



Rajasthan CM Bhajan Lal called him 'Jaadugar', Ashok Gehlot now offers him a magic show

Son of a renowned magician, former CM and Congress veteran announces a slew of measures for the community: A convention in Chittorgarh, an academy in Jodhpur, and a new body — Indian Magic Federation — aimed at uniting all magicians and their organisations.

New Delhi. (Agency)

A couple of weeks ago, Rajasthan CM Bhajan Lal Sharma had taken a somewhat personal jibe at his predecessor, Congress veteran Ashok Gehlot. Speaking in Udaipur, CM Sharma said, "Poorva mukhyamantri ji, aap jaadugar hain. Lekin Congress mein aapko hera pheri ke madhyam se jaana jaata hai (Former CM, you may be a magician. But within the Congress, you are known for your foul play)."

Gehlot is the son of noted magician Laxman Singh Gehlot. On Sunday, the former CM responded to Sharma's jibe by urging him to organise a magic show at his residence and address the various issues faced by magicians.

Alongside leaders of Jadu Kamal Babu Laxman Singh Gehlot Jayanti Celebration Organising Committee, Magician Great Mayavi Charitable Trust, and Magicians Association Rajasthan, Gehlot addressed a press conference at his residence where a series of measures for welfare of magicians were announced. These included a magicians' convention in Chittorgarh, an academy in Jodhpur, and a new body — Indian Magic Federation — aimed at uniting all magicians and their organisations. Said Gehlot, "I don't know what Bhajan Lal ji said, but if he wants, there can be a magic show at the CM residence. His entire family, ministers, and MLAs can watch the show. And after that, if the CM wants, he can resolve a major issue faced by magicians, that of GST. I am also writing to the Central government and the CM in this regard."

'If an IPS officer's family is not safe, how is the public?': Mayawati on UP murder

New Delhi (Agency)

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) chief Mayawati on Monday described the alleged murder of an IPS officer's mother in Uttar Pradesh's Ambedkar Nagar district as "extremely tragic", saying the state's law and order situation was "extremely concerning".

In a post on X, Mayawati said the killing of the elderly mother of senior IPS officer Ashutosh Mishra had raised serious concerns about public safety.

"The apprehension among people over the incident is entirely justified — if such a heinous crime can occur in a police officer's family, how safe is the common public?" she said.

Mayawati urged the Uttar Pradesh government to take the incident seriously and ensure strict legal action against those responsible.

According to police, 95-year-old Indrawati was found dead on a cot at her home in Rudha Dhamrua village at around 9 am on Sunday. Her gold jewellery was reportedly missing.

A domestic worker found her and alerted neighbours. Indrawati lived alone following the death of her husband, a former government college principal.

Mishra, who is currently posted in Lucknow, reached the village later in the afternoon and filed a complaint alleging murder and robbery against unidentified persons.

Police said a gold chain, nose pin, earrings and anklets were missing, while no other household belongings appeared to have been disturbed. The family suspects that thieves entered the house on Saturday night, killed Indrawati and fled with her jewellery.

Local SHO Shashank Shukla said the exact cause of death would be established after the post-mortem examination.

Vande Mataram row: Complaint seeks FIR against Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi under new law

New Delhi. (Agency)

The complaint cites

Sonia Gandhi's

gestures and Rahul

Gandhi's remarks,

seeking a probe

into whether their

conduct amounted

to intentional

disruption of

Vande Mataram's

rendition.

A complaint has been filed with the Delhi Police against Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, seeking registration of an FIR over an alleged attempt to disrupt the singing of Vande Mataram during Independence Day celebrations at the Congress headquarters.

The complaint seeks an FIR after the police ascertain the applicability and legal status of the Vande Mataram Act and conduct a fair, impartial and time-bound probe into the alleged conduct of the two Congress leaders.

A controversy erupted after Sonia Gandhi was seen making gestures as the singers proceeded to the stanzas that the Congress has opposed. Party leaders have argued that the later stanzas, which contain Hindu religious imagery, could be objectionable to members of other faiths.

The BJP launched a sharp attack on the Congress leadership, demanding that Sonia Gandhi apologise to the nation. The Congress, however, denied the allegation



and said there was no attempt to stop the singing of the full version of the national song.

Filed by advocates Kunal Vinayak and Shubh Sharma, the complaint alleges that Sonia Gandhi, who was present at the Independence Day function at AICC

headquarters at Indira Bhawan, appeared to make gestures and communicate with people present in a manner that indicated an objection to the continuation of the rendition of Vande Mataram.

The complaint also refers to purported video footage in which Rahul Gandhi is alleged to have said, "We are not singing Vande Mataram", during the rendition of the National Song.

According to the complaint, the exact nature, intention and purpose behind the alleged gestures and conduct of Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi require investigation by the competent authority.

The complainants have invoked the Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Bill, 2026, stating that it seeks to extend the penal protection available to the National Anthem to the National Song.

The empire of 'liquor-gambling and drugs' under the umbrella of khaki in Madhupura: Law and order is being disrupted by the administrators

MAHANAGAR METRO

Ahmedabad: The Madhupura police station area has now become a hub of crime and illegal activities. Serious allegations have come to light that the police, who are responsible for enforcing the law, have become predators for the people. With the connivance of Police Inspector (PI) Z. N. Ghasura and his alleged 'earning son', the same administrator Suresh Chaudhary and the sub-administrator Veljibhai working in the crime branch, the business of domestic and foreign liquor, gambling and MD drugs is running rampant in the entire area.

Where are the illegal bases operating in Madhupura?

Shenaz's country liquor: Dhobighat, Dudheshwar

Maniya's country liquor: Madhupura

Jayesh's country liquor: Shak Market

Nagji Kalolwala: Accused of supplying country liquor with chemicals in wholesale throughout Madhupura

Extortion and open challenge

According to the bootleggers, the administrator Suresh Chaudhary collects a fixed commission for each can

of country liquor. Despite serving in other departments, Suresh Chaudhary and Veljibhai of the Crime Branch are handling the administration of the Madhupura police station worth crores of rupees. These alleged administrators are openly challenging the orders of the Ahmedabad Police Commissioner, PCB and DCP. Public outrage: Question on women's safety



The crime graph has increased alarmingly due to the openly sold MD drugs and alcohol in the area. Drunkards and anti-social elements have become rampant on the roads, due to which incidents of molestation of passing women and sisters and daughters have become a daily occurrence. In addition, three-way gambling and cricket betting bookies are running their black business without any fear.

Demand for high-level investigation Local residents and aggrieved citizens are demanding that:

1. An impartial investigation of the CDR (Call Detail Record) and properties of the alleged administrator Suresh Chaudhary be conducted.
2. The State Monitoring Cell (SMC) should immediately raid all the bases of Madhupura.
3. The Chief Minister of the state and

the Home Minister should take serious note of this matter and take strict action against PI Z. N. Ghasura and his associated employees.

Uncontrolled sale of chemical-laced liquor made of toxic chemicals: Fear of another 'latha incident' in Madhupura!

If tomorrow a disaster occurs in Madhupura or innocent people are sacrificed, then who is directly responsible for it?

Black business under the guise of khaki: A system blinded by extortion Chemical-laced poisoned liquor and the stuff of death: The chemical-laced country liquor that Nagji Kalolwala is supplying throughout Madhupura can result in a major latha incident at any time. He is openly playing with people's lives in the greed of earning.

The game of evading responsibility: If tomorrow an unwanted incident occurs or people die due to drinking poisonous liquor, then the responsibility will be on PI Z. N. Ghasura, will the administrator Suresh Chaudhary or the top police officers take over?

Administration and inaction worth crores: The alleged administrators and the police who pocket millions of rupees by charging commission on every can of liquor have put a black mark on this khaki growth.

Women's safety and atmosphere of fear: Local residents and women are afraid to even step out of their homes due to the harassment of drunkards and anti-social elements. The protectors of the people have become the protectors of bootleggers.

Direct questions before the administration

1. Are the state Home Minister and Police Commissioner waiting for a big racket in Madhupura?

2. Why are strict action not being taken immediately against administrators like Veljibhai and Suresh Chaudhary, who are working in the Crime Branch?

3. Why doesn't the State Monitoring Cell (SMC) raid these bases and expose the nexus between PIs and bootleggers?

Relieve me: Shehzad Poonawalla presses BJP to accept resignation in 2nd letter

Shehzad Poonawalla said he had made a final decision to leave BJP responsibilities and move to the private sector, citing pressing personal and financial circumstances.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Shehzad Poonawalla, who has resigned as the BJP's national spokesperson, has once again submitted his resignation to the party, urging the leadership to accept it and relieve him of his organisational responsibilities.

In a letter to BJP president Nitin

Nabin, which he shared on X, Poonawalla said he was grateful that the BJP had initially declined to accept his resignation and had asked him to reconsider his decision. However, after "long and



hard contemplation", he said he had arrived at a final decision to press for his exit from the party role and active membership.

"The events of the last few days, courtesy certain individuals about

whom I have told you in great detail, have forced me to reinforce and stand by my earlier decision," he said, without naming the individuals.

Poonawalla, who joined the BJP in late 2021, had emerged as one of the party's prominent faces and among its most prominent Muslim voices within the organisation. Explaining his decision, Poonawalla reiterated that he would move to the private sector because of "pressing emergency financial and personal circumstances". At the same time, he said he would continue to support the vision and work of Prime Minister Modi and the BJP "wherever possible and in whatever format possible".

Roll out women quota on Lok Sabha strength: Congress

NEW DELHI. (Agency)

A day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi appealed to Opposition parties to support the proposed delimitation-linked women's reservation legislation, the Congress on Sunday accused him of indulging in "drama" and demanded that the 33% quota be implemented on the existing strength of the Lower House of Parliament for the 2029 Lok Sabha elections.

Congress general secretary in-charge of communications Jairam Ramesh questioned the government's intentions, saying Modi should stop "sermonising" from the Red Fort and instead act on women's reservation immediately. Responding to the Prime

Minister's Independence Day appeal, Ramesh said the issue needed to be viewed in its historical context. He pointed to the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments passed in 1993, which provided one-third reservation for



women in panchayats, zilla parishads, block panchayats and municipalities.

Ramesh credited former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi with laying the groundwork for women's political representation at the grassroots level and bringing the provision into the constitutional framework. He also recalled the passage of the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam in September 2023, saying it was passed unanimously and that Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge.

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News box

BLO duties leave govt schools in Gurgaon short-staffed ahead of exams

Gurgaon.(Agency)

With examinations set to begin Aug 18, govt schools across the district are grappling with acute staff shortages after a large number of teachers were deployed on election duty. Nearly 90% of govt schools are facing shortages at some level, teachers said, with many assigned as booth level officers (BLOs) or BLO assistants. At Govt Senior Secondary School, Fazilpur Jharsa, 15 teachers have been assigned BLO duties and four more as BLO assistants, leaving school head Mukesh Kumar to run the institution's roughly 780 students largely on his own. "It is extremely difficult for one person to handle a school of this size," he said, with teaching, student supervision and administrative work all affected. In several schools with 600-700 students, only one or two teachers reportedly remain to manage classes, supervision and routine administrative work. Similar shortages have been reported in Bhondsi, where teachers said high enrolment has left a handful of staff stretched across multiple responsibilities. School heads are worried about arranging invigilators, distributing question papers, maintaining attendance, supervising students, collecting answer sheets and completing evaluation work with limited staff.

District Primary Teachers' Association president Ashok Prajapati said teachers were first sent for training and then assigned BLO duties in large numbers. He questioned how schools would conduct exams without adequate teaching staff, adding that they had also been directed to organise Independence Day activities — leaving one teacher responsible for hundreds of students across studies, exams and other events.

4 years after MCG takeover, internal roads still not repaired in Sushant Lok 3

Gurgaon.(Agency)

More than 300 families in Sushant Lok 3 are waiting for proper internal roads. The internal roads in F Block were laid around 2017, but residents said they have not been resurfaced since. MCG took over the colony in 2022, raising hopes among residents that the long-pending road repairs would finally be addressed. However, residents said the contractor eventually stopped work, saying the material allotted for the project got exhausted. Residents have questioned how the material could run out before all the roads were completed and have raised concerns over the preparation of the original estimate.

"There is no proper drainage system, and the uneven patches make it difficult to walk. Estimates being prepared without properly assessing the requirements on the ground, resulting in several things being left out. The development is being carried out in a piecemeal manner," said Sudakshina Laha, general secretary of the RWA. Residents said a fresh estimate was prepared for the remaining work. However, they are still waiting for the construction to resume. They have approached MCG several times and were told that the roadwork would be taken up after the tendering process.

Hum-Tum road crumbling, residents of 7 condos seek urgent repairs



Noida.(Agency)

Residents of seven housing societies, nearby villages and other areas have sought urgent repairs to Hum-Tum Road. The link road connects several high-rise societies in Rajnagar Extension (RNE) with the Outer Ring Road and Meerut and is a crucial route for local commuters. "The road is filled with large potholes, often filled with drain water, and currently facing rainwater, making it nearly impossible for commuters to assess the depth," Manoj Agarwal, a representative of the RNE Flat Owners Federation, said. Commuters said navigating the stretch has become perilous, with frequent accidents being reported here. "E-rickshaws have also overturned multiple times, injuring passengers. A resident of Moti Residency lost his arm in an accident after being hit by a dumper truck on the same road," Agarwal added. Last week, residents submitted a memorandum to the GDA vice-chairperson and municipal corporation, demanding the immediate construction of Hum-Tum Road and proper cleaning of the accompanying drain. In the past, complaints on these issues resulted in assurances from officials, but no action has been taken, residents said. Residents said persistent waterlogging has created a dangerous marsh-like situation on the road. "If the foundation stone for road repair has already been laid and the tender process completed, why has construction work not commenced?" Agarwal questioned.

