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BJP MP was shouting 'Shame, Rahul Gandhi' over Jharkhand, Priyanka did this next

Priyanka Gandhi stopped in Parliament to answer a BJP MP's slogan over Jharkhand. Her reply challenged the charge that Rahul Gandhi had not met the state's students.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi faced protests right after arriving in Parliament for the ongoing Monsoon Session on Monday. Several NDA MPs were protesting with placards in hand a day after the police crackdown on protesting students and job aspirants in INDIA-ruled Jharkhand. One BJP MP sloganeered, asking why Rahul Gandhi has not visited the eastern state yet. Priyanka stopped in her tracks, with a smile on her face, and took a good glance at the placard. She tried to counter, but he kept sloganeering. "Jharkhand kyun nai gaye (Why didn't he go to Jharkhand)," he asked as the Congress MP attempted to confront him.

Tamil Nadu Speaker joins anti-abortion rally, sparks massive row



New Delhi. (Agency)

A major political row has erupted in Tamil Nadu after Assembly Speaker and Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) leader JCD Prabhakar took part in an anti-abortion rally and spoke against abortion. Critics and opposition parties condemned the remarks as regressive and contrary to women's rights, arguing that political movements should stand for progressive causes rather than endorse such views. Prabhakar flagged off the 5th National March for Life India in Chennai, a Catholic Christian religious event, where thousands of people participated in a rally opposing abortion and advocating for the protection of unborn life. In his address, the 73-year-old TVK leader described the rally as a movement reminding society that life has value even before a child is born. "I consider this rally as a voice reminding us that even before a child sees this world, that life has value," he said. "I consider this an event expressing the belief that every unborn child has dignity," the Speaker added.

Govt sets terms for Amit Shah reply on Gen Z stir; FCRA bill splits opposition

New Delhi. (Agency)

The government is keen on ending the deadlock with the opposition over discussions on student protests and the FCRA bill, with just two days left for the Monsoon session of Parliament to end.

With just two days left for the Monsoon session of Parliament to end, which has nearly been a washout, the government is keen on ending the deadlock with the opposition over discussions on student protests, the Ram Temple donation case and the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA). However, the government has set terms for Union Home Minister Amit Shah's reply on the students' stir, saying it would include the agitations in opposition-ruled Punjab and Jharkhand as well, sources said. Moreover, the government has conveyed to the opposition that there should be a proper discussion on the issue before Amit Shah responds. "Issuing a statement will only be a formality; we want proper discussion and not just a

statement," government sources said.

WILL PARLIAMENT DISCUSS STUDENT PROTESTS?

The Parliament has barely functioned since July 20, when a police crackdown



against student protesters during their 'Sansad Chalo' march brought central Delhi to a standstill. Several students and cops were injured as the protesters, led by the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP), demanded

the resignation of Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over exam paper leaks.

Pradhan resigned on July 30, but the Congress and the opposition stepped up their protests over the alleged police excesses on students. Videos and images later surfaced showing protesters with pellet injuries. Since then, the opposition has maintained that the deadlock in Parliament would continue till Amit Shah made a statement over the police action. Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi has particularly urged the Home Minister to tell Parliament who ordered the "firing against students" on July 20, saying that he was "not interested in fantasy conversations". "The question was never that Amit Shah is going to come and give a speech in Parliament.

MAHANAGAR METRO EXCLUSIVE

Navapur Turns Into Illegal Gambling Hub: Is the Law Silent on Gambling Dens Like 'Pada' Flourishing Along the Gujarat Border?

MAHANAGAR METRO

Nandurbar. a border town in Maharashtra's Nandurbar district, is now facing serious allegations of becoming a major hub for illegal activities under the shadow of the khaki. Located on the Gujarat-Maharashtra border, the town is allegedly emerging as a centre for crime and high-stakes gambling. According to local residents and sources, gambling operations involving huge sums of money are allegedly continuing on a daily basis, while questions are being raised over the apparent lack of action by the authorities responsible for maintaining law and order. From Bungalows to Sheds: Where and How Are the Alleged Mini-Casinos Operating? According to local sources, the alleged gambling dens are operating at two main locations within the jurisdiction of Navapur Police Station. Location 1: A bungalow near Jan Talav Hanuman Temple and behind Jindal Petrol Pump is allegedly being used to arrange secret gambling games for high-profile players. Sources claim that the activities are conducted discreetly, with selected players being allowed entry. Location 2: Another major gambling den is allegedly operating behind Ekta Hotel in the Visarwadi area. A specially constructed permanent shed is reportedly being used for the operation. Sources allege



that a syndicate involving Rakesh Gosavi alias Pappu Gosavi, Rice Sheikh and Suraj Jaiswal is operating these gambling activities. Games such as 'Asro', involving number-based gambling, and 'Tran Patti' are reportedly being played at these locations. Gamblers Arriving From Gujarat: Crores Allegedly Won and Lost Every Day The alleged gambling operations are reportedly not limited to local players. According to sources, gamblers from industrial cities across Gujarat, including Vapi, Valsad, Surat, Bharuch and Ankleshwar, allegedly arrive in convoys of cars. Sources claim that large amounts of money are reportedly won and lost at these locations day and night. The presence of expensive luxury vehicles from Gujarat outside the alleged gambling dens is being cited by locals as an indication of the scale of the activities. The biggest question being



raised by residents is: If vehicles from Gujarat can reportedly be seen parked at these locations even around 1 a.m., why has the local police allegedly failed to notice the activities? Allegations of Monthly 'Collections': Role of PI and Senior Officers Under Question Local residents claim that they have repeatedly informed Navapur Police Station PI Abhishek Patil about the alleged gambling activities, both verbally and in writing. However, they allege that no raid has been conducted so far. Sources further claim that the matter has also been brought to the attention of Nandurbar SP Ashwini Sanap, the LCB PI and IG Sanjay Yampure. Despite these alleged complaints, residents say that no significant action has been visible on the ground. Amid the lack of action, allegations and discussions about monthly 'collections' running into lakhs of rupees have also sur-

faced. These are serious allegations and would require an independent investigation by the competent authorities to establish whether there is any truth to them. Residents and journalists who have reportedly raised their voices against the alleged gambling operations also claim that they have faced threats of violence and warnings of being implicated in false cases. Flashback: When Strict Action Was Taken Against the Gambling Network The issue has also been raised in the past. According to reports cited by local sources, 'Pako Gujarat News' had earlier exposed allegations related to the gambling network. At that time, then-IG Shekhar reportedly ordered immediate action, following which raids were conducted at locations allegedly linked to Rice Sheikh. Sources claimed that valuable property worth crores was seized during the action. The then PI of Navapur was also reportedly suspended over alleged negligence. Despite that earlier action, residents now claim that the alleged gambling network has once again become active in the Navapur Police Station area. The Big Question: Will Any Senior Police Officer Conduct a Raid? The alleged activities and the reported lack of visible action have raised several questions among local residents. Questions are being raised over.

'Wear Proper Clothes', Rekha Gupta Tells AAP MLA After Video In Undergarments

New Delhi. (Agency)

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta has slammed an Aam Aadmi Party MLA who was seen in a viral video sitting in his undergarments while signing papers for people in his constituency.

A video of AAP MLA from Kirari in northwest Delhi, Anil Jha Vats, is viral on social media. In the video, Jha is seen in a vest and shorts, seated cross-legged in his chair, with a saffron cloth draped across his lap. The video was reportedly shot while Jha was signing application forms from constituents for the Delhi government's scheme for financial aid to women. In the video, Jha is seen signing papers as people, including a number of women, queue up in front of his table.

Referring to the MLA's objectionable dressing, or the lack of it, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta blasted Vats in the Assembly, calling his act shameful.

"Your behaviour is shameful. You should at least dress properly when women come to you to get their papers signed," the Chief Minister said. Rekha Gupta also demanded that Vats' Assembly membership be cancelled for his behaviour in front of women.

"This sort of indecent behaviour from an MLA cannot be tolerated.



Who are they, Giriraj Singh asks over Rahul Gandhi's holiday pic. Congress reacts

Union Minister Giriraj Singh sparked a controversy after sharing a photo of Rahul Gandhi with a woman and a child during his vacation. As the photo went viral, sparking curiosity, the Congress clarified who the people with Rahul were.

BENGALURU (Agency)

In politics, a leader's private moments rarely stay private. A photo of Rahul Gandhi with a woman and a child in a boat, likely taken during his vacation, has become the centre of a political mystery after Union Minister Giriraj Singh posted it on X. Singh, who has come under severe backlash from the Congress, asked Rahul to reveal where and when the image was taken and who was accompanying him.

"Rahul ji, where was this picture taken, when was it taken, and who are the people with you in this picture? I am curious to know!" Singh tweeted. The Leader of the Opposition has frequently faced criticism from the BJP over his foreign visits. Rahul's three-week foreign trip in June-July also came under flak from the BJP. It is not known if the image shared by Giriraj Singh is from his latest jaunt. The image shared by the Union Minister shows a relaxed Rahul Gandhi with a



woman, wearing a headscarf and sunglasses, and a child in a blue long-sleeved swimming costume, is seated between Rahul and the woman.

News box

Monsoon spell to stay weak in Gurgaon, rain likely at isolated areas

Noida.(Agency)

Rain activity in the city is likely to remain limited over the next few days, with India Meteorological Department (IMD) forecasting showers at a few places over the next four days.

The city recorded a maximum temperature of 33.1 degrees Celsius on Monday at the KVK automatic weather station, down from 34.3 degrees Celsius on Sunday. The minimum temperature, however, rose to 27.6 degrees Celsius from 25.7 degrees Celsius on Sunday, according to IMD data.

Gurgaon recorded 1mm rainfall in the 24 hours ending at 8.30am on Monday at the KVK station.

The district-wise forecast issued by IMD indicates rain at a few places in Gurgaon on Aug 11, 12, 13 and 14. The spatial spread of rainfall is expected to remain limited, with no indication of widespread showers over the district. IMD's district-wise weather warning chart also does not show a heavy-rain warning for Gurgaon over the coming days. The warnings issued for parts of Haryana are mainly concentrated in other districts, including Panchkula, Yamunanagar, Kurukshetra, Karnal, Panipat and Sonapat. The forecast suggests a continued but relatively limited monsoon spell in Gurgaon. Showers may occur in parts of the district, but rainfall activity is expected to remain restricted through the week.

Scholarship portal lists 175 schools in Noida, only 60 found active

Noida.(Agency)

Of the 175 schools listed on the scholarship portal under the pre-matric scholarship scheme for Classes 9 and 10 in Gautam Budh Nagar, only around 60 were found to be active on the portal during a routine review, education department officials said. Similarly, only about 55 of the 133 schools listed under the post-matric scholarship scheme for Classes 11 and 12 were found to be active. Officials also found duplicate logins for some institutions. The discrepancies emerged during a review of the master data by the district social welfare officer. The district education department has now directed schools to verify their entries and submit documents and details related to inactive institutions and duplicate logins to the district social welfare office within three days. District inspector of schools Chandra Shekhar said, "There are a large number of schools in the master data where discrepancies have been found. A thorough verification of the data will now be carried out and inactive schools and duplicate entries will be identified and removed." Officials said cleaning the master data was necessary as scholarship programmes are monitored at the state and district levels, with district performance also assessed through dashboards. A large number of inactive or duplicate entries could affect the district's ranking.

The department has also flagged schools that have not uploaded details of eligible students on the scholarship portal. Officials said delays in uploading student data could affect the timely disbursement of scholarship benefits.

NCRTC lays down 23-station plan for Ghaziabad-Jewar Namo Bharat corridor

Noida.(Agency)

The preliminary DPR for the proposed Ghaziabad-Jewar Namo Bharat corridor has been made and NCRTC is in the process of finalising it. The corridor, which will start from Ghaziabad, will be 72.5 km and will conclude at Noida International Airport. The distance will be covered in 50 minutes. Officials said a direct Delhi corridor from Sarai Kale Khan to Jewar was explored but eventually shelved.

"As proposed in the Dec 29 meeting last year, the Ghaziabad-Jewar Namo Bharat RRTS cum Metro corridor will originate from Ghaziabad Namo Bharat Station and conclude at Noida International Airport. About 71.5 km of the corridor will be elevated and 1.29 km will be underground," said an NCRTC official. "The underground segment will be in the area of Noida International Airport near Terminal-1 and the ground transportation centre." A total of 22 stations, apart from the Ghaziabad station, are proposed along the entire corridor. Out of these stations, 21 stations will be elevated, while the last station at NIA is proposed to be underground. "Proposed metro services will be available from Ghaziabad Namo Bharat Station to Ecotech-VI, covering 18 stations, while Namo Bharat services will have 11 stations along the corridor. Seven stations will be common to both Namo Bharat and Metro services," said the official.

Hero Honda flyover restoration hits hurdle as NHAI reworks estimate

Gurgaon.(Agency)

As the first attempt to appoint a specialised agency for restoring the Hero Honda Chowk flyover failed to attract any bidders, NHAI is now reworking the project before inviting bids again. Instead of floating the same Rs 22.3-crore tender, the authority is revising the cost estimate, technical specifications and contract conditions. NHAI had invited bids in May this year for the restoration of the flyover, more than two years after a depression was detected on the elevated structure. However, despite extending the timeline twice, agencies still did not participate. According to NHAI officials, the project's estimated cost

and the specialised nature of the restoration work were among the factors that may have deterred agencies from participating in the bids. The revised proposal is expected to be ready within a week, after which it will be sent for approval before a fresh tender is floated. "Earlier, the tender was prepared on the basis of the initial estimate and technical specifications. However, we did not receive bids from specialised agencies," an NHAI official said. The revised tender will also incorporate changes in the execution methodology and contract conditions, officials said. The aim is to engage an agency with experience in specialised bridge rehabilitation, the official added. "The flyover is structurally

intact overall, but repair and rehabilitation work on the deck slab are required. Since this is a specialised bridge rehabilitation project, we are examining the work methodology and technical details and will incorporate these in the revised estimate.

