur village. Responding to Gyaspura's question,

Sond said that the village sarpanch was suspended, an administrator had been appointed, and the auction was being conducted on Friday. He argued that earlier auction attempts had failed because nobody came forward to bid after the department increased lease rates by 20 per cent, forcing it to follow the prescribed procedure of subsequent auctions.

Gyaspura, however, asked why no administrator had been appointed for nearly four months after the sarpanch's suspension. When Sond claimed that auction attempts had already been made earlier in the year, the MLA rejected the assertion. "If the minister

can prove that even a single auction was conducted this year, I will resign from



my MLA-ship," Gyaspura declared in the House. He then said, "Eh sadan jhooth bolan da adda nahi hai. Iss layi

ithe sach boleya jaave. (This House is not a place to tell lies. Please speak the truth here)". He also disputed the minister's reply regarding the suspension of a Block Development and Panchayat Officer (BDPO) and asked why departmental proceedings were being initiated if the officer was not at fault. Sond replied that the BDPO had been suspended in connection with an unrelated case and not in the Daulatpur matter. He also defended the department's record, saying it had increased panchayat lease income across Punjab and promised to place detailed figures before the House in the next session.

Ahmedabad Chief Fire Officer arrested on bribery charges

Arrest comes just one-and-a-half years after his appointment as CFO of Ahmedabad Fire and Emergency Services

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

THE GUJARAT Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Friday arrested Amit Dongre, Chief Fire Officer (CFO) of the Ahmedabad Fire and Emergency Services (AFES), and a private individual for allegedly demanding and receiving a bribe of Rs 36,000 in lieu of approving the Fire Safety Certificates (FSCs) of six buildings in the city.

The ACB identified the other arrested person as Bhavsinh Pratap Jhala (31), from near Vijay Crossroads and claimed that Rs 36,000 paid to the duo as part of a bribe to approve FSCs for six buildings at Rs 6,000 per building has been

recovered. Amitkumar Anandrao Dongre (47) CFO, Ahmedabad, Class-1, was arrested later on the basis of a phone call



between him and Jhala talking purportedly about the bribe amount, said the ACB. A statement issued by the ACB said, "The complainant in this case works

as a Fire Safety Officer (FSO), who provides fire safety related services, in Ahmedabad city. Through him, fire safety NOCs of a total of six buildings located in Ahmedabad city were sent for approval on the Gujarat government portal, but the accused (Jhala) demanded a bribe of Rs 6,000 per NOC, totaling Rs 36,000 for approval of all 6 NOCs."

The complainant then went to the ACB office in Vadodara and registered a complaint on the basis of which Inspector A N Prajapati of Vadodara ACB laid a trap along with government witnesses. The action was supervised by Vadodara ACB Assistant Director BM Patel.

BSF Meghalaya promotes youth empowerment and community harmony through SPANDAN League sporting events

Shillong/Tura. (Agency)

Shillong/Tura, Aug 7 (UNI) As part of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of the Border Security Force (BSF), District-Level SPANDAN League Basketball and Junior Football Tournaments were organised simultaneously in Shillong and Tura on Friday under the Sports for Peace and Development (SPANDAN) Programme of the Sports Authority of India (SAI).

The sporting events aimed to promote youth participation in sports, foster discipline and sportsmanship and strengthen community engagement through a positive sporting environment.

In Shillong, the District-Level SPANDAN League Basketball Tournament was organised by 153 Bn BSF at the Indoor Basketball Court of St. Anthony's H.S.

School.

Inspector General of BSF, Meghalaya Frontier Headquarters, Om Prakash Upadhaya, encouraged the youth to pursue excellence while embracing the values of discipline, teamwork, sportsmanship and healthy competition. He emphasised that sports play a vital role in building confidence, developing character and nurturing responsible and disciplined citizens.

The opening match between St. Anthony's Higher Secondary School and Army Public School witnessed an enthusiastic display of talent, determination and team spirit, with St. Anthony's Higher Secondary School emerging victorious.

In Tura, the District-Level SPANDAN League (Junior) Football Tournament was organised by 144 Bn BSF at Don Bosco Higher Secondary School.

Deputy Inspector General of BSF, SHQ Tura, Lalit Mohan Sharma motivated the participants to strive for excellence and uphold the principles of discipline, teamwork, fair play and sportsmanship. The opening football encounter between St. Luke's H. S. School, Tura and Don Bosco H. S. School, Tura, provided an exciting contest, with St. Luke's H. S. School emerging victorious.

The successful conduct of the two tournaments highlights BSF Meghalaya's commitment to engaging with youth and local communities through sports. Through the SPANDAN initiative, BSF continues to promote sports as a powerful instrument for fostering peace, unity, discipline, healthy lifestyles and positive development among young people, while strengthening the bond between the Force and the communities it serves.

Kairana, 10 years later: Gangster killing in encounter turns page on 'Hindu exodus' chapter

Lucknow. (Agency)

The killing of 38-year-old gangster Furqan in an encounter in Uttar Pradesh's Shamli district on Wednesday marked the quiet end of a chapter that once roiled state politics. He was one of the criminals whose "free run" was alleged by the BJP in 2016 — as it sought to come to power in UP — to have led to a "Hindu exodus" from Kairana.

Furqan, who carried a Rs 1 lakh bounty on his head, had a string of cases against him, most prominently that of murder of Vinod Kumar Singhal, the treasurer of the Kairana Vyapar Mandal. Singhal, 34, was shot dead on August 16, 2014, at his grocery store, allegedly because he supported another trader who had received extortion demands from the gang. Furqan and his three accomplices were facing charges in the case, with the

trial still on. While Furqan was out on bail when killed, the other three remain on bail.

The killing of Singhal sent shockwaves through Kairana. Within days of the murder, his family relocated to the neighbouring Muzaffarnagar district, citing safety concerns. Around three months later, on persuasion of the district and police officials, they returned.

In 2016, in the run-up to the UP Assembly elections, Kairana hit national headlines when late BJP MP Hukum Singh alleged that nearly 350 Hindus had fled the town because of threats and extortion by criminal gangs belonging to one community. A town bordering Muzaffarnagar, Saharanpur and the state of Haryana, Kairana has a

population of more than one lakh, with Muslims forming around 70% of the numbers. It has long been a stronghold of criminal gangs, with Kairana's location along state borders helping

that had left Kairana following incidents of extortion. Among them was the family of Singhal, and of two other businessmen killed allegedly by a gangster said to have links with Furqan.



them evade capture.

With heat on the issue rising, the Shamli administration ordered a probe into the claims. It identified only three families

Furqan was allegedly involved in several criminal activities, leading a gang known by its number in police records — "D-8/2015".

Originally from Aryapuri locality in Kairana, he had more than two dozen criminal cases against him, including murder, robbery, extortion, and offences under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act and Arms Act.

Convicted in an NDPS case and given 10 years, he had come out on bail six months ago.

Giving neighbours a chance to be friends again

Sometimes, it is the very idea of being at war that makes ordinary people see each other as enemies with enough aggressive passion to go for each other's throats. Grotesque as the thought is, ironically, the tentative nature of the source of this dark passion is also the spark of hope. It means that the minute the idea of being at war is removed, the enmity between people too can evaporate.

Jolle Demmers explains this strange and menacing, yet transformative power of the idea of war beautifully in her book *Theories of Violent Conflict: An Introduction*. She uses the last scene in the classic 1980 Second World War Hollywood film, *The Big Red One*, written and directed by Samuel Fuller, with Lee Marvin in the lead as an infantry sergeant, to illustrate the point. The story was apparently based on Fuller's own traumatic experience of war as a former soldier.

I bought and watched the movie. It depicts a time when the war had turned dreary. For a few American privates trudging through a forest, each day had come to mean no more than negotiating the danger of violent death to live another day. Then, on a foggy day of this normalised survival routine, the figure of a German soldier emerges from the mist in the distance, appearing to want to surrender. The sergeant ducks to avoid being sighted, draws his combat knife and waits. Once close enough, he lunges at the man and stabs him. He would have stabbed the grounded German again to confirm the kill, but a fast-approaching commotion takes his attention away. It turns out that the noisy men are another group of American soldiers excitedly shouting at them that the war ended four hours ago. Though bewildered initially, the message soon registers. The sergeant and his men gather their stuff and prepare to leave when a soldier shouts out from behind that the German soldier is still breathing. All the men rush to the fallen man. They desperately give him first aid and manage to resuscitate him. The sense of relief, especially of the sergeant, is palpable. As they prepare to carry the wounded man away, the sergeant murmurs between clenched teeth in a barely-audible, soldierly tone: "You better not die, or I will blow up your brain."

The absurdity of war could not have been better portrayed. Rendered equally ridiculous is how war manages to segregate perfectly normal people into friends and enemies, not based on any personal rivalries or misgivings, but solely on the idea of belonging to one side or the other of the warring fence. Confounding as this attribute of war is, it also exposes a vulnerability of ordinary people, communities and even national populations. A vulnerability that demagogic populist public figures and those aspiring to be one have, time and again, successfully exploited to buttress their leadership standings by erecting imaginary, often unsubstantiated, warring fences.

To many people in conflict-torn Manipur, this picturisation of war—written by Fuller and theorised on by Demmers—would seem almost a profile of what they have been going through over the past three years. This will be confirmed by most who have been frequenting the many relief camps of conflict-displaced people, not with the intent of finding alibis to validate their preconceived biases—as so many ambulance-chasing journalists and fact finders have done, accentuating the divide—but to listen with empathy to the woes of those who have lost homes and loved ones. On the surface, the familiar pattern is to be confronted with angry posturing by those in these relief camps that all their miseries are on account of their hated enemies on the other side of the conflict fence. But as emotions settle, answers to non-probing queries such as how they would define their pre-conflict relationships with their once neighbours, now "enemies", the answers are telling and touching. They were normal neighbours, often bound by the supply-and-demand chains of a common market.

Getting the work she deserves

Indian women have made steady gains to claim a larger share of science degrees, though their share in engineering and tech streams could improve. More targeted pathways are needed to encourage them to pursue computing, AI, electronics and data-intensive fields

Over the past decade, one of India's most important social changes has been the improvement in women's access to higher education. Not so long ago, our system struggled to bring many young women into college. But now the same system records near-parity in their enrolment. As per the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) for 2023-24, the latest count, women's enrolment has risen 42.2 percent from 2014-15. The female gross enrolment ratio (GER), at 31.2, exceeds the male ratio. For the seventh consecutive year, the Gender Parity Index stands in favour of women, at 1.08. Some observers ask, what next? Is improved enrolment enough? Are women entering the right disciplines? Are institutions supportive? Are degrees translating into sustained work? Are India's gains broad-based and backed by policy mechanisms? These are fair questions. Yet, let these questions not obscure the central fact. The first reason is that AISHE data confirms the gains are not confined to a narrow social group. Enrolment from the Scheduled Caste (SC) communities has grown 51.1 percent in the decade to 2023-24. For Scheduled Tribes and other backward classes, it increased by 75.7 percent and 60.2 percent, respectively. Over the same time, women from SC communities registered a two-thirds rise, ST women saw an impressive two-fold increase and OBC women recorded a growth of about 72 percent. The numbers clearly indicate a broad-based democratisation of higher education, not an urban or elite phenomenon. The second reason for the increased participation of women is broader institutional support. At the latest count, India had 1,289 universities, 48,426 colleges and 15,221 standalone institutions. There were 18 universities exclusively for women, compared with 11 in 2014-15. There were 4,787 colleges exclusively for women. Still, is access by itself sufficient? Is the system only focused on increasing seats? Is it building mechanisms to connect education with employment? Shouldn't a degree help a young woman enter work and advance in her career? These are questions that need to be taken seriously.