Workers and Anganwadi Employees Stage Protest at Collectorate
Memorandum Submitted to Additional Collector Over Pending Demands

Mahanagar Metro Desk

Godhra: Following a nationwide call given by the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), various workers' organisations staged a protest at the Panchmahal District Collector's Office in Godhra over several long-pending demands. A large number of workers, Anganwadi employees and personnel associated with the PM POSHAN scheme participated in the protest and raised their voices over their demands. Memorandum Submitted to Chief Minister Leaders of the workers' organisations submitted a memorandum to Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel through the Additional Collector, urging



the state government to resolve their long-pending issues at the earliest. Various Demands of Anganwadi Employees The PM POSHAN and Anganwadi Employees' Union demanded that the post of Centre Coordinator be upgraded and designated as "School Nutrition Assistant", along with a minimum monthly wage of Rs. 30,000. The organisation also demanded that, considering the rising cost of living, a policy be

introduced to provide an annual 10% increase in the honorarium of Anganwadi Workers and Helpers. Among other demands, the employees sought an increase in the retirement age from 58 years to 65 years. They also demanded accident compensation of Rs. 4 lakh and group insurance coverage in view of the risk of fire-related accidents during cooking and other kitchen-related activities. Demand for 8th Pay Commission and Restoration of Old Pension Scheme The Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh demanded the early implementation of the 8th Pay Commission in the interest of workers and employ-

ees, along with the restoration of the Old Pension Scheme. The organisation also demanded a minimum EPS pension of Rs. 7,500 per month along with Dearness Allowance (DA). Other demands included an increase in the wage ceiling for coverage under ESIC and EPF, as well as an increase in the maximum gratuity limit to Rs. 40 lakh. Warning of Intensified Agitation Leaders of the Panchmahal District BMS and affiliated organisations warned that if the pending demands of workers are not addressed positively at the earliest, the organisations will intensify their agitation in the coming days.

The Masterpiece of Sculpture Carved Underground: The World-Renowned Stepwell of Adalaj

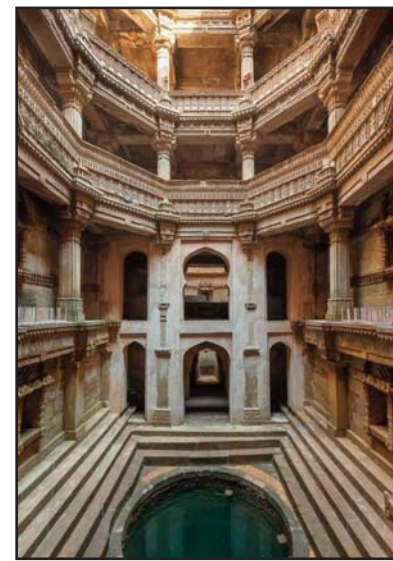
Mahanagar Metro Desk

If one wishes to witness a unique confluence of human history and architecture that, despite being centuries old, stands steadfast and alive today, it is the Adalaj Stepwell located on the sacred land of Gujarat. Situated near Gandhinagar, this five-storied stepwell is not merely a means of water conservation, but a magnificent epic carved in stone. Built in 1499 AD in memory of Rana Veer Singh of the Vaghela dynasty by his highly erudite wife, Queen Rudabai, this architectural marvel is the supreme manifestation of Indian sculpture. This is a subject that elevates us to an unparalleled height of pride, sacrifice, and architectural grandeur. Descending five stories underground, the architectural style of this stepwell is a magnificent fusion of Hindu and Islamic sculpture. As we descend the steps of this stepwell and venture inside, the carvings of deities, floral vines, animals, birds, and

scenes of contemporary social life on the stones come alive before our eyes. This extraordinary ornamentation carved on stone bears witness to how high-class our older generations were in art and culture. This art of the people of Gujarat to make life beautiful even amidst the constraints of nature can be carved into poetic words in this manner: "Where sculptures have flown from the heart of the stone, At the steps of Adalaj, the sacred glimpses of culture are shown." This stepwell is not merely a center of art, but an immortal saga of the sacrifice, dedication, and moral fortitude of a strong woman. The patience and courage displayed by Queen Rudabai for the welfare of the public and to fulfill the unaccomplished dream of her husband remain inscribed in golden letters on the pages of history. In today's modern and digital era, we erect massive physical structures, but that faith, benevolence, and spiritual



warmth behind the ancient architectures seem to be missing somewhere today. The hearts of the people always praise this supreme union of selfless public welfare and art in this way: "Wealth and grandeur merely erect physical mansions, But through the sacrifice of the Queen, such sacred shrines are created." Today, in the twenty-first century, when India is showcasing its cultural identity on the global stage, this stepwell of Adalaj imparts a message to preserve our magnificent heritage. This historic architecture can play



a significant role in making our future generations genuinely capable, art-loving, and nationalistic. There is no doubt that this banner of victory of architecture, crossing terrestrial boundaries to attract tourists from all over the world, will wave proudly for centuries and bear witness to our glorious heritage.

Author: Rupesh Solanki

Lions Club Jaora Celebrates Independence Day as 'Seva Parv'; Distributes Free Spectacles and Medicines

Mahanagar Metro Desk

JAORA: Lions Club Jaora celebrated Independence Day with great enthusiasm as a special 'Seva Parv' (Festival of Service), showcasing a blend of patriotism and community welfare. Flag Hoisting at Lions Eye Hospital Campus The celebrations commenced with a flag-hoisting ceremony at the Lions Eye Hospital premises. Club President Lion Sudhir Jain unfurled the National Flag. Following the ceremony, free medicines and spectacles were distributed to underprivileged and needy individuals on behalf of the club. "Service to humanity is that true essence of life which brings inner peace. It is a moment of immense pride for all of us as we celebrate 80 years of our nation's freedom." — Lion Sudhir Jain, President, Lions Club Jaora Club Secretary Lion Sandeep Ranka noted that Dr. H.S. Rathore, Harinarayan Arora, and Eye Hospital Chairman Pradeep Sharma also shared their thoughts, highly appreciating the club's continuous humanitarian efforts. Patriotic Cultural Evening:



'Ek Sham Desh Ke Naam' A special cultural event titled 'Ek Sham Desh Ke Naam' was organized during the club's business meeting. Performances: Dr. Shailendra Pandey, Sujannal Kochatta, Rajkumar Marwadi, and A.N. Palwal captivated the audience with patriotic songs. Janmashtami Invi-

tation: Devendra Sharma extended a warm invitation to all members for the upcoming Shri Krishna Janmashtami celebrations. Dignitaries in Attendance The event saw significant participation from club office-bearers, members, and prominent citizens, including: Secretary:

Lion Sandeep Ranka Treasurer: Lion Vipin Chordia Past Presidents & Senior Members: Lion Ramesh Mehta, Lion Anil Dhariwal, Lion Vijay Pamecha, Lion Anil Kala, Lion Arun Sanghvi, Lion Saji Varghese, Lion Ashok Sethia, Lion Rajnikant Shah, Lion Rakesh M. Kochatta, Lion Mustafa Saif, Lion Anoop Sharma, Lion Devendra Sharma (Niyati), Lion Vishal Chatter, Lion Rakesh P. Kochatta, Lion Sanjay Chapdod, Lion Manish Kochar, Lion Prateek Sawan-sukha, Lion Sandeep Daseda, Lion Narendra Vinayaka, Lion Narendra Sanghvi, Lion Vijay Rathore, Lion Rajat Soni, Lion Yash Saklecha, among others. Special appreciation was extended to J.P. Shrivastava (Manager, Lions Eye Hospital) and the entire hospital staff for their dedicated operational support. The program was efficiently conducted by Secretary Lion Sandeep Ranka, and the vote of thanks was delivered by Lions Eye Hospital Chairman Lion Pradeep Sharma.

Why Maharashtra's campuses have gone 30 years without a student vote

Mumbai. (Agency)

Through July, thousands of youngsters, many of them students, filled streets across Mumbai to back the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP)'s demand for accountability over the NEET paper leak. Hundreds were detained. Notices went out, and police officers turned up at homes to warn students off the next demonstration, which drew a bigger crowd. Across Maharashtra, protests and crackdowns repeated. Many on the streets saw the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan as only the beginning of long-pending reform, and said they would keep coming out. Almost none of those students has ever voted for a representative on their own campus.

The protests have now put that back on the table. The organisations racing to sign up the generation that filled the streets have reopened a demand they let go of six years ago: the return of student union elections. The CJP's membership drive is in full swing. The Maharashtra Navnirman Vidyarthi Sena is visiting colleges alongside offline and online enrolment, a drive its student wing says was planned around the party's August foundation day, before the protests began. The Progressive Students Union starts shortly, and is looking at changing its social media strategy for Gen Z.

8-year-old among 2 killed by big cats in Uttar Pradesh's Bahraich



Lucknow. (Agency)

As more than 500 villages in Moradabad and Bijnor districts remain on high alert following a series of leopard attacks, two fresh wildlife attacks in Bahraich's Katarniaghat Wildlife Division have triggered fear among the communities living on the fringes of the forest. The attacks, reported from two separate ranges, left two dead, a woman and an eight-year-old boy. The two incidents were reported from Dharnapur and Motipur ranges of the Katarniaghat Wildlife Division, where forest officials have stepped up efforts to track the animals.

"Teams from the forest department are camping in the affected areas and monitoring the situation. People of around 15 villages have been advised to exercise caution while venturing into fields or forest areas," said Katarniaghat Wildlife Division Field Director H Raja Mohan.

IPS officer's mother, 94, murdered at UP home, police suspect robbery

Lucknow. (Agency)

The 94-year-old mother of a serving IPS officer was allegedly murdered at her home in Malipur area of Ambedkar Nagar district of Uttar Pradesh on Sunday. Police said that they suspected robbery as a possible motive since several pieces of jewellery were missing from her body. The woman has been identified as Indravati, mother of Superintendent of Police Ashutosh Mishra, who is posted in Lucknow. She was found dead with a cloth stuffed into her mouth and injuries visible on her body, said a police officer.

The incident came to light around 9 am when a domestic help arrived at the house and found the main door locked from outside. "She opened the door and found Indravati lying unresponsive on a cot in the verandah. She alerted a neighbour, who informed the family and police," said a police officer. A case of murder and robbery has been registered against unidentified persons at Malipur police station on a complaint lodged by Mishra.

According to police, the officer had visited his ancestral home at Rurha Dhamrua village on Saturday and returned to Lucknow later that evening.

In his complaint, Mishra said his uncle, Sachindra Mishra, called him around 3:50 pm and told him that his mother had suffered a heart attack and died. When Mishra reached the village, he and his uncle examined the body and noticed that several pieces of jewellery were missing, including a gold chain, a tulsī necklace with gold beads, a nose pin and earrings. Her anklets were also missing. Blood was visible around her mouth, and a green towel had been stuffed inside it. Two injury marks were also visible on her lips. Mishra told police that the circumstances indicated that his mother was murdered and that the assailants took away the jewellery she was wearing.

After threat by industrialists to migrate, Maharashtra Minister Uday Samant promises to resolve grievances

Mumbai. (Agency)

Days after 20 industrial units to threatened migrate from Chakan MIDC area citing pathetic state of amenities, Maharashtra Cabinet Minister for Industries Uday Samant, who Sunday rushed to Chakan and met the aggrieved industrialists, directed officials to complete the required infrastructure work within a 10-month period and fill up the potholes by August 31.

"I have directed officials to complete the infrastructure work as demanded by the industrialists in Chakan within next 10 months," the Minister said at a press conference after holding discussions with the agitated Chakan industrialists. Samant held a meeting with the local industrialists.

Samant said he has directed officials to address all the grievances raised by the industrialists at the meeting. "Be it about the state of roads, laying new roads, waste collection and disposal, widening of roads, setting up truck terminal acquiring space for road and parking facilities, drinking water facility or the traffic jams, I have directed

officials to resolve all the grievances of the industrialists," he said. Samant reached Chakan following directives of Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis who had termed the situation as "serious". Samant inspected the MIDC and PMRDA roads in Chakan. He also inspected the locations suggested by industrialists. Following this, he held a meeting with representatives of industrial associations, entrepreneurs, and officials.

Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde participated in the meeting via video conferencing. The meeting which lasted for three hours was also attended MP Dr. Amol Kolhe, MLA Babaji Kale, Neelam Gorhe, Collector Jitendra Dudi, PMRDA Commissioner Abhijit Chaudhari and association office-bearers. The minister, however, played down the issue of the threat of migration by aggrieved industries. "Throughout our meeting, the issue of migration of industries did not come up for discussion. No one said we are migrating. I don't know from where the issue had come up. Whatever discussions we

had were also positive ones. In fact, from the discussions, it emerged that in Pune and Chakan, industrial growth has been rising by 30 per cent every year," Samant said. Samant said as there are too many government agencies working in Chakan resulting in



confusion, and the Pune district collector will henceforth be coordinating their work. "We have set up a committee for this. The district collector will be coordinating the

work of all the agencies. He will also be holding a janta durbar every Friday to address the grievances of the industrialists. We will have necessary powers to get things down from the government agencies working in Chakan. Similarly, he will have the powers

to act against the erring agencies," he said. "I will also be holding meetings every two months to resolve the problems of all other MIDCs in Pune," he said. Regarding traffic congestions in Chakan MIDC area, the minister said that they are planning resolve the issue by implementing a plan in three phases: "Temporary, medium-term, and permanent. Potholes will be filled by August 31... Contractors who fail to complete work on time will be blacklisted." The minister said several new roads have been approved in Chakan MIDC area. "PMRDA has given work orders for some roads in January. However, the road work has not yet started.

NH-52 blocked on Punjab-Haryana border as marching farmers camp at Khanauri

The traffic disruption has revived memories of the prolonged blockade witnessed on this national highway stretch during the farmers' agitation in 2024-25.

Patiala. (Agency)

National Highway-52 was blocked on the Punjab-Haryana border on Monday after members of the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (non-political) erected tents on one side of the highway at Khanauri as the Haryana administration stopped their Delhi-bound Kisan Bachao Padyatra (save farmers march) against the India-US trade deal.

"We were to march ahead towards Jantar Mantar in a group of 51 farmers, with 200 additional participants accompanying us as support staff, from August 16 onwards. We were to cover 228 kilometres and reach Jantar Mantar on August 29 to protest against the proposed India-US trade deal. As they are not allowing us to march even on foot, we have no choice but to sit at the location where we have been stopped," said SKM (non-political) convenor Jagjit Singh Dallewal told The Indian Express.