Once the agency is finalised, our target is to complete the restoration within about a month," the official said. The restoration involves repairs and strengthening of damaged portions of the flyover. The scope includes work on the deck slab and bearings, along with measures such as grouting, strengthening and partial replacement of damaged sections, as recommended following a structural assessment. In May 2024, a nearly 20-metre section of the Gurgaon-Delhi

carriageway developed a visible depression. NHAI barricaded the affected portion and restricted traffic on the damaged lane, which has remained cordoned off since then.

The damage worsened by Dec 2024, when the affected portion developed into a cavity with reinforcement bars exposed. Further concrete chipped off in Jan last year, leaving iron rods visible and a hole in the deck.

NHAI subsequently asked CSIR-Central Road Research Institute to conduct a structural audit of the flyover and the underpass at Hero Honda Chowk, both constructed by the same agency. In Oct last year, the audit found the flyover stable overall but identified weaknesses in parts of the deck slab and bearings.

New walls, gates and farmhouses come up again in protected Aravalis

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Fresh construction activity appears to be continuing inside Ansal Aravali Retreat in Raisina's protected Aravalis. A TOI field visit on Aug 5 found more than two dozen active construction sites in the area despite ongoing proceedings before National Green Tribunal (NGT) and its earlier directions to restore the ecologically sensitive landscape.

The area falls under the 'gair mumkin pahar' or uncultivable hill category and is notified under Section 4 of Punjab Land Preservation Act (PLPA), which prohibits tree felling. It is also protected under the Union environment ministry's Aravali Notification, under which construction of buildings, roads, electrification works and felling of trees are not permitted without approval. During the visit, found labourers working at several plots, an excavator operating inside one property and a large farmhouse under construction. Fresh stone boundary walls, retaining walls, brick pillars and iron gates had come up at multiple locations. Several plots that appeared vacant or only partly developed during previous visits were now enclosed by new boundary walls. Stacks of dressed stone, sand and other construction material indicated ongoing work across the colony. Along C Block Road, around nine farmhouses and boundary walls were under construction. Construction activity was also observed along A and B Block roads. At several locations, vegetation appeared to have been cleared.

The Boundary of Words and the Infinite Sky of Emotions

Mahanagar Metro Desk
Author: Rupesh Solanki

The human heart is a boundless sky of sensitivities, where countless waves of emotions constantly surge. For centuries, human beings have resorted to language and words to convey these feelings of their mind to others. However, there is a major contradiction in the philosophy of literature and relationships: when we try to confine these invisible and infinite emotions into a frame of just a few letters, their sanctity and depth are somehow lost. It is for this very reason that emotionally sensitive human beings repeatedly commit a mistake in life—they inadvertently express their unique and deep emotions through words. True love, true compassion, or true separation never demand speech. They flow naturally through the blinking of eyes, the language of silence, or the beating of the heart. When we say to someone, "I love you very much" or "I am hurting deeply," those words make the vast form of emotion look very small and limited. The big question is, how can an emotion as vast as the universe be contained within a few words? Yet, with the intent that the other person might understand us, the heart grows anxious and seeks the support of letters. It is due to this very restlessness that these beautiful lines emerge, giving



perfect expression to this state of mind: "A mistake is committed. Repeatedly... Emotions inadvertently get expressed through words!!!" In today's modern and digital era, man has come very close through writing, but has drifted far away from the heart. We show off our emotions all day long by sending messages, but the true realization and warmth behind those words remain absent. Modern technology has provided us with means of communication, but true togetherness and surrender are hidden only within the silence of the heart. When someone who is truly ours understands our unspoken pain merely by looking into our eyes without a word being said, it is then that the limitations of words end and true humanity awakens. The hearts of the people always accept this realization of selfless love and genuine

connection in this way: "The one who understands feelings without speech is true togetherness. Otherwise, words merely create stories and dialogues." This thought imparts a profound message for living life: a person's true art and virtue lie not in displaying their feelings, but in keeping them sacred. No matter how much literary knowledge or vocabulary one possesses, everything appears futile if that spiritual moisture to identify with another's pain is missing in the heart. This repeatedly committed mistake proves that man is ultimately a creation of emotions and no matter how hard he tries, he cannot hide his feelings. This harmony of inner emptiness and true love will continue to explain to mankind for centuries to come that the true value of relationships lies not in the words spoken, but in the depth of the unspoken silence.

Street vendors, unions protest outside Mini Secretariat; traffic hit

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Street vendors and trade unions staged a protest outside the Mini Secretariat on Monday, alleging harassment of vendors, delay in notifying designated vending zones, non-implementation of revised minimum wages and continued use of contractual labour in industrial units. The protesters demanded that the administration notify vending zones without further delay, stop repeated eviction and anti-encroachment drives against street vendors, implement the revised minimum wages across industries and abolish the contractual worker system. Trade unions also demanded repeal of the three labour codes, which they said were against workers' interests. Rohtas, organisational secretary of Rehri Patri Mazdoor Union, Gurgaon, alleged that street vendors were being repeatedly targeted in the name of beautification and anti-encroachment drives. He also said the list of street-vending zones submitted by the organisation had still

not been notified, leaving vendors without clarity on where they could legally conduct their business.

Rohtas also alleged that officials were allowing illegal vendors to operate while taking action against those dependent on vending for their livelihood. According to him, the administration had also failed to conduct a fresh survey of street vendors. "No survey of street vendors is conducted and officials are supporting illegal vendors for their personal gain," he alleged.

Another major grievance was the functioning of the Town Vending Committee (TVC). Rohtas said the committee had not met for the past five years despite the requirement for meetings at regular intervals. The trade unions raised the issue of minimum wages alongside their demand for an end to contractual employment. Anil Pawar, president of Trade Union, Gurgaon, said the state govt had announced a substantial

increase in minimum wages earlier this year following labour unrest, but many industrial units were yet to implement the revised rates. "The state govt hiked the minimum wage



earlier this year and directed the industries to implement it immediately, but till now many industries have not implemented the new minimum wages," he said.

Haryana notified a nearly 35% increase in minimum wages on April 9, 2026, with the revised rates effective from April 1. The move came amid intense labour unrest in the industrial

belt, including protests by contractual workers in Manesar demanding better wages and working conditions. Under the revised structure, the monthly minimum wage for an unskilled

worker was raised to Rs 15,220.7, from Rs 11,274, while the rate for semi-skilled workers was fixed at Rs 16,780.7, skilled workers at Rs 18,500.8 and highly skilled workers at Rs 19,425.8. Trade unions also demanded an end to the contractual worker system in manufacturing units, arguing that it weakens workers' bargaining power and allows employers to avoid providing workers with the wages and benefits available to regular employees. While the protesters remained outside the Mini Secretariat to press their demands, the police restrictions around the complex created a second problem for commuters. With the roads leading towards the parking area closed, traffic backed up towards Rajiv Chowk.

Tripura couple sentenced to five years' rigorous imprisonment in narcotics case

Agartala. (Agency)

A couple from Golmura in Tripura's Gomati district was sentenced to five years' rigorous imprisonment under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act.

The convicts were identified as Sahid Miah and Parbin Bibi, who were arrested in connection with a heroin seizure case registered under Sections 21(b) and 25 of the NDPS Act at Kakraban Police Station two years ago.

The Additional Sessions Judge of Gomati district sentenced each of them to five years' rigorous imprisonment and imposed a fine of Rs 20,000. In default of payment, they will have to undergo an additional three months' rigorous imprisonment.

For the offence under Section 25 of the NDPS Act, each was awarded another five years' rigorous imprisonment and fined Rs 10,000. In default of payment, they will have to undergo one month of simple imprisonment. The sentences were ordered to run concurrently.

NHA officials visited first evening hospital in Tripura

Agartala. (Agency)

A high-level delegation from National Health Authority (NHA) visited the newly opened Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Agartala Civil Hospital on Monday in the city to oversee the facilities and patient service system.

The city civil hospital has started an evening Outpatient Department (OPD) with competent doctors and paperless digital facilities. They conducted a comprehensive assessment of the hospital's infrastructure, medical facilities, and overall healthcare delivery system.

The visit is particularly significant as the Tripura Government is committed to enhancing the state's healthcare infrastructure and improving the quality and accessibility of medical services. The newly established facility currently offers services through five major specialist departments, including Obstetrics and Gynaecology, General Medicine, Dermatology, Paediatrics, and Ophthalmology.

Additionally, dental care and a variety of diagnostic blood tests are also available. The hospital has been equipped with air-conditioned facilities and a paperless service system, which has led to growing interest among patients and the general public since its inauguration.

Indian, US Navies conduct joint EOD exercise in Kochi

Kochi. (Agency)

The Indian Navy and the US Navy are conducting a five-day bilateral Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) exercise at the Southern Naval Command in Kochi from August 10 to 14, aimed at enhancing interoperability between specialist diving and EOD teams of the two navies. The exercise, which commenced on August 10, is designed to strengthen professional cooperation and facilitate the exchange of expertise in handling contemporary EOD challenges.

The programme includes subject matter expert exchanges, cross-training, equipment demonstrations and scenario-based practical training. It provides an opportunity for personnel from both navies to share contemporary EOD techniques, advanced technologies and best operational practices.

The exercise is also enabling the two sides to gain a better understanding of each other's capabilities, operational concepts and professional approaches, while promoting collaborative learning and operational synergy.

Heavy rain likely in Konkan and ghat regions till Aug 15, yellow alert for several districts

Pune. (Agency)

Heavy rainfall is likely to continue in parts of Maharashtra till August 15, particularly in Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg and Palghar districts, due to moisture-laden winds blowing in from the Arabian Sea, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast.

The weather department has also predicted good rainfall over the ghat sections of Raigad, Satara and Pune districts. Mumbai, Thane and Palghar are likely to receive heavy rain on Tuesday and Wednesday, while the Konkan region and Goa are expected to witness a fresh spell of intense monsoon activity during the week.

Favourable weather conditions over the Arabian Sea, support from the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) and a low-pressure area over Madhya Pradesh are likely to strengthen rainfall along the Konkan



coast and adjoining ghat areas. Rainfall intensity is expected to increase in Mumbai, Thane, Palghar and Raigad on Tuesday and Wednesday.

The IMD has issued a yellow alert for Raigad, Ratnagiri, Pune and Satara, warning of heavy showers, particularly over the ghat sections. Light to

moderate rainfall is likely at isolated places across other parts of the state.

A low-pressure area is currently active over Madhya Pradesh, with an associated cyclonic circulation extending up to 5.8 km above mean sea level. Another cyclonic circulation has developed over the northwest Bay of

Bengal at an altitude of around 7.6 km, with indications of a fresh low-pressure area forming over the region on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, Cyclone Dolphin, which struck the Chinese coast, could influence weather systems over the Pacific Ocean and the Bay of Bengal. Meteorological conditions associated with major storms in the Pacific can temporarily alter the flow of moisture-laden winds towards the Indian subcontinent and slow the formation of low-pressure systems over the Bay of Bengal. The reduction in monsoon cloud activity over the Bay of Bengal is therefore being linked, in part, to the broader atmospheric changes associated with the cyclone. However, the overall monsoon system is expected to remain active over the Konkan coast and adjoining ghat regions during the coming days.

Indian Railways allows PwDs with UDID cards to travel in designated unreserved coaches

Panchkula. (Agency)

The Railway Board has clarified that persons with disabilities (PwDs) holding valid Unique Disability ID (UDID) cards can travel in unreserved coaches earmarked for PwDs on suburban sections and ordinary passenger trains even if they have not been granted concessional fare by the Railways.

The Board said Commercial Circular No. 11 of 2026 had earlier clarified that PwDs holding UDID cards and valid authority can travel in SLRD/LSLRD coaches of normal Mail/Express trains. The latest addendum further clarifies their eligibility for trains on suburban sections and ordinary passenger trains.

Under the latest instructions, two categories of PwDs will be considered

bona fide passengers for travelling in coaches earmarked for them on suburban sections and ordinary passenger trains. The first category comprises PwDs who have been granted concessional fare facility under existing



guidelines and hold either a concession certificate in the prescribed proforma or a Railway Divyangjan Card issued by Indian Railways.

The second comprises PwDs holding

valid UDID cards issued by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) who have not been extended concessional fare facility by the Railways.

Both categories must carry valid identity proof—a UDID card, Railway Divyangjan Card, or concession certificate in the prescribed proforma, as applicable—along with valid authority to travel, such as a journey ticket or season ticket.

The Railway Board has also made it clear that passengers who are not authorised to travel in coaches earmarked for PwDs will face action under the provisions of the Railways Act, 1989, if found travelling in such coaches. Importantly, the Board reiterated that allowing PwDs holding valid UDID cards issued by DEPwD to travel in these coaches does not extend concessional fare facility to them.

UP: After the death of their father in Kashi, mother and son also committed suicide by consuming poison

Varanasi. (Agency)

A family from Maharashtra, who had come to the holy city of Kashi for pilgrimage, was struck by grief.

After the death of their father due to illness, the mother and son also committed suicide by consuming poison on Monday evening.

According to police, the bodies of the mother and son were found in a room at a homestay in the Luxa area on Monday night. Preliminary investigations indicate that the two committed suicide by consuming sulphas.

According to police sources, Vishal Mukherjee (56), a businessman from Maharashtra, along with his wife, Jaya Mukherjee (51), and son, Ishaan Mukherjee (25), had come to Kashi on August 5.

The family visited temples, including Shri Kashi Vishwanath Dham, and participated in the Ganga Aarti. It is reported that Vishal Mukherjee, who was suffering from a serious illness, had a last wish of visiting Baba Vishwanath during the month of Shravan.

Vishal Mukherjee's health suddenly deteriorated on Saturday night, and he was admitted to BHU Hospital, where he died during treatment on Sunday. After speaking with his family, his wife and son performed his last rites in Kashi.

According to the police, Jaya Mukherjee and Ishaan were in deep shock after Vishal Mukherjee's death. When the door of the homestay in Luxa remained unopened for a long time on Monday night, the operators informed the police. Upon arriving at the scene and opening the door, the mother and son were found dead. Preliminary investigations indicate that the couple committed suicide by consuming sulphas.