But this is where current reforms are important. PM Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (PM-USHA) aims to strengthen state higher education, with the explicit target of enhancing employability through market-linked courses, industry collaborations, internships, apprenticeships, skill-based modules, open and distance learning, accreditation support and outcome monitoring. Many states are already benefiting from the scheme. Globally, there is a concern about the lower participation of women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics streams. It is true that in India, too, women's participation in engineering



and tech is lower, while that in general science is promising. AISHE reports that over 31 percent of the total students in engineering and tech at the latest count were women. In science, it's higher at 54.6 percent. But are there targeted pathways to encourage them to pursue engineering, computing, artificial intelligence, electronics and data-intensive fields? Several such opportunities exist. The department of science and technology's Vigyan Jyoti programme supports girls in classes 9 to 12 to pursue STEM. The All India Council for Technical Education's Pragati scholarship supports girls in technical education. Every IIT has a fifth female enrolment in undergraduate programmes under female supernumerary seats. Such interventions are useful. In JEE (Advanced) 2026, 10,107 female candidates

qualified, making India's premier engineering institutions welcome more female students.

Financial inclusivity is necessary for the transition. PM-Vidyalaxmi provides collateral-free, guarantor-free education loans for women admitted to higher education institutions every year. Safety and dignity are equally central. UGC's regulatory framework covers anti-ragging, promotion of equity, prevention and redress of sexual harassment, student committees and ombudsperson systems.

Faculty representation is another area where the evidence is encouraging. AISHE records almost 45 percent of over 17.32 lakh teachers in 2023-24 to be women. There are 82 women teachers for every 100 men. Agree, the parity needs to improve. But, it is up from 63 in 2014-15. There is an increase of over 36 percent in the female faculty strength in the decade. As more women enter postgraduate and doctoral education, this faculty pipeline should be strengthened further. In UGC-NET December 2025, a national-level entrance test for PhD fellowships, almost 59 percent of the registered candidates were female.

The Periodic Labour Force Survey 2025 reports that among women aged 15 and above, the worker-population ratio is 32.4 percent for graduates and 42.9 percent for postgraduates. It's a clear indication that education matters for women, particularly digital skills, apprenticeships and formal-sector growth. The National Apprenticeship Training Scheme provides holders of graduate, diploma and vocational certificates with 6-12 months of on-the-job training and a stipend. It can help young women acquire work culture, soft skills, technical exposure and employer confidence before entering full-time employment.

The evidence so far is clear. Women's access to higher education is increasing at scale, irrespective of their social or economic circumstances. We should continue to widen these opportunities from classroom to career, so that women not only enter higher education in large numbers but also move confidently into work that matches their learning, talent and ambition.

Education, women at heart of Vijay's first budget, revenue gaps remain

Even when prioritising long-term investment in education and infrastructure, the government has not abandoned populist welfare

The debut budget of the Vijay-led TVK government in Tamil Nadu, unveiled amid high expectations, has focused on youth and women. Mindful of the state's growing debt and revenue challenges, it has consciously avoided big-bang announcements. At the same time, it has sought to expand the scope of social welfare measures.

The proposals to gift an 8-gram gold coin to every bride and a 1-gram gold ring to every newborn delivered in a government hospital use the amber metal to provide a safety cushion at pivotal life moments, scheme titles such as Annan Seer Thittam (Brother's Wedding Gift) and Thai Maaman Thanga Mothiram Thittam (Maternal Uncle's Gold Ring Scheme) reflect a patriarchal approach. At the same time, the plans for maternity care centres for pregnant women across the state and shelter homes offering counselling and rehabilitation support to transgender persons have won the hearts of many. Even when prioritising long-term investment in education and infrastructure, the government has not abandoned populist welfare. Although enhanced social security and free laptops for



college students, an essential learning resource today, dominated the budget, it also bats for strengthening public infrastructure through school modernisation, digital libraries, integrated student hostels and skill development programmes. Vijay has made education a clear priority, with the budget allotments including a ₹2,132-crore scheme for infrastructure improvement at 3,734 schools

and providing over 5.3 lakh high-school students with bicycles and helmets.

What remains to be revealed is how the government will boost its revenues. The budget mentions various reforms that are expected to generate an additional ₹15,000 crore. The white elephant of the state electricity board's debt must be tackled through a gradual tariff hike. Tax leakage in liquor retail needs to be plugged with a more robust enforcement and monitoring system.

This government has claimed that the outgoing one's interim budget had inflated infrastructure project costs, and has reduced the capital expenditure allocation for 2026-27 in the revised estimates. Despite this, the state's outstanding debt, projected to rise to ₹11.12 lakh crore by the end of the fiscal year, remains a major concern, even though the burden as a share of revenue receipts has slightly declined. It would not be a surprise if the government deploys other means sometime soon to enhance revenues as it seeks to increase capital expenditure and fulfil its electoral promises.

Force must be used as a last resort

Frontline personnel carrying out lawful orders from their superiors should not be made scapegoats

THE Cockroach Janta Party has sought action against the police personnel involved in the crackdown on protesters in New Delhi on July 20, during which a student was injured in pellet firing. Rahul Gandhi, Leader of the Opposition, has endorsed this demand. Having handled countless crowds throughout my career — starting soon after my early days of training at Mount Abu (Rajasthan) — I have learned that a mob possesses a distinct, volatile personality of its own. The central objective of mob management is to pierce that collective personality and force its constituent members to think once again as individuals. To achieve this, the application of force is sometimes necessary. However, force is not always the only answer. Early in my career as the Additional Commissioner of Police (Crime) in Mumbai, I managed to disperse an agitated mob without using any force whatsoever. The incident happened in Malad, where boys playing cricket got into a fierce argument. One of them hit another with a bat, causing his death. The assailant happened to be the son of a known gambling den operator from a minority community, while the victim was a Gujarati boy. Enraged, a large group of youths and local residents staged a massive dharna on the Western Express Highway right outside the Malad police station, blocking the vital artery connecting Mumbai to Ahmedabad. Although the local police had already taken the perpetrator into custody, the crowd was dissatisfied. They demanded that the boy be handed over to them, presumably to face street justice. A tense standoff ensued. I was ordered by the Police Commissioner to resolve the deadlock and restore traffic, which had been paralysed for hours. Rather than marching in with batons, I approached the protesting youths and asked them to explain what had happened, pretending that I was unaware of the details. Eager to be heard, they recounted the incident while I

listened patiently. I then asked them, "Was the match played right here on the highway?"

"No," they replied, "it was inside the neighbourhood." I suggested that they take me to the exact spot so that I could inspect it myself. Eager to cooperate, the crowd led me away from the highway. Like the Pied Piper, I managed to draw the entire crowd off the main thoroughfare. Traffic resumed smoothly and the situation was defused through dialogue and patience, without a single blow being struck. Of course, the incident also exposed police negligence regarding the illegal gambling den operated by the assailant's father; I ordered his operations shut down immediately. The principle of using the minimum necessary force must strictly guide a command officer at all times. While every officer is trained in the riot drill protocol, the heat of the moment can cause ground commanders to lose sight of this doctrine. A competent police leader must remain calm and composed, systematically dismantling the mob's collective energy.

However, relying strictly on minimal force is not always practical when a crowd turns violent. In such critical moments, a leader must make a split-second decision before control is lost entirely.

During the late 1960s, the Shiv Sena launched protests in Mumbai against "outsiders". The party decided to prevent then Union Finance Minister Morarji Desai from entering the city unless he accepted a petition about their grievances. When the police blocked the protesters' path, the demonstration descended into violent rioting. Shops belonging to non-Maharashtrians were looted and set ablaze. As the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) in

charge of the Dadar area, I confronted a destructive mob at Gol Dak Khana. Sensing that peaceful persuasion and mild force were no longer viable, I made a tough call. I ordered a state reserve police jawan to fire a round from a rifle. As a result, the rioters scattered instantly.

Political interference will complicate these high-stress



situations. A state Home Minister has no business micro-managing field operations or overruling police protocol. During the 1965 communal riots in Pune, the Home Minister sent his personal security officer to instruct field commanders — and even the Army units called in to assist — not to open fire under any circumstances. As the DCP in charge of a severely destabilised area, I chose to ignore that verbal directive and ordered a round to be fired. Rioting ceased soon; the lawbreakers realised that the

police would not hesitate to enforce the law. During the subsequent judicial inquiry, the Home Minister denied issuing the "no-firing" directive. It was a stark lesson for field officers who must rely on established rules of engagement, not the whims of ministers.

Years later, during the 1984 Mumbai riots, the government insisted on deploying the Army despite my assessment as Police Commissioner that it was unnecessary. I eventually conceded, but insisted on a counter-condition: the immediate preventive detention of Shakra Pramukhs (local Sena ward leaders) who were inciting violence. Supported by then Chief Secretary RD Pradhan, I instructed all 51 Senior Inspectors that I would tolerate no leniency in arresting these key organisers. Though the Chief Minister faced immense pressure from Shiv Sena chief Balasaheb Thackeray to release his men, we held them in detention for 12 days, successfully breaking the momentum of the riots. Reflecting on recent events at Jantar Mantar involving student protesters, I am puzzled by the handling of the situation. The Delhi Police reported that over 200 known anti-social elements embedded themselves among the protesters to incite violence. Preventive detention of such persons before major rallies is standard policing protocol across the country. Why weren't they rounded up in advance? Leaving them unchecked invited predictable chaos.

Handling volatile crowds is a complex task — backseat driving is easy. Field officers do not take pleasure in confrontation; they take high-stakes, split-second decisions under immense pressure. If a mistake is made, it is not done on purpose.



High Blood pressure:

Exercise and tips

Commonly referred to as a 'silent killer', high blood pressure or hypertension is a leading cause of death globally.

of developing hypertension. Family history Having a family history of high blood pressure places you at a greater risk of developing the condition. Lifestyle issues It is a well-known fact that your lifestyle can affect your risk of developing it. Major lifestyle flaws include high intake of alcohol, excessive smoking, too much salt and not eating sufficient fruits and vegetables.

Tips to prevent and control:

One of the primary



This is largely due to unawareness regarding early detection and cure. In India, around 16 per cent of people above 20 years of age suffer from high blood pressure. However, a single high reading does not necessarily imply that you have hypertension. Moreover, even if you were informed recently that you have the condition; there is absolutely no reason to panic. All you need are some basic lifestyle tips and a well-planned exercise routine and you will be as fit as a fiddle.

Overview:

High blood pressure or hypertension is a medical condition when the difference between the maximum (systolic) and minimum (diastolic) pressures exerted by the circulating

blood on your blood vessels increases the desirable value (above 90-119 systolic and 60-79 diastolic).

Prime risk factors:

Some of the major factors that increase your risk of developing the condition are: Age Increased levels of blood pressure are closely associated with age and the effects of an unhealthy lifestyle gradually build up. Ethnicity Generally, it is observed that people belonging to the African-Caribbean and South-Asian communities have increased probability

ps to ensure that you do not develop the condition is by adopting a healthy lifestyle. By healthy lifestyle, we refer to the complete cycle of following a healthy eating plan, and moderate indulgences. Broadly, the prevention and control tips can be segregated into:

- Maintaining a healthy weight -



Practice moderation if you drink alcohol - Quitting smoking - Regulating the excessive intake of salt and sodium - Frequent

regulation of your health by visiting health care professionals at periodic intervals.

Exercise tips for managing blood pressure:

Becoming active and incorporating regular physical activity in your day-

to-day living helps make your heart stronger. This, in turn, can lead your heart to pump more blood with less effort, thereby lowering the force on your arteries and the subsequent reduction of blood pressures.

Aerobic training This form of training can have a major influence on your blood pressure levels. This can include anything from walking, running and hiking to biking and even swimming. On an average, target at least 30 minutes of aerobic activity for most days of the week. In case, you are unable to manage this

time set, you can also opt for shorter bursts of activity as they count too.

Weight training Although these exercises can lead to sudden spikes in your blood pressure levels, they can have long term benefits. Make sure that you consult a physician before embarking on any weight training programs.

Yoga and meditation In order to prevent this condition, yoga postures and meditation techniques should also be incorporated in your daily routine. The prime effect of these fitness programs is that they help combat stress and saturate the mind with tranquility.

Deep-breathing exercises According to a recent research published in the American Journal of Hypertension, a person can regulate his blood pressure level by 'harnessing' the

body's own natural pressure regulator. Breathing techniques are easy and effective ways to curb elevated levels of blood pressure. Regular and right breathing techniques can help you maintain normal blood pressure.