A few members of the SKM (non-political) from Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan joined the agitation at the Khanauri border on Monday. Traffic movement has been disrupted on both

sides of the highway. The highway connects Punjab's Sangrur district with Haryana's Jind district and is used by passenger and commercial vehicles travelling between Sangrur, Patiala, Barnala and adjoining areas



and Narwana and Jind, with onward connectivity towards Rohtak and Delhi. On the Punjab side, the highway passes through Khanauri and Data Singhwala before entering Haryana.

Alternative routes

With the main highway blocked, vehicles are being forced to take alternative routes.

Traffic from Sangrur and surrounding areas heading towards Haryana can use the Sangrur-Sunam-Lehra Gaga-Moonak route, depending on the destination. Those travelling from Patiala and central Punjab towards Haryana can take the Patiala-Samana-Kaithal route, though this involves a longer diversion. Another option is to approach Kaithal from the Khanauri side through connecting village roads, which can help commuters bypass the blocked Data Singhwala crossing, although the route is less direct and may not be suitable for all vehicles. The disruption has revived memories of the prolonged blockade witnessed on this stretch during the farmers' agitation in 2024-25. The highway remained blocked from February 13, 2024, to March 19, 2025, after the SKM (non-political) and the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha began their agitation at the Shambhu and Khanauri borders seeking legally guaranteed minimum support prices after being stopped from proceeding towards Delhi. The sit-ins at both locations were forcibly removed by the Punjab Police on March 19, 2025.

'No teachers, poor food': School girls block Lucknow road after boys protest

Lucknow. (Agency)

Around 200 girl students of a government residential school in Lucknow walked out of their campus through a rear gate on Monday morning and blocked the Lucknow-Dubbaga road, protesting over a shortage of teachers, poor-quality food and other grievances. The protest, which lasted nearly two hours, brought traffic on the busy stretch to a standstill before police and senior officials from the Welfare Department and district administration intervened.

The students were from Jai Prakash Narayan Sarvodaya Vidyalaya for Girls in the Para area. Videos showed some sitting in a row in front of vehicles, while others held hands and formed a human chain. They raised slogans and demanded that senior administrative officials come to the spot, hear their grievances and take steps to resolve their problems. The protest comes three days after more than 100 boys from the

school's boys' campus staged a similar protest over a shortage of teachers and other grievances. The boys' and girls' sections of Narayan Sarvodaya Vidyalaya operate from separate campuses and buildings. It is run by



the Uttar Pradesh Welfare Department.

Police, officials intervene

A police team reached the spot and tried to persuade the students to clear the road. A majority left but around 50 students remained at the protest site.

Senior officials from the Welfare

Department and the district administration later arrived at the site and spoke to the protesting students. The officials subsequently took the students back to the school, where they listened to their grievances and sought to address the issues they had raised. "The roads have been cleared and officials are listening to the students' grievances," said Assistant Commissioner of Police, Lucknow, Shubham Kumar.

Days after boys' protest

On August 14, the boys had blocked Mohan Road, protesting over the shortage of teachers. Uttar Pradesh Welfare Department Minister Asim Arun, who was travelling through the area, found his vehicle caught in the traffic jam caused by the protest. He intervened and spoke to the students.

Reacting to today's protest, the Samajwadi Party wrote on X: "After Gen Z, now Gen Alpha is also on the streets — this is clear proof of how much the BJP has ruined the education system."

Why candidates failed Bombay HC clerk test within minutes of starting exam

Mumbai. (Agency)

Cockroach Janta Party's (CJP) Abhijeet Dipke on Sunday, August 16, joined a protest by candidates who had appeared for the Bombay High Court's clerk recruitment typing test but were declared failed within minutes of the exam due to slow software, faulty equipment, server failures, abrupt logouts and non-functional keyboards during the exam. Seeking a retest, Dipke joined the sit-in protest by candidates outside the examination centres in Chhatrapati Sambhajanagar.

Abhijeet Dipke visited the Chhatrapati Sambhajanagar examination centre and told the mediapersons that the candidates had travelled from far-off places and sought that the re-examination be held immediately. The students demanded that they be given different computers for the retest, not the same that declared them failed.

Post the controversy, the HC Registrar (Personnel) issued a notice regarding the typing examination which stated: "Under the instructions, it is hereby informed that today all over Maharashtra the above-referred Typing examination was smoothly conducted for the post of Clerk (through the Agency)."

"It is, however, reported that there were a few technical issues at certain examination centres, more particularly at Aurangabad and Kalyan," it said. "The technical issues, if any, regarding the said process conducted at the hands of the Agency are being examined, and the candidates shall be duly informed by official communication about further appropriate course of action," it added.

"If candidates fail typing test...": What test advertisement said As per the advertisement issued by the Registrar General of the Bombay HC on December 8, 2025, online applications were invited from candidates for the post of clerk on the establishment of the HC for 830 posts at its principal seat in Mumbai and 166 and 366 posts at the benches at Nagpur and Aurangabad (situated at Chhatrapati Sambhajanagar), respectively. Nearly 13, 000 candidates were eligible for the exam. The selection process, as per the advertisement, included a 90-mark screening test, a 20-mark typing test, and a 40-mark viva-voce. With minimum passing marks of 10 out of 20, the advertisement stated, "If the candidate fails in typing test he/she will not be considered for the post of clerk."

Mumbai's endless road-digging may finally stop as BMC plans policy to fix utility lines

BMC's new policy seeks to launch an online portal for issuing permissions, mandate the creation of utility ducts along the Mumbai roads while issuing trenching permissions as well as incentivise the process of reinstating the trenched roads for the agencies and utility owners.

Mumbai. (Agency)

Frequent road digging for laying and fixing utility lines — which has emerged as a menace in Mumbai — may finally stop as the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) plans to introduce a new trenching policy for the city. According to Mumbai municipal commissioner Ashwini Bhide, BMC's new trenching policy is likely to be prepared by September 1 and will be implemented for utility agencies, following the standing committee's approval.

The new policy seeks to launch an online portal for issuing permissions, mandate the creation of utility ducts along roads when issuing trenching permissions, and incentivise the reinstatement of trenched roads for the agencies and utility owners. The Indian Express has learnt. In what Bhide deemed an attempt at "bringing method to

the madness", she said that the new trenching policy seeks to eliminate human interventions and incentivise the use of dedicated utility ducts to improve the quality of roads.

"The trenching policy will be designed in such a way that the utilities will have an incentive to use dedicated ducts. Under the new policy, everything will be streamlined online. Under the existing policy, the utility owners end up leaving the roads shabby as there were too many players. We are trying to remove all the bottlenecks and systematise the entire process of trenching to improve the quality of roads," Bhide told The Indian Express. Mumbai has a road network of 2,050 kilometres. Owing to the lack of space, it is beneath the surface of roads, footpaths and medians that a vast network of utility cables, including electricity lines, telecommunication cables, gas lines, old



BEST cables among other channels, are laid. To install new lines or fix the existing utilities, agencies are compelled to dig up the road surface beneath which the utilities lie. Such regular trenching poses hurdles for

motorists and pedestrians while also taking a toll on the quality of roads. "We have roughly 27 to 30 utilities, and they need to be constantly repaired or augmented, for which trenching is critical.

Hotel fire in West Bengal's Tarapith town kills eight, several injured

KOLKATA.(Agency)

Police have arrested the owner of a hotel in Tarapith in West Bengal's Birbhum district where a devastating fire broke out, killing eight pilgrims and injuring several others.

Police are investigating whether the hotel authorities had taken adequate safety measures to prevent the fire.

At least eight people, mainly pilgrims, were killed and several others critically injured in an early morning fire at the hotel on Monday, police said. The fire was spotted around 5 am on the ground floor of the four-storey hotel building in the temple town of Tarapith, when most of the guests were asleep, they said.

Twenty-two fire tenders were pressed into service at the spot and brought the blaze under control within around three hours.

The injured were taken to the Rampurhat Government Medical College and Hospital. Hotel officials claimed the fire was caused by a short circuit. The arrested owner, Kalyan Paul, of the hotel 'Bideshini', close to the Tarapith Kali temple, claimed that there were no loopholes in the hotel's fire safety measures and that there was an exit door at the back of the building.

"Electricity connections in the hotel were snapped by our staff soon after the fire was spotted early this morning. The entire hotel complex suddenly plunged into darkness and, as a result, boarders could not come out of the hotel. The anxious boarders could not find the exit door because of the darkness and smoke caused by the fire. They tried to come out of the hotel through its reception centre and directly faced the fire," Kalyan, who also sustained injuries, told reporters at the spot.

SC directs SIT to expedite probe into alleged embezzlement of Ram temple donations

Bihar.(Agency)

The Supreme Court on Monday directed the court-appointed Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the alleged embezzlement of donations at the Ram temple in Ayodhya to expedite its investigation and bring it to a logical conclusion.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana directed the SIT to file its status report in a sealed cover on the progress made in the investigation into the donations theft case.

The bench also asked the SIT to consider objectively any suggestions made by the different litigants before the court for qualitative improvement of the investigation and its transparency.

The bench said after examining the report of the SIT, the court may issue certain directions for reforms in the management of donations made by the devotees visiting the Ram temple. On July 27, the top court took note of the setting up of the four-member SIT headed by IGP Kiran S to probe the alleged embezzlement of donations at the Ram temple.

It had asked the Uttar Pradesh government to also include a forensic auditor in the probe team. Observing that "remedial actions will have to be taken", the bench had said steps will be taken to "ensure transparency".

The bench had also directed the SIT to submit a status report in two weeks. On July 20, the bench had asked the Uttar Pradesh government to apprise.

Telangana's air monitoring network remains Hyderabad-centric

HYDERABAD.(Agency)

Telangana's air-quality monitoring network remains heavily concentrated in Hyderabad, with only five of the state's 26 stations under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) located outside the capital, according to data from the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. Hyderabad has 21 stations, while Nalgonda has two and Sangareddy three. Nearly 81% of the state's NCAP monitoring stations are therefore located in Hyderabad.

The limited geographical spread leaves large parts of Telangana without ground-level monitoring infrastructure. The disparity becomes clearer when compared with other states. Andhra Pradesh has 74 stations across 13 cities, Maharashtra 166, Uttar Pradesh 112, Rajasthan 46 and Karnataka 35. Telangana's 26 stations are spread across only three locations in the NCAP network.

The distribution is significant as air pollution can vary considerably depending on traffic, industrial activity, construction, road dust, land use and weather conditions. A network concentrated in one city can provide detailed information about local pollution but may fail to capture pollution levels and hotspots elsewhere.

Hyderabad has 14 Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAAQMS) and seven manual stations. Nalgonda and Sangareddy, however, have only manual stations, with no continuous monitoring stations listed in either city.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has stressed that continuous and reliable air quality monitoring is essential to identify pollutants, inform policy decisions and

Bombay HC makes food safety body pay Rs 5 lakh for not restoring Pune shop's licence despite 98% compliance

Mumbai.(Agency)

The Bombay High Court has yet again rapped the Maharashtra food safety body and ordered it to pay Rs 5 lakh to a sweets shop in Pune for keeping the licence suspended despite a 98 percent compliance report in a re-inspection. Notably, the Pune petitioner, which remained closed due to the licence suspension, lost Rs. 8.74 lakh in revenue after the food safety body's action.

Calling the food safety body's licence suspension orders a "strange policy and perversity", the Bombay High Court cancelled the licence suspension order, permitting the petitioner - Gurunanak Dairy and Sweets - to restart its business.

The Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA) now has 30 days to pay Rs 5 lakh compensation to Gurunanak Dairy and Sweets shop.

"We have observed that your intention is laudable and some department has at least

stood up. But you are going overboard. You should have immediately revoked the suspension of the licence once you noticed 98% compliance (in the re-inspection report)," the High Court remarked. A bench of Acting



Chief Justice Ravindra V Ghuge and Justice Gautam A Ankhad was hearing a plea by Gurunanak Dairy and Sweets from Pune, challenging the June 12 suspension of its food licence.

The FDA had initiated the action against the

Pune sweets shop after receiving complaints of food poisoning. During an inspection, the food safety body observed several violations linked to sanitation, maintenance, and hygiene.

The Gurunanak Dairy and Sweets reached out to FDA Commissioner Tukaram Mundhe, addressing the observations through a compliance report on July 9. Four days later, an FDA officer reinspected the premises and awarded it 35 (98 percent) out of 36 marks in food safety compliance. However, the licence was not restored, prompting the petitioner to approach the HC.

'Lost Rs 8.7 lakh': Petitioner

Advocate Abhijeet Desai, representing the petitioner, argued that the business has been shut for 34 days, resulting in a revenue loss of Rs. 8.74 lakh. The FDA lawyer justified the non-revocation, saying

the appeal was heard and closed for judgment on August 11. "This is plain and simple perversity; absolutely strange policies. Once you clear with 98%, you say, now, go and file an appeal.

Deadly fire breaks out at Mumbai hotel, spreads to nearby stall, hotel

Mumbai.(Agency)

A deadly fire broke out at a hotel in Kandivli in Mumbai in the early hours of Monday, trapping its occupants for hours. The fire erupted in a false ceiling on the fourth floor of the five-storey building around 4:14 am and later spread to an adjoining hotel and a nearby fruit stall.

The Mumbai Fire Brigade (MFB) personnel rescued 11 people and brought the Mumbai hotel fire under control at around 6:42 am after a 2-hour-long firefighting operation. While the fire had remained confined to the fourth floor initially, it spread rapidly due to wooden furniture, clothes and other flammable items.

"Initially, the blaze remained confined within the electrical wiring of the building and

further intensified due to the presence of flammable items like wooden furniture, clothing items, tarpaulin sheets, bamboo and



plastic materials," an official from the Mumbai Fire Brigade (MFB) said.