AAP may implode soon, Mann won't complete his tenure: Warring

Chandigarh. (Agency)

Punjab Congress president Amrinder Singh Raja Warring on Monday bid what he termed a "farewell" to chief minister Bhagwant Mann, predicting that the current Vidhan Sabha session could be Mann's last as chief minister. Claiming that the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) was headed for an internal implosion, Warring alleged that the state govt could lose its majority as several party MLAs were waiting for an opportune moment to rebel.

"At no cost is Mann going to complete his tenure," Warring claimed. He added that even if the Punjab assembly elections are held on schedule in Feb 2027, Mann would not remain chief minister until then. The Punjab Congress chief alleged that most AAP legislators



had become alienated and disillusioned with their own govt.

"For four-and-a-half years, they have felt suffocated. Now they are waiting for a

breather," he said.

Launching a sharp attack on the chief minister, Warring said Mann had proved to be the "worst-ever chief minister" Punjab had witnessed. "Unfortunately, Mann could not realise that his stage had changed and that he was no longer required to survive by narrating jokes and anecdotes," Warring said.

Addressing the chief minister, he remarked, "People of Punjab did not elect you to make them laugh. For that, they already had enough of your comedy." Warring said the people had voted for AAP with hopes of "badlaav" (change), but alleged that Mann had instead surrendered his authority to "outsiders" while prioritising the security of his chief ministerial position. "You sacrificed Punjab's interests to protect your chair.

Shraddha Walkar's aunt claims to get anonymous Pak calls, fears family safety

Palghar. (Agency)

Four years after the gruesome murder of Shraddha Walkar, her paternal aunt, Rajal Naik, on Monday claimed she had been receiving anonymous phone calls from Pakistan after speaking to the media about the delay in justice in the case. Naik said the calls have frightened her family and that she plans to approach the police with evidence.

A resident of Vasai in Maharashtra's Palghar district, Naik said she has stopped answering unknown international calls because of safety concerns. She further said she has saved screenshots of the incoming call logs and will file an official complaint with the Vasai Police.



"Even after four years, Shraddha has not received justice. Ever since I started raising my voice in the media, I have been getting anonymous calls from Pakistan. We are scared, but I have

documented the call records and will be approaching the police for a probe into who is trying to intimidate us," Naik told reporters.

Walkar, 27, who was from Vasai, was

murdered in Delhi on May 18, 2022, by her live-in partner Aaftab Poonawala. According to police, he strangled her, cut her body into multiple pieces, kept them in a refrigerator and disposed of them over several days in different parts of Delhi.

Poonawala, who had rented a flat in the national capital's Mehrauli where the murder took place, was arrested on November 12, 2022.

The trial in the case has been pending since 2023. Walkar's father Vikas, who had pursued the case after her death, passed away in 2025. Naik has now said she will go to the police over the anonymous calls, while continuing to raise concerns over the delay in justice for Walkar.

Universe: Sacred side of educational enterprise

When Samuel Vedanayagam Pillai (1826-1889) wrote the first Tamil novel, ‘Prathapa Mudaliar Caritharam’, in 1879, he, like many of his contemporary writers, placed education at the heart of his work. The protagonist of the novel, a wealthy landowner’s son, had once refused to go to school, saying, “Ayya, do I need to study? Are not my wit and common sense enough? The poor do need to be educated, no doubt, as they have to earn their living. But is that necessary for me? If there is something to be read or written, don’t we have our clerks? And accountants?” This amusing display of adolescent arrogance from a century and a half ago may seem preposterous, but its relevance is strikingly contemporary.

Learning, in our highly technologically advanced society, is now valued chiefly for the economic opportunities it offers. Degrees have become tickets to better-paying jobs. What purpose do science and technology serve, except to bring unprecedented luxury within our reach? Ironically, prosperity often weakens our understanding of what education is for. There may be other factors operational in a society, but it is material gains that lead to the final snapping of ties between learning and potential learners. This tension between commerce and learning is not unique to our age. It has surfaced repeatedly in history, and one of its clearest expressions can be found in Reformation Europe. Martin Luther’s crusade against ecclesiastical corruption, in the early decades of the 16th century, had turned common people



suspicious towards the revered monasteries and nunneries, which were also the seats of medieval learning. The halo around the institutions related to the established Church was fading and the bonds of popular allegiance were loosening.

The period was also marked by a commercial revolution. Trade and commerce became incredibly lucrative. Many well-meaning traders in Germany began to withdraw their wards from schools, and pushed them into trade; traders, like farmers, could always do with more hands.

This created another crisis in Western Europe. Reformation needed more preachers and teachers, not fewer. Luther was constrained to write his famous sermon ‘On Keeping Children in School’ in 1530. In it, he argued that it was the “real masterpiece of the devil’s art” to keep children away from learning, and sacrifice them at the altar of mammon. He called upon communities to bring children back to schools to be trained to occupy holy offices to lead the flock in righteous living, and to guide the prince in dispensing justice.

Arguing for mass education for both spiritual and temporal ends, Luther laid the foundation of the second education revolution in the West, the first one being King Charlemagne’s groundbreaking efforts in the 9th century AD. History testifies that renewal of its spiritual foundations is the way to make learning a meaningful human pursuit.

The wise mother of that overconfident Mudaliar child counsels: “Without education, can we comprehend the nature and divine attributes of the almighty, or the teachings of the scriptures and spiritual tracts? Can we know anything of sciences like geography or mathematics...” In a single breath, she evokes both the spiritual and the material, both the sacred and the scientific.

Lapses led to July 20 police crackdown on protesters

The authorities missed the window of preparation and planning

No accountability has been fixed yet for the July 20 police crackdown on protesters, even as the Opposition is trying to corner the government over this issue. The Tribune Edit and Op-Ed articles continue to ask questions and seek answers about the police action. Newspapers Writing about the police atrocities committed on the eventful day, the authorities missed the window of preparation and planning for the July 20 march, writes Gurbachan Jagat, ex-Governor, Manipur, and former DGP, J&K, in his Edit article What went wrong at Jantar Mantar. Usually, whenever such a march is announced, the administration at the ground level goes into overdrive. Briefing is of the utmost importance so that they understand to the last man the threat and their response. Force must be used under supervision — controlled, measured and sufficient to achieve the objective of crowd dispersal, he avers. The objective is not to vanquish an enemy at all costs as that only results in more protests and provokes the people. He pins down the problem: much of the prescribed procedure is ignored or, at best, given scant attention. writes Julio Ribeiro in his Edit article Force must be used as a last resort. The principle of using the minimum necessary force must strictly guide a command officer at all times. In the Jantar Mantar protest, 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. SouthAsians & Diaspora

Coming to the main issue of the high-stakes NEET paper, from banking to medical colleges, just about every field now depends on the MCQ system to recruit candidates for education and employment. Why is it such a favourite? asks former NCERT director Krishna Kumar in his Edit article NEET is flawed to the core. Basically, MCQ-based tests allow the elimination of a large number of candidates. The process of elimination is mechanical

and thus impartial. This is why the process is regarded as being legitimate even if it is not quite valid, he writes. No matter how advanced is the technology used for conducting NEET, its inner crude character will remain unaddressed. We must abolish the machine called the National Testing Agency (NTA). No meaningful reform is possible unless we abolish these two high-pressure tests and come forward with creative and life-affirming alternatives, says sociologist Avijit Pathak in his Op-Ed article NEET, JEE and death of critical thinking. We must constitute a committee of great



educationists, teachers, pedagogues, good doctors and creative engineers and encourage them to evolve a decentralised pattern of tests that seeks to evaluate a young learner’s analytical and interpretative skills, social and moral sensibilities, and some basic understanding of what doctors and engineers actually do in their professional fields.

Talking about the reforms needed in the education system, the amendments to the anti-paper-leak law may expedite investigation and trials, but the deterrent effect remains an open-ended question in a country that is over-legislated and under-enforced, writes Lok Sabha MP Manish Tewari in his Edit piece Education system must focus on job skills. The reform agenda should match the aspirations of the young generation, he writes. This chasm between ‘credentials’ and ‘capability’ is a consequence of an academic architecture that relegates employment integration to residual luck of campus placements and prestige hierarchy of limited eminent institutes.

Success in Godavari talks could usher in new era

Political posturing must give way to cooperation. Telangana and Maharashtra should work together with a shared commitment to protect their most vulnerable communities from the challenges posed by an increasingly volatile climate

In a welcome initiative aimed at resolving an inter-state water war, Telangana and Maharashtra seem headed towards negotiations regarding the contentious Tummidihatti barrage on the Pranahita river, the largest tributary of the Godavari by discharge and drainage. Union environment minister Bhupender Yadav has assured he would convene a Central Water Commission meeting on the issue, and between the irrigation ministers of the two states. As with all other water-sharing disputes, this long-pending issue has been prolonged by political compulsions on both sides. It all started in 2008 when Y S Rajasekhara Reddy, then the Chief Minister of combined Andhra Pradesh, proposed a 152-metre-high barrage on the Godavari near Tummidihatti as part of the Pranahita-Chevella irrigation project. Maharashtra insisted on reducing the height, claiming that a large area in the state, including a wildlife sanctuary, would be submerged. After Telangana was formed, the BRS government shifted the water source from Tummidihatti to Medigadda, and constructed the Kaleshwaram lift irrigation scheme.



Meanwhile, Maharashtra approved a barrage height of 148 metres at Tummidihatti, which would reduce Telangana’s drawing capacity to 80 thousand million cubic feet. The Revanth Reddy government took a middle path and proposed a height of 150 metres, which Maharashtra dismissed. That’s why the Telangana CM sought the Centre’s intervention, which proposed

mediation. Telangana wants to complete the Tummidihatti barrage to use 100 tmcft of Godavari water, as the Kaleshwaram project is under repair. Telangana has a 960-tmcft share of Godavari water, out of which the state has tapped only a little over 500 tmcft till date. With rainfall patterns becoming increasingly unpredictable, prolonged political delays in decision-making are no longer sustainable if any state is to judiciously use their water resources. After all, rivers do not recognise political boundaries. Political posturing must give way to cooperation. Telangana and Maharashtra should work together with a shared commitment to protect their most vulnerable communities from the challenges posed by an increasingly volatile climate. If the two states resolve the matter with the Centre’s support, it would usher in a new era for a country affected by several river-water disputes. This is possible because the two states are now jointly constructing the Chanaka-Korata barrage across the Penganga river. It shows that parched lands can be adequately watered if politics stands aside.

The Resurgence of Terror in Pakistan

☛The bombings in Swat and Khuzdar are not exceptional incidents, but are indicators of a deeper structural deterioration

On August 2, a suicide bomber killed 17 people, including 10 civilians and seven policemen, and injured dozens more in an attack targeting anti-militancy demonstrators in the city of Kabul in the Swat District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. On the same day, a Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) suicide attacker struck the compound of Shafiq Mengal, the leader of a state-backed militia in Khuzdar, killing at least 20 people.

These attacks underscore the breadth of Pakistan’s insurgent challenge, spanning both Islamist and ethno-nationalist theatres. Crucially, these are the latest manifestations of a widening crisis that has returned Pakistan to the position it occupied at the height of its internal wars (2009-2013): the world’s deadliest theatre of terrorism. The immediate significance of these incidents lies not merely in their brutality but in what they reveal about the evolving trajectory of violence. Suicide attacks have not become more frequent in 2026; they have become markedly more lethal. According to the South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) database, Pakistan recorded 15 suicide attacks between January 1 and August 2 in both 2025 and 2026. Yet civilian fatalities in these attacks surged more than two-and-a-half times, from 23 to 82. The civilian death toll in these incidents has already exceeded the total for the entirety of 2025. Security Force fatalities, by contrast, declined marginally, while militant deaths collapsed dramatically. Insurgent groups are increasingly able to strike civilian concentrations while avoiding sustained confrontation with state forces.

This trend is embedded within a broader resurgence of terrorism across Pakistan. After years of decline following extensive military operations, violence has risen steadily since 2022. Total terrorism-linked fatalities climbed from 971 in 2022 to 4,001 in 2025, making Pakistan the country recording the highest number of



terrorism-related deaths anywhere in the world. Fatalities in 2026 already totalled 2,842 by August 2, and the current trajectory suggests that the country will again remain at the top of global terrorism fatality rankings. Since 2000, Pakistan has recorded over 19,000 terrorist incidents claiming more than 76,500 lives, including over 23,200 civilians and more than 11,200 Security Force personnel. These are not the statistics of a state that has defeated terrorism; they are the accumulated evidence of

insurgencies that have repeatedly adapted to changing circumstances. The principal driver of the present escalation is strategic rather than tactical. Islamabad’s relationship with the Afghan Taliban has deteriorated rapidly since the latter’s return to power in August 2021, as Islamabad’s fantasies of ‘strategic depth’ crumbled against the realities of the disputed Durand Line, the present border between the two countries. Repeated cross-border attacks and Pakistan’s increasingly

aggressive military posture have followed. Pakistan’s Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif’s declared in February 2026 that “our cup of patience has overflowed” and that Pakistan was now in “open war” with Afghanistan. The Afghan response was equally explicit, with Taliban media announcing a “battalion of suicide attackers” reportedly prepared for operations against Pakistan. The permissive environment across the border in Afghanistan has dramatically expanded the strategic space available to TTP and affiliated formations.

Pakistan’s predicament is deeply rooted in decades of selective counter-terrorism. Terrorist organisations were never dismantled comprehensively; instead, distinctions were maintained between those perceived as threats to the Pakistani state and those regarded as strategic assets for external policy objectives. Such distinctions were inevitably and progressively eroded, as organisations fragmented, cadres shifted loyalties, operational capabilities diffused, and ideological ecosystems remained intact. The result is today’s security landscape, where multiple insurgencies reinforce one another while exploiting persistent weaknesses in governance, intelligence, and political coherence.

The bombings in Swat and Khuzdar are not exceptional incidents, but are indicators of a deeper structural deterioration. Pakistan once appeared to have brought terrorism under substantial control through sustained security operations. That achievement has steadily unravelled. Unless Islamabad abandons selective approaches to Islamist terrorism, restores strategic coherence, and confronts all violent extremist organisations without distinction, the present resurgence is unlikely to remain a temporary spike. It is, instead, becoming the defining characteristic of Pakistan’s internal security environment once again.