However, for long term effects, always remember that you will have to follow these exercise and lifestyle tips on a regular basis. The benefits last as long as you continue with the planned fitness regime.

'Fitness at workplace' is the latest mantra in the corporate world. Companies have realised that regular exercise boosts employee morale, enhances productivity,

reduce

s absenteeism and signs of burnout or depression.

Nowadays, the corporate employees not only stretch themselves beyond their responsibilities, but also stretch their muscles in the office gym.

A little bit of planning and a few small additions in one's office routine can help one a healthier lifestyle. According to a World Health Organisation report, India could incur losses to the tune of \$237 billion by 2015 due to rise in lifestyle diseases like heart disease, diabetes, stroke and cancer, because of unhealthy workplaces.

Here are some easy everyday things you can do to get healthy and fit while at your workplace:

Stay hydrated:

Water helps your body with physical and mental performance, detoxification and

Fun ways to keep

fit in your office

avoid monotony.

Make reasons to walk around:

Give yourself several reasons to take a break and move around after every 40 minutes. Simply getting up and moving around for a few moments can keep you focused, less fatigued and feeling better. For example, avoid ordering a cup of coffee/ tea at your desk, go and get it yourself or while speaking with someone on cell phone walk around till you end the call. Get down from your car if driven by a chauffeur a few blocks before your office and walk the remaining distance provided you leave home 10 to 15 minutes before your usual time.

Hit the office gym in lunch hours:

Try to exercise for 30 minutes during the lunch time and grab a bite at your desk afterwards. Encourage having an area of a simple gym in your office. It could be jogger or a stationary bicycle or a treadmill.

Simple stretching:

People often face stress, back and joint pains and weight gain problems at work. To get rid of such health problems, while sitting in your chair, flex your feet and circle your ankles, stretch your legs and arms as frequent as you can.

Take the stairs:

Whenever possible, get moving and take the stairs rather than the elevator. Taking stairs will keep you fit and energetic.

Pack healthy snacks:

Rather than buying chips, junk food and sodas during office hours, bring some granola, fruit or raw veggies to snack on. This healthy diet will keep your energy levels fit and steady.

Conduct meetings on the go:

When it's practical, schedule walking meetings or brainstorming sessions. Do laps inside your building or take your walking meetings outdoors.

Participate in different office games:

Office games such as table tennis, basket ball are an interesting way to keep healthy and fit. These games not only keep your energy levels high but also keep your body in good shape.

Use neem oil, garlic for mosquito free home

As the national capital battles one of its worst dengue seasons, experts suggest natural methods like neem and coconut oil concoction or garlic to keep the mosquito-borne tropical disease at bay.

Neem oil acts as a great indoor mosquito-repellent owing to its smell that wards off mosquitoes. One can make an effective insecticide by mixing neem oil and coconut oil in equal proportion and rub it on the exposed parts of a body.

- Another natural method to keep mosquitoes at bay is to plant Tulsi near the window panes. The plant has properties that do not allow mosquitoes to breed.

- A mixture of lemon oil and eucalyptus oil is extremely effective in warding off mosquitoes naturally. Both have the active component cineole in it carrying antiseptic and insect repellent properties, which makes them effective when applied to the skin.

- Camphor is an easily available ingredient that kills mosquitoes in a house. Made from the extract of a tree, this compound has been found to have the longest mosquito repellent effect as compared to other natural products. Burning camphor in a closed room can be extremely effective in keeping mosquitoes at bay.

- Garlic might smell bad, but that is exactly why mosquitoes stay away. All you need to do is crush a few pods of garlic, boil them in water and spray the liquid in the room.





Your cell phone can give you Cancer

Mobile is an inseparable part of our life. We are completely dependent on our mobile phones and everyone has it, even school children. We are pretty sure that most of us are Nomophobias at least till some extent. You may have read reports that this tiny, super functional gadget can be life threatening, but is it the truth? There are reports that radiation can even turn your brain into an omelette. We did a little research and got you some factual answers.

Radiation from your mobile?
Yes! Radiation is present from mobile phone in the form of electromagnetic waves. Through a particular radio frequency on these electromagnetic waves, you are able to make and receive calls. The radiation emission is present in small amounts from your mobile as these emissions are of short range waves.

Radiation absorption
Small amount of radio waves emitted from your mobile is

absorbed by the body. According to Wikipedia - the maximum power output from a mobile phone is regulated by the mobile phone standard. In most systems the mobile and the base station check reception quality, signal strength and the power level. It is increased or decreased automatically within a certain span to accommodate different situations - when you are inside or outside the building or vehicle.

The rate at which energy is absorbed by the human body is measured by the Specific Absorption Rate (SAR). SAR data for specific mobile phones, along with other useful information, can be found directly on manufacturers' websites.

Effects by mobile radiation
The effects can be of two types - thermal and non-thermal.

Thermal effects
One of the most common effects by electromagnetic waves is dielectric heating. When a person uses a cell phone, most of the heating effect will occur at the surface of the head. This heating can increase your head temperature by a fraction of a degree. However this heat is less than the heat obtained by sunlight. The blood circulation isn't affected much, as the brain's blood circulation is capable enough to deal with excess heat, but the cornea of the eyes is not accustomed to a lot of heat.

Non-thermal effects
The communications procedure used by mobile phones often result in low-frequency pulse from the carrier signal.

"Non-thermal effects" could be reinterpreted as a normal cellular response to an increase in temperature. This heat can activate several messenger system, gene expression and production of heat shock protein in order to defend the cell against stress caused by heat.

According to a study conducted by The Journal of the American Medical Association - exposure to radio frequency signal waves within parts of the brain closest to the cell phone antenna resulted in increased levels of glucose metabolism.

In non-thermal effects, following problems can be seen.

- Blood-brain barrier effects
- Cancer
- Cognitive effects
- Electromagnetic hypersensitivity like tingling sensation in the skin of the head, headache, dizziness, loss of mental attention etc.
- Sleep disorders
- Behavioural effects

Reduce the effect of phone radiation

In order to lower the effects of mobile phone radiation follow these simple steps:

Keep some distance Behind every phone packaging, in fine prints most of the mobile brands recommend to keep your cell at least 10millimeters away from your body. Learn to maintain some distance with your tiny buddy. It may sound difficult but it is not impossible.

Weak signal is bad
Cell phones release more radio frequency radiation when the signal is low. That means, if your signal is low avoid using your cell phone to prevent unnecessary harm.

Choose hands-free headsets
Always choose hands-free headsets, as it will help to reduce the radiation emissions to the brain.

Switch sides
Change hands (and ears) frequently while talking on your cell phone to limit the amount of exposure to one side of your head.

Use speakers to dial numbers
The radiofrequency radiation is strongest when your phone is attempting to place a call, so hold it away from your head until you hear someone pick up.



5 habits to avoid for better Sleep

If you're sleep-deprived get rid of these patterns of behaviour, today...

Nighttime snacking
It might be tempting to reach out for that slice of uneaten pizza or a box of doughnuts, but this is actually one of the most common habits that can keep folks from getting shuteye. Late night eating is said to cause a gastro esophageal reflux disorder, in which where the stomach acid goes back into the esophagus causing acid reflux, say experts. This gives acidity and makes a person feel uncomfortable.

Exercising very late
Exercise is certainly a good habit but doing so in the late hours of the day is unwise. Experts outline the connection between a lower body temperature and achieving quality sleep. When you exercise it raises the body temperature and increases the metabolism. So, while this works

well during the day, it's not ideal if you want to get into sleep mode.

Watching too much TV
Unfortunately the TV set is believed to be a part of the bedroom, but actually watching your fav crime or drama shows from your bed can set the pulse racing and make the rain too active. Also an exposure to violent programming is said to cause nightmares. Doctors advise meditation or prayer that helps to relax the system. One may also curl up and read a book.

Working after hours
Most people tend to either spend late hours at the office or bring work home for late night. But this habit can cause stress and tension that leads to insomnia and loss of appetite. Pouring over a work presentation, number crunching or talking to colleagues can make the mind very alert, and push up adrenalin and stress levels — quite the opposite scenario for a restful night.

Talking too much
Sometimes due to hard schedules, finding time to talk with your spouse at bedtime might seem like the only option. However, if the conversation escalates into an argument, it can shoot up energy levels and cause feelings of anger and fear that takes away sleep. Fights also make it impossible to fall asleep afterwards. The ideal thing to do is make time for settling issues and important topics at some time during the day.



Foods You should learn to love

Experts say that more often than not, this is based on an irrational dislike from your childhood or even that the food hasn't been prepared the right way. But by refraining from certain foods, you may actually be missing out on certain nutrients which are so essential for good health. Here are some of the most commonly hated foods, which you should include in your diet...

Mushrooms
Unless you're allergic to mushrooms, there is no reason why you shouldn't include them in your diet. Make an effort and get used to the taste and texture of mushrooms, which are rich in proteins and B vitamins and are also the only vegetable to naturally contain Vitamin D.

Celery
This crunchy vegetable is full of nutrients like vitamin K, potassium and folate, is known to lower blood pressure and is also low in calories. Blend some celery and add it to a soup.

Brussels sprouts
Rich in vitamins K, C and omega-3 fatty acids, Brussels sprouts are also high in cancer-fighting substances (glucosinolates). To ensure that they tempt your tastebuds, opt for fresh sprouts rather than frozen, and never overcook them so as to avoid their unpleasant smell.

Fish
Are you among those who is put off simply by the smell of fish and consequently refuses to touch it? Whether it is the smell, texture or bones that put you off, here's something that will help change your mind. Fish have great sources of protein and the oily kinds are also packed with omega-3 fatty acids, which is good for your heart and brain. To make fish more appetising, have it with a healthy marinade to enhance its flavour.

Tomatoes
Some people dislike tomatoes in any form, while others stay away from the raw fruit but have no qualms about eating it in a sauce or cooked form. Fortunately research says that the antioxidant lycopene is better absorbed by your body when it is eaten in a processed/

cooked form than the raw variety. Lycopene is known to fight heart disease and cancer.

Broccoli
If not cooked correctly, almost no one will say they like broccoli. So instead, skip soggy, boiled broccoli for a recipe that is tastier. Rich in antioxidants, you could try lightly roasting broccoli with olive oil, garlic and seasoning.

Tofu
Tofu has a great protein quantities, cholesterol-lowering properties and contains phytoestrogens, which are known to help alleviate symptoms of menopause. To give it some flavour, experts recommend marinating it with soy sauce before cooking.

Avocados
The texture of avocados may seem unappetising but this healthy fruit is high in vitamin E, potassium and essential fatty acids and great for your heart and skin. Blend avocados with lemon juice, oil and seasoning. It becomes a healthy alternative to mayonnaise.

Peanut butter
Peanut butter has several health benefits, which include lowering cholesterol levels and keeping heart disease at bay. To dilute the stickiness of the spread, add it to a salad dressing.



CAG report flags lapses in Delhi's power subsidy scheme, e-procurement system

Delhi. (Agency)

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report for 2022-23, tabled by Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Friday, raised concerns over shortcomings in Delhi's electricity subsidy scheme. On electricity subsidies, the audit found that subsidy expenditure had increased from Rs 2,405.59 crore in 2019-20 to Rs 3,161 crore in 2022-23. It stated that the policy "did not target the deserving and disadvantaged section of the population and paid it to nearly the entire domestic consumer base."

The report also observed that over 50,000 consumers with zero electricity consumption for more than a year received Rs 17.81 crore in subsidies, while the regulatory assets of Delhi's

electricity distribution companies (DISCOMs) rose from Rs 9,063 crore in 2019-20 to Rs 27,200.37 crore by March 31, 2021.

The CAG audit also questioned the provision of subsidies for consumption up to 400 units. It noted that there was no concrete basis on record for fixing this limit, despite the scheme covering nearly 80 per cent of domestic consumers.

Under the subsidy policy, more than 30 lakh consumers using 0-200 units of electricity received an average annual subsidy of Rs 6,000. Meanwhile, around 16.60 lakh consumers using more than 200 units received an average annual subsidy of over Rs 10,000 per connection, which was nearly 70 per cent higher than that received by consumers with lower consumption.