When the fire broke out at the Mumbai hotel,

as many as 15 guests were staying on the fourth floor. While some managed to escape, 11 got trapped in thick smoke that had spread

on all the floors of the establishment. The fire brigade officials later rescued them through internal corridors. An investigation has been initiated to ascertain if the Mumbai hotel had fire safety mechanisms in place. Monday's hotel fire comes days after two, including a two-and-a-half-year-old child, lost their lives in a blaze that erupted at a residential building at Mumbai's Vile Parle. The preliminary investigation suggested that the blaze at the residential building likely originated from the electrical wiring system and remained confined within electrical installations, wiring, and air conditioning (AC) units.

AP's Ramayapatnam Port set for operational debut in December

VIJAYAWADA.(Agency)

Along the Nellore coastline, Andhra Pradesh's next major maritime gateway is rapidly taking shape.

Heavy dredging vessels manoeuvring in the access channel, and construction crews working round-the-clock on breakwaters are driving the greenfield Ramayapatnam Port toward a December 2026 operational debut, with physical progress surging past 80%.

The accelerated pace stems from a high-level infrastructure review in late May, where Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu set strict, time-bound completion targets for major ports, airports, and fishing harbours.

By placing port development on an expedited track—similar to industrial projects mandated to launch within 18

months—the State has prioritised swift operationalisation across key execution agencies.



That momentum is backed by official status reports tabled in Parliament by Union Minister for Ports Sarbananda Sonowal and fresh disclosures from the Andhra Pradesh Maritime Board (APMB), confirming that Phase-A of Ramayapatnam Port has reached

80.50% physical progress, and 73.95% financial execution against its Rs 4,929.39-crore sanctioned cost.

Outer breakwaters stand at 97.98% completion, berth construction has reached 95.35%, and access channel dredging has passed 68.73% toward initial draft targets. Crucial last-mile evacuation networks are moving in tandem to prevent freight bottlenecks.

A 5.5-km direct road link connecting the harbour complex to National Highway 16 has reached 95% completion and is eyed for a September commissioning.

Parallely, a 7.4-km railway line connecting to Tettu station—having secured Railway approval for its Engineering Scale Plan—is 30% complete toward a synchronised December finish.

312 students, 10 teachers stranded in Kendrapara school building for 2 days

KENDRAPARA.(Agency)

At least 312 students and 10 teachers of a government-run SC/ST residential school have been stranded in a flooded village under Pattamundai block since the past two days. The Ashram school at Kulasahi village under Penthapala panchayat was marooned after floodwaters from Brahmani river inundated the area on Saturday. After the ground floor of the school building was submerged, students, teachers and other staff were forced to move to the first floor.

Currently, the school is surrounded by nearly 10 feet of floodwater, making it impossible for the inmates to move out. No rescue team had reached the school at the time of filing this report.

"The school building is battling a strong current," a teacher said, expressing concern over the situation. Another stranded teacher said the school, located in a low-lying area close to the riverbank, frequently faces waterlogging during floods. "The authorities should have been more cautious and shifted all the students before the area was flooded," he said.

Cheated advances, mounting debt: The bitter reality for sugarcane transporters in Maharashtra

Between 2022 and 2025, five sugar belt districts recorded 1,953 cheating cases involving Rs 257 crore allegedly lost to labour contractors

Pune.(Agency)

"My son's textbook calls sugarcane a cash crop — a nagdi peek. But tell me, what kind of cash crop leaves us cheated, in debt and wanting to die by suicide?" asks 38-year-old Somnath Sonavane, a sugarcane transporter and farmer. His question sums up an often uncomfortable reality of Maharashtra's sugarcane heartland.

Between 2022 and 2025, Pune, Kolhapur, Solapur, Satara and Sangli districts recorded 1,953 criminal cases in which sugarcane transporters allegedly lost a total of Rs 257 crore to labour contractors, or mukadams, who took advances on the promise of supplying harvesting groups. Police have booked 3,162 labour contractors in these cases. Kolhapur accounted for more than half the cases at 1,154, followed by Sangli (235), Solapur (216), Pune (175) and Satara (173). For many sugarcane farmers, becoming a transporter is an extension of

cultivation, labour and loan costs. Owning a tractor, truck or other transport vehicle offers another source of income during the crushing season. "We are sugarcane farmers first and transporters later. We entered this business because we thought the truck would give us another source of income. Instead, we are taking loans to keep the truck running and giving interest-free advances to labour contractors. When the contractor cheats, the debt remains ours," said Sudhir Jadhav, a farmer-transporter from Shirur.

The advance that disappears

A police inspector who has investigated several such cheating cases in Kolhapur said the system depends heavily on mukadams, who mobilise groups of migrant sugarcane cutters, often couples or families travelling together. Transporters generally approach them through contacts in the sugar belt. Most mukadams come from villages in

families. "Transporters cannot simply hire labourers directly. Cane harvesting depends heavily on organised groups of migrant cutters, making the mukadam a crucial link in the process," said the inspector. The



crushing season therefore begins with trust arranged through sugar mills often do not cover the entire advance demanded by

some allege that contractors take advances from multiple transporters for the same group or disappear after receiving the money.

"We now know that many mukadams take advances from multiple people for the same group of labourers, while others disappear after taking the money. When the harvesting season begins, the transporter is left with a vehicle bought on loan, installments to pay, fuel and maintenance expenses, but no cane to transport," said Ganpat Kale, a transporter and farmer from Pune district.

He said many transporters borrow or mortgage property to arrange the advance. "If the group does not come, the entire season's calculation collapses. The bank installments do not stop just because the labour contractor has disappeared," Kale said. Transporters also say bank loans arranged through sugar mills often do not

Women prefer smaller competitions, whereas men seek larger competitions, which are typically associated with higher monetary rewards, the study said.

Women prefer Jobs that have fewer applicants



When applying for a job, women seek positions with fewer applicants than men - a factor that could partly explain why we see fewer of them in the corporate boardrooms, new research suggests.

The size of a competition - such as the number of applicants to a particular job or the number of people vying for a monetary reward - shapes who enters the competition. Women prefer smaller competitions,

whereas men seek larger competitions, which are typically associated with higher monetary rewards, the study said.

"These patterns of findings can contribute to a better understanding of gender inequality in the workforce," said Kathrin Hanek, the study's lead author from University of Michigan in the US.

"The gender difference in preferences may in part explain pay gaps and the

underrepresentation of women in particular fields or at the helm of large organisations," Hanek noted.

The findings appeared in the Journal of Applied Psychology.

The difference between the genders can be partially attributed to women feeling more comfortable in smaller competitions.

The researchers found consistent gender

differences in the preference for smaller versus larger competitions across a variety of different competition contexts.

For instance, one study examined women's and men's real decisions to enter a small (10 competitors) or large (100 competitors) word-formation task competition.

The results indicated that 53 percent of women but only 41 percent of men preferred

the small competition.

"This research by no means blames women for gender inequality but rather uncovers a novel environmental factor that might contribute to inequality, beyond the well-documented effects of gender biases and discrimination," Stephen Garcia, associate professor University of Michigan.

Fairness at work can boost Employees' health



Fairness at work is likely to bring you positivity as well as good health, says a new research, indicating that an organisation is rated on the basis of the health of its employees.

The findings showed that when perceptions of fairness changed, the self-rated health of employees also changed. Those who experienced more fairness on average reported better health.

"People who feel fairly treated are not only more likely to be motivated at work and go the extra mile for their organisation, but they are also more likely to be healthy, have an active lifestyle and feel positive," Eib added.

Further, the health status of employees may also affect how employees feel treated at work.

The results are detailed in the Journal of Work, Environment and Health.

The team investigated whether perceptions of what they call 'procedural justice', such as the processes in place to decide on rewards, pay, promotion and assignments are related to employees' health.

The findings can help raise awareness among employers and



"Our study provides a thorough examination of how fairness at the workplace and health of employees is related over time," said Constanze Eib, lecturer at Britain's University of East Anglia.

Also, fairness at work is a crucial aspect of the psychosocial work environment and that changes towards greater fairness can improve employees' health.

authorities that fairness at work but also health is important to consider increasing satisfaction, well-being and productivity in the workplace and wider society, the researchers said.

The study, focused on more than 5800 people working in Sweden. Participants were asked to rate their general state of health on a scale from one to five, one being 'very good' and five being 'very poor'.

Research says the following 10 types are most likely to be gainfully employed. Do you see yourself here?

The cheerleader: What's a good sport without a happy bunch of cheerleaders? All work and no promotion, makes the company disappear in the market.

So your small law firm maybe known in the circles, but a little push from a marketing guru will make the world aware of your facilities, capabilities, which will result in acquiring more clients. The marketer works in tandem with the founder to position the company that suits his or her vision and build the brand. This personality type is highly assertive, understands urgency and is willing to gamble (even when the founder develops cold feet).

The multi-tasker: So your company is tiny and everyone is a bit stretched. There are some who just can't handle the pressure, but there are few who can grin and bear it all, and can put their hands in several puddings all at once - be admin one day, and a creative executor the next. These multi-taskers serve as real assets to smaller firms whose budgets are meagre and manpower a handful. Young entrepreneurs are constantly on the look out of talent that not only can juggle many roles, but also switch parts as and when required.

The obligator: What's the difference between an accommodator and multi-tasker?? The former is a 'willing personality', while the latter is just blessed to focus on too many things at the same time. But as an owner of a small business, you need an accommodator in your squad, too. Read: These personalities are not spineless 'yes minister' kinds, but understand when they need to up their game, and do whatever it takes to work with impossible demands and deadlines.

Reverse role player:

Small firms have a strong tendency and leaning to employ people who are like-minded, but HR officials reckon that a personality whose views and beliefs are opposite of that of the company would do the latter good and result in growth. He/she would bring in the perspective and insight that owners would fail to notice. Sometimes, they'll also

10 types of people who get Better jobs

serve as mock rivals, thus further enhancing the chances of success and productivity.

The decision maker: When an entrepreneur has just started off in the business, he/she is always a bit averse to taking big risks and making concrete decisions. They are constantly turning to people who can use their own judgment and give them sound advice. Remember, they need someone who is not afraid to pull the trigger in times of distress. If you're a firm decision maker, then you are just the person your boss needs by his/ her side.

The cautious player: Likewise, if you're the kind of entrepreneur who has a tendency to run with his /her dreams, an employer who likes to play it carefully is always a good hand in the team. You need this type of personality as a counterbalance to risk takers. They are risk-averse, but sometimes you need such people to bring in stability and caution you from getting too excited and taking on more than your resources can manage.

The planner: A person skilled in draft ing policies and plan ning the next action the compa ny must take is a key

member to have in the team. Many serve as efficient executors, but few as effective planners (who essentially run the ship). These are the guys who can identify long-term goals, have a vision for the future and can work on a calculated measure to get there.

The organiser: It's one thing to be a good strategist, and another to pull it all together. The best ideas go for a toss if you do not have someone who is task-oriented to put them into action. So if you are a master at organising, then it's imperative to add that in your CV.

The analyser: While the strategist and organiser have their own skill sets to execute the idea into action, it takes an observant kind -who has one eye firmly on the markets and another on the rivals -to help you weigh the pros and cons and work accordingly.

The helper: If you have wetted your hands in the hospitality business, and are looking to make a switch, be sure you retain the 'service-oriented' trait in your next job, too. A person who has a willingness to help others always makes for a great team player. They balance administrative qualities, understand urgency and have the patience to deal with finicky clients.



• Personal Interview is the foremost tool to judge the abilities of a person.

• In the face-to-face contact between the interviewer & interviewee, it is possible to record more than only verbal responses; which are often superficial.

Tips for a Personal Interview

Personal

Interview is the foremost tool to judge the abilities of a person. In the face-to-face contact between the interviewer & interviewee, it is possible to record more than only verbal responses; which are often superficial. When human beings communicate directly with each other, much more information is communicated. The nature of words used, facial expressions & body language- together contribute in judging a person. According to Meha Bhargava, an Image Management professional, you must keep the following in mind while going for an interview.

Do the Research

Extensively research not just about the profile you are interviewed for, but the

company profile, their achievements, their story of success, their products & services, their target market etc.. All this will make you confident enough to answer every question diligently.

Look sharp

Being smartly and elegantly dressed not only makes you feel good but also has a strong impact on the interviewer. Like the mantra 'The way you dress, defines the way you think, act and how others react'

Listen carefully

Giving full attention to not only what is said but also to what is not said will make

you know about what they have in store for you. Sometimes important things are left unsaid between the lines, make sure you catch up to every bit.

Show enthusiasm with body language

A firm handshake, smile, eye contact and positive responses ensure that the interviewer feels confident in you and your abilities to be hired. What you feel reflects by your body language. Even if you are nervous, don't let it show. Sit in a correct, firm and comfortable posture avoid fidgeting with

your legs, or hands. This distracts the interviewer and gives an impression of a feeble personality.

Answer only what is asked

Do listen carefully what you are being asked, if you don't understand confirm it again and while answering do not deviate from one thing to another. Straightforward

and to the point answers are only what they love to hear.

Ask questions

Don't be blank at the end of the interview, ask questions, be it on your profile, about the company, pay working hours etc. No questions give an impression of disinterest in the company and the job. But make sure your questions are appropriate.

Skill vs degree

What works for you?

In India, we place too much emphasis on what is often just a piece of paper, instead of the knowledge or skills one should acquire to earn it. If a student is looking for higher education, a degree is the normal study route. There are numerous careers and fields of work that require advanced knowledge and skills training.

However, all students may not and sometimes cannot take advanced courses and prefer to develop skills that do not necessarily require the rigour of a degree curriculum. In other words, every person with skills may not receive a degree. Similarly, there are many graduates who have theoretical knowledge but no practical



experience. A number of jobs and careers require various skills - for example, in the computer and IT sector. So, without worrying if it is a degree or not, many students can study a course that would help them find work. The government's skill development programme is

attempting to change students' attitude towards skills that can earn them jobs. However, there needs to be greater synergy between prospective employers and the skills training centre so that students are well-placed with salaries that can attract other youngsters. Also, often, employers ask for a degree irrespective of how adequately trained such a candidate may be. Therefore, students prefer to pursue a degree without a job in sight, rather than skill themselves through training that can better provide a job. The solution is to analyse what a student is made for - a degree or a skill-based programme - and which one would work best for him/her.