5 herbs that can add flavour to any juice



herbs can lend a refreshing taste to mocktails as well as fresh fruit juices

Mint: Mint leaves have a pungent but pleasant menthol flavour, with a sweetish aftertaste. Mint goes well with most fruits, so add this to your guava, peach, apple and sweet lime or pomegranate juice. Always serve chilled.

Basil: Fresh green and aromatic basil also offers several benefits. For one, it is an anti-oxidant. It also helps with respiratory problems and indigestion. To use it, simply tear a few basil leaves and add them to your juice. A great morning pick-me-up is chilled orange or watermelon juice with some cinnamon and basil leaves.

Lavender: You may not know this, but the herb lavender has a sweet floral aroma and pairs well with mint. The leaves can be used with strawberries, peaches and lemonade gets a nice burst of flavour when you add a few sprigs of fresh lavender to a glass.

Lemongrass: This one can be bought at any local market. Aromatic lemongrass not only adds flavour to a soup or hot tea but it's a nice addition to a fresh orange or pear juice. Remember, when you buy lemongrass, ensure its base is intact.

Kaffir lime leaves: Tangy kaffir lime leaves can be used to liven up any citrus juice. Just add the leaves on their own or them into smaller pieces.

How to reuse cooking oil?



Are you wary of using your cooking oil after frying a batch of nachos, because of the health implications? Here are some tips to reuse them.

Choose the oil

If your frying technique is off, your oil won't be reusable. Every oil has a specific smoking point, - the temperature where the oil starts breaking down. Use oils like canola, peanut or vegetable oils with a high smoking point that won't break down easily. Avoid reusing olive oil as it has a low smoking point and a dominant flavour, which makes it a bad choice for deep-frying in the first place.

Filter the oil

After the first (and each subsequent) fry, drain the oil and filter it. Any impurities and unwanted extras like loose crumbs or bits of batter are going to spoil the oil's integrity, making it burn the next time you heat it. Put a few layers of cheesecloth in a metal strainer to filter out the crumbs.

Refrigerate it

Let the oil cool down till it's at room temperature, and then refrigerate it in an air-tight container.

Use separate oils according to flavour

The oil is going to take on the flavour of the food you cooked in it, which makes fried fish oil ideal for shrimp, but not good for onion rings. Separate the oils to prevent bad flavour overlaps.

Guilt-free bakes take over



cakes, breads and cookies -the most calorie-laden, sinful delights -can be anything but healthy. Right?

However, some city bakers are all set to change the mindset. They are using wholesome and organic ingredients to add health and taste to your bakes! Think cakes like olive jalapeno, American corn, lemon pomegranate, almond tea-crunch, desi kaju katli, meetha paan, apple oats, red-velvet (with beetroot), pumpkin walnut bread and zucchini choco-chip cookies among others. There is something for everybody -fitness enthusiasts, lactoseintolerants, nut-intolerants, lactating mothers, vegans and even those suffering from diabetes or celiac. Gluten-free, sugar-free and vegan cakes among other healthy bakes, which use alternative ingredients like moong dal, wholewheat, oats, ragi, jowar, bajra, sooji and almond flour, are a reality now. Most of the healthy bakes are sweetened with natural ingredients like honey, jaggery, figs, nuts, dates, carrots and bananas. Instead of vegetable oil, rice bran or olive oil is used. Fresh fruits, beetroot, zucchini and amaranth seeds are added for colour and flavour, while puffed bajra, dry fruits, muesli, soya cream, butter of dry fruits are used to decorate the cake, instead of calorie laden milk cream or the unhealthy fondant. "Staples, like millets ensure that the cakes are also rich in fibre," says baker Arun Kaulige.

Durga Menon adds, "Vegetables and fruits add a different character to the bakes, which you will not find with artificial flavours or regular bakes."

Before you turn up your nose at the organic ingredients, you should know what you are eating in the name of sweet treats. Meeta Wala valkar says, "When I was learning how to bake, I was appalled by the unhealthy ingredients that went into it. After baking, we would bring our creations home, which was then served at dinner. In a month's time, my family started suffering from many health issues."

And that is not startling if you consider the fact that apart from copious amounts of flour, sugar, butter, oil and cream, seven types of chemicals go into any regular bread or cake. "It is a vicious cycle -to balance the sourness of preservatives, you add acidity regulator, which makes the bread hard. So you add dough softener. Then, to balance the sourness, you decrease the percentage of fruit and add sugar. So we decided to break out of it and just make healthy bakes. Our cakes use no decoration at all. Not even names on birthday cakes," Meeta added.

The healthy revolution started about five years ago, but is gaining prominence now. When Chaitali Raizada started healthy baking five years ago, it was an uphill task for her to reach out to others. The fact that atta cakes tend to be

dense, and not fluffy, led to speculation about the taste and texture. "Earlier, people were skeptical about the taste of healthy cakes. But now, the city has become much more fitness conscious, and most people who have tasted this have lost the palate for regular stuff."

Chaitali believes her bakery is not about desserts. It's a way of life that is free from the clutches of white flour, sugar, artificial colours, additives, preservatives, chemicals, pesticides and even microwaves or non-stick ware.

A surgery and a strict diet that followed is what got Nikita Sanjay Narang to look at healthy baking seriously. "A dietician told me that I was to have no food with preservatives, flour, sugar, etc.

But I had a sweet tooth and a passion to bake. So, after six months of experimenting, I finally started coming up with healthy recipes. However, when I market my cakes as no flour, no butter and no sugar and no egg, people think it will have no taste. Though I struggled earlier, the demand is definitely on the rise now."

Karen Lobo Dutta's sweet cravings during her pregnancy prompted her to look up healthy options. Today, she aims to train the next generation to eat healthy even when they are indulging. Simran Oberoi Multani shares those views.

"I started healthy baking for my son, who is a toddler now. Even if he snacks on my cakes on a daily basis, I wouldn't worry. The passion to bake healthy also led me to devise an oats and almond biscuit containing flaxseeds and jaggery, which helps young mothers in lactating better."

However, for Jeeva Anna George, it was a question of survival. "In 2010, I was diagnosed with celiac -a disease in which the small intestine is hypersensitive to gluten, leading to difficulty in digesting food. I was put off most food items as gluten is in almost every product with a shelf life. So I started baking my own stuff," she says, adding that schools for children with special needs are part of her clientele.

Clever ways to use your ice

Cube tray

How to use your ice cube tray

Use fruit cubes for your party: Fruit-infused ice cubes are a great idea for a party. Choose fruit like watermelon, strawberries and cherries (de-seed them). Put some fruit into each tray and cover with water. Freeze. You can also do this with different shaped cubes. With this, bid goodbye to artificial drinks and say hello to an enticing, flavourful treat.

Freeze herbs for cooking: Don't fret over herbs going stale anymore. Just store your thyme, oregano and rosemary in ice trays. Select fresh herbs. Chop them up neatly and place them in the different compartments. Add a little olive oil in each till it fills to the top. Cover with a plastic wrap and freeze. Remove the cubes and use them whenever needed.

Store edible flowers: Using edible flowers in cooking is a top trend for the year and now you can freeze your roses and lavender in ice cube trays

to add to your chilled drinks. Simply toss a few cubes into your glass of water and enjoy the refreshing change. You can also store zucchini flowers for your ricotta, drumstick flowers for pungent chutneys and lavender for desserts, biscuits and

other bakes.

Make coffee ice cubes: Here's something to add to your chilled coffee. Just pour warm coffee into the ice cube tray and let it freeze. Use these for enhanced flavour to your glass.

6 foods that are dangerous for your teeth

Who doesn't want healthy teeth which translate into a bright smile? While there are many healthy options to get a glowing batch of teeth there are also some foods that mean disaster to your teeth. Here's what you should avoid -

Sweet candy

Candy sweets, especially hard candies have tons of sugar which is bad for tooth health since the sweet can cause cavities and get stuck in the crevices causing more bacteria.

Tea and coffee

The tannic acids in coffee and even in some teas can wear down enamel and stain your

teeth brown. While you cannot give up tea or coffee completely, try to keep it to the minimum and opt for green tea too.

Pickles

We all find pickles tasty and great as accompaniments to our meal, but the combination of super-acidic vinegar and sugar is a recipe for enamel erosion.

Citrus fruits

Lime, Lemons, Oranges, and

Grapefruit, they all are loaded with citric acid which can cause enamel erosion and tooth decay. If you cannot completely avoid them, try to minimize it by avoiding too

much of acidic foods and drinks through the day. The best way to find out an acidic food is to see if any food or drink easily stains the teeth.

Soda

Top 5 real estate destinations to invest in 2016

Prop Tiger

Beat the heat this summer with a trip in Australia

Tourism Australia Recommended By Colombia

Soda has a combination of sugar, acids, and carbonation which is too bad for teeth since it leads to tooth erosion and decay. While studies show a glass of red wine every once in a while can be good for the heart and cholesterol levels, the beverage can stain teeth quite easily. The acids in red as well as white wine wear down the surface of teeth, which is why stains are so common.



'Indulge' fest to treat capital's whisky, cigar lovers

Indulge, a whisky and cigar festival to be held here next month, will feature an array of the greatest whiskies paired with a selection of cigars.

Dramz Whiskey Bar and Lounge will host the fest

February 6-7. In its maiden

edition, Indulge will feature 46 labels, 20 distilleries and eight experts around the world who will talk about cigars and whiskies.

Some of the prominent whiskies that the patrons could relish include the likes of Glenfiddich (21, 18, 15 and 12 years), Balvenie, Glenlivet (25, 21, 18, 15, Founders Reserve and 12), Royal Salute 21, range of Chivas Regal, Old Pulteney,

Balblair, Cardhu, Oban, Tomatin, Mackmyra Preludium 06 from Sweden and more.

These whiskies will be paired along with some cigars that boast of names like Beenacudo, Padron, Bespoke, Campessino, Costa, to name a few, from The Smoke Company.

"Being an ardent lover and collector of fine whiskies and single malts, I have been working on the concept for more than a year. A festival like this creates a platform where I could share the same with all those who love great whiskies," Sunil Aggarwal, owner of Dramz and director of Indulge, said in a statement.





Reporting to a Younger boss?

Do you feel awkward reporting to a younger boss? A new generation is trying to allay your fears by asking, "What's age got to do with it?"

Innovation apart, fast proliferating startups have another side effect -younger bosses. This shift in status quo does give rise to a certain anxiety. In a traditionally hierarchy-friendly country, does this tipping of balance change things at the workplace? According to the recent 2015 TimesJobs Leadership Survey, over 60 per cent entry-to-mid level employees say they would like to have young bosses. This, however, is in contrast to 80 per cent senior professionals, who after 20 years of experience, would prefer older bosses. The question of age seems to have left India Inc in a bind, but it is strangely the young entrepreneurs and business managers who themselves are offering a solution.

THE KIDS ARE ALL RIGHT

For startups and companies that are concerned with newer technologies, the media and the internet, young bosses often prove to be a huge advantage. At 23, Rega Jha is Editor, Buzzfeed India, and she leads a team of people where almost everyone is older than her. "For an internet company," she says, "there is a premium on being young. We have an inherent advantage because we grew up with this technology. Older people in their 30s and 40s will walk up to my team in office and ask, 'Hey, what do you kids think of this?' So age does not come with any negative

connotations at work."

While youngsters may be better equipped to tackle new age jobs, young bosses are not complacent enough to be oblivious to the lack of experience that comes with their age. In fact, because they are so keenly aware of this fact, they constantly try to learn from older colleagues. In her tenure with Buzzfeed, Rega has been conscious of her age and thus respectful of employees with more experience, even going out of her way to ask them for tips and advice. Their own failures and successes have helped provide her a priceless map.

TWO-WAY STREET OF EDUCATION

Saurabh Agarwal was already an entrepreneur when it hadn't even become cool to become one. He started Unify Facility Management in 2009 and was only 26 at the time. Today, Unify is one of the biggest housekeeping service providers for corporate and commercial facilities in the country. In a business that had little to do with new technologies, Saurabh was surrounded by older experts. "Even when I started taking interviews, I made sure I

At 40, Rahul was 10-15 years older than the Program Managers he reported to during the two years he spent there. "Even though I was older than my Program Managers, they had more experience than me in the education field," says Rahul, who had left his cushy corporate job to engineer societal change. "It made no difference to me that they were younger than me. In my mind, there is no bias for either younger or older bosses. I learned from them, like I would from any boss. Conversely, they took my opinion on things just like they took opinions from other colleagues who were their age."

RESPECT YOUR JUNIORS

The situation at a senior management level proves to be even more age-agnostic. While junior-to-mid level functions involve a lot of personal reviews and feedback, working with younger bosses when you are a part of senior management is all about doing things together. "At a senior management level, it's all about collective responsibility," says 63-year-old Tapan Bose, who is currently retired and working on contract with the SP Jain Institute as a Project Advisor. In the past, he has worked in senior management positions with a few IT multinational companies where he had to report to a CEO younger than him. He does, however, add, "It wasn't like I had to take permission for anything. Important decisions were mostly taken as a group and the whole process was objective-driven, based on responsibility and accountability, so age had nothing to do with it."

In today's competitive world, it's not that easy to be at the top and employees across the spectrum realise this. While younger bosses have to work a little harder than their older counterparts in order to earn trust and credibility, it's often smooth sailing once they have succeeded in doing so. As long as a manager is good at his job, manages his team well and is willing to learn from others, he usually earns the respect of employees. "I used to make sure I did my homework before we met prospective clients," says Saurabh. "We had all the answers to their questions and that would stump them because they did not expect this from such a young guy. But the team saw this and it increased their confidence in me too."