The CAG recommended that the government review the electricity subsidy policy and make it more transparent.

E-procurement system under scanner

Bidders in Delhi government's e-procurement system used common PAN numbers and identical email IDs, pointing to possible collusion and cover bidding, the CAG report has found out.

The report, which examined the system between 2017-18 and 2022-23, found that in 7,181 tenders worth Rs 3,217.44 crore, involving 14,527 valid bids, bidders had used the same IP addresses, indicating a conflict of interest.

In 45 tenders worth Rs 530.25 crore,

bidders registered with a common PAN number bid in the same tender, suggesting possible collusion. Separately, 12,283



bidders were found to have used just 5,658 email IDs between them, allowing multiple registrations under a single ID. Further, in 38 tenders worth Rs 2.52

crore, all bids came from bidders registered with the same email ID, pointing to suspected cover bidding.

The audit also flagged 66 bidders who were allowed to register without mandatory PAN details, of whom 12 participated in 28 valid bids. Other lapses included registrations without date of birth details, departmental users logging in after superannuation, and decryption of financial packets before technical evaluation.

Other irregularities flagged

Further, the report flagged several other lapses, including revenue leakages, procedural lapses, and avoidable expenditure related to the Delhi government's Finance Department, Revenue Department, and Trade and Taxes Department.

Delhi Fire Services receives over two dozen calls related to house collapses

Delhi. (Agency)

The Delhi Fire Services (DFS) has received more than two dozen calls related to house collapses, portions of buildings giving way and fallen trees since midnight as heavy rain battered the capital on Friday. However, no one was injured in these incidents. According to the fire department, in one of the incidents, three women were trapped inside a house after a tree collapsed onto the structure. Firefighters rescued all of them safely, he said.

The fire department said nine calls pertained to either complete house collapses or portions of buildings giving way. The rain pounded several parts of the city throughout the day, inundating roads, disrupting normal life and affecting vehicular movement across the city. Authorities were working to clear fallen trees and restore normal traffic movement while civic agencies monitored vulnerable buildings and waterlogged areas as the rain continued in parts of the city.



The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) also said that it has received several complaints of tree fall and waterlogging from across the city following heavy rain on Friday.

According to the Central Control Room report of the civic body, tree-fall incidents were reported from Keshavpuram, South, Central, West and Civil Lines zones, while complaints of waterlogging were also received during the period.

CAG flags discrepancies in Delhi's power subsidy scheme

New Delhi. (Agency)

Delhi's electricity subsidy policy has failed to target the disadvantaged section of the population, with its benefits being reaped by higher consumption bracket consumers.

With an outgo of Rs 3,161 crore in 2022-23, more than 30 lakh consumers within the 0 to 200 unit consumption bracket received an average per connection subsidy of Rs 6,000 per annum, whereas approximately 16.6 lakh consumers, with consumption of more than 200 units, received an approximately 70% higher average subsidy per connection of over Rs 10,000 per annum, according to the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report tabled by Chief Minister Rekha Gupta in the Delhi Assembly on Friday.

The report said the rationale for having a high threshold value of 400 units of consumption, which covered approximately 80% of the domestic consumers, was not found on record.

The audit observed that the subsidy policy of the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi for the power sector did not target the disadvantaged section of the population and paid it to nearly the entire domestic consumer base. It further noted that the subsidy outgo per consumer was higher for higher consumption bracket consumers. The audit report covered a period of four fiscal years from 2019-20 to 2022-23. As per the report, over 50,000 consumers had zero consumption for more than 12 months straight and were provided a subsidy of Rs 17.81 crore.

Further, more than 90,000 consumers received a subsidy of Rs 11.88 crore for continuous zero consumption for six to 11 months and more than 1.7 lakh consumers had continuous zero consumption for periods between three and five months and got subsidy of Rs 12.57 crore.

SC raps Ghaziabad hospitals, says pay Rs 12L to 4-year-old rape victim's kin

New Delhi. (Agency)

The Supreme Court on Friday came down heavily on two private hospitals in Ghaziabad for allegedly refusing to treat a four-year-old rape and murder victim and ordered them to pay Rs 12 lakh compensation to her family.

"St Joseph Hospital will pay Rs 10 lakh and Khajan Singh Manvi Healthcare will pay Rs 2 lakh within four weeks to the victim's family," said a bench of CJI Surya Kant, Justice Joymalya Bagchi and Justice V Mohana on Friday.

The top court said that it would also frame guidelines for hospitals and the police on the handling of victims of heinous crimes. Observing that clear directions were necessary, the bench invited suggestions from the

amicus curiae on addressing the gap between the existing legal framework and its implementation.

The matter stems from the alleged sexual assault of a four-year-old girl



on March 16, 2026. According to the case, the child was allegedly lured away by a neighbour with the promise of chocolate and was later found unconscious and bleeding in a field behind a school.

Senior Advocate Hariharan

submitted to the apex court that the girl survived for five hours after the assault. Both hospitals had the facilities.

Yet they refused admission and transferred her without even giving basic treatment like a blood transfusion," he argued. Referring to the importance of immediate medical care, Hariharan pointed out that while heart attack victims benefit from the "golden hour", the four-year-old child in the case remained without effective treatment for nearly five hours after suffering severe injuries.

Justice Bagchi said that Article 21 of the Constitution imposes a duty on every hospital to preserve life. "Like cardiac cases, sexual assault victims need immediate care in the golden window. You cannot wash your hands off," he said.

NEET question paper leak accused used blank cheques for payment guarantee: CBI

Delhi. (Agency)

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has claimed in its chargesheet that the NEET-UG 2026 paper leak was organised through a multi-state criminal conspiracy involving the National Testing Agency (NTA) experts, middlemen, and candidates.

The CBI alleged that coaching operators and intermediaries systematically established contact with the subject experts well before the examination process, adding that several accused maintained continuous communication with the experts, arranged meetings and facilitated payments to secure access to the confidential papers.

The final report claimed that the paper-leak network used WhatsApp, Telegram and digital files to circulate question

papers before the exam, adding that the NTA experts were recruited into conspiracy months before the exam, and the coaching network allegedly paid



lakhs for confidential papers.

The agency has alleged that the conspiracy behind the paper leak was not a last-minute operation but "a carefully planned exercise". It alleged that the subject experts used to obtain confidential question papers, which

passed through a chain of intermediaries to candidates in exchange for huge sums of money.

The charge sheet claimed that the original educational certificates, blank signed cheques, and other documents were exchanged between members of the network as security for payments promised after delivery of the leaked question papers.

The CBI has arrayed 13 accused, including three NTA-appointed subject experts, in its charge sheet. The agency has claimed that forensic analysis of seized electronic devices, chat records, recovered documents, and witness statements collectively establish the alleged criminal conspiracy, abuse of official position by public servants, and illegal circulation of confidential examination material.

Private varsities bill gets Delhi cabinet nod

New Delhi. (Agency)

In a major boost for higher education, the Rekha Gupta government has approved the draft Bill for the establishment and incorporation of private universities in the National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi. With the nod of the Delhi Cabinet, the Bill will now be introduced in the Assembly for consideration and passage.

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said the Bill would mark the beginning of a new era in higher education in Delhi. The proposed legislation seeks to create a modern, transparent and effective legal framework for the establishment of world-class private universities in the Capital. It is aimed at providing students with



better academic opportunities and promoting research and innovation. The initiative is in line with the spirit of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

CM Gupta said, "Delhi has remained one of the few major regions without a clear legal framework for the establishment of private universities. As a result, a large number of students had to move to neighbouring states or abroad in search of quality higher education. Students will have the opportunity to study at world-class higher education institutions within their own city."

The Bill will pave the way for internationally acclaimed educational institutions and their off-campus centres to establish a presence in Delhi. Keeping Delhi's geographical limitations and limited land availability in mind, the Bill does not insist on the traditional model of large land-based campuses.

Greater emphasis will be placed on academic quality, student facilities, etc. This will enable the development of modern, multi-storey urban campuses suited to a land-constrained metropolis like Delhi.

Paper leak racket busted: Chandigarh fireman 'Paperwala' among 7 held

Delhi. (Agency)

Two candidates appearing for a Lower Divisional Clerk (LDC) examination at the Central Sanskrit University in Delhi were allegedly caught using concealed electronic devices to receive answers, leading the Delhi Police to an interstate paper-leak syndicate allegedly being run for more than two years by a Chandigarh Fire Department fireman, officers said. The fireman, Sonu Kumar, also known as "Paperwala", was arrested while allegedly trying to broker the leak of another Haryana government examination, police said.

Apart from Sonu, the six arrested accused have been identified as job aspirants Arti and Hemant; Hemant's brother Rinku; Sanni, who worked as a staffer at the Delhi University; and Deepak and Virender, who worked as middlemen.

How police busted the racket

On July 26, candidates were appearing for an exam for the post of Lower Divisional Clerk (LDC) at the Central Sanskrit

University in Delhi. Minutes into the examination, invigilators in a room noticed something off, according to police. One of the candidates, Aarti (24), was constantly stretching her ear. She was found to be fiddling with a Bluetooth earpiece, and someone was constantly speaking to her. Soon, invigilators noticed another candidate Hemant (23) readjusting a button on his shirt. "It was not a button but a camera of a small Samsung phone. Since the camera is in the middle of the phone, it looked like a button from far away. He was also carrying a Bluetooth device fitted with a SIM card and had hidden tiny nano earbuds," said a senior police officer. Both were detained during the examination. Soon, what appeared to be an isolated case of malpractice turned into an investigation spanning three states and ended with the arrest of seven people, including Sonu Kumar.

Uncovering the racket

After an FIR was registered at Janakpuri Police Station under relevant sections of the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act and the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, investigators began questioning



the two candidates. Hemant allegedly told the police that the electronic devices had been arranged by his elder brother, Rinku, through another man, Virender.

"Rinku and Virender had known each other since long as they are from nearby villages in Rohtak," said a police officer. The so-called price "for clearing the

recruitment examination", investigators said, had been fixed at Rs 12 lakh.

Similar was the case of Aarti, who hails from Jind in Haryana. Her account details revealed a transaction of around Rs. 50,000 to a man named Sanni, who is also from a village near Aarti's. "She disclosed that her friend Sanni had supplied her with a customised mobile phone, Bluetooth device, SIM card and nano earbuds that would allow her to share the question paper from inside the examination hall and receive answers from outside," DCP Hareshwar Swami said. The arrangement, police said, was worth Rs 10 lakh, which was to be paid after Aarti qualified.

The disclosures led investigators to arrest Rinku and Virender. Sanni was arrested soon afterwards. During the questioning, he allegedly identified another man, Deepak, who, according to police, acted as an intermediary and coordinated candidates for the racket. Their deal, investigators said, had been struck for Rs 8 lakh.

Sinclairs Hotels posts excellent Q1 results, Net Profit up by 27.89 pc

New Delhi. (Agency)

Sinclairs Hotels Limited has posted excellent results for the first quarter ended 30th June, 2026, with its Net Profit recording a 27.89 per cent growth. During the quarter, it posted a Total Income of Rs.2470.30 lakh, an increase of 26.76% over Rs.1948.80 lakh in the corresponding quarter of the previous year.

EBIDTA for the quarter increased by 32.85% and stood at Rs.1294.58 lakh (Rs.974.46 lakh), while Profit Before Tax was up 29.65% and stood at Rs.1016.95 lakh (Rs. 784.38 lakh).

The Profit After Tax showed a healthy increase of 27.89% and stood at Rs.790.99 lakh as against Rs.618.48 lakh in the corresponding period of the previous year, a company statement here said.

It said the company continues to be debt free with strong fundamentals and its Equity (excluding Revaluation Reserves) stood at Rs.10743.59 lakh as on 31 st March, 2026.

Sinclairs Hotels presently operates a chain of nine hotels and resorts located at Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Burdwan, Siliguri, Dooars, Gangtok, Ooty, Port Blair, Haldighati (near Udaipur). Several of the company's properties namely Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Burdwan, Dooars, Port Blair and Ooty were recognised with TripAdvisor's Travellers' Choice Award 2026.