Usha Albuquerque, Career Counsellor, Delhi

College prepares you

When students decide on a career path, it is essential for them to understand the importance of a degree and how it contributes to their future. A degree programme makes a student's 'generalised' approach more focused. At the college level, applicants pick a stream and then study a specific field such as engineering, medicine, commerce, science, humanities, law, architecture, etc. The student learns about things ranging from the finer points of a particular discipline to communication and people skills. Students must opt for a degree course since it trains them to understand - through guest lectures, industry visits, etc - how industry functions. They, thus, know what employers expect. They develop a world view of the field they would work in, explore it in-depth and be ready to face challenges in their professional lives.

Why you need a 'disconnected' break

Taking your laptop along on your upcoming holiday? Do a rethink, for you might be committing a huge mistake, which might actually add more stress than you imagine. Experts warn how one should not cart along work and stay rooted to any social networking sites and microblogs, while on a getaway. The 'digital detox break' is being considered as the ideal 'me time'. The idea has taken root so much so that packages are being tailor-made to force stressed folk to wean away from all their gadgets. Here's how it benefits you:

"What we're doing here is providing evidence that how people relate to God matters for their commitment and satisfaction at work," Kent noted.

You see the world differently

You might throw fleeting glances to what's going around you if you're stuck to your smartphone screen. But being away from it allows you to view the world minus distraction.

It builds better interpersonal relations

How many people actually remember a good old-fashioned conversation? With no gadget around you can communicate face-to-face better.

You become less aggressive

Being answerable to someone on the opposite end means that you are having to answer to a demand all the time, which causes a sense of hostility and repressed anger in you. Take away such feeling by simply unplugging.



2 more Air India pilots fail drug screening test after Phuket-Delhi flight fiasco

The development comes days after the Air India group introduced mandatory psychoactive substance testing for all its pilots from August 13, following the Phuket-Delhi flight fiasco involving an Air India pilot.

Delhi. (Agency)

Two Air India group pilots have returned non-negative results in the initial mandatory psychoactive substance screening, sources told India Today. Their samples have now been sent for confirmatory testing, and the final results are awaited.

A non-negative result means the initial screening has detected a substance or chemical marker that requires further testing. It does not mean the pilots have been confirmed to have consumed a prohibited substance. The confirmatory

test will establish whether the initial result is a true positive.

The development comes days after the Air India group introduced mandatory psychoactive substance testing for all its pilots from August 13, following the Phuket-Delhi flight incident involving Air India flight Ai2379. Sources said around 300-400 pilots have undergone the screening so far, and the testing process is continuing. So far, two pilots have been flagged in the initial screening, sources said. Their samples are now undergoing further analysis to establish

whether a psychoactive substance was consumed.



WHAT HAPPENED ON THE PHUKET-DELHI FLIGHT

The expanded testing follows the

August 4 incident involving Air India flight AI2379, which was flying from Phuket to Delhi when the Airbus A320 suddenly lost around 300 feet of altitude during cruise. The aircraft later stabilised and landed safely in Delhi. The incident left passengers and crew members injured. Both pilots underwent mandatory psychoactive substance screening after the incident. While the co-pilot's screening did not raise a similar concern, the initial test of the pilot-in-command returned a result that required further analysis. Both pilots were taken off the flying

roster pending the test and the investigation.

The pilot-in-command subsequently tested positive for marijuana in the confirmatory test, sources told India Today. The development brought greater scrutiny to substance testing among flight crew and was followed by the decision to expand screening across the Air India group. The drug test is, however, only one part of the wider investigation into what happened on Ai2379. India Today's reporting found that the investigation had widened after a post-flight maintenance.

Waiver for water bill late payment till March 31

Delhi. (Agency)

The Delhi government has extended the 100 per cent waiver of Late Payment Surcharge (LPSC) on outstanding water bills for domestic and non-domestic consumers till March 31, 2027, Water Minister Parvesh Sahib Singh said. So far, 5,27,514 consumers have benefited from the scheme, with Rs 3,261 crore in LPSC waived. The Delhi Jal Board has also collected Rs 815.84 crore towards the principal amount.



The scheme covers 14.09 lakh domestic and 70,312 commercial consumers, offering them an opportunity to settle their outstanding water bills.

Singh said the extension aimed to provide relief to consumers while strengthening the Jal Board's finances.

"For a family, an old water bill can remain a worry for years. When LPSC keeps getting added, the amount can become difficult to clear," the minister said.

The minister said consumers only needed to pay the principal amount to avail the 100 per cent waiver. He said the March 31, 2027 deadline was final and would not be extended further.

100 Atal canteens set up in eight months, says government

New Delhi. (Agency)

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, along with former Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu, inaugurated 25 Atal Canteens across the national capital on Sunday, marking the death anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

The Delhi government has established and operationalised 100 canteens within seven to eight



months, providing meals at Rs 5 per plate to one lakh needy people, including slum dwellers, daily wagers and construction workers.

Naidu termed the initiative commendable, saying it would provide affordable and nutritious food to vulnerable sections, including labourers and people coming to Delhi in search of employment. He congratulated Gupta and the Delhi government for completing the target. Gupta said achieving the target was a major milestone and a tribute to Vajpayee's ideals of Antyodaya and public service. She said the government aimed to ensure that no one slept hungry in the city.

SC flags social media lapses over child abuse content, seeks Centre's reply

The Supreme Court sought the Centre's response to allegations that social media platforms are not reporting child abuse material cases to authorities under the POC SO Act. The plea also seeks a uniform reporting mechanism and warns that non-compliance could affect safe-harbour protection.

New Delhi. (Agency)

The Supreme Court on Monday flagged concerns over lapses by social media platforms in complying with mandatory reporting requirements under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and sought the Centre's response on the issue. The court asked the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and the Ministry of Law and Justice to file their counter-affidavits two weeks before the next hearing, scheduled for September 24. The top court's order comes weeks after the government flagged lapses in the handling of child sexual abuse

material, as well as the brief removal of a video of Prime Minister Narendra Modi from Facebook during a high-level meeting with



Meta executives.

The application before the court has raised allegations that social media intermediaries are not directly reporting instances of child sexual exploitation and abuse material (CSEAM) to the Special Juvenile

Police Unit (SJPU) or local police, as required under POCSO.

It has alleged that platforms instead report such cases to the US-based National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC).

The plea has also raised concerns over alleged paid advertisements promoting CSEAM and sought criminal action against platforms that fail to comply with statutory reporting obligations. The petitioners have sought a uniform standard operating procedure for intermediaries covering the detection and reporting of CSEAM, preservation of electronic evidence and sharing of IP addresses and other digital information with investigating agencies.

AI, chips, CWG can't all go there: Annamalai attacks 'Gujarat-centric model'

Delhi. (Agency)

K Annamalai, former Tamil Nadu BJP president and founder of the We The Leaders movement, criticised what he described as a Gujarat-centric approach to development under the BJP-led NDA government, arguing that investments, technology projects and major events could not all be concentrated in one state. Gujarat is Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah's home state, a point Annamalai did not fail to underline. Annamalai's plain-speaking critique of his former party, which leads the central government, came at the India Today Tamil Nadu Round Table in Chennai on Monday. The 42-year-old IPS officer-turned-politician said the BJP's



"I believe the decisions of the BJP are becoming Delhi-centric, so it is very unfortunate. That has to change," Annamalai said. He said state-level leaders should be given greater authority to take decisions

and act on them. "Genuinely, they have to empower state-level leaders to make actions. It has to happen," he said.

Annamalai then took aim at what he called the "Gujarat-centric model of Delhi development", questioning the concentration of major investments and national events in Gujarat.

"And the Gujarat-centric model of Delhi development has to change a bit," Annamalai said. "You can't have all the AI companies going there or wafer companies going there, 2030 Commonwealth Games going there, 2030 police games going there, 2036 Olympic Games going to Ahmedabad.

You cannot have this Gujarat model of all-India development," he added. He said the concentration of opportunities in one state could not be the model for India's development. "That has to change. People are watching," Annamalai said.

50 per cent of DDA flats sold on Day One

New Delhi. (Agency)

The Delhi Development Authority's (DDA) Karmajeevi Awaas Yojana 2026 received an overwhelming response on the first day of bookings, with more than 50 per cent of the flats on offer sold on Saturday.

Of the 1,218 ready-to-move-in flats offered under the scheme, 661 were booked on the first day. Launched under Lieutenant-Governor Taranjit Singh Sandhu, the scheme opened for bookings on Saturday through the First Come, First Served mode. The 1-BHK category witnessed particularly strong demand, highlighting the preference for affordable housing among working professionals and other homebuyers.

The response comes amid strong housing sales by the DDA in Narela in recent months. During the first quarter of the current financial year, the authority sold 1,284 flats, generating revenue of more than ₹1,020 crore. Narela accounted for 1,153 of these sales, nearly 90 per cent of the total. Under the Karmajeevi Awaas Yojana 2026, the DDA is offering 1,218 ready-to-move-in flats at Pocket-11, Sectors A1-A4, Narela, at a flat 25 per cent discount. The scheme includes 1-BHK, 2-BHK and 3-BHK flats, with discounted prices starting at Rs 33.40 lakh, Rs 75.55 lakh and Rs 1.065 crore, respectively.

The scheme has been designed for serving and retired government employees, as well as working professionals from the corporate, business, entrepreneurial and professional sectors, providing them an opportunity to own ready-to-move-in homes in Delhi.

The strong response also underlines the growing attractiveness of Narela, which is emerging as a major residential, educational, institutional and sports hub. The DDA's continued investment in infrastructure and connectivity is helping position the sub-city as one of Delhi's future growth centres.

The housing complex is located around 1.2 km from the upcoming Metro station, 1.9 km from the proposed RRTS station and 2 km from the Narela Sports Complex. It is also 5 km from the upcoming Education Hub and 9.2 km from the upcoming Integrated Sports Stadium. The complex is around 500 metres from UER-I, 1.1 km from GT Karnal Road and 6.15 km from UER-II.

Delhi tribunal awards Rs 3 crore to road accident victim

New Delhi. (Agency)

A Delhi tribunal has held that violation of traffic law, like not wearing a helmet, cannot be termed 'contributory negligence' without evidence showing that the violation caused a road accident.

Motor Accident Claims Tribunal (MACT) Presiding Officer Abhilash Malhotra made the observation while awarding over Rs 2.92 crore compensation to a 32-year-old marketing executive, Nilmani Chauhan, who suffered 88% permanent disability because of a spinal cord injury he suffered in a road accident in 2020.

The judge noted that Chauhan was grievously injured after a speeding car

rammed into his two-wheeler on December 30, 2020, leaving him unable to stand or walk for the rest of his life.



The tribunal rejected the insurer's argument that the victim was negligent because he was not wearing a helmet, saying it cannot be said to be grounds for

contributory negligence. "Non-wearing of a helmet was an offence under the Motor Vehicle Act, but it cannot be termed as a rash or negligent act which led to the accident," the tribunal said.

While granting the award, the tribunal said that from the nature of the injuries it was clear that the injured will never be able to perform the job of marketing executive, which involves considerable movement, and the desk job will also be dependent upon the services of a full-time attendant.

"It is already proved on record that the lower body of the injured has become dysfunctional.

He is dependent upon an attendant for passing urine, as he cannot feel the same, and his employer stated that they are providing him salary on humanitarian

The victim had suffered a 88% permanent disability because of a spinal cord injury he suffered in a road accident in 2020.

grounds till the time this case is decided," the judge said in an order passed on August 12.

The tribunal held the car driver, Ramesh, responsible for "negligent driving" while directing the insurance company IFFCO Tokio General Insurance Co Ltd to pay an amount of over Rs 2.92 crore, for loss of future earnings, medical treatment, and attendant charges.

SpiceJet tells court it has settled disputes with some lessors: Report

New Delhi. (Agency)

SAt the time, the airline was operating five Bombardier Q400 aircraft from NAC. SpiceJet said the agreement settled all past liabilities related to the Q400 aircraft.

AIRLINE FACES PRESSURE FROM LESSORS

SpiceJet had been trying to raise funds amid a series of quarterly losses.

The airline was also facing legal action from some lessors over unpaid dues. Some lessors had approached courts and asked India's aviation regulator to deregister their aircraft. The disputes had added to the pressure on the airline as it worked to restore its grounded fleet.

Earlier in June 2023, SpiceJet said lessor FTAI Aviation would lease up to 20 engines to the airline as it worked to restore its fleet. The airline had also said in May 2023 that it had started efforts to revive 25 grounded aircraft using its own funds and a \$50 million line of credit secured through an Indian government scheme.

Japan's economy manages 1.1% growth rate despite headwinds

TOKYO. (Agency)

Japan's economy grew an annual rate of 1.1% in the April-June quarter even as private consumption stayed flat and the growth of exports declined, according to government data released Monday. Japan's real GDP, or gross domestic product, the sum value of nation's goods and services, grew at a seasonally adjusted rate of 0.3% from the first quarter to second quarter of this 2026, according to Cabinet Office data. The annualised rate shows what the growth rate would have been if it had continued for a whole year. It was 2.1% in the January-March period. Private spending dipped 1.2% in April-June compared to January-March, while exports grew 0.5%. Exports for the latest period were driven by the global demand for Japanese autos and semiconductors. Japan is home for Toyota Motor Corp., Honda Motor Co. and other top automakers. Global demand for computer chips being powered by interest in AI, helping to support Japan's exports.

Government consumption rose 1.6%. Quarterly GDP growth was lower than what analysts had expected. The Japanese economy has been hurt by the war in Iran, which has sent energy costs surging. That's especially difficult for resource-poor Japan, which imports almost all its oil. The Strait of Hormuz, a vital transport route for oil exports from the Persian Gulf to Asia, has been effectively blocked due to the war, pushing prices higher. Japan has released some oil reserves and is working on alternate routes. Brent crude has been recently trading at about \$88 a barrel, up from about \$65 a year ago, although that's lower than earlier this year, when it shot above \$110 a barrel. A weak yen has also worked as a plus for some Japanese companies, including giant exporters like Toyota, boosting the value of overseas earnings when translated into yen.