With over 65% of India's population under 30, it almost seems natural that younger people are increasingly taking up managerial roles. The great news is that their colleagues don't see this as a threat or a disadvantage. Age, it seems, is just a number, after all.



didn't sound bossy. These people were more experienced than me. They had worked in the industry for 20 years and seen and done things I hadn't. I told them I needed them for this venture to succeed. They had the expertise I didn't and I did not even try to hide this fact." The respondents to this article made it clear that most employees in the country value skills far more than age. Rahul Sharma, for instance, joined the Teach For India Fellowship in 2013 to teach students of low-income schools. Because the average age of people working in the NGO fell within the mid-20s spectrum, only a handful of people were older than Rahul.

is seen in poor light. "It would be advisable that the candidate figures out who he is applying to and address the mail to the concerned person, making the application personalized. And one should never make the mistake of applying to multiple companies by adding several email ids in the BCC as it's seen as unprofessional," says Rao. A suitable salutation in such emails could be 'Dear Sir', 'Dear HR Manager' or 'Dear Hiring Manager'. On a different note, the email id created to send your resume could also affect your chances of getting short-listed. "If an employer receives a resume from an id like serialkisser01@gmail.com, the reaction it would receive is obvious," laughs Ashish Arora, Managing Director, HR Anexi Pvt Ltd, who recommends short and straightforward email ids with a subject line clearly drawing attention to the role being applied for.

Resources - South Asia, SAS Institute (India) Pvt Ltd. Rao adds that freshers need to highlight their educational qualifications, technical skills and their college projects in their resume. "If you've done an internship, you need to mention your exact role and learning from it in your resume," adds Rao, who feels that grammar and punctuation cannot be compromised in one's CV. "A cover letter is also a must and it should briefly summarize the candidate's skills and the kind of role they're looking for, along with a reason for applying for the role and choice of company," says Rao.

How one addresses the person receiving the resume is vital too. A "Hi" followed by the person's name

Dos and don'ts for your job application

HR professionals point out common mistakes made by those applying for their job, providing a list of dos and don'ts. Many argue that academics fails to prepare fresh graduates in communication etiquette, necessary in the corporate world. It is thus a task for some of them to even get employed as job interviews require one to present his or her skills, while conducting oneself in a certain manner. To address these concerns, we list mistakes made by first-time job aspirants and how they can be corrected.

- Email etiquette

So, you've heard about a suitable job, managed to procure the employer's email id and decided to shoot off your



resume for consideration. But when you're a fresher, your resume may not be your biggest strength. So what do you do? "A mistake freshers make in their resume is, since there's little to speak of in terms of professional achievement, they litter it with details about their family and their hobbies," says Srinivas Rao Katkoor, Director Human

5 office etiquette tips that will make your Workplace better

Working in open-plan offices comes with its share of hassles.

You get to hear chatter from other departments and may have an air-conditioning system that leaves your part of the office with Arctic temperatures while everyone else is quite comfortable. While you may not be able to shush people all the time and have no control over temperature control, there are other courtesies you can observe at work to keep the inter-departmental peace.

DON'T CROWD THE WATER COOLER

Most people chat at the office water cooler so that they can get a break from their workstations and perhaps have a chinwag about office politics. That's all very well, but the moment you see that someone else is in line to use the cooler, you should make way for them so that they can use it and head back to their desks.

EMPTY YOUR GLASS

If your office doesn't have disposable cups at the water cooler, chances are there will be a tumbler for everyone to use. For starters, don't fill the entire tumbler if you know you aren't going to finish it — that's just being plain eco-friendly. If you do have leftover water in the tumbler, empty it before putting it back in its place — especially

ally if you've just had hot water. After all, you wouldn't want someone else getting scalded with your leftover water.

DON'T HANG AROUND IN THE RESTROOM

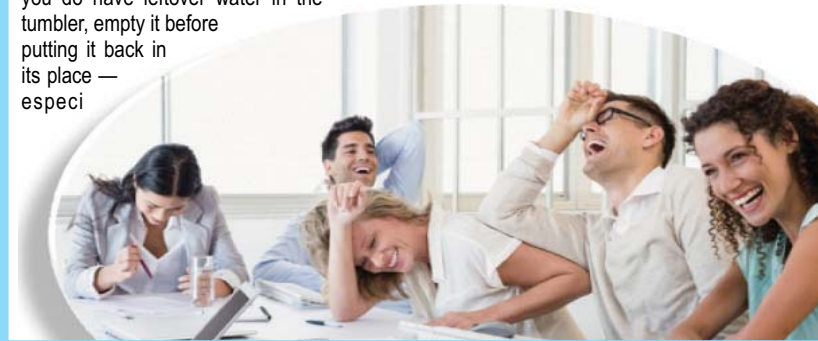
The ladies' loo is another favourite spot for women to chit-chat in between work. But make sure you don't hijack the space in front of the sink or block the door while you're chatting away. This way, you don't cause inconvenience to other people who may want to dash in and out.

FILL UP THE PRINTER

Sometimes, different departments have to share a common printer. So if you're sending a printout, you should first make sure that there's enough paper in the printer. Otherwise, you could be holding up someone else's print in the queue.

WAIT TO ENTER THE LIFT

It's a common sight to see people standing right in front of the lift waiting for it to open and then bump into the people getting out of it when they enter. Let whoever is already in the lift exit it and then enter. It's only polite.



5 things to avoid Looking unprofessional

Coming across as unprofessional is the last thing one would want to be. Here are some tips that can help you avoid the same:

- Have you heard of the 'expectation hurts' phrase? That is exactly what would be termed as optimism bias or being unrealistically optimistic. Assuming that there is a lesser chance for one to be at risk than others leads them to believe that they can afford to be more laidback and they often start taking the safe route. This could make one look unprofessional.
- Words matter. While actions speak louder

than words, you should still mind your words. Do not use bad words at work place -



whether you are using it just like that or are frustrated - it shows employees in a bad light.

- Never hide things at your work place. It is good to be transparent in your communications. That way, you have nothing to hide and your communication with your colleagues and your seniors remains unaffected.
- Do not run away from responsibilities. A responsible employee is not only the most sought after, but also tends to be more successful at his/her work. On the contrary, do not overpromise, too, if you cannot accomplish it.
- Leering could make you look like a creep and interactions with those from the opposite sex become difficult. You'll be in the radar for all the wrong reasons, of course.

Is the Opposition shooting itself in the foot by disrupting Parliament?

While Parliament is the workplace of both the government and the Opposition, it is the latter's most important arena. Disrupting the Monsoon Session repeatedly, is the Opposition giving up the very platform it needs to question the government and hold it to account? Who's ultimately the bigger loser here?

Delhi. (Agency)

When Parliament is disrupted, the first impression is usually that of a government unable to conduct business. That is particularly relevant now, because the Monsoon Session, which began on July 21, is facing repeated disruptions and adjournments almost from the outset, with Opposition parties protesting over a range of issues.

Bills have been delayed, Question Hour is disrupted and proceedings are repeatedly adjourned. But there is another way of looking at the cost of a dysfunctional Parliament. It is one that places the Opposition, rather than the government, at the centre of the disadvantage. Congress MP Shashi Tharoor made precisely this argument at an IIMUN (India's International Movement to Unite Nations) event. Political protests, dharnas and demonstrations have a legitimate place in a democracy, he said, but Parliament serves a different purpose. It is where political

disagreement is converted into questions, arguments, scrutiny and a permanent legislative record. A government with a majority can



ultimately use its numbers to pass legislation. The Opposition, by contrast, has far fewer institutional tools to influence the government. Its most important ones are inside Parliament — Question

Hour, Zero Hour, debates, motions, amendments and parliamentary committees. That makes a functioning Parliament particularly valuable to the Opposition. "There is no problem with all sorts of political demonstrations, dharnas, hartals, gheraos, sloganeering, whatever. All those are legal, constitutional and permitted in our democratic framework," Tharoor said. "But the temple of our democracy is a place where you go for prayer in the form of argument, debate and reasoned thinking," Tharoor said. The distinction matters because parliamentary democracy is not simply a mechanism for counting votes. The government's majority determines whether it can ordinarily get its legislation passed. Parliament, however, is also designed to make the government answer questions, defend its policies, hear objections and place its reasoning on record.

And many of those mechanisms are more valuable to an Opposition party than to the government itself.

THE OPPOSITION'S MOST IMPORTANT WEAPONS ARE PARLIAMENTARY

Question Hour is perhaps the clearest example. The Lok Sabha describes asking questions as an "inherent and unfettered parliamentary right" of its members. During Question Hour, MPs can seek information on virtually every aspect of government administration and policy, while ministers are required to answer. Starred questions permit oral answers and supplementary questions, allowing MPs to pursue the government's response in real time.

That accountability mechanism is especially useful to the Opposition.

A minister does not need to use Question Hour to establish that his or her ministry is functioning; the minister already sits inside the executive. An Opposition MP, however, can use a question to demand data, expose inconsistencies, seek explanations or force a minister to publicly defend a decision.

Deepti Gaur Mukerjee named Higher Education Secretary after NEET row

Delhi. (Agency)

Senior bureaucrat Deepti Gaur Mukerjee has been appointed as the new Higher Education Secretary as part of a top-level bureaucratic reshuffle carried out by the Centre on Monday. She succeeds Vineet Joshi, who was appointed Secretary in the Ministry of Panchayati Raj last month. The Personnel Ministry said late on Monday night that the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet had approved Mukerjee's appointment in a partial modification of its July 23 order. The appointment comes in the wake of the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) paper leak controversy.

Mukerjee, a 1993 batch Indian Administrative Service officer of the Madhya Pradesh cadre, is currently serving as the Corporate Affairs Secretary. In the earlier order, Naresh Pal Gangwar, Secretary in the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, had also been named Higher Education Secretary in place of Joshi.

Following the latest changes, Youth Affairs Secretary Pallavi Jain Govil will be the new Corporate Affairs Secretary in place of Mukerjee. Sunil Paliwal, Chairman of the Inland Waterways Authority of India, has been appointed Youth Affairs Secretary in place of Govil, while Sushil Kumar Lohani, Officer on Special Duty in the Cabinet Secretariat, will succeed Paliwal as Chairman of the Inland Waterways Authority of India.

Indian student from Andhra dies in head-on collision with pick-up truck in Ohio

New Delhi. (Agency)

An Indian student from Andhra Pradesh died in a road accident in Ohio, United States, after a pickup truck travelling in the opposite direction crossed the centre median and collided with the sedan he was driving, police said. The accident took place in the Macedonia area of Ohio on August 7.

The deceased, Dileep Kumar Bungatavula, hailed from Andhra Pradesh's Kadapa district and had moved to the US to pursue higher education at Kent State University. According to police, Bungatavula was driving a sedan when a pickup truck travelling in the opposite direction crossed the centre median and crashed into his vehicle. The Consulate General of India in New York confirmed Bungatavula's



death and said it was in touch with his family and providing all possible assistance.

"We are deeply saddened to learn of the

untimely demise of Mr. Dileep Kumar Bungatavula, an Indian national, who tragically lost his life in a car accident in Ohio on August 7, 2026," the consulate said in a post on X. "Our thoughts and heartfelt condolences are with his family during this difficult time. The Consulate is in touch with the family and is extending all possible assistance," it added. Meanwhile, the North America Telugu Society has launched a fundraiser for Bungatavula's family.

Uttarakhand flashflood rips apart bridge, sweeps away vehicle and driver

A bridge collapse cut off the border area and around a dozen villages, with rescue teams deployed to search for the missing BRO driver.

New Delhi. (Agency)

A sudden surge of floodwaters triggered by cloudbursts and intense monsoon rains turned the Tamak drain in Uttarakhand's Chamoli into a raging torrent, sweeping away a Bailey bridge, a vehicle and a Border Roads Organisation (BRO) driver.

The bridge on the Malari-Niti National Highway connects Jyotirmath to the border area and the collapse snapped road connectivity to around a dozen villages, including Jumma and Niti and cut off the frontier.

A BRO driver, Pankaj, a resident of Pithoragarh district, was swept away by the powerful current as he was

watching the floodwaters when the bridge suddenly collapsed. He remained missing. A vehicle was also swept away as the floodwaters surged through the drain.



Rescue teams were quickly mobilised, with personnel from the district administration, State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and

National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) dispatched to the site.

Following the bridge collapse, authorities suspended traffic on nearby roads as well. Officials said administrative teams were assessing the damage, while the BRO began work on alternative arrangements. Traffic is expected to be restored within a day or two, Chamoli District Disaster Management Officer NK Joshi added.

Over the past several years, floods and landslides in the Tamak drain have disrupted the Joshimath-Niti road, while flood debris has repeatedly choked the nearby Dhauli Ganga.

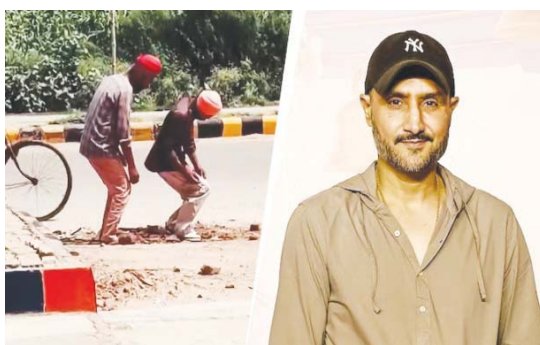
Harbhajan Singh's 'zombie drug' post on Punjab backfires. Video was from Rajasthan

Delhi. (Agency)

BJP Rajya Sabha MP and former cricketer Harbhajan Singh came across a video showing two turbaned men apparently behaving erratically on a roadside, purportedly under the influence of a "zombie drug". Assuming the footage was from Punjab, Singh shared it on social media, expressing anguish over what he described as the deteriorating drug situation in the state.

However, the video was later identified as being from Sri Ganganagar in Rajasthan, a BJP-ruled state, triggering a sharp backlash from the Punjab government and social media users. Harbhajan Singh shared the video on X and expressed concern over the alleged

spread of drug addiction among Punjab's youth. He said the state's young people were "besieged by addictions" and urged



people to "save Punjab's youth". "The evil eye has struck, my friend, on our Punjab," Singh said in his post, alleging that successive governments had "ruined

Punjab and its Punjabi youth".

The post soon came under scrutiny, with users pointing out that the footage was not from Punjab. Punjab Police subsequently issued a fact-check, clarifying that the video was filmed in Sri Ganganagar, Rajasthan.

"The video being circulated is from Sri Ganganagar, Rajasthan—not Punjab—and has no connection with Punjab Police. A Punjabi audio track does not make an incident a Punjab incident," Punjab Police said on X while resharing Singh's post.