The company is poised for strong growth over the medium to long term, driven by the fast-tracking of multiple infrastructure projects in North Bengal including improved road, rail and airport connectivity.

Looking at the evolving business environment and substantial investments in infrastructure projects, it is focussing on growth and expansion in West Bengal where the Sinclairs brand enjoys strong recognition and goodwill.

Telangana to leverage AI to plug GST leakages, enhance revenue

New Delhi. (Agency)

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy today held discussions with noted economist and former Chief Economic Adviser Dr. Arvind Subramanian on leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI) to plug leakages in Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections and strengthen the State's revenue without affecting ease of doing business. During a meeting at the Bodhi Pavilion of the MCR Human Resource Development Institute (MCRHRD) here, the two reviewed the State's financial position and discussed reforms in the GST and Excise Departments to improve revenue mobilisation. The Chief Minister briefed Subramanian on measures initiated by the State Government to prevent leakages in GST collections and informed him that an AI-driven system was being developed to streamline the functioning of GST officials through data-based analytics. He said the proposed system would help improve tax collection while ensuring that traders and businesses do not face inconvenience. Subramanian stressed that technology should be used not only to enhance revenue collections but also to improve the Ease of Doing Business.

100% tariffs on India soon? US Senate clears Russia sanctions bill; 10 things to know

New Delhi. (Agency)

The US Senate on Friday approved a bill that could allow President Donald Trump to impose tariffs of up to 100% on goods from countries such as India and China that continue to buy Russian oil and gas and other exports, arguing that such trade helps sustain Moscow's economy and fund its war in Ukraine.

Here are 10 things to know about the legislation and what it could mean for India.

What is the bill?

The Senate passed the Lindsey O Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026 by an 86-11 vote. Named after the late Republican Senator Lindsey Graham, one of its principal architects, the bipartisan legislation seeks to increase economic pressure on Russia and Iran and target countries that continue to conduct significant energy trade with Moscow. The bill would give the US president the authority to impose tariffs of up to 100% on goods from the world's top five purchasers of Russian oil or natural gas, potentially including India and China. What other sanctions does the bill propose

The bill goes beyond tariffs on Russian oil buyers. It also proposes sanctions against Russian President Vladimir Putin, senior political and military officials, financial institutions, energy projects and other entities linked to Russia's war effort.

AI is creating more jobs than it cuts in India. But there's a catch

New Delhi. (Agency)

Artificial intelligence is expected to change the way millions of people work. In India, that change is already showing up in an unexpected way. Companies are creating more AI-related jobs than the number of jobs being lost to the technology.

India saw 83,100 AI-related hires, compared with 31,921 layoffs and attrition linked to AI, according to a Nomura report first accessed by Bloomberg News. That means there were about 2.6 AI-related hires for every job lost or affected. The numbers offer some relief at a time when AI has been blamed for everything from shrinking technology jobs to threatening entry-level employment.

But they also point to a more complicated change taking place in India's workforce. The jobs being created by AI are often not the same jobs that are disappearing.

Nomura economists Sonal Varma and Si Ying Toh looked at 69 employment-related cases across Asia, mostly covering the period from 2022 to August 2026. They found that India had the largest absolute impact from AI-related hiring and job losses among the countries studied. INDIA 'GROUND ZERO' FOR UNDERSTANDING IMPACT OF AI

The economists describe India as "ground zero" for understanding AI's impact on employment. That is because of the country's huge

workforce and its dependence on technology services and business-process outsourcing. For years, India's advantage in the global services industry has been its large pool of educated workers. Companies could hire thousands of people to handle

customer support, software testing, data processing and other routine tasks for clients around the world. AI is now changing the economics of some of that work. Nomura found that many of the job-loss cases in India involved support teams being replaced by chatbots. At the same time, many of the hiring cases involved IT-services graduates being recruited specifically because of demand linked to AI. So a company may need fewer people to answer routine customer queries, while hiring more people who can build or work with the AI systems handling those queries.



Mutual Funds: Sensex has fallen 8% in 2026; is it the right time to raise SIP?

New Delhi. (Agency)

When the equity market rises, many lay investors rush to put their money in SIPs or Systematic Investment Plans. When the market declines, many panic and pull their money out or stop their SIPs. But some intelligent investors know that pulling out in a falling market is often not the best strategy. Amid the ongoing decline in the Indian stock market, the question is rising in the minds of many mutual fund investors whether they should increase their SIP amount or continue investing as before. Most analysts will tell you that there is no need to panic about the current decline in the market. This is a normal fluctuation of the market and long term investors should

continue their SIP without stopping.

Fall on Sensex in 2026 According to reports, BSE Sensex was at 85188 on January 1, 2026. On August 7, 2026, it fell 6,607 points or 7.85% to reach 78,499.17 points. Shifting reference points, one can see that the benchmark index has fallen about 5.68% in the past six months and about 2.64% in the past one year.

Why the decline?

The markets are in turmoil for the following reasons:

Global uncertainty

Higher crude oil prices

Outflow of investment by Foreign Investors

Less than expected earnings of companies

Profit taking after high valuation

The right time to increase SIP?

Decline of about 8% constitutes

normal behavior for the equity market. Long term investors should not close SIP, market analysts and investment strategists say. More units are available at lower prices through SIP during market downturns. Rather than trying to time the market rightly, it is a better strategy to continue investing regularly.

What portfolio should be reviewed?

Analysts state that investors are advised to review their portfolio instead of panicking after seeing the market decline. If the investment in equity falls short of the target, then the portfolio can be rebalanced at this point. Investment decisions should be made based on your financial needs and asset allocation, not just by looking at market trends.

8th Pay Commission: If fitment factor is 2.57, what will be the pay hike?

New Delhi. (Agency)

For Pay Commission calculations, the fitment factor is the determinant for all pay hikes. Central government employees are keenly watching the fitment factor in the 8th Pay Commission. BankBazaar estimates that at a fitment factor of 2.57, the gross salary of a Level 8 employee could increase by approximately 68% to reach Rs 1.51 lakh. The 8th Pay Commission recommendations will also raise pension for all the Central government employees.

Hopes of pay hike in 8th Pay Commission

The 8th Pay Commission is a significant decision for central government

employees. The Commission held a meeting with employee and pensioner organisations in New Delhi on Friday, August 7, 2026. Issues related to salaries, pensions, working conditions and employee welfare were discussed. The Commission will also hold discussions with various



stakeholders in Chennai, Puducherry, Jaipur, and Chandigarh in August and September. Employees hope the Commission's recommendations will be released soon, paving the way for a new pay structure and salary increases. Fitment factor to decide basic salary

The fitment factor fixed by the 8th Pay Commission will play a key role in determining new basic salaries of employees. For example, if the fitment factor is 2.0, the current basic pay could nearly double. However, this does not necessarily mean that the employee's total gross salary will also double.

E20 is safe: Oil firms reject contamination claims after nationwide testing

SAN FRANCISCO. (Agency)

State-owned oil marketing companies—Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL)—on Thursday rejected recent claims of excessive chloride content and moisture contamination in ethanol-blended E20 petrol, saying an intensive nationwide testing exercise found no evidence to validate allegations of fuel contamination.

The three oil marketing companies said scientifically designed random tests conducted across the entire E20 fuel supply chain confirmed that fuel quality remains consistently within prescribed specifications and there is "no cause for alarm." The clarification comes amid recent reports raising concerns over possible contamination in Ethanol Blended Motor Spirit (EBMS), commonly sold as E20 petrol.

Indian Oil, BPCL and HPCL said the Government of India has prescribed stringent chloride specifications for ethanol used in petrol blending and instituted a high-frequency monitoring mechanism across refineries, distilleries, depots, terminals and retail outlets to ensure compliance throughout the supply chain. Indian Oil, BPCL and HPCL said they have further strengthened surveillance by conducting water-ingress and density tests eight to twelve times daily at every retail outlet. The three oil marketing companies have also deployed mobile fuel quality testing laboratories across locations, while test results are being independently validated through accredited fuel laboratories to ensure the highest standards of quality assurance.

REFINERY SAMPLES RECORD CHLORIDE BELOW 1 PPM

Indian Oil, BPCL and HPCL said more

than 100 randomly selected petrol samples collected from refineries across the country recorded chloride levels at or below 1 ppm. The companies said the results reaffirm



the effectiveness of quality control systems embedded in India's refining and dispatch process and demonstrate that petrol leaving refineries consistently meets prescribed quality standards.

ETHANOL FROM 80 DISTILLERIES ALSO WITHIN LIMITS

Indian Oil, BPCL and HPCL said a dedicated task force comprising officials from the three oil marketing companies and the Centre for High Technology (CHT) examined ethanol samples from 80 distilleries across the country over the past ten days. All the samples recorded chloride content below 3 ppm, significantly lower than the prescribed specification, reflecting robust quality control mechanisms at the ethanol production stage.

DEPOT AND TERMINAL TESTING REMAINS COMPLIANT

Indian Oil, BPCL and HPCL said testing of ethanol and E20 petrol at depots and tank truck terminals also found chloride content below 3 ppm. More than 80 samples collected from OMC terminals across the country met prescribed chloride limits, with regular monitoring ensuring fuel quality remains intact throughout storage and distribution.



year. Additionally, the price of edible oil increased by 11% and the price of cooking gas cylinders by 10%. The price increases in these three items increased the cost of home-cooked vegetables and other dishes. However, the impact of inflation was somewhat mitigated by the availability of potatoes and tomatoes.

The Crisil Intelligence report just a day after the RBI governor said that they are keeping a close vigil on food inflation, which is going to raise retail inflation figures and that the footprint is going to peak in Q3FY27 before inching down.

Chicken another culprit

The cost of a non-vegetarian thali increased by 9% year-on-year. This was largely due to the rising prices of onions and cooking gas as well as a 14% increase in the price of broiler chicken. Chicken accounts for nearly half of the total cost of a non-vegetarian thali. Therefore, the increase in chicken prices directly impacted the cost of the entire thali.

Maharashtra rains raise onion prices

According to the report, one reason for the persistence of onion prices is the supply of old and expensive stocks in the market.

‘Slogans’ for Umar Khalid, Mao books on laptop: Why 2 TISS students were denied anticipatory bail

Mumbai.(Agency)

Observing that students are expected to respect the law of the land, a Mumbai sessions court Friday rejected the anticipatory bail pleas of two TISS students accused of raising slogans seeking the release of Umar Khalid and Sharjeel Imam, who are facing trial under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), and of possessing downloaded books and other material that the prosecution said reflected Maoist ideology.

Seven others, who had also attended an October 2025 gathering to mark the death anniversary of former Delhi University professor G N Saibaba, were granted anticipatory bail. The pleas were filed in the same month.

The court held that while paying homage to Saibaba — he was acquitted in the case against him before his death — was not illegal, the allegations that the two students had raised slogans supporting Khalid and Imam, coupled with the material recovered from their electronic devices, weighed against grant of anticipatory bail.

FDA seizes over 500kg of unsafe food in star hotels in Bengaluru

BENGALURU.(Agency)

In one of the biggest food safety enforcement drives targeting luxury hospitality establishments, the Karnataka Food Safety and Drug Administration (FDA) on Friday conducted surprise inspections at 26 three-star and five-star hotels across Bengaluru, uncovering multiple violations ranging from expired food and fungal-contaminated vegetables to unhygienic kitchens and improper storage of meat products.

The special drive was carried out under the guidance of Health Minister UT Khader by 30 teams of Food Safety Officers across the city. The inspections were aimed at verifying compliance with the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, and the Food Safety and Standards (Licensing and Registration of Food Businesses) Regulations, 2011.

Officials collected 35 food samples, including tea powder, chicken, mutton, fish, edible oil, chilli powder, turmeric powder, tomato sauce, lemon juice, cheese, papad, cashew nuts, ginger, pepper powder, spice powder and milk. The samples have been sent to the Food Laboratory for analysis, and legal action will be initiated wherever violations are confirmed.