Rupee falls 17 paise to 95.59 against US dollar in early trade

MUMBAI. (Agency)

The rupee depreciated 17 paise to 95.59 against the US dollar in early trade on Monday, as the overall risk-reward appears tilted towards weakness. Forex traders said investors' sentiment turned cautious after the Reserve Bank of India on August 14 said that its swap facility for FCNR (B) deposits will be available only for deposits mobilised till August 31. Earlier, the cut-off date for Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank) or FCNR (B) deposits was September 30. Under the FCNR (B) scheme, banks offer attractive interest rates to mobilise foreign currency deposits. The Reserve Bank on Friday said its concessional swap facility, introduced to encourage foreign currency inflows, has attracted USD 56.84 billion till August 13. At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 95.50, then fell to 95.59, down 17 paise from its previous close.

On Friday, the rupee appreciated 3 paise to close at 95.42 against the US dollar. "After attracting nearly USD 50 billion of forex inflows, the central bank has now announced that the facility will be available only for deposits mobilized until August 31, 2026. The support from these inflows remains significant, but the market will eventually begin looking beyond this temporary cushion," CR Forex Advisors MD- Amit Pabari said. While the rupee may remain supported in the near term, the overall risk-reward appears tilted towards weakness, Pabari said. "Technically, the 95.20-95.30 zone is likely to act as an important support area. As long as this level holds, USD/INR could gradually move towards the 96.20-96.50 region in the coming days," he said. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading at 99.54, down 0.12 per cent. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading higher by 0.47 per cent at USD 88.94 per barrel in futures trade.

The AC inside your home still depends on China. Voltas wants to change that

New Delhi. (Agency)

India is preparing for an air-conditioner boom given the rise in temperature due to climate change, but there is a problem hiding inside the machines that millions of Indians are buying: some of the most important components are still sourced from overseas. Now, Tata-owned Voltas is trying to change that. Voltas has signed a binding term sheet with Atomberg Innovation, the B2B engineering arm of consumer appliances startup Atomberg Technologies, to set up a proposed 50:50 joint venture to develop, manufacture and supply compressors and other allied components for room air conditioners in India. The partnership is aimed at building domestic capability in a critical part of the AC supply chain and reducing dependence on imports. The timing is important. In May, the government allowed manufacturers to import certain



rotary hermetic compressors below 2 tonnes used in air conditioners and heat pumps only up to 30% of their FY25 import volumes during FY27. Manufacturers have also been asked to submit an indigenisation plan. The move was designed to balance immediate supply needs with the longer-term push to build domestic capacity. For Voltas, this is also a second attempt at building a domestic compressor capability — but

with a very different partner.

WHY THE COMPRESSOR MATTERS

The compressor is one of the key components in an air conditioner. It circulates refrigerant through the system and is central to the cooling process. India's problem is that domestic AC manufacturing has grown faster than the local ecosystem for some critical components. China is a major source of

India's imports of refrigeration-equipment compressors. India Exim Bank data showed China accounted for 73.7% of India's imports in the relevant compressor category, worth \$217.5 million. This figure relates to the specified trade category and should not be read as saying that 73.7% of every compressor used in Indian ACs comes from China. That distinction matters because India's AC industry is increasingly looking to manufacture more of the product and its components locally. The government has been pushing this through the production-linked incentive scheme for white goods, which includes air conditioners and their components. Atomberg Innovation itself has been listed among companies referred to under the PLI scheme for AC components, with control assemblies and motors among its eligible products and a committed investment of Rs 50.20 crore.

Banking reforms panel to be set up soon, says Nirmala Sitharaman

New Delhi. (Agency)

-The government is set to announce the members of a high-level committee on banking reforms soon, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Monday. A senior Finance Ministry official indicated that the panel is likely to be formed this month. The committee will examine how India's banking sector can better support the country's long-term economic goals and its vision of becoming a developed nation by 2047.

COMMITTEE TO FOCUS ON VIKSIT BHARAT

Speaking at the first day of the two-day PSB Confluence 2026 in New Delhi, Sitharaman said the government would move quickly after the committee submits its

recommendations, reported Moneycontrol. The proposed panel was first announced in the Union



Budget 2026-27. The government had said the High-Level Committee on Banking for Viksit Bharat would review the banking sector and suggest changes needed to align it with India's growth ambitions. The committee has not yet been formally constituted.

BANKING SECTOR IN

STRONGER POSITION

Sitharaman said the committee would look at the role banks need to play in helping India achieve its Viksit Bharat goal. The finance minister also pointed to the improvement in the financial health of Indian banks. She said bad loans, or non-performing assets (NPAs), are at their lowest levels, giving banks a stronger base to take up further reforms.

WHY BANKING REFORMS MATTER

Banks will have an important role to play as India aims to expand its economy and increase access to credit. The proposed committee is expected to examine what changes may be needed in the banking sector to support this growth over the coming decades.

Why Indian Railways is betting big on Vande Bharat: The numbers behind its expansion

New Delhi. (Agency)

Vande Bharat trains are becoming an increasingly important part of Indian Railways' passenger network, and the reason is not just faster journeys or better amenities. There is a stronger business case behind the expansion: premium AC passenger categories are among the few segments of Indian



Railways' passenger business that generate profits. Financial performance data for FY25 shows that AC 3-tier and AC Chair Car were the only two passenger categories to report profits. This is significant for Vande Bharat because Chair Car services feature prominently on premium trains such as Vande Bharat and Shatabdi. As Indian Railways expands its Vande Bharat network and introduces sleeper services, the numbers point to growing demand for passengers willing to pay more for premium rail travel. THE PASSENGER SEGMENTS THAT MAKE MONEY Indian Railways' passenger operations remain loss-making across most categories. In FY25, losses ranged from Rs 20,705.94 crore in the Ordinary class to Rs 48.77 crore in First Class. AC 3-tier, however, generated a profit of Rs 3,645.44 crore in FY25. That was higher than the Rs 2,501.07 crore profit recorded in FY24, although below the Rs 3,300.08 crore reported in FY23. AC Chair Car also reported a profit of Rs 376.77 crore in FY25. The category had reported losses of Rs 203.96 crore in FY24 and Rs 297.62 crore in FY23. The contrast is important.

RBI proposes new loan rules: What borrowers need to know about EMLs



New Delhi. (Agency)

Borrowers with floating-rate loans may get more protection when banks change the benchmark used to set their interest rates. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has proposed a new framework that could make such changes more transparent and limit how lenders can alter loan pricing. The RBI has proposed the Reserve Bank of India (Interest Rates on Loans and Advances) Directions, 2026. If finalised, the new rules are proposed

to come into effect from April 1, 2027.

BORROWER CONSENT MAY BE NEEDED FOR EXISTING LOANS

The proposed framework provides for a one-time exercise to move existing loans linked to internal or external benchmarks to the new framework by April 1, 2029. Borrowers would have to give their consent for this migration. The revised interest rate also cannot be higher than the rate applicable immediately before the loan is moved to the new framework. Banks and other lenders would not be allowed to charge

borrowers a fee for the migration.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE LOAN BENCHMARK CHANGES?

The benchmark is important for a floating-rate loan because the interest rate is generally made up of the benchmark and the lender's spread. If the benchmark changes, it can affect the interest rate, EMI or the time needed to repay the loan. Under the proposed rules, the loan agreement would have to clearly mention the benchmark, how often it will be reset and the reset date.

Missed foreign asset disclosure? How can taxpayers use the new CBDT scheme

New Delhi. (Agency)

If you have a foreign bank account, property, investment or income that should have been reported in your income-tax return but was missed, there is now a one-time opportunity to disclose it. The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has notified the Foreign Assets of Small Taxpayers-Disclosure Scheme (FAST-DS), 2026. It has also issued detailed FAQs explaining the scheme and how taxpayers can use it. It posted on X, "Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has notified the Foreign Assets of Small Taxpayers-Disclosure Scheme (FAST-DS) Rules, 2026." The scheme came into effect on August 16, 2026. Taxpayers can file declarations until December 31, 2026, and the entire process will be online. The Income Tax Department said the FAQs have been issued to help taxpayers and other stakeholders



understand the scheme and its rules.

WHO CAN USE FAST-DS?

The scheme covers residents, non-residents and resident but not ordinarily resident (RNOR) taxpayers, subject to the conditions laid down under the scheme. A taxpayer can make a declaration if they were a resident of India in the year to which the undisclosed

income relates or in the year in which the foreign asset was acquired. The scheme applies where a taxpayer did not file an income-tax return, filed a return but left out the relevant foreign asset or income, or where the asset or income could otherwise be treated as having escaped assessment. The declaration has to be filed electronically in Form 1 between

August 16 and December 31, 2026. It can cover previous years, subject to the monetary limits under the scheme.

FOREIGN INCOME WAS NOT TAXED: WHAT WILL YOU HAVE TO PAY?

There is an important difference between foreign income that was never offered to tax and a foreign asset that was not reported even though the related income had already been taxed. In the first case, FAST-DS covers undisclosed foreign income or assets with an aggregate value of up to Rs 1 crore. The taxpayer has to pay tax at 30%, along with an additional amount equal to 100% of the tax. This effectively takes the total payment to 60% of the amount declared.

PAID TAX BUT FORGOT TO REPORT THE FOREIGN ASSET?

The second category is meant for taxpayers who have already offered the income related.

Hotel fire in West Bengal's Tarapith town kills eight, several injured

KOLKATA.(Agency)

Police have arrested the owner of a hotel in Tarapith in West Bengal's Birbhum district where a devastating fire broke out, killing eight pilgrims and injuring several others.

Police are investigating whether the hotel authorities had taken adequate safety measures to prevent the fire.

At least eight people, mainly pilgrims, were killed and several others critically injured in an early morning fire at the hotel on Monday, police said.The fire was spotted around 5 am on the ground floor of the four-storey hotel building in the temple town of Tarapith, when most of the guests were asleep, they said.

Twenty-two fire tenders were pressed into service at the spot and brought the blaze under control within around three hours.

The injured were taken to the Rampurhat Government Medical College and Hospital. Hotel officials claimed the fire was caused by a short circuit.The arrested owner, Kalyan Paul, of the hotel 'Bideshini', close to the Tarapith Kali temple, claimed that there were no loopholes in the hotel's fire safety measures and that there was an exit door at the back of the building.

"Electricity connections in the hotel were snapped by our staff soon after the fire was spotted early this morning. The entire hotel complex suddenly plunged into darkness and, as a result, boarders could not come out of the hotel. The anxious boarders could not find the exit door because of the darkness and smoke caused by the fire. They tried to come out of the hotel through its reception centre and directly faced the fire," Kalyan, who also sustained injuries, told reporters at the spot.

SC directs SIT to expedite probe into alleged embezzlement of Ram temple donations

Bihar.(Agency)

The Supreme Court on Monday directed the court-appointed Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the alleged embezzlement of donations at the Ram temple in Ayodhya to expedite its investigation and bring it to a logical conclusion.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana directed the SIT to file its status report in a sealed cover on the progress made in the investigation into the donations theft case.

The bench also asked the SIT to consider objectively any suggestions made by the different litigants before the court for qualitative improvement of the investigation and its transparency.

The bench said after examining the report of the SIT, the court may issue certain directions for reforms in the management of donations made by the devotees visiting the Ram temple.On July 27, the top court took note of the setting up of the four-member SIT headed by IGP Kiran S to probe the alleged embezzlement of donations at the Ram temple.

It had asked the Uttar Pradesh government to also include a forensic auditor in the probe team.Observing that "remedial actions will have to be taken", the bench had said steps will be taken to "ensure transparency".

The bench had also directed the SIT to submit a status report in two weeks.On July 20, the bench had asked the Uttar Pradesh government to apprise.

Telangana's air monitoring network remains Hyderabad-centric

HYDERABAD.(Agency)

Telangana's air-quality monitoring network remains heavily concentrated in Hyderabad, with only five of the state's 26 stations under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) located outside the capital, according to data from the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. Hyderabad has 21 stations, while Nalgonda has two and Sangareddy three. Nearly 81% of the state's NCAP monitoring stations are therefore located in Hyderabad.

The limited geographical spread leaves large parts of Telangana without ground-level monitoring infrastructure. The disparity becomes clearer when compared with other states. Andhra Pradesh has 74 stations across 13 cities, Maharashtra 166, Uttar Pradesh 112, Rajasthan 46 and Karnataka 35. Telangana's 26 stations are spread across only three locations in the NCAP network. The distribution is significant as air pollution can vary considerably depending on traffic, industrial activity, construction, road dust, land use and weather conditions. A network concentrated in one city can provide detailed information about local pollution but may fail to capture pollution levels and hotspots elsewhere.

Hyderabad has 14 Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAAQMS) and seven manual stations. Nalgonda and Sangareddy, however, have only manual stations, with no continuous monitoring stations listed in either city.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has stressed that continuous and reliable air-quality monitoring is essential to identify pollutants, inform policy decisions and assess the effectiveness of pollution-control measures.

Bombay HC makes food safety body pay Rs 5 lakh for not restoring Pune shop's licence despite 98% compliance

Mumbai.(Agency)

The Bombay High Court has yet again rapped the Maharashtra food safety body and ordered it to pay Rs 5 lakh to a sweets shop in Pune for keeping the licence suspended despite a 98 percent compliance report in a re-inspection. Notably, the Pune petitioner, which remained closed due to the licence suspension, lost Rs. 8.74 lakh in revenue after the food safety body's action.

Calling the food safety body's licence suspension orders a "strange policy and perversity", the Bombay High Court cancelled the licence suspension order, permitting the petitioner – Gurunanak Dairy and Sweets – to restart its business.

The Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA) now has 30 days to pay Rs 5 lakh compensation to Gurunanak Dairy and Sweets shop.

"We have observed that your intention is laudable and some department has at least

stood up. But you are going overboard. You should have immediately revoked the suspension of the licence once you noticed 98% compliance (in the re-inspection report)," the High Court remarked.A bench of Acting



Chief Justice Ravindra V Ghuge and Justice Gautam A Ankhad was hearing a plea by Gurunanak Dairy and Sweets from Pune, challenging the June 12 suspension of its food licence.