Harbhajan's post drew a strong response from the Punjab government. Cabinet Minister Baljit Kaur accused the BJP MP of deliberately sharing footage from another state to portray Punjab in a negative light.

Parliament's Monsoon Session heads for a washout as key bills remain stuck

New Delhi. (Agency)

When Parliament's Monsoon Session began on July 20, the BJP-led NDA appeared to have the numbers, the Opposition appeared divided, and the government seemed well-placed to push through an ambitious legislative agenda. Three weeks later, that script has been upended.

The session, which was expected to focus on major proposals including women's reservation, delimitation and tighter regulation of foreign funding, has instead been dominated by the NEET controversy, student protests and a widening confrontation



between the government and the Opposition over police action against demonstrators.

The resignation of Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on July 25 was the first major political fallout of the protests. But rather than drawing a line under the controversy, it shifted the battle to the Home Ministry, with the Opposition now demanding that Amit Shah explain who authorised the alleged police action against protesting students in Delhi's Jantar Mantar.

The immediate trigger for the disruption was the Opposition's campaign over the NEET paper leak and the treatment of students who took to the streets. What began as a demand for accountability in the examination system widened after allegations of police excesses against protesters. Pradhan's resignation gave the Opposition fresh political ammunition, but did little to ease the standoff in Parliament.

We live like rodents: Suhel Seth kicks off crusade on urban mess, bigwigs cheer

Delhi. (Agency)

"I am angry, furious and raging over the miserable life we live in the cities across India. We live like rodents. Even worse." Speaking these words in a 2.17-minute clip, marketing expert and author Suhel Seth launched what he calls a citizens' movement against India's crumbling urban infrastructure. The clip, posted on Seth's X handle on Saturday (August 8) morning, came hours after heavy rain on Friday submerged large parts of the Delhi-NCR, including Haryana's Gurugram, where the author lives.

Asking people to send him photos and videos of civic failures, Seth pledged to amplify them until authorities were held accountable. His appeal struck a chord among eminent personalities and hundreds of people across India. Biocon founder Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, senior advocate Sidharth Luthra, and Lloyd Mathias, an angel investor.

Indian Army veteran Lieutenant Colonel Sushil Singh Sheoran (Retired) said, "I am neither a communist nor an ultra socialist, but an apartment in Gurugram, which has third-world civic amenities, is being sold for Rs 271 crore. There is something extremely wrong with India".

Sheoran was reacting to entrepreneur Manav Sardana's Rs 271 crore penthouse buy at DLF's The Dahlias in Gurugram.

On Friday (August 7), as if by annual ritual, monsoon rain once again exposed Gurugram's chronic flooding as roads submerged, traffic paralysed, and people were stranded for hours.

Hours before the Millennium City was inundated on Friday, the Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA) had posted on X, "Every drain counts in building a flood-resilient Gurugram." Hours later, people

responded with images and videos of waterlogged roads and stranded vehicles. Having long flagged Gurugram's civic issues, Seth has pitched the initiative as a citizens' movement, not a protest, saying



documented evidence and collective public pressure can hold authorities accountable. The campaign has spread beyond Gurugram, with people from multiple cities joining in with similar stories and visuals of urban neglect.

'WE LIVE LIKE RODENTS'

The campaign began with a video posted by Suhel Seth on X after Gurugram witnessed severe waterlogging.

"I am angry, furious and raging over the miserable life we live in the cities across India," the 63-year-old said, adding, "We live like rodents. Even worse." Describing India's urban infrastructure as collapsing, Seth said potholes had become the size of "Mount Everest" while cities continued to flood every monsoon despite authorities having centuries of experience dealing with seasonal rains.

He reserved particular criticism for Gurugram's local administration.

He accused it of repeatedly allowing the Millennium City to turn into "Venice every monsoon". Instead of just venting frustration, Seth urged people to participate in what he described as a movement for accountability.

SEBI reviews CAS trading activity, proposes easing debt maturity norms for issuers

Mumbai. (Agency)

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is reportedly examining trading activity recorded during the first week of the newly introduced Closing Auction Session (CAS) amid concerns over unusual price movements and the potential influence of low-liquidity trades on closing prices. According to NDTV Profit report, the market regulator has received transaction data from stock exchanges and is reviewing trades executed during the closing auction window, which was rolled out recently. The exercise is aimed at assessing whether any trading patterns may have affected the closing prices of securities, particularly in stocks with relatively low participation levels.

The review follows heightened volatility witnessed after the implementation of CAS and concerns raised by market participants regarding the price discovery process during the final minutes of trading. The report said SEBI is examining whether limited liquidity in the initial phase of the new mechanism could make some stocks more susceptible to price influence through relatively small orders. In a separate development, SEBI has proposed changes to debt market regulations aimed at providing issuers with greater flexibility in managing repayment schedules and reducing refinancing pressures.

In a consultation paper released on Monday, the regulator proposed increasing the maximum number of International Securities Identification Numbers (ISINs) that can mature in a single financial year from 14 to 17 for privately placed debt securities. Public comments on the proposal have been invited until August 31.

8th Pay Commission has not submitted report yet, says Govt

New Delhi. (Agency)

The 8th Central Pay Commission has not yet submitted its recommendations to the government, the Parliament was informed on Monday. The commission chaired by former Supreme Court Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai was constituted by the government on November 3, 2025. It had been given 18 months from the date of its constitution to submit its recommendations. It may also submit interim reports on matters where recommendations are finalised earlier. The government said there were around 35.77 lakh Central government civilian employees as of March 1, 2026. The number of pensioners and family pensioners stood at around 33.76 lakh as of December 31, 2025, excluding defence pensioners. The Terms of Reference require the commission to examine matters relating to pay revision, allowances, pension, family pension, and service conditions. The commission is currently holding regional meetings with employee unions, service associations, and pensioner organisations. The 8th Pay Commission's Delhi consultations concluded on Monday, marking another important stage in its exercise to gather views from Central government employees, pensioners, unions and other stakeholders. These meetings were attended by unions and associations registered in Delhi.

US judge drops all criminal charges against billionaire Gautam Adani

New Delhi. (Agency)

A US court has permanently dismissed criminal charges against Adani Group chairman Gautam Adani, his nephew Sagar Adani and former Adani Green Energy CEO Vneet Jaain, bringing an end to a nearly two-year-old bribery and securities-fraud case. The US District Court for the Eastern District of New York granted the Justice Department's Rule 48(a) motion to dismiss the indictment with prejudice. The charges included securities-fraud conspiracy, wire-fraud conspiracy and securities fraud.

Judge Nicholas Garaufis approved the dismissal after seeking further explanations from prosecutors on why the government wanted to abandon the case. A dismissal with prejudice permanently ends the criminal proceedings and prevents the charges from being refiled. However, it does not amount to a judicial finding on the underlying allegations.

The case began in November 2024, when US prosecutors accused Gautam Adani, Sagar Adani, Jaain and others of conspiring to pay USD 250 million in bribes to Indian government officials to secure solar-power contracts expected to generate more than USD 2 billion in after-tax profits over two decades.

Can airports own airlines? Here's what the government has clarified

New Delhi. (Agency)

Can the company that operates the airport you fly from also own the airline you're boarding? The short answer, according to the government, is yes. But there is an important caveat.

In a written reply in Parliament, the government clarified that there is no policy barring airport operators from owning or operating scheduled airlines. At the same time, it confirmed that the Airports Authority of India (AAI) has received a request seeking a waiver from existing cross-holding restrictions, although the proposal is yet to be examined by the Ministry of Civil Aviation. The clarification comes weeks after the issue emerged as a subject of debate within the aviation

industry. Reports last month said Adani Airport Holdings had sought a waiver from cross-holding restrictions under its airport concession agreement, triggering speculation that the group was looking to enter the airline business.

Adani Enterprises, however, later denied the reports, saying it was not evaluating any proposal to launch an airline. The company clarified that while a waiver had been sought in relation to the cross-holding provisions in its concession agreement, it should not be interpreted as an indication of plans to start an airline. Against this backdrop, the government's parliamentary reply makes one thing clear: there has been no change in

government policy because there was never a blanket prohibition on airport operators owning airlines in the first



place.

IF THERE IS NO POLICY BAR, WHY IS A WAIVER NEEDED?

The confusion stems from the fact that government policy and airport

concession agreements are two different things. While the government says there is no overarching policy preventing airport operators from owning airlines, some public-private partnership (PPP) airport concession agreements contain cross-holding clauses. These contractual provisions restrict airport operators from holding more than a specified stake in a scheduled airline unless a waiver is granted. In other words, an airport operator may not be barred by government policy from entering the airline business, but it could still be restricted by the terms of the concession agreement under which it operates an airport.

After TCS, HCLTech faces data leak claims; firm says no systems breached

New Delhi. (Agency)

HCLTech on Tuesday said it has found no evidence of a breach of its systems or any impact on client engagements after a hacker group claimed that employee data may have been exposed. The company said its initial investigation suggests that the data in question may be limited and could date back several years. A further investigation is underway. "There is no evidence of breach to the Company's systems or engagement with any of the Company's clients," HCLTech said. HCLTech said it is investigating the claims and will report any material findings from the probe. The company also said

cybersecurity remains a top priority and that it is committed to protecting information entrusted to



it. The IT major clarified that the employee data allegedly exposed appears to be limited and several years old, based on its initial investigation.

TCS ALSO RECEIVED SIMILAR

ALERT

The development comes hours after Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) informed stock exchanges that it had received threat-intelligence alerts about the possible exposure of certain employee information.

TCS said its investigation had found no credible evidence of a breach of its systems or customer environments. The two developments have brought attention to claims of employee data exposure at two of India's largest IT services companies. However, both companies have said they have found no evidence that their systems or client environments were breached.

94% of corporate employees fear medical bills: What's behind the financial stress?

New Delhi. (Agency)

For many salaried employees, losing a job or struggling to pay an EMI may seem like the biggest financial worry. But a new study suggests there is another concern that is weighing more heavily on corporate India: the rising cost of healthcare. Unexpected medical expenses have become one of the biggest sources of financial stress for corporate employees, according to Tata AIG General Insurance Company's The Corporate Health Protection Pulse 2026. The study found that 94% of respondents said an unexpected medical bill could put them under financial pressure. The findings also point to a worrying gap: many employees have employer-provided health cover, but are not sure whether it will be enough

when they actually need it.

WHY ARE MEDICAL BILLS CAUSING SO MUCH STRESS?

Healthcare costs have been rising, and a major hospitalisation can put



a sizeable dent in household savings. The study found that hospitalisation costs were among the top healthcare concerns for corporate employees. Other major concerns included lifestyle-related diseases, health cover for family members, mental health and

inadequate emergency savings.

For someone dependent mainly on a monthly salary, an unexpected medical bill can be difficult to absorb. The problem becomes even bigger if the treatment is not fully covered by insurance or the employee's policy has limits. The study found that healthcare expenses were the biggest financial concern during a job transition, ranking ahead of loss of income and EMI obligations.

JOB LOSS ADDS ANOTHER LAYER OF WORRY

The survey also looked at how long employees could manage their finances if they suddenly lost their jobs. Nearly seven in 10 respondents said they could sustain themselves for six months or less without a job. Only 12% believed they could manage for more than a year.

3rd party motor insurance fraud under scanner as insurers face rising claim payouts

New Delhi. (Agency)

General insurers are stepping up efforts to detect and crack down on fraudulent motor third-party insurance claims as the segment faces rising losses from higher compensation awards and a growing number of uninsured vehicles.

The move comes amid concerns over claims involving fake accidents, forged documents and fabricated injuries. A recent order by the Madras High Court has also given insurers a fresh push to seek stronger action against those involved in such fraud. Go Digit General Insurance secured a July 29 order from the Madras High Court for the appointment of district-level special investigation teams across Tamil Nadu to probe suspected

fraudulent insurance claims, reported The Times of India (TOI).

The court has directed authorities to investigate claims involving fake accidents, misrepresentation, forged insurance policies, fabricated injuries and false medical reports and bills. Police have also been asked to collect relevant evidence, including call detail records, during investigations. The court further directed that criminal proceedings be initiated against those found responsible. Departmental action has also been ordered against officials found to have facilitated fraudulent claims or failed to prevent them.

MOTOR THIRD-PARTY FRAUD BECOMES AN INDUSTRY CONCERN

The issue is gaining attention across the insurance industry as motor third-party insurance already faces pressure from rising claims



costs. Krishnamoorthy Rao, MD and CEO of Generali Central Insurance, told TOI that motor third-party fraud could become an industry-wide issue as insurers deal with higher compensation awards and an increase in uninsured vehicles. One concern flagged by Rao is the

alleged conversion of non-road traffic accident claims into motor accident claims. This can increase the number of claims being brought under motor third-party insurance and, in turn, add to insurers' liabilities.

HIGHER COURT AWARDS ADD TO THE PRESSURE

Fraud is not the only factor pushing up costs for motor insurers. Insurers are also increasing provisions following a recent Supreme

Court judgement that introduced compensation under a separate head for loss of domestic care. The compensation under this head is based on a monthly income of Rs 30,000, with periodic revisions for inflation and socio-economic changes, according to the report.

Four militants nabbed in Manipur

Imphal.(Agency)

The overall law-and-order situation in Manipur remained normal over the past 24 hours, according to police. Security forces continued search operations and area domination in fringe and vulnerable districts, with intelligence-based combing, cordon and search operations carried out extensively to target those involved in extortion and criminal activities. On August 9, security forces arrested four individuals in separate operations across the state. One suspected cadre of an armed group was arrested from the Khongjom Langathel area in Thoubal district, while a cadre of a proscribed outfit was arrested during a search operation in the Yumnam Huidrom area of Imphal West district. A self-styled cadre of an armed group was arrested from his residence in Purum Pangaltabi, Imphal East district, and an active member of another armed group was arrested from Lamlong, also in Imphal East district. The movement of 425 vehicles carrying essential goods along National Highway-37 was ensured, with strict security measures and convoy protection provided at vulnerable and sensitive stretches.