19-year-old drowns, friend missing in Kuakhai

BHUBANESWAR.(Agency)

A 19-year-old youth drowned while another went missing after being swept away by the swollen waters of Kuakhai river on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar on Friday. The deceased was identified as Rudra Narayan Swain of Dhauli and his missing friend Dibyajyoti Swain of Laxmisagar area in the capital city.

According to the police, Rudra, Dibyajyoti and two other friends had gathered on the riverbed near the Indrapal Sai Temple under Balianata police station limits for a feast.

Police suspect, one of the youths entered the river either to wash utensils or to take a bath but slipped into a deeper stretch and was swept away by the strong current. A friend rushed to rescue him but he too was caught in the current. Personnel of the Odisha Fire and Emergency Service rushed to the spot after receiving information about the incident around 2.30 pm. “The river was swollen and the water was around 30 ft to 40 ft deep. After an intensive search, the body of Rudra was recovered,” said a fire officer.

Search operations for Dibyajyoti continued till evening before being suspended due to fading light. The operation will resume on Saturday, said Balianata police station IIC Rashmita Behera.

‘Hefty salaries, irregularities’: After protests by student outfits, GU suspends 10 temporary officials

Action based on recommendation of panel probing irregularities in appointments made during last 3 years 'during the tenure of former Gujarat University VC Neerja Arun Gupta'

Ahmedabad.(Agency)

The Gujarat University on Friday suspended 10 officials with immediate effect based on the recommendation of a three-member committee, which was formed on August 5 following protests by student organisations alleging irregularities in the temporary appointments. While the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) staged a protest at Gujarat University’s Vice Chancellor office on Friday following a written complaint on August 4, the National Students’ Union of India (NSUI) demanded an ACB probe into the hefty salaries handed out to these officials and the irregularities in the appointments.

The suspended officials include Group CEO, CEO, Senior Vice President, Director, Professor of Practice, among in-charge Vice Chancellor Jagdishkumar Joshi said. The university constituted a three-member committee to look into the complaint submitted by ABVP on August 4 to the in-charge Vice Chancellor alleging violations of the University Grants Commission (UGC) rules in the temporary appointments in the Atal Incubation Centre – Gujarat University Startup and Entrepreneurship Council (AIC GUSEC), Centre for Professional Courses (CPC) and Pradhan Mantri Jan



other posts in various departments. Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK). These persons were paid excessively high salaries which caused a financial loss to the varsity, the ABVP has alleged.

‘A conspiracy hatched in jail’: Amid gang war for clout, Surat gangster killed

Ahmedabad.(Agency)

A 32-year-old gangster was murdered on Wednesday afternoon allegedly by his rival gang in front of his woman friend in Surat’s Bhestan, an area in the textile and diamond hub dominated by migrants, police said. The murder of Satish Dhagde alias Satish Maratha is suspected to be an outcome of gang rivalry to gain control of the area, police said, adding that nine persons, including three minors, were detained in connection with the murder.

The three minors were produced before the Juvenile Justice Board, which sent them to a remand home. The remaining accused, identified as Ketan Sirsath (19), Rahul Dubey (20),

Karan Dubey (20), Ajit Goswami (25), Akash Thakur (18) and Rahul Kapure (29), all residents of different areas in Surat, were produced before the Surat district



court which remanded them in police custody till August 12. The accused were arrested on the Songadh-Uchhal main

Around Town: From 500 sq ft cold drink house to 15,000 sq ft empire, inside Mohammad Ali Road’s Shalimar

Last month, Shalimar was under the spotlight after the Food and Drug Administration Maharashtra suspended its FSSAI license.

Mumbai.(Agency)

It is impossible to miss Shalimar restaurant if you are crossing Mohammad Ali Road. Started 56 years ago as a 500 sq ft ‘cold drink house’ serving falooda and fresh fruit juices, it is today spread across over 15,000 sq ft — a Mughlai restaurant with multiple dining halls, a fast food counter famous for its chaats and over 600 pizzas sold daily, a dedicated takeaway section, and a cafe launched last year, Reserve By Shalimar.

“It was started in 1970 by my grandfather Zainuddin Sheikh, who was the first to move to Mumbai from Jaunpur,” recalled Omaer Sheikh, 38, the third generation manning the business

with his brother Arquam Sheikh, 24, and their mother Ishrat Sheikh, 56. “Back in those days, he got a chef from Bhutan to make falooda and it became an instant hit, and till today, it continues to be one of the most sought after.” The falooda is



layered with housemade sugar syrup, vermicelli noodles and sabja seeds, topped with milk and finished with housemade ice cream. “We sell about 600 glasses on average, which goes up to 1000

on weekends and in summer, and beyond during Ramzan,” added Arquam.

In the late 1970s or early 1980s, adjacent shops were purchased and Shalimar became a restaurant serving hearty Mughlai food — Nalli Nihari, Mutton Biryani, Korma, Kadhai Gosht, Do Pyaaza among others. The restaurant expanded to a 400-seater under Omaer’s father Shahabuddin Sheikh, credited with introducing Shawarma to the city after sending a chef to Dubai to learn it. “I still remember our staff struggling to pronounce it correctly,” said Omaer, who started manning the eatery at 16 after his father’s sudden demise in 2004. “My younger brother Arquam was only two years old.

At Gujarat tourism fair, Israel among countries wooing travellers back post West Asia crisis

Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, who inaugurated the fair on Thursday, said it would play an important role in showcasing Gujarat when the state had declared 2025 as the “Year of Tourism.”

Gandhinagar.(Agency)

ORGANISED AGAINST the backdrop of the West Asia crisis, the three-day Travel and Tourism Fair 2026 at the Mahatma Mandir convention and exhibition centre in Gandhinagar saw several country and state representatives going all out to bring back tourists and business.

Israel, which was among those that saw a massive drop in tourist footfall, was in focus as the ‘featured country’ at the fair. Asked how tourism had been impacted since the West Asia Crisis, Marketing Director of the Israel Ministry of Tourism Amruta Bangera said, “It has been impacted but I think

we are growing”, highlighting that “it should not be a problem to reach the first destination that people travel to, becomes a perfect blend. It’s not the first destination that people travel to,



but if a person has already done Europe, US and UK they want something new and this is the perfect place where there is something new for everyone.”

Shut at 45, back at 97: How Mumbai’s 102-year-old Noor Mohammadi cooked its comeback

Mumbai.(Agency)

Ansari Tufail walked in at 5.45 pm sharp on Wednesday, the first customer through the doors of Noor Mohammadi Hotel in three weeks. The 50-year-old had come for the Nalli Nihari, but with the dish still hours away in its deg, he settled for what was ready. “My younger son and I tried at least four eateries in the neighbourhood, but the food here has a taste that cannot be replicated elsewhere. The coal they use gives the dishes a completely different flavour,” he said, planning to return with his son later that evening for his Nihari. The 102-year-old Mohammad Ali Road restaurant had been shut since mid-July, when Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration officials suspended its FSSAI licence after an inspection. The FDA alleged inspectors found thick layers of oil on the kitchen floors, open windows letting flies and crows into the kebab section, peeling paint and greasy walls, old and unclean utensils, no supplier records or drinking water quality reports, and inadequate pest control. The restaurant scored 45 points. On Tuesday, after a reinspection in which its score rose to 97, Noor Mohammadi received a stay order allowing it to reopen.

Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation points fingers at Irrigation wing for waterlogging

BHUBANESWAR.(Agency)

The blame game has begun over the waterlogging in several parts of Bhubaneswar after Thursday’s heavy rain, with the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) holding the Irrigation wing responsible for the flooding in areas along the Daya West Canal. Mayor Sulochana Das, who visited the waterlogged areas in wards 31, 32, 33, 43 and 45, alleged that the flooding was caused by a choked stretch of the canal within the city.

She said the clogged canal had led to waterlogging in the low-lying areas following the heavy rain. The Daya West Canal is under the control of the Irrigation wing, which is responsible for its maintenance and desilting, she said. “We have been repeatedly writing to them on this issue. The current chief secretary, who had earlier headed the irrigation wing, was also apprised of the matter in 2022, and we have continued to pursue it with the department.

NEWS BOX

10 years after Neeraj Chopra's gold, Ashish Yadav wins U20 Worlds javelin silver



Oregon. (Agency)

Ashish Yadav has given Indian javelin another reason to look forward, winning silver in the men's event at the 2026 World U20 Championships in Oregon, exactly a decade after Neeraj Chopra became the first Indian man to win a javelin medal at the competition. The 19-year-old produced a best throw of 74.09m to finish second behind South Africa's Jan-Hendrik Heymans, who won gold with 80.50m. Dominica's Addison James took bronze with 73.89m. Yadav's silver makes him only the second Indian man to stand on the World U20 Championships podium in javelin, following Chopra's gold in Bydgoszcz in 2016. Yadav's medal came after a final that demanded a response from him. He opened with 69.96m and then fouled his second attempt, putting himself under pressure early in the competition. He responded with his third throw, sending the javelin 74.09m to move into second place. He followed that with 72.31m, 70.62m and 67.98m, but none of the athletes behind him could produce a throw good enough to knock him off the podium. The performance was just short of Yadav's personal and season's best of 74.49m, but it was enough to deliver a major international medal at the biggest competition of his junior career.

YADAV MAKES HIS MOVE

The silver was not entirely unexpected after Yadav's performance in qualification. He topped Group A with 69.87m and finished second overall, behind Heymans, who won Group B with 76.02m. Heymans was the only athlete in qualifying to clear the automatic qualification mark of 72.50m.

Travis Head joins elite list with second straight Allan Border Medal

CHENNAI. (Agency)

Travis Head has become only the fifth Australian cricketer to win the Allan Border Medal in consecutive years after edging Alex Carey in a remarkably close contest for Australia's top men's individual cricket award. The left-hander was separated from Carey by just one vote, with Mitchell Starc finishing three votes behind him.

Head received his second successive medal from former Australia captain Allan Border at Friday's awards ceremony, making the occasion



particularly special for the 32-year-old. "I felt very privileged and honoured to have 'AB' in the room. That's the difference from last year's presentation in Sri Lanka, is having him there to present it," Head said, as quoted by cricket.com.au. The award caps another prolific year for Head, who finished the voting period as Australia's leading Test run-scorer while also topping the ODI batting charts. His performances across both formats ensured he remained at the centre of Australia's batting plans. To think that I've got two medals and my kids can look at them and I can tell them about it in 20 years' time is pretty cool. To have both India and England series in there for both medals is cool," he added.

ASHES HEROICS SEAL THE DEAL

Head's decisive contribution came during the New Year's Test at the SCG, where he struck 163. It was his third century of the Ashes series after he made an unexpected move to the opening position.

The missing continent no more: How Yan Diomande rewrote Real Madrid's transfer map

The Ivorian winger, Yan Diomande, is the first permanent African international signing since 2006 for Real Madrid. So, why did it take 20 years?

Glasgow. (Agency)

Real Madrid's signing of Yan Diomande has naturally been viewed through the lens of the club's evolving transfer strategy. At 19, the Ivorian winger fits the profile that has increasingly defined Madrid's recruitment in recent years – young, high-ceiling talent capable of developing into one of football's next global stars. Yet beyond the excitement surrounding his arrival lies a little-noticed statistic. With his move to the Santiago Bernabu now complete,

Diomande has become Real Madrid's first permanent men's first-team signing of an African international since Mahamadou Diarra arrived from Lyon in 2006. In the two decades since, Madrid have rebuilt multiple squads, won six Champions League titles and signed some of the biggest names in world football, yet no African international had joined the first team on a permanent transfer. The definition is important. Emmanuel Adebayor and Michael Essien both represented Real Madrid on loan. Achraf Hakimi graduated from the club's academy, while Brahim Diaz joined from Manchester City as a Spain youth international before later switching allegiance to Morocco. Under those parameters, Diarra remained the club's last African international to arrive as a permanent first-team signing until Diomande's arrival. That raises an intriguing question: why did Europe's

most successful club go nearly two decades without making a permanent transfer for an African international?