The FDA had initiated the action against the

Pune sweets shop after receiving complaints of food poisoning. During an inspection, the food safety body observed several violations linked to sanitation, maintenance, and hygiene.

The Gurunanak Dairy and Sweets reached out to FDA Commissioner Tukaram Mundhe, addressing the observations through a compliance report on July 9. Four days later, an FDA officer reinspected the premises and awarded it 35 (98 percent) out of 36 marks in food safety compliance.However, the licence was not restored, prompting the petitioner to approach the HC.

'Lost Rs 8.7 lakh': Petitioner Advocate Abhijeet Desai, representing the petitioner, argued that the business has been shut for 34 days, resulting in a revenue loss of Rs. 8.74 lakh. The FDA lawyer justified the non-revocation, saying

the appeal was heard and closed for judgment on August 11."This is plain and simple perversity; absolutely strange policies. Once you clear with 98%, you say, now, go and file an appeal.

Deadly fire breaks out at Mumbai hotel, spreads to nearby stall, hotel

Mumbai.(Agency)

A deadly fire broke out at a hotel in Kandivli in Mumbai in the early hours of Monday, trapping its occupants for hours. The fire erupted in a false ceiling on the fourth floor of the five-storey building around 4:14 am and later spread to an adjoining hotel and a nearby fruit stall.

The Mumbai Fire Brigade (MFB) personnel rescued 11 people and brought the Mumbai hotel fire under control at around 6.42 am after a 2-hour-long firefighting operation. While the fire had remained confined to the fourth floor initially, it spread rapidly due to wooden furniture, clothes and other flammable items.

"Initially, the blaze remained confined within the electrical wiring of the building and

further intensified due to the presence of flammable items like wooden furniture, clothing items, tarpaulin sheets, bamboo and



plastic materials," an official from the Mumbai Fire Brigade (MFB) said.

When the fire broke out at the Mumbai hotel,

as many as 15 guests were staying on the fourth floor. While some managed to escape, 11 got trapped in thick smoke that had spread

on all the floors of the establishment. The fire brigade officials later rescued them through internal corridors.An investigation has been initiated to ascertain if the Mumbai hotel had fire safety mechanisms in place.Monday's hotel fire comes days after two, including a two-and-a-half-year-old child, lost their lives in a blaze that erupted at a residential building at Mumbai's Vile Parle. The preliminary investigation suggested that the blaze at the residential building likely originated from the electrical wiring system and remained confined within electrical installations, wiring, and air conditioning (AC) units.

AP's Ramayapatnam Port set for operational debut in December

VIJAYAWADA.(Agency)

Along the Nellore coastline, Andhra Pradesh's next major maritime gateway is rapidly taking shape. Heavy dredging vessels manoeuvring in the access channel, and construction crews working round-the-clock on breakwaters are driving the greenfield Ramayapatnam Port toward a December 2026 operational debut, with physical progress surging past 80%.



The accelerated pace stems from a high-level infrastructure review in late May, where Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu set strict, time-bound completion targets for major ports, airports, and fishing harbours. By placing port development on an expedited track—similar to industrial projects mandated to launch within 18

months—the State has prioritised swift operationalisation across key execution agencies.

That momentum is backed by official status reports tabled in Parliament by Union Minister for Ports Sarbananda Sonowal and fresh disclosures from the Andhra Pradesh Maritime Board (APMB), confirming that Phase-A of Ramayapatnam Port has reached

80.50% physical progress, and 73.95% financial execution against its Rs 4,929.39-crore sanctioned cost.

Outer breakwaters stand at 97.98% completion, berth construction has reached 95.35%, and access channel dredging has passed 68.73% toward initial draft targets. Crucial last-mile evacuation networks are moving in tandem to prevent freight bottlenecks.

A 5.5-km direct road link connecting the harbour complex to National Highway 16 has reached 95% completion and is eyed for a September commissioning. Parallely, a 7.4-km railway line connecting to Tettu station—having secured Railway approval for its Engineering Scale Plan—is 30% complete toward a synchronised December finish.

312 students, 10 teachers stranded in Kendrapara school building for 2 days

KENDRAPARA.(Agency)

At least 312 students and 10 teachers of a government-run SC/ST residential school have been stranded in a flooded village under Pattamundai block since the past two days. The Ashram school at Kulasahi village under Penthapala panchayat was marooned after floodwaters from Brahmani river inundated the area on Saturday. After the ground floor of the school building was submerged, students, teachers and other staff were forced to move to the first floor.

Currently, the school is surrounded by nearly 10 feet of floodwater, making it impossible for the inmates to move out. No rescue team had reached the school at the time of filing this report.

"The school building is battling a strong current," a teacher said, expressing concern over the situation. Another stranded teacher said the school, located in a low-lying area close to the riverbank, frequently faces waterlogging during floods. "The authorities should have been more cautious and shifted all the students before the area was flooded," he said.

Cheated advances, mounting debt: The bitter reality for sugarcane transporters in Maharashtra

Between 2022 and 2025, five sugar belt districts recorded 1,953 cheating cases involving Rs 257 crore allegedly lost to labour contractors

Pune.(Agency)

"My son's textbook calls sugarcane a cash crop — a nagdi peek. But tell me, what kind of cash crop leaves us cheated, in debt and wanting to die by suicide?" asks 38-year-old Somnath Sonavane, a sugarcane transporter and farmer. His question sums up an often uncomfortable reality of Maharashtra's sugarcane heartland.

Between 2022 and 2025, Pune, Kolhapur, Solapur, Satara and Sangli districts recorded 1,953 criminal cases in which sugarcane transporters allegedly lost a total of Rs 257 crore to labour contractors, or mukadams, who took advances on the promise of supplying harvesting groups. Police have booked 3,162 labour contractors in these cases. Kolhapur accounted for more than half the cases at 1,154, followed by Sangli (235), Solapur (216), Pune (175) and Satara (173). For many sugarcane farmers, becoming a transporter is an extension of farming. Sugarcane cultivation alone may not provide enough income after

cultivation, labour and loan costs. Owning a tractor, truck or other transport vehicle offers another source of income during the crushing season. "We are sugarcane farmers first and transporters later. We entered this business because we thought the truck would give us another source of income. Instead, we are taking loans to keep the truck running and giving interest-free advances to labour contractors. When the contractor cheats, the debt remains ours," said Sudhir Jadhav, a farmer-transporter from Shirur.

The advance that disappears

A police inspector who has investigated several such cheating cases in Kolhapur said the system depends heavily on mukadams, who mobilise groups of migrant sugarcane cutters, often couples or families travelling together. Transporters generally approach them through contacts in the sugar belt. Most mukadams come from villages in Marathwada and Vidarbha and have established relationships with migrant

families. "Transporters cannot simply hire labourers directly. Cane harvesting depends heavily on organised groups of migrant cutters, making the mukadam a crucial link in the process," said the inspector. The



crushing season therefore begins with trust and often a large advance. Transporters pay mukadams lakhs of rupees on the promise that labourers will arrive when required. But

some allege that contractors take advances from multiple transporters for the same group or disappear after receiving the money.

"We now know that many mukadams take advances from multiple people for the same group of labourers, while others disappear after taking the money. When the harvesting season begins, the transporter is left with a vehicle bought on loan, installments to pay, fuel and maintenance expenses, but no cane to transport," said Ganpat Kale, a transporter and farmer from Pune district.

He said many transporters borrow or mortgage property to arrange the advance. "If the group does not come, the entire season's calculation collapses. The bank installments do not stop just because the labour contractor has disappeared," Kale said.Transporters also say bank loans arranged through sugar mills often do not cover the entire advance demanded by mukadams, forcing them to put in their own savings.

NEWS BOX

India hockey coach calls out FIH on X, blasts them for terrible refereeing vs China



New Delhi. (Agency)

India women's hockey team head coach Sjoerd Marijne has publicly questioned the International Hockey Federation's (FIH) refereeing after India were held to a 2-2 draw by China in their opening match of the Hockey World Cup on Sunday, August 16. Marijne took to X to highlight the penalty stroke awarded to China in the final minute of the first quarter. The coach posted video footage of the penalty and questioned the FIH's interpretation of the rules. The Dutch coach claimed the Chinese player appeared to drag the ball during the penalty stroke, something that is not permitted under the rules. However, according to Marijne, the FIH rules committee did not consider the action to be dragging when he sought clarification. "Good to know, this is apparently NOT dragging. The reaction of the rules committee from the FIH after asking clarification is that this clip of the penalty stroke is not dragging. I have just asked it for clarification whThe penalty stroke came at the end of a first quarter that had otherwise been dominated by India. Baljit and Lalremsiami caused problems for China from the wings, while India's forward line repeatedly found its way into the opposition circle. The referee awarded China the penalty stroke after ruling that Shilpi Dabas had obstructed China's Zhang Ying. India took the video referral, but the decision was upheld by the TV umpire. at to tell my players," Marijne wrote on X. Zhang made no mistake from the spot to bring China level at 1-1. The decision appeared to frustrate Marijne, who also questioned another call late in the match after India were not awarded a penalty corner despite Navneet Kaur's circle penetration. **INDIA HOLD CHINA TO 2-2 DRAW** India had started the match on the front foot and took the lead in the eighth minute through Navneet Kaur.

Cristiano Ronaldo hints at retirement: It will probably be my last year playing football



New Delhi. (Agency)

Cristiano Ronaldo has hinted that the 2026-27 season could be his final one in professional football, admitting that he will "probably" retire from the game at the end of the campaign. "This is probably my last year of football, and I want to leave a spectacular legacy," Ronaldo told Vogue. The 41-year-old Portugal captain has stopped short of announcing his retirement, but the comments offer his clearest indication yet that he is considering the end of his playing career. There is still plenty left for Ronaldo to chase. He has scored 976 goals in 1,330 games for club and country and is just 24 goals away from reaching 1,000. His numbers at Al Nassr remain strong too. Ronaldo scored 28 goals in the Saudi Pro League last season, finishing third in the scoring charts, and found the net 39 times in all competitions. That came at the end of a career that has taken him from Sporting CP to Manchester United, Real Madrid and Juventus before his second spell at United and his move to Al Nassr in 2023. Ronaldo has scored 450 goals for Real Madrid, 145 for Manchester United across his two spells and 138 for Portugal. He has won five Ballon d'Or awards, five Champions League titles and the European Championship with Portugal. At 41, he remains Portugal's captain and one of Al Nassr's main attacking threats. But for the first time, Ronaldo is speaking openly about what comes after football.

LIFE AFTER FOOTBALL

Ronaldo says he has already thought about how he will spend his time once he stops playing.

BWF World Championships: Fitter and still hungry, PV Sindhu chases history at home

Seven years after her last World Championships medal, PV Sindhu arrives in Delhi fitter and calmer, chasing a record sixth, backed by a rebuilt sports science team and facing a draw set to test her.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Seven years is a long time to carry an ache. For PV Sindhu, it has lasted since Basel, where she last stood on a World Championships podium. Since then, the two-time Olympic medallist has watched the tournament come and go without her name on it, even as she remained, by her own record, the most decorated woman in its history. Now the wait comes to New Delhi, to the Indira Gandhi Indoor Arena, and to a crowd that will not need reminding what is at stake: a sixth World Championships medal, one that would pull

her level with no one and leave her, alone, at the top of a list she currently shares with China's Zhang Ning.

She could not have picked a better moment to arrive at that number. Sindhu ended a two-year title drought at the Japan Open earlier this year, and if the seven-year wait for a Worlds medal has weighed on her, that win seems to have lifted something.

"I think it definitely gives me a lot of confidence," she said on the eve of her first-round match in Delhi. "Of course, I'm really looking forward to the World Championships to start. Since it's happening in India, I think it's really exciting." She was relaxed at that press conference, even playful, a shuttler who looked like she was enjoying herself again rather than merely enduring the circuit. She trained alongside Ayush Shetty in the build-up, both of them overseen by coach Irwansyah, and by most



accounts around the venue, she has looked sharp.

SCIENCE IN THE SHADOWS

But the real story of this Sindhu, the 2026 version rather than the one who won gold in 2019, sits somewhere less visible than a scoreline. It is in the sports science room.

Vimal Kumar, who has watched Sindhu's career from close quarters and spoke to India Today in 2025 about the need for her to manage her tour schedule more sustainably as she got older, sees the difference plainly now.

"At her level, more than anything else, the S&C plays a major role. How you take care of your body is very important," he said.

"Her fitness team is also working very diligently. You can't kill her every session. It has been very systematic. Those are aspects we have improved. She looked good to me." Sindhu herself is unusually candid about how deliberately that team has been built.

"I've had a really good team around me, and we had to build that team. It took some time," she said. "When we got the whole team together in terms of sports science, physio and the trainer, I think we all came together, we sat down, we just noted down what is required and what is needed. We discussed it with the coach and we had to improve on those things."

Pakistan Women name Asia Cup, Asian Games squads, target revival after T20 World Cup

Pakistan Women have named their Asia Cup and Asian Games squads as they look to bounce back from a disappointing T20 World Cup campaign. Fatima Sana returns as captain, with Pakistan also aiming to recover after recently losing the T20I series to Sri Lanka.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Pakistan Women have their sights set on a fresh start after the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) announced the 15-member squads for the Women's Asia Cup 2026 and the women's cricket event at the 20th Asian Games on Sunday. Regular captain Fatima Sana returns to lead Pakistan in both



tournaments after missing the recent T20I series against Sri Lanka due to her commitments with The Hundred, where she represented Birmingham Phoenix. Her return will be a major boost for a side looking to recover from a disappointing T20 World Cup campaign. Pakistan managed only one win in five group matches at the global tournament,

finishing fifth in Group 1 with two points. They lost their opening three games against India, South Africa and Bangladesh before suffering a heavy 113-run defeat to Australia. They eventually ended their campaign on a positive note by beating the Netherlands by 37 runs.

FATIMA RETURNS AS PAKISTAN LOOK TO REBUILD

The Asia Cup will be played from August 28 to September 13 at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium, with Pakistan drawn in Group A alongside Hong Kong, China, India and Thailand. They will begin against Thailand on September 1 before facing India on September 5 and Hong Kong, China, on September 7. The squad announcement comes after Pakistan suffered another setback against Sri Lanka, losing the T20I series 2-1. Muneeba Ali led the side in Fatima Sana's absence due to her commitments with The Hundred.