Bengaluru eco activists revive ‘No Balloons Please’ campaign ahead of Independence Day

BENGALURU.(Agency)

Ahead of Independence Day, Bengaluru-based eco activists have renewed their ‘No Balloons Please’ campaign, urging citizens, communities and establishments to avoid balloons and balloon releases during celebrations and to opt for reusable and compostable alternatives. Spearheaded by Beautiful Bharath, a citizen volunteer community working on sustainability and clean cities, the campaign highlights the environmental, health and civic risks associated with balloons. The volunteers said balloons are largely single-use and non-recyclable, ending up in landfills or as non-recoverable street litter. Their fragments can disintegrate into smaller particles and microplastics, contaminating soil and potentially entering water bodies through rain and drains. Balloon waste reaching oceans can also be mistaken for food by turtles and other marine animals, while strings can entangle birds and wildlife. The campaign also flags human health and safety concerns, including choking risks from balloon fragments for infants, latex allergies and potential accidents involving hydrogen-filled balloons near heat sources.

Drugs worth Rs 55.8 crore seized, 39 arrested in Bengaluru

BENGALURU.(Agency)

The Bengaluru City Police, along with the Anti-Narcotics Wing of the CCB, have arrested 39 people, including eight foreign nationals, and seized over 200 kg of various drugs worth Rs 55.80 crore in a week-long operation. The Amruthahalli police have arrested two men for allegedly peddling drugs and being involved in a drug manufacturing network in Delhi. Following a tip-off in connection with a previous case, the police team arrested the two men in Delhi and seized 14.4 kg of MDMA worth Rs 28.8 crore. The accused have been identified as Omni Singh, a native of Delhi, and Obam, a Nigerian national. The accused allegedly manufactured the drugs in Delhi and supplied them to students and local customers in Bengaluru. Meanwhile, the Girinagar police arrested a French national, Demba Jouma Francis, and seized 4.37 kg of MDMA worth around Rs 10.36 crore. According to the police, the accused was staying in Yelahanka and allegedly procured drugs from African nationals in Delhi before selling them to known customers in Bengaluru.

KIIT International School hosts 13th MUN, focus on global issues

The two-day conference brought together around 1,500 students from nearly 100 schools across major cities, including Delhi, Chennai and Kolkata.

BHUBANESWAR.(Agency)

The 13th edition of Model United Nations (MUN) at KIIT International School was inaugurated on Saturday by former diplomat and director general of Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (MP-IDSA), New Delhi, Sujan Chinoy. The two-day conference brought together around 1,500 students from nearly 100 schools across major cities, including Delhi, Chennai and Kolkata. The participants engaged in discussions and debates on pressing global issues through 13 committees. Chinoy urged students to develop qualities of discipline, hard work, teamwork and collective effort. Recalling his long

association with KIIT and its founder the successful conduct of the event. Achyuta Samanta, he said success is driven by vision, perseverance and teamwork. “There is no substitute for industriousness. Even a lion must rise and hunt; success does not come on its own,” Chinoy said. Samanta congratulated the organisers on the successful conduct of the event. Reminiscing his first meeting with Chinoy in Australia, Samanta highlighted the former diplomat’s career spanning more than four decades and his expertise in international relations, defence and policymaking. He also highlighted KIIT and KISS’ achievements in education and sports, stating that KIIT has produced more than 24 Olympians and contributed to India’s performance at international sporting events, including the World University Games and Asian Athletics Championships. KIIT International School principal Sanjay Suar said the participation of students from nearly 100 schools reflected their growing interest in the MUN.



Rajasthan Farmer Hid Rs 5 Lakh From His Family. A Year Later, Termites Had Eaten It All

Rajasthan.(Agency)

A farmer in Rajasthan’s Balotra district has reportedly lost Rs 5 lakh after termites destroyed the cash he had buried in his field for safekeeping. According to reports, Mangilal Meghwal, a resident of Newai village near Pachpadra, received Rs 5 lakh after selling a plot of land around a year ago. Fearing theft and worried that the money might be spent by his sons, he decided to hide the cash in his field instead of keeping it at home.

The farmer placed the money in a plastic bag and buried it in a pit on his farmland. He did not tell his wife or children where the money was hidden. Months later, when he needed funds to build a room on the farm, he went to

retrieve the cash. However, he could no longer remember the exact spot where he had buried it. Despite searching across his 10-bigha field, he was unable to find the



money. Eventually, he informed his family about the hidden cash. At first, they struggled to believe his story, but later joined the search. Even then, the money remained missing.

Nearly a year later, during the monsoon season, a damaged bag containing the cash reportedly surfaced in the field. When family members opened it, they discovered that termites had infested the bundle of notes. Most of the Rs 500 notes had been badly damaged and torn into pieces. **Banks Refuse To Accept Damaged Currency Notes** The family collected the termite-damaged currency notes and approached the State Bank of India (SBI) branch in Pachpadra, hoping to recover at least part of the lost money. However, bank officials reportedly refused to exchange the notes after assessing their condition. The family then visited SBI’s main branch in Balotra, but their efforts yielded the same result.

'Cat-22' In Madhya Pradesh: 50 Humans Killed, 45 Tigers Dead In Just 8 Months

Madhya Pradesh.

Madhya Pradesh has long worn its wildlife numbers as a badge of honour. It has the highest tiger population in India, the country’s largest leopard population and some of its most celebrated forests. But behind this conservation success story, a disturbing parallel crisis is unfolding. In the first eight months of 2026, at least 50 people have died in wild animal attacks across the state. During roughly the same period, more than 45 tigers have also died. According to the latest statistics available with the Madhya Pradesh

Forest Department, tigers have attributed to a leopard. At least 16 of the victims were girls and women, while the remaining were boys and tiger men.



attacks, eight were killed by wild boars, seven by elephants and four by sloth bears, while one death was

The timing of the deaths reveals an even more worrying pattern. As many as 30 of the 50 fatalities occurred in just three months. Seven people were killed in March, 13 in April and another 10 in May. These are also the months when large numbers of villagers, particularly tribal communities, enter or move along forest areas to collect tendu leaves and mahua flowers, bringing them into much closer contact with wildlife.

12 injured in firing along Assam-Arunachal border amid land dispute

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said the situation had been brought under control and tension had eased. He said Education Minister Ranoj Pegu had been deputed to hold talks with the Arunachal Pradesh government, while Assam’s director general of police and chief secretary were in touch with their counterparts in the neighbouring state.

Northlakhimpur.(Agency)

At least 12 people from Assam were injured on Monday in alleged firing by miscreants from Arunachal Pradesh along the inter-state border in Dhemaji district, police said. The clash was linked to a dispute over alleged encroachment of land. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said the situation had been brought under control and tension had eased. He said Education Minister Ranoj Pegu had been deputed to hold talks with the Arunachal Pradesh government, while Assam’s director general of police and chief secretary were in touch with their counterparts in the neighbouring state. According to a senior official, the incident took place

in the morning at Mingmang Basti along the Assam-Arunachal Pradesh border in the Gogamukh revenue circle under Gerukamukh police station. Police said the clash broke out after a dispute over alleged encroachment by people from Arunachal Pradesh on land in Assam. As per preliminary information, miscreants from across the border allegedly opened indiscriminate fire targeting residents of Assam, the official said. The injured were identified as Durgheswar Patir, Rohit Dole, Nagaraj Dole, Biggeswar Patir, Pame Pegu, Sanjay Tayung, Utpal Dole and Jan Dole, while the identities of four others were yet to be ascertained,

the official said. All of them were first taken to Gogamukh Rural Hospital. Seven were later referred to Dhemaji Civil Hospital in a critical condition, officials said. Of them, four critically injured people were shifted to Assam Medical College and Hospital for advanced treatment.



"Security has been stepped up in the border area and further details are awaited," the senior official said. Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of an official function at Sonapur near Guwahati, Sarma said a "localised incident" had been reported in Dhemaji along the Assam-Arunachal Pradesh boundary. "There is nothing to do at the state level as such. The situation has been promptly brought under control and the tension has been defused," he said. Sarma added, "Our DGP is also in touch with his counterpart, and the CS is communicating with the Arunachal Pradesh government."

Centre makes load covers mandatory for all tippers, dumpers from April 1, 2027

Panchkula.(Agency)

Effective April 1, 2027, all tippers and dumpers on Indian roads must be equipped with a system that fully covers their load body, as mandated by an amendment to the Central Motor Vehicles Rules. The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has notified the Central Motor Vehicles (Twelfth Amendment) Rules, 2026, which require all dumpers and tippers to have fully enclosed load bodies while operating on roads. According to the updated Rule 138B, the cover can be opened or closed by electric, electromechanical, hydraulic, or mechanical means. Any appropriate material may be used, but the load must be fully covered while the vehicle is in motion. Additionally, tippers and dumpers must be fitted with an audio-visual alert system in the driver’s cabin to warn the driver if the load-body cover is open or unsecured while the vehicle is moving. This requirement applies to all dumpers and tippers from April 1, 2027. The Centre has also amended Rule 93 to ensure that the new covering system is not counted when measuring the total height of a tipper or dumper. The cover used to enclose the load as per Rule 138B will be excluded from the vehicle’s height measurement.

HEI students to get study scholarships for excelling in Gita contest

BHUBANESWAR.(Agency)

Students in the state will get a chance to turn their knowledge of Bhagavad Gita into an opportunity to win scholarships, as colleges and universities have been asked to encourage their participation in a major state-level chanting competition and Gita Jnana Pariksha in Puri later this year. To be organised by Prajnana Mission, the Gita chanting competition will be based on the 6th Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita (Atmasamyam Yoga) with participation of students from schools, colleges and universities at all districts. Winners of the district-level competitions will qualify for the state-level contest, scheduled for December 26 and 27 this year, at Hariharananda Gurukulam, Balighai, Puri. There will be no participation fee for students taking part in the competition. The state-level prize winners will receive scholarships for one year.

NEWS BOX

From broken track dream to Asian Games range, Kamaljeet's second shot at glory



New Delhi. (Agency)

An injury on the athletics track ended one dream, but his refusal to walk away from sport led him straight to the shooting range. Rewari's Kamaljeet turned to pistol shooting in 2019 and has since built a compelling second chapter, establishing himself as one of India's leading precision marksmen. The 22-year-old is set to represent India at the 20th Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, where he will aim for gold in his marquee individual event: the Men's 10m Air Pistol.

PIVOTING FROM TRACK HEARTBREAK

Kamaljeet's transition from track and field to pistol shooting was far from smooth, marked by financial hurdles and steep learning curves. Yet, his family ensured his second sporting life didn't end before it started. "We are a middle-class family, but my parents never let me quit shooting," Kamaljeet recalled. "I had to manage my own expenses for course fees and matches early on, and there were times I thought I wouldn't continue. It took me two to three years to earn that money back, but my family never asked questions; they gave me whatever I needed to keep going." Building a foundation from scratch in Haryana meant relying heavily on a tight-knit support network.

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Afghanistan earn direct qualification for 2027 ODI World Cup with win over Ireland

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Rashid Khan held his nerve under pressure to guide Afghanistan to a three-wicket win over Ireland in Belfast on Monday and secure their direct qualification for the 2027 ODI World Cup. Chasing 207, Afghanistan looked in control at 97 for two before Ireland fought its way back into the contest. They slipped to 154 for six and then 176 for seven, with Gavin Hoey's four-wicket spell putting Ireland within sight of a remarkable comeback. Rashid, however, stayed composed and finished unbeaten on 37 off 43 balls, hitting four



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Afghanistan had gone into the match knowing a win would guarantee direct qualification for the 2027 tournament, which will be jointly hosted by South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia. The victory also gave them a 2-0 lead in the five-match series after the opening ODI was washed out and Afghanistan won the second match by 92 runs. Rashid had earlier played a key role with the ball, taking 3/44 as Afghanistan's spinners kept Ireland's batters under pressure. AM Ghazanfar also claimed three wickets, with the pair combining to account for six of Ireland's wickets.

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West Indies will have to fight through the qualification tournament once again after missing out on an automatic 2027 ODI World Cup berth. Afghanistan's win over Ireland confirmed their place among the top-ranked teams.

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This is an unwanted return to familiar territory for West Indies. They also had to go through the qualification process for the 2023 ODI World Cup. But after

finishing fifth in the Super Six stage, they failed to make the tournament, missing the World Cup for the first time in their



history. That absence had a knock-on effect. West Indies also missed the 2025 Champions Trophy, having last featured in the tournament in 2013. The 2027 qualification pathway gives them another route, but it will not be straightforward. The 10-team Qualifier

will include West Indies and Ireland, the two lowest-ranked non-host Full Members. The top four teams from Cricket World Cup League 2. The top four teams from the Qualifier Playoff. The Playoff will feature the bottom four teams from League 2 and four teams from the Challenge League, effectively the third tier of the qualification pathway.

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The revised qualification system has also changed what happens after the main Qualifier. The winner will secure direct entry into the second round of the 2027 World Cup. The teams finishing second, third and fourth will then enter a three-team Super Series, with the winner also progressing to the second round.

Know your athlete: How shooter Vidarsa's husband fuelled her Asian Games dream

Asan. (Agency)

When Vidarsa K Vinod first picked up a rifle through the National Cadet Corps (NCC) back in 2018, her goals were modest. Coming from Kerala's Kozhikode district, the youngster simply wanted to experience the sport - and perhaps, down the line, leverage it into a secure government job.

Fast forward eight years, and the 27-year-old is set to represent India on one of the biggest stages in world sport: the Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, competing in both the 10m Air Rifle and 50m Rifle 3 Positions events. While her journey to the national squad is a testament to grit and sacrifice, its defining spark came from an unexpected place: a single, provocative question asked by fellow shooter - and now husband - Manu S Ravi.

MODEST BEGINNINGS IN KERALA

Growing up in a middle-class family where



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Meeting at the range after the COVID-19 pandemic, the two built a close bond as friends before eventually getting married. Today, Manu serves as a shooting coach in Kerala and remains Vidarsa's closest confidant. But back when her career was idling, he posed the question that recalibrated her life.

Sarfaraz Khan in, Dhruv Jurel out for IND vs SL Tests: Mohammad Kaif picks his XI

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Sarfaraz Khan over Dhruv Jurel for India's first Test against Sri Lanka. He believes Sarfaraz's ability against spin could make him the stronger choice in Galle.