A TREND HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT

The answer is unlikely to lie in a shortage



of talent. Since Diarra arrived in Madrid, Africa has produced some of the defining footballers of the modern era. Didier Drogba became a Chelsea legend, Samuel Eto'o conquered Europe with Barcelona and Inter Milan, Yaya Toure transformed Manchester City's midfield,

while Mohamed Salah, Sadio Mane, and Riyad Mahrez established themselves among the world's elite.

Most followed a familiar pathway, developing through clubs in France, Belgium, Portugal or the Netherlands before reaching football's biggest stages.

Despite that wealth of talent, Real Madrid never made a permanent move for any of them. The pattern is easy to miss because it unfolds over years rather than transfer windows. In fact, the question first occurred to me almost by accident.

During the 2017-18 season, Karim Benzema was enduring one of the leanest scoring campaigns of his Real Madrid career, while Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang was scoring freely for Borussia Dortmund. Watching a match with a senior colleague, I wondered aloud whether Aubameyang would be the ideal striker for Madrid.

Andrew Flintoff steps down as England Lions head coach, joins Sydney Thunder in BBL

New Delhi. (Agency)

Andrew Flintoff has stepped down as head coach of the England Lions after nearly two years in the role, bringing his stint with the country's second-string side to an end as he prepares to take charge of Big Bash League franchise Sydney Thunder.

Flintoff, 48, took over as England Lions head coach in September 2024 and played a key role in the development programme for some of the country's leading young cricketers. The former England all-rounder said he had taken considerable pride in working with players at the beginning of their international careers. "Unfortunately I've made the decision to step away from my role with the Lions," Flintoff said in a



statement issued by the England and Wales Cricket Board. "Not only have I enjoyed my time having the opportunity to work with the best young cricketers in the country, but have taken great pride in seeing them develop," he added. Flintoff's decision comes as he prepares for his next coaching assignment in Australia. He has been appointed head coach of Sydney Thunder and is due to begin his new role later this year. "I can't wait to get started with the Thunder later in the year and see where coaching takes me," Flintoff said. The move represents another step in Flintoff's return to cricket following the serious injuries he suffered in a 2022 accident while filming for the BBC television programme Top Gear.

I drove Lewis Hamilton's Ferrari at Monza and saw F1's future in India

A drive in a Ferrari around Monza was the dream but it led us to find India's roadmap to find the next F1 driver. The F1 Simulator racing is proving to be the first step on the grassroots programme to unearthing the next big racing talent from the country.

St. Louis. (Agency)

It was a warm Sunday morning on July 26 when I got a call I wasn't expecting. It was from Mumbai Falcons Racing Limited (MFRL), and the question was a simple one. "Would you like to drive your favourite Formula One car around the track you've always dreamed of racing on?" "I was caught off guard for a

moment, but the little kid in me didn't need long to answer. The dream had always been the same – driving a Ferrari around the Temple of Speed,



Monza. I put that dream forward, and MFRL was more than happy to make it happen. There was just one condition. I had to set my fastest lap on July 30.

The next four days were all about

preparing for my big date at Monza. I decided to embrace my inner Sonny Hayes from the F1 movie. Neck exercises suddenly became part of my daily routine. Reflex drills with tennis balls followed. As race day drew closer, I somehow felt more exhausted than ever, despite not even knowing how I was supposed to get to Italy. Then, just a day before race day, I was told to report to Bharat Mandapam in Delhi for my drive at Monza. I squeezed in a few more neck exercises before booking an Uber to the "racetrack." It wasn't exactly the glamorous Formula One driver experience I had imagined, but I tried to make the journey feel a little more authentic with the 'F1' movie soundtrack blasting through my headphones.

England striker Ivan Toney charged with assault in London nightclub case

MADRID. (Agency)

England striker Ivan Toney has been charged with assault following an alleged incident at a London nightclub in December 2025. The Al Ahli forward is due to appear at Westminster Magistrates' Court on September 24. Toney, 30, was charged on July 31 with assault causing actual bodily harm, with the alleged incident taking place on December 6 at a nightclub on Wardour Street in London's Soho district. The Metropolitan Police confirmed the charge but did not provide further details about what allegedly happened. A spokesperson for Toney said the England international was shocked by the development but remains prepared to defend himself



when the matter reaches court.

"Ivan acknowledges the charge and although he is naturally shocked, he looks forward to being given the opportunity to clear his name in court," the spokesperson said.

Toney will now await his appearance at

Westminster Magistrates' Court next month, where the legal process surrounding the allegation will begin.

TONEY FACES COURT APPEARANCE

The court date comes at an important point in England's international calendar. Toney is scheduled to appear on September 24, just two days before England host world champions Spain at Wembley in their Nations League group opener. The striker currently plays for Saudi Pro League club Al Ahli, having moved to the Middle East after establishing himself as one of Brentford's leading attacking players. Toney helped Brentford earn promotion to the Premier League from the Championship and went on to score 36 goals in 85 appearances in England's top flight.

Messi was target of bomb threat, reveals report in chilling FIFA World Cup terror plot

A Spanish outlet has revealed a series of chilling threats against Lionel Messi and other football stars during the 2026 FIFA World Cup in USA. The reports detail alleged bomb plots, stalking and thousands of threatening messages sent to players and

New Delhi. (Agency)

Argentine football icon Lionel Messi was reportedly the target of the most serious threats against footballers during the 2026 FIFA World Cup, with a police dossier detailing alleged plans to attack him with explosives. The security reports

also recorded threats against other players, officials and referees during the tournament. According to a report by Spanish outlet Informacion.es, security agencies from the United States and participating countries worked through an FBI-coordinated network to monitor terrorism alerts, violent threats and suspicious activity throughout the tournament. The dossier reportedly identified Messi as the footballer who attracted the highest number of threats. One of the most serious incidents emerged in Dallas, where Argentina played Jordan. A man reportedly contacted Dallas airport and claimed that he and two others were travelling towards the stadium carrying "homemade bombs and an AR-15". The threat was directed at police officers and

players from both teams, with Messi specifically mentioned. The dossier also recorded another alarming threat ahead



of Argentina's match against Egypt in Atlanta. An X user allegedly threatened to enter the stadium and attack Messi with explosives strapped to his body. WHAT WERE THE TERROR PLOTS AGAINST MESSI?

The threats against Messi went beyond

online abuse, according to the police reports. In the Dallas incident, the caller reportedly claimed that he and two others were heading towards the stadium with homemade explosives and an AR-15, while specifically naming Messi among the targets. Another threat emerged before Argentina's match against Egypt in Atlanta, when an X user allegedly wrote that they were about to enter the stadium and attack Messi with four bombs attached to their body. The security response was subsequently heightened. During the Atlanta match, police also received another call claiming that three bombs had been placed in separate bins inside the stadium. Explosives specialists, canine handlers and K-9 teams were deployed to search the venue.



Shweta Tiwari

SLAMS Exes Raja Chaudhary, Abhinav In The Traitors 2 Trailer: 'Cheat Karte Hue Maine Pakda Tha'

The trailer for The Traitors 2 is finally out, and one of Shweta Tiwari's statements has caught everyone's attention. During her meeting with Karan Johar, in which he would decide whether she should be an Innocent or a Traitor, Shweta tried to prove her skills and said that she was the one who caught both her ex-husbands when they cheated on her.

What Did Shweta Tiwari Say In The Traitors 2 Trailer?

Karan Johar is heard saying, "Jhooth pakadne main aap maahir nahi ho sakti." Shweta Tiwari then said in the trailer, "Apne patiyan ko cheat karte hue maine hi pakda tha." Shweta Tiwari married actor Raja Chaudhary in 1998. They got separated in 2007, and after their divorce, Shweta married actor Abhinav Kohli in July 2013. During both her divorces, she had cited domestic violence.

Raja Chaudhary Accused Shweta Tiwari Of Having An Affair

Shweta's statement in the trailer has especially caught everyone's attention as Raja Chaudhary recently appeared on Siddharth Kannan's podcast and made some explosive statements about their marriage. Raja denied the domestic abuse allegations levelled against him by Shweta, and even accused the actress of having an extramarital affair with her Kasautii Zindagi Kay co-star Cezanne Khan.

He said, "... She was working with him. She was staying in his house. Even a common friend of ours confessed that she used to come here with him... Even he himself said yes, that we're in a relationship." However, Raja claimed that Shweta never admitted to him that she was allegedly dating Cezanne Khan.

Raja Denied Domestic Violence Allegations

He also denied domestic violence allegations and said that he "never" raised his hand at Shweta. "I may have broken things- the door, TV, the table- but I never raised my hand at her," he said. Raja said, "She said I was the one who used to beat her every day. What a lie!" Raja also accused Shweta of twisting his words and spreading false information that he chose a flat worth Rs 93 lakh over their daughter, Palak Tiwari, as part of the divorce settlement. While Shweta did not react to Raja's claims, her statement in the new trailer has gone viral. The Traitors 2 will drop on Amazon Prime Video on August 13, with new episodes airing every Thursday.



Ameesha Patel

Reveals Why She's Single At 51 And Will Never Marry: 'Can't Afford One Man...'

For Ameesha Patel, marriage has never been something she felt the need to pursue. The Gadar actress, who is now 51, has often kept her personal life away from the spotlight and has chosen to focus on her career and life on her own



terms. Her views on marriage also put her in the company of stars like Salman Khan, Sushmita Sen and Tabu, who have spoken about choosing a life without a conventional marriage. Ameesha has now opened up about her own reasons for remaining single.

Recently, Ameesha Patel conducted an Ask Me Anything session on X (formerly Twitter). During the interaction, a fan asked, "When are you getting

married?" The actress gave a savage response. She replied, "Never, superrr happy being single. I have 100 close family and friends who love me. Can't afford one man to come and change all that."

Soon after she responded, several fans agreed with her in the comments. One fan commented, "That's really great. Getting married is a compromise which hinders your ability to grow as a dream achieving person. Being single has something more exhilarating feelings than being married." Another fan wrote, "being single is the way."

One of the fans also questioned her about doing fewer movies. The question read, "@ameesha_patel #AskAmy i still look young and dashing at your age . y are u not acting in any films now ?" She replied, "Thnx for the compliments .. par kya karoon . I guess I'm not on the bucket list of producers who achieve 100 cr or 50 cr or 200 cr at the box office . May be 500 walla another dhamaaka is my destiny and that too iconic hits."

In 2023, Ameesha reunited with Sunny Deol for Gadar 2 and went on to create history at the box office. She reprised her iconic role as Sakina in the film. The sequel also starred Utkarsh Sharma, Simrat Kaur, Manish Wadhwa and Gaurav Chopra in pivotal roles. She is yet to announce her next project.

Main Vaapas Aaunga OTT Release: When And Where To Watch Vedang Raina, Sharvari's Film



Intiaz Ali's Main Vaapas Aaunga emerged as one of 2026's biggest surprise success stories. Starring Sharvari, Vedang Raina, Diljit Dosanjh, and Naseeruddin Shah, the Partition-era romantic drama won both critical acclaim and audience appreciation, with strong word of mouth turning it into a sleeper hit at the box office. Even after its theatrical run, the film has continued to remain in the spotlight as it gears up for its OTT release.

Earlier today, the official Instagram handle of Netflix India shared the poster of the film, announcing its arrival on the platform. Main Vaapas Aaunga is all set to make its debut on Netflix on August 7. Along with the poster, they wrote, "78 saal pehle jo kahaani adhoori reh gayi thi, woh ab poori hogi. Watch Main Vaapas Aaunga, out 7 August, on Netflix!"

Soon after the official announcement was shared, the comments section was filled with love-filled comments. One fan wrote, "Can't wait to watch it for the 3rd time." Another fan commented, "First half is 100% becoming my comfort watch during every meal!!!!!!!" A third fan wrote, "ready to watch it an unhealthy number of times." One of the fans dropped a wordplay comment that read, "Main Vaapas Dekhunga."

Set against the backdrop of the 1947 Partition, Main Vaapas Aaunga tells an emotional story of love, separation, and longing across generations. The film follows an elderly man whose fading memories lead his grandson on a journey to uncover an unfinished romance that has remained etched in his heart for decades, highlighting the lasting scars of Partition and the enduring power of love.