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Former India star Mohammad Kaif has backed Sarfaraz Khan to beat Dhruv Jurel to a place in India's playing XI for the first Test against Sri Lanka. The former India batter believes Sarfaraz's ability against spin makes him the better option for the conditions in Galle.

Sarfaraz was brought into the squad as a replacement for injured Sai Sudharsan, giving him another opportunity to return to India's Test setup. Speaking on

his YouTube channel, Kaif said India could still favour Jurel because he has already been part of the team, but Sarfaraz would be his choice for the best XI. "If they follow the trend of backing



the players who have already been playing for the team, then they might say, 'Jurel has been with us already. He hasn't scored consistently, but we will back him because he has already been part of the team.' If that is the approach, then Sarfaraz will have to wait," Kaif

said. "But if you ask me what the best XI is, Sarfaraz's name comes into my best XI because of his ability to play spin at No. 5 or No. 6. His record against spin is excellent." Sarfaraz has played six Tests since making his debut in 2024, scoring 371 runs at an average of 37.10. His record includes a century and three fifties, with his standout innings coming against New Zealand in Bengaluru, where he scored 150.

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When you think about your favourite team going into a competition or tournament, it is natural to keep your hopes high. It may be their performances in the recent past that make you feel excited, or a tactical tweak that makes you feel they could topple the other giants fighting for top honours. And as you discuss it with fellow fans or friends, you tend to end the conversation with one simple line: Let's not jinx it. "For fans of the Indian men's and women's hockey teams, they would have said this line for many years now. At times, it has worked out well. The Tokyo Olympics was one

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women's team producing an inspiring fourth-place finish. There has been more success along the way. The men have added another Olympic bronze and continued to collect medals at the Asian Games. The women won an Asian

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Yet there has been one tournament that has remained the kryptonite for both sides. It is almost as if the supermen and superwomen of Indian hockey just collapse when the World Cup comes around. That tournament is the FIH Hockey World Cup. This year, the World Cup will be held in the Netherlands and Belgium, with the men's and women's tournaments taking place simultaneously for the first time since Utrecht 1998. And when it comes to hockey, India once stood as the benchmark simply because of the talent it produced.

Bibiano Fernandes accepts India U-15 job as Ranjit Bajaj's role becomes uncertain

New Delhi. (Agency)

Bibiano Fernandes is set to return to the India youth setup, with the former U-17 coach reportedly accepting the All India Football Federation's (AIFF) offer to take charge of the U-15 national team. His appointment comes as India prepares for the inaugural FIFA U-15 World Cup & Festival in Azerbaijan later this year.

According to a report by Times of India, Bibiano has agreed to the role after the concerns around the proposed coaching structure were addressed. The AIFF technical committee had identified him as its preferred candidate, with the federation's executive approving his appointment as head coach last week. The initial arrangement had raised eyebrows, with Minerva Academy owner

Ranjit Bajaj getting the nod as team manager. Bibiano was understood to have concerns over the possibility of interference, while Bajaj had earlier indicated that he would be willing to take up the manager's role if Bibiano decided against accepting the coaching position.

With Bibiano now reportedly ready to take charge, however, Bajaj is unlikely to accept a role that would largely be administrative. The responsibilities of the coach and manager have since been clearly defined, with Bibiano expected to have control over footballing matters.

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Bibiano's return gives India a coach with a strong track record at the youth level.

The former India midfielder guided the country to three successive AFC U-16/17



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administrative responsibilities of the two positions. Bibiano will be responsible for coaching and player selection, while the manager's role is expected to focus on logistics and other administrative duties.

That arrangement could allow the coach to work without the concerns that had initially surrounded the appointment. Bajaj, meanwhile, has built one of India's most successful youth football programmes through Minerva Academy, which has won trophies at both domestic and international level. His presentation to the AIFF technical committee reportedly included an ambitious plan to help India reach the 2034 FIFA World Cup.

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NEWS BOX

Fire breaks out after attack on major Libya gasoline tank

world.(Agency)

A major gasoline reservoir in Libya's Zawiya, west of Tripoli, caught fire and collapsed on Monday after what authorities said was an attack by unknown perpetrators. The National Oil Corporation (NOC) said the tank contained about 4.5 million litres of gasoline. The reservoir is located at the second-largest oil refinery in Libya, with a refining capacity of 120,000 barrels per day. "This evening, tank number 402-T, belonging to the Brega Oil Company and used for storing gasoline, was directly targeted, resulting in a severe fire before the tank completely collapsed," the NOC said in a statement. Brega said in a statement that firefighters were working to contain the blaze, adding that "cooling operations are underway for adjacent tanks to prevent the fire from spreading". The NOC condemned similar attacks in past days in Zawiya, including two drone attacks on a naphtha reservoir and a water desalination plant over the weekend. The NOC declared a state of emergency and called for an investigation.

Separately, a Libyan parliamentary panel condemned the attack and called for stronger protection of oil installations. "The House of Representatives' Energy and Natural Resources Committee condemns in the strongest terms the criminal attack targeting the Zawiya Refinery, one of the most vital facilities in the oil and gas sector that is a cornerstone of the national economy," it said in a statement.

Meta Unveils AI Model 'Muse Glimmer' That Can Run On Personal Computers

world.(Agency)

A Meta Platforms Inc. introduced a new, downloadable AI model that can run on a personal computer, adding fuel to a US debate over whether the increasingly powerful technology should be freely available or kept under tighter control. Users will be able to download and customize the new Muse Glimmer, a distilled version of the company's Muse Spark 1.2 model designed with a focus on efficiency to minimize system requirements, Meta said on Monday. At 30 billion parameters, the Muse Glimmer is "small enough" to need only one graphics card to power its work, which will primarily involve agent-like AI tasks such as schedule management and file organization, according to Meta. The release, along with a 6,500-word essay penned by Meta Chief Executive Officer Mark Zuckerberg, challenge a vision of AI championed by startups like OpenAI and Anthropic PBC, which largely favor keeping the technology under tight control. Google offers its Gemma family of open-weight models that can be run on local devices, while low-cost open models from Chinese companies including DeepSeek, Moonshot and Alibaba Group Holding Ltd. have intensified pressure on US rivals who charge for access. The weights, or values that help the AI system make decisions, for Muse Glimmer will be available via the Hugging Face collaboration platform. Meta intends to make the weights for a version of the more powerful Muse Spark available as well.

Libya Military Intelligence Chief Killed In Car Blast: Report

world.(Agency)

The head of military intelligence for eastern Libya's Libyan National Army was killed on Monday when an explosive device detonated in his car outside his home in the Hawari area of Benghazi, two security sources told Reuters. Brigadier Fowzi Mansouri was killed in the evening blast, the sources said, speaking on condition of anonymity. They did not say who was responsible for the attack or provide further



details on the device.

The killing highlights continuing security challenges in Libya, where rival administrations and armed groups have retained influence despite a 2020 ceasefire that halted major warfare. Libya split in 2014 between rival eastern and western factions after a 2011 NATO-backed uprising toppled longtime autocrat Muammar Gaddafi. The Libyan National Army, led by military commander Khalifa Haftar, controls much of eastern and southern Libya.

At least 111 killed after 7.5 magnitude earthquake jolts western Colombia

CALL.(Agency)

The Death toll in the devastating earthquake that struck western Colombia on Monday rose to 111. The powerful 7.5 magnitude earthquake damaged hundreds of buildings and left many trapped under debris while their loved ones and rescue workers searched through rubble. Search teams and civilians picked through the remains of destroyed buildings in the country's third-largest city, Cali, passing large pieces of concrete and other rubble down a long line of volunteers. "Our building has basically been left in ruins, and the building next to ours? Completely collapsed," said Álvaro López, who cradled his dog as he watched the search. The desperate scene recalled

the searches still ongoing in neighboring Venezuela weeks after that country was devastated by two powerful earthquakes. Besides Cali, the quake ravaged cities across western Colombia, including Pereira, Quibdo and Manizales, and was felt in neighboring Ecuador and Panama. The epicenter was in San Jose del Palmar, a community of about 4,800 people in the Choco region about 250 miles (400 kilometers) west of Bogota, the U.S. Geological Survey said.

Colombia's President Abelardo de la Espriella said at least 87 people were injured and around 1,600 buildings were damaged, including at least 61 that completely collapsed. He declared an emergency to expedite funding for the quake recovery. "We aren't going to leave people alone. They are in our



hearts and we are going to tend to people with our full determination," he said. Most powerful quake recorded in Colombia this century Colombia's Geological Service said Monday's quake was the country's strongest recorded "in the 21st century," and that it was followed by several aftershocks. Colombia's Pacific region around the epicenter lies along the "Ring of Fire," the line of seismic faults

encircling the Pacific Ocean where most of the world's earthquakes occur. The Pacific, particularly the Choco region, is one of Colombia's poorest, nestled in dense jungle. Much of Choco is only reachable by boat or plane, which may pose difficulty in assessing the wider toll. Local authorities said the death toll included at least 40 people who

were killed in the Risaralda region, where Pereira is located, and 27 people in the Valle del Cauca region, where Cali is located, including three children.

Authorities also confirmed nine people killed in Choco, two in the Caldas region and a 73-year-old in the Antioquia region. It was not immediately clear where the other 32 people died.

US set to make online filing mandatory for immigration applications

world.(Agency)

The US is set to make online filing mandatory for a wide range of immigration benefits, including green cards, citizenship, asylum and employment authorisation, as part of a push to modernise processing and cut operational costs. The US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), in a rule published in the Federal Register on Monday, said forms that have been available for electronic filing for at least 180 days will have to be submitted online.

The rule also establishes a process for making additional forms online-only, provided the agency gives applicants at least 60 days' notice. The move could affect green card applications and renewals,

family-based petitions, citizenship requests, asylum claims, employment authorisation applications and Temporary Protected Status filings. Applicants will generally be required to use a USCIS online account, either by completing the form electronically or uploading a PDF of the completed form along with supporting documents. USCIS said the rule is aimed at accelerating its shift away from paper-based processing and reducing reliance on the Treasury Department's lockbox system, which receives and processes applications submitted by mail. The agency said electronic filing would improve efficiency, reduce errors and strengthen fraud detection and security screening by making

immigration data easier to access and analyse. Applicants who are unable to file online can seek an exemption by submitting a new form. USCIS will assess such requests on a case-by-case basis, with approved applicants required to pay a USD 25 filing fee. USCIS processed more than 14 million benefit requests in fiscal year 2025, while its lockbox facilities handled around 453 million pages of paper submissions. The agency spent approximately USD 396 million operating lockbox intake systems and more than USD 10 million on postage alone. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) expects mandatory e-filing to reduce costs linked to manual handling, data entry, shipping, storage and scanning.

Australia Introduces Optional Gender, Sexual Orientation Questions In Census

Canberra.(Agency)

Australians for the first time can reveal their sexual orientation and whether they identify as a different gender than the one recorded at birth - contentious debut questions in the latest census that occurs every five years. The 66-question census, held on Tuesday, August 11, is the first under a center-left Labor Party government since 2011. The current Labor government backflipped to allow the questions after having dropped them temporarily two years ago as "divisive." Both questions are open to members of households 16 years and older. The answer options for sexual

orientation are straight, gay or lesbian, bisexual, don't know, prefer not to answer or a term of the respondent's choice that can be



written in a designated blank space. The options for the gender that the respondent currently identifies with that differs from that registered at birth are man,

woman, nonbinary, prefer not to answer or another term that the respondent can provide. The gender and sexual orientation questions are optional, along with a question on religion that has been included since the first census in 1911.

Labor had promised such questions about sexuality and gender would be included in the next census while campaigning ahead of the 2022 elections that brought the party to power after nine years out of government. The Australian government determines the topics for each census. The Australian Bureau of Statistics decides the wording of questions. In 2024, the government decided against deviating from the 2021 census questions in the interests of maintaining social cohesion.

1,600 Buildings Collapse, 132 Dead: Videos Of 7.4 Magnitude Colombia Earthquake

Bogota.(Agency)

A powerful 7.4-magnitude earthquake struck western Colombia, rattling much of the country and setting off a desperate search and rescue of survivors trapped under the rubble of hundreds of collapsed buildings in several cities. At least 132 people have died, and around 570 others have been injured in the South American nation's strongest earthquake this century.

The deaths are likely to rise as rescue crews and residents continued to dig through flattened buildings, even as the Colombian Geological Service has warned of additional tremors. The disaster struck just days after President Abelardo De La Espriella took over the highest office in the country, thrusting the new administration into its first major crisis, with memories still fresh

of devastating twin earthquakes in neighbouring Venezuela in June.

According to Espriella, at least 1,575 homes, 18 health centres, and 52 schools had been damaged in the powerful quake that was followed by 21 aftershocks. The president said at least 61 buildings had completely collapsed as he declared an emergency to expedite funding for the quake recovery. "We aren't going to leave people alone. They are in our hearts and we are going to tend to people with our full determination," he said.

The Visuals

Visuals shared on social media sites showed a four-story building crumbled in Pereira during the quake, while footage from Manizales showed one of the side towers of the city's landmark neo-Gothic cathedral collapsing and

scattering debris onto nearby streets.

A video broadcast by Caracol Television showed a group of people pulling a small baby covered in dust from under



a pile of rubble. Caracol reported the six-month-old girl and her mother were rescued from under a five-story building in Cali. Another clip from the city of Cali showed rescue workers rappelling people out from the

windows of a local hospital.

Ring of Fire

Colombia's Pacific region around the epicenter lies along the "Ring of Fire," the line of seismic faults encircling the Pacific Ocean where most of the world's earthquakes occur.

The Pacific, particularly the Choco region, is one of Colombia's poorest, nestled in dense jungle. Much of Choco is only reachable by boat or plane, which may pose difficulty in assessing the wider toll. Northwestern university seismologist Suzan van der Lee told news agency Reuters that the quake's powerful magnitude, inland location and strike-slip motion may have amplified damage in populated valleys despite its considerable depth. "This one was far below the crust, and in theory it shouldn't cause as much shaking.