News18 Showsha gave the film 3.5 stars. A part of the review read, "Main Vaapas Aaunga sees Partition through the eyes of lovers who don't care about politics, religion, or what others believe. It is about what Partition stole from ordinary people. Intiaz Ali reminds us that history may remember borders, but those who lived through it remembered the people they lost. The film makes you yearn for a love like Keenu and Jiya's, but never for the pain of waiting a lifetime to reunite."

Saif Ali Khan's Sister Saba Pataudi Reveals Why She Remains Unmarried At 50: 'At 19, I Almost Did Marry But...'



While Saif Ali Khan and Soha Ali Khan followed their mother Sharmila Tagore's footsteps and became popular actors, their sister, Saba Pataudi, largely remains away from the spotlight. She is often seen accompanying Sharmila Tagore to events and is known for her heartfelt social media posts about her family. Unlike Saif and Soha, Saba also remains unmarried.

She recently spoke to Neha Dhupia and Angad Bedi and explained why she never got married. Saba said, "I did not have a first boyfriend. I was introduced to a lot of people for marriage from the age of 18 or 19, but I didn't marry any of them. Though at 19, I almost did marry someone in Kolkata whom I had been introduced to."

But that didn't quite work out. I wasn't really ready for it." Saba explained that while she was open to marriage later, she never found her ideal partner. She said, "I just didn't find anyone who was truly compatible. And after having a father like Abba (former India cricket captain Mansoor Ali Khan Pataudi), honestly, he was such a remarkable person. Not that you're looking for someone exactly like your father, but your father is your father." "He was so charismatic, humble, responsible, and he also taught me to be independent. There was something Taapsee Pannu once said: 'I don't need a boy, I need a man.' I really resonated with that. And I just didn't quite find that person," Saba reasoned.

Who Is Saba Pataudi?

Saba Pataudi was born on May 1, 1976, and is 50 years old. Unlike her actor mother and siblings, Saba Pataudi chose not to become an actor. Instead, she is a jewellery designer. As per her Instagram bio, she is also a tarot reader and spiritual healer.

She is also the Chief Custodian of the Royal Endowment Trust, Bhopal. The eldest daughter of Sharmila Tagore and Mansoor Ali Khan Pataudi, Saba enjoys a large Instagram following of 259K people (at the time of publishing this article). Saba often takes to Instagram to share heartfelt posts for her family members.

NEWS BOX

Indian Woman Sets World Record For Longest Hair, Has Never Cut It Since 2015.

JARAMANA, Syria.(Agency)

Renu Dhariyal from India has set a new record for the longest hair on a living person (female), with her hair measuring more than 8 feet long. Her record-breaking locks have now been officially verified in Haldwani, Uttarakhand. Renu's raven hair measures 271.50 cm (8 feet 10 inches) long. This is just slightly shorter than Robert Wadlow, the tallest man ever, who stood at 272 cm (8 feet 11.1 inches), reported Guinness World Records. Her record was verified in Haldwani, Uttarakhand, India, in April. The achievement took the record from Aliia Nasyrova of Ukraine, whose hair measured 257.33 cm (8 feet and 5.3 inches). Renu is a content creator and YouTuber who shares beauty tips with other women. Explaining how her hair became so long, Renu said she had been growing it continuously since 2015. She said that in Indian culture, long hair is considered a symbol of extreme beauty and tradition, which inspired her to grow it so long. She also said that she had never cut her hair since 2015. series of images show Renu with her hair trailing along the ground behind her, draping over the edge of a bed and surrounding her as she sits on the floor. Her hair is also described as thick and shiny. Renu ties it into an elaborate plait when she needs to keep it off the floor. Maintaining hair of this length requires a lot of patience. Renu said she spends hours washing and detangling her hair.

US Expects Deal Soon On Strait Of Hormuz As Iran-Oman Talks Continue

world.(Agency)

A US official on Friday reported progress between Iran and Oman that could soon reopen the Strait of Hormuz, potentially restoring oil exports that have been disrupted by the five-month-old US war with Iran. The US official, who declined to be identified, said Washington soon anticipated an agreement between the two countries, which sit on either side of the strait, so that normal oil traffic could resume. A deal between Iran and Oman over control of the strategic waterway is seen as crucial to a wider peace agreement. "There is progress between Oman and Iran on the strait, and we expect a deal soon," a US official told Reuters on Friday. "Once the deal is announced to restore commercial shipping without impediments, the United States will lift the blockade of Iranian ports."

"As always, US actions will continue to be performance-based and tied to Iran's implementation of its commitments," the official said. Before the US and Israel launched the war on Iran on February 28, about one out of every five barrels of oil consumed worldwide transited the strait, but Iran has used the hostilities to justify charging a toll on oil tankers and firing on ships that attempt to cross the strait without permission.

Turkey Says New Defence Pact Does Not Contradict NATO Commitments

world.(Agency)

Turkey said on Friday that its new defence agreement with Pakistan and Saudi Arabia did not contradict its commitments to the NATO alliance. "The agreement is not in contradiction with the commitments of Turkey's existing international alliances, including those at the heart of NATO," the government's anti-disinformation service said in a post on X. In fact, it was an additional cooperation mechanism that supported regional security, the statement added. "Turkey's development of regional



partnerships is not an alternative to its NATO membership," it said. The service said it was responding to "baseless claims and manipulative posts" criticising the new agreement. The three countries signed the joint decree on Friday in Riyadh, amid violence in the region from Houthis attacks and the US-Iran war.

Trump administration moves ahead with efforts to fire Federal Reserve governor Lisa Cook

WASHINGTON.(Agency)

The Trump administration is moving ahead with its efforts to fire Federal Reserve governor Lisa Cook, two months after the Supreme Court allowed her to retain her job while she fights the president's effort to terminate her over mortgage fraud allegations that she has denied. The justices in a 5-4 decision in June said Cook, who was nominated to the Fed's Board of Governors by President Joe Biden, could remain in her post at least as long as her lawsuit challenging her firing goes on. The Trump administration is appealing a lower-court ruling in Cook's favor. Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts wrote in a footnote in his opinion that nothing

forbids President Donald Trump from "trying again" to fire Cook provided she is given proper notice and a chance to contest it. Trump indicated after the opinion that he would do just that, vowing to "take appropriate action immediately." In a letter this week obtained by The Associated Press, White House aide Dan Scavino told Cook that Trump was "considering removing you from your position" but cited the Supreme Court's requirement of proper notice in giving her until August 26 to challenge it. The attempt to fire Cook is rooted in a criminal referral made last August by Bill Pulte, the director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency, that accused her of committing mortgage fraud by

declaring two different homes – one in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and one in Atlanta – as "primary residence."



Homebuyers can get lower mortgage rates or smaller down payments on their primary homes compared to second or vacation homes. Cook has aggressively defended herself against the allegations, saying the president

had attempted to oust her "on a manufactured pretext because I refused to bow to political pressure and continued to set interest rates based only on what would best serve the American people." Her lawyer, Abbe Lowell, argued in a November letter that Cook has mostly lived in the Ann Arbor property since first purchasing it in 2005. As a result, it was accurate for her to refer to it as her "primary residence" in a June 2021 application to refinance its mortgage, the letter said. A month later, she purchased a condominium in Atlanta and, in a July 2021 document, also referred to it as her "primary residence." Lowell said that it was an "isolated notation" that did not reflect an intent to defraud.

Iran's supreme leader Mojtaba Khamenei in critical condition; rushed to hospital, claims Israeli media

TEL AVIV.(Agency)

Reports have surfaced in Israeli media claiming that Iranian Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei is in critical condition and has been rushed to a hospital.

According to Channel 14 (C14), citing sources inside Iran, and a prior report by the Jerusalem Post, which quoted the IranWire outlet and sources close to President Masoud Pezeshkian's administration, rumours that Khamenei is in an "extremely critical condition" are circulating widely at the highest levels of the regime. One source cited by the Jerusalem Post stated, "We would not be surprised if we heard news of his martyrdom soon." Khamenei assumed the position of Supreme Leader shortly after his father was killed in joint US-Israeli military



strikes on February 28, 2026. Since taking office, he has not made any public appearances and has communicated exclusively through written statements.

Reports indicate he was injured and potentially disfigured in the initial strikes that targeted his father's compound, forcing him

into hiding and compelling him to communicate with senior regime figures through a slow network of intermediaries to avoid targeting.

Adding to the speculation surrounding his status, President Masoud Pezeshkian acknowledged in a state TV interview that direct interaction with Khamenei is currently "very difficult."

International and regional reports have repeatedly questioned his physical location and capacity. In July, Saudi news outlet al-Hadath, citing an Israeli security source, claimed that Khamenei was "not in Iran." Around the same time, US President Donald Trump asserted in a Fox News interview that Iran's top military leadership had been eliminated, claiming that Khamenei was "90% gone" and incapacitated following the military campaign.

Over 50 Decomposed Bodies Found At Chicago Funeral Home After Neighbours Notice "Stench"

CHICAGO.(Agency)

The remains of 56 people were found improperly stored and decomposing Thursday at a Chicago funeral home run by a couple who previously operated a crematory that was similarly shut down because of mishandled remains, authorities said. Illinois state officials, meanwhile, suspended the license of one of the funeral home's directors, alleging bodies were being kept in an unrefrigerated area in "deplorable conditions." The discovery came months after neighborhood residents began noticing a "stench" emanating from the funeral home, which led some to complain to the city. The Cook County Medical Examiner's Office

said it was notified by state and local officials that bodies were being stored improperly at South Chicago Chapel, and investigators and



forensic pathologists were dispatched Thursday. The remains were in various states of decomposition, officials said. "Staff is assessing the conditions of the remains, searching for documentation regarding identification of the decedents as

well as death certificates. This process could take several days to ensure proper disposition," the medical examiner's office said in a statement, adding that family notifications will be made following the identifications.

Police said Friday that their preliminary statement on the case incorrectly said that fire department officials declared the scene a hazardous materials incident. No arrests have been announced, but city police said detectives are investigating. Messages or the funeral home were left by phone and through its website Friday. Later Friday, a small number of residents and people seeking information about their deceased loved ones gathered.

US Senate passes sanctions bill that may penalise countries, including India, buying Russian oil and gas

WASHINGTON.(Agency)

The Senate overwhelmingly approved a punishing Russian sanctions package Friday, the result of a yearlong campaign by the late Sen. Lindsey Graham to reinforce U.S. support for Ukraine and try to force President Vladimir Putin's hand as the grinding war drags on. The bipartisan legislation, which passed 86-11, would penalize countries that continue to buy Russian oil, gas and other exports seeking to deprive Putin of revenues fueling the war. It comes after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy visited the Capitol last week following Graham's funeral, met with senators from both parties and watched from the gallery as the Senate took the first procedural votes. "Today,

President Zelenskyy is watching from Ukraine — and Putin is watching from Moscow," said Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., who had worked with the late South Carolina senator on the package.

"I would like to think Lindsey Graham is watching, too," he said. "Today we say to the people of Ukraine: You are not alone. And today we say to Vladimir Putin: You will not conquer Ukraine."

The sweeping show of force from the Senate is the most substantial move yet during President Donald Trump's second term to shift the dynamic of the four-year war, which has now churned longer than World War I. Congress has struggled to ensure the flow of U.S. funding and munitions to Ukraine, but Trump has given a nod to the package,

which includes his push for sanctions on Iran, pressuring the House to pass and send it for his signature. Graham



and Blumenthal had announced a deal with the White House on the sanctions legislation on July 10 after more than a year of negotiations with the White House. Graham, who had just returned from Ukraine, died suddenly the next day, likely from an aortic tear.

The bipartisan package allows the

president to impose tariffs on the world's top five purchasers of Russian oil or natural gas, including China and India. It provides exceptions for countries that import less than 15% of their natural gas from Russia and are taking steps to reduce those imports.

The legislation also includes sanctions on Putin, senior Russian political and military leaders, Russian financial institutions and Russian energy projects. It would expand U.S. sanctions to target older, refitted oil tankers that Russia uses to circumvent existing U.S. sanctions on Russian oil and energy revenues. The bill also allows the White House to waive sanctions or restrictions if the president certifies to Congress that it's in the national interest.