Mikel Arteta's Arsenal blow Manchester City away to lift 18th Community Shield

New Delhi. (Agency)

Arsenal could hardly have asked for a better start to the new season. Mikel Arteta's side tore Manchester City apart with a 3-0 win in the Community Shield on Sunday, lifting the trophy for the 18th time and sending an early warning to their Premier League rivals. The Gunners needed just 23 seconds to take the lead, with Riccardo Calafiori finishing off a superb move involving Myles Lewis-Skelly. Lewis-Skelly allowed the ball to run across his body 25 yards from goal before slipping a superb reverse pass into the path of Calafiori. The Italian left-back made no mistake, running onto the pass before calmly sidefooting beyond Gianluigi Donnarumma. It was the fastest goal in Community Shield history



and set the tone for a one-sided afternoon in Cardiff. City did have a chance to

the right. Christos Tzolis, one of Arsenal's debutants, made a clever run beyond Abdurkai Khusanov and managed to direct a looping header back across goal. Kai Havertz was perfectly placed to meet it, heading through Donnarumma and into the net. It was a deserved reward for an Arsenal side that played with real intensity despite the Community Shield traditionally being viewed as a curtain-raiser rather than a major competitive fixture. The Gunners looked hungry from the opening whistle and gave City very little time to settle. Tzolis, in particular, made a strong first impression. The summer signing was lively throughout the first half and played a key role in Arsenal's second goal. City made a change at the break, bringing on Jack Grealish for Jeremy Doku, while Arsenal introduced Declan Rice for Bruno Guimaraes.

Jamal Musiala collapses on field during Bayern Munich friendly, sparking concern

New Delhi. (Agency)

Jamal Musiala, the 23-year-old Bayern Munich and Germany attacking midfielder, sparked concern after collapsing during Bayern's friendly against RB Leipzig. The worrying scenes came just minutes after Musiala had scored, but Bayern have since offered reassurance that their star midfielder is doing well. Musiala came off the bench during Bayern's 3-1 win and found the net in the 81st minute. Speaking after the match, Bayern sporting director Max Eberl moved to ease concerns surrounding the player. The most important thing is that he is fine. There is nothing to say about anything else," Eberl said. A Bayern board member for sport also offered a brief update, saying, "The main thing is that he's OK." The club, however, did not provide further details about what



caused Musiala to collapse. Musiala had been on the pitch for only around 15 minutes when he went down and needed attention from medical staff from both teams. He eventually got back to his feet

and walked towards the tunnel on his own, although he appeared visibly shaken. He was substituted in the 88th minute. Reports in Germany suggested Musiala experienced sudden dizziness, while

temperatures in Munich had climbed above 30 degrees Celsius. However, Bayern have not confirmed the cause of the episode and are expected to monitor his condition.

MUSIALA'S HISTORY ADDS TO CONCERN

The timing of the incident inevitably brought Musiala's recent injury problems back into focus. He suffered a serious leg injury during Bayern's Club World Cup match against Paris Saint-Germain last summer, including a fractured fibula, and spent several months on the sidelines. Musiala eventually returned to action in January and has since been working his way back towards his best. He was also part of Germany's 2026 World Cup campaign, making the latest scare particularly unsettling given how carefully his recovery has been managed.

India vs Sri Lanka: Rain threatens Galle Test and India's WTC charge

Asan. (Agency)

Rain has already taken a sizeable bite out of the first Test between India and Sri Lanka in Galle, and the weather could yet have the final say. India have built a commanding position at 460/9, but the amount of time lost means a result is far from guaranteed.

Day 1 was shortened by rain, while Day 2 suffered an even bigger interruption. Only 43 overs were possible on Sunday after the start was pushed back to 2.35 PM, with India adding 172 runs to their overnight 288/2.

SL vs IND 1st Test Day 2: Highlights

Devdutt Padikkal's 167 has put India firmly in the driver's seat, with KL Rahul making 82 and Dhruv Jurel adding 51. Sri Lanka's spinners



did fight back, with Prabath Jayasuriya taking 4/109 and debutant Keshara Nuwantha claiming 3/175, but India still finished the day nine wickets down and in control. The concern now is simple. India need enough time to bowl Sri Lanka out and then create a result, but the weather has already eaten into that window. With more rain forecast, a draw is becoming a genuine possibility.

WILL RAIN WASH OUT SL VS IND GALLE TEST?

According to AccuWeather, Monday has an 83% chance of precipitation in Galle. The hourly forecast makes for particularly frustrating reading, with a 51% chance of rain at 10 AM, 47% at 11 AM, 44% at noon, 48% at 1 PM and 52% at 2 PM. The chances then ease to 45% at 3 PM, 39% at 4 PM and 34% at 5 PM before rising again to 40% at 6 PM. In other words, even if the showers are brief, the stop-start nature could be enough to eat into valuable playing time. Rain is also forecast around the scheduled start, with conditions expected to improve at points before another spell arrives later in the day.



Kareena Kapoor

Khan Poses In White Bikini With Saif On His 55th Birthday

Kareena Kapoor Khan gave fans a glimpse of her holiday with Saif Ali Khan on his 55th birthday, but it was her bikini picture with the actor that went viral. The actress shared a series of personal photos from their getaway, including a loved-up picture in which she posed beside Saif in a white bikini. The birthday album offered more than just a couple's picture. Kareena also shared photos featuring their sons, Taimur and Jeh, along with snapshots from their drives and a fun mirror selfie.

Kareena, 45, paired the pictures with a personal birthday message for Saif. She wrote, "Happy Birthday to my forever ride or die... how boring would life be without you... This insta post pictures are all approved by him, loves it when I post his pictures."

The white bikini picture showed Kareena and Saif posing together against a rocky backdrop during their getaway. Kareena wore sunglasses with her white bikini, while Saif opted for a white shirt and red shorts.

She also picked a special song to go with the post. Kareena added Dil Dance Maare from their 2008 film Tashan, a fitting choice given that the



couple began their romance while working on the film.

The post also gave fans a look at the more private side of their relationship. Along with the bikini picture, Kareena included moments with their children and casual holiday photos.

Fans reacted to the pictures and her birthday message, with many praising Kareena and Saif's chemistry. Saif's sister Saba Pataudi joined the birthday wishes in the comments. She wrote, "Happiest Birthday Bhai!! Have an awesome one. Lots of love." Kareena's close friend Amrita Arora commented, "Saifuuuuuuuuuu," while filmmaker Zoya Akhtar wrote, "Happy Birthday Saif." Rhea Kapoor also wished him, writing, "Happy birthday Saif, we love you."

Saif and Kareena got married on October 16, 2012, in a private ceremony in Mumbai. The couple are parents to two sons, Taimur Ali Khan and Jehangir Ali Khan, and Kareena often shares glimpses of their family holidays and special moments on social media.

Aamir Khan, Kiran Rao Look Distressed As Son Azad Cries Outside Mumbai Pet Clinic; Video Goes Viral



Aamir Khan was spotted outside a Mumbai pet clinic on Saturday with his former wife Kiran Rao and their son Azad Rao Khan. A video of the family leaving the clinic has since surfaced online, with Azad visibly emotional and Aamir carrying a pet carrier.

The clip has prompted concern among social media users, although neither Aamir nor Kiran has revealed why they visited the clinic or shared any update about their pet.

Azad Rao Khan Seen Crying Outside Pet Clinic

In the video circulating on social media, Aamir and Kiran can be seen walking out of the clinic with Azad. The 14-year-old appears to be crying, while his parents also look visibly concerned. Aamir is seen carrying what appears to be a cat carrier as the family makes its way out. The visuals quickly led to speculation about whether one of the family's pets was unwell.

"His pet dog or cat is not well, I guess," one person commented. Another wrote, "Might be some pet lost its life. Sad."

A third user speculated that the family may have lost a pet and suggested that this was why Azad appeared upset.

However, there is currently no confirmation about what happened. Aamir and Kiran have not issued a statement about the clinic visit, nor have they said that any of their pets has died. The claims circulating online remain speculation based solely on the video.

Aamir Khan's Batwara 1947 Hits Theatres

The sighting comes shortly after the theatrical release of Aamir's latest production, Batwara 1947. Directed by Rajkumar Santoshi, the Partition drama is headlined by Sunny Deol and also stars Preity Zinta, Shabana Azmi, Ali Fazal, Karan Deol and Abhimanyu Singh.

Sohail Khan BREAKS Silence On Sudden Weight Loss After Health Concerns: 'No Ozempic, No Fat Burners'



Sohail Khan's noticeably slimmer appearance recently became the subject of intense social media chatter, with fans wondering if the actor's weight loss had anything to do with his health. Some even speculated that he had turned to Ozempic or other weight-loss aids.

The 55-year-old has now addressed those theories and explained what actually happened while he was participating in The Alliance.

Sohail Khan Reveals What Led To His Weight Loss

Speaking to Hindustan Times, Sohail said his physical transformation was partly connected to his experience after entering The Alliance as a wildcard contestant. Since it was his first reality show, adjusting to the environment initially proved difficult.

Sohail admitted that he felt "a bit claustrophobic" during his first few days inside. Things became more challenging when he developed a stomach infection within the first week itself. "A stomach bug added to that in the first week itself of entering the house," Sohail said.

Despite falling ill so early in his stint, the actor remained on the show for five weeks. He credited the other contestants and the care he received from them for encouraging him to continue.

"I must tell you, the love and concern, not only about my health, but at any given time by contestants, made me stay in for five weeks, though I was unwell in the first itself," he added.

Sohail Khan Denies Using Ozempic

His illness also forced Sohail to become more careful about his diet. The actor explained that he wanted to continue participating in the challenges rather than allowing his health to interfere with his stint on the reality show.

That meant controlling what he ate while trying to remain active enough to compete. Sohail also spoke fondly about the friendships he developed during the show.

He said he wanted to remain with the "new family and friends" he had found there until the final day and hoped those relationships would now continue for life.

Addressing the speculation around weight-loss medication directly, Sohail made it clear that Ozempic had played no part in his transformation.

"So no Ozempic, no fat burners, I'm only taking pure and loads of love and affection from everyone," he said.

Sunny Deol

Says Pan Masala Brands Approach Him But He Refuses: 'Mera Zameer Nahi Manta'

Sunny Deol has made it clear that pan masala endorsements are one category of advertising he has no interest in entering. The actor says he has received such offers but has consistently turned them down because promoting the product goes against what he personally believes. Speaking on Shubhankar Mishra's podcast, Sunny discussed his approach to brand endorsements and



why certain lucrative opportunities simply do not make the cut for him.

Sunny Deol Says He Will Never Endorse Pan Masala

Asked specifically about staying away from pan masala commercials, Sunny said there was no possibility of him changing his stance in the future. "I don't do pan masala ads and kabhi karunga bhi nahi. I wouldn't do any of those things. Aatey hai but nahi karunga. I don't want to do something which I don't believe in," he said. The actor added that he does not consider pan masala something worth

promoting, making his position on such advertisements fairly straightforward. "Main in sab cheezon ko manta nahi hoon. I don't think this is a good thing to promote," Sunny said.

According to the actor, the same principle has influenced several other professional decisions. He said there have been things he has refused simply because his conscience did not permit him to take them up.

"Kitni cheezein nahi karta because mera zameer nahi manta isliye aur jo karni hoti hai woh kar leta hoon," he added.

Sunny Wonders Why He Doesn't Get More Ads

The conversation also turned towards Sunny's comparatively limited visibility in the advertising space. While several of his contemporaries regularly appear in major brand campaigns, Sunny admitted that he himself does not know why advertisers haven't approached.



NEWS BOX

Top EU diplomat seeks increase in sanctioned Russian entities: report

BERLIN.(Agency)

EU top diplomat Kaja Kallas said she wants to increase by one third the number of Russian entities sanctioned over the Ukraine war, German newspaper Die Welt reported Monday. The bloc has adopted 21 rounds of sanctions against Russia since Moscow launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. "For autumn I am putting forward the most far-reaching sanctions listings since the start of the war," Kallas told Die Welt. "Once adopted, they would immediately raise the total number of sanctioned Russian entities by a third," she was quoted as saying. The comments came weeks after the EU adopted a watered down sanctions package that was approved after protracted negotiations among member states, some of whom objected to some of the tougher measures. The sanctions, which Kallas said have deprived Russia's war machine of "over €1 trillion", currently target 3,000 individuals and entities, according to the European Commission.

6-Year-Old Pug Jinny Lu Wins 2026 World's Ugliest Dog Contest

world.(Agency)

A 6-year-old pug named Jinny Lu has been crowned the winner of the 2026 World's Ugliest Dog Contest, which celebrated its 50th year by bringing together a group of unique-looking dogs. The 50th Annual World's Ugliest Dog Contest, produced by the Sonoma-Marin Agricultural Association, took place on August 14 at the Sonoma County Fairgrounds in Santa Rosa, California, reported People.com. The event featured a parade of strange-yet-sweet-looking dogs competing for the unusual title. As the winner of the internationally known contest, Jinny Lu's owner Michelle Grady will receive a \$5,000 (around Rs 4,77,252.50) prize from MUG Root Beer. MUG Root Beer also provided \$3,000 (around Rs 2,86,772.40) to the second-place winner, Pinky, a Chihuahua/Pomeranian mix, and \$2,000 (around Rs 1,91,180.40) to the third-place MUG mentioned in a statement that Jinny Lu was adopted through Pug Rescue four years ago and has been a constant source of mischief and joy ever since. Grady said that Jinny Lu, who made her fourth attempt at earning the World's Ugliest Dog title, absolutely loves competition, meeting everyone and everything the event stands for.

Russia Hits Indian Billionaire's Factory In Ukraine As War Spills In Europe

Moscow.(Agency)

Indian-origin billionaire Lakshmi Mittal's ArcelorMittal mining and metallurgical complex in Kryvyi Rih -- Ukraine's largest integrated steel unit -- came under a missile attack by Russia. The strike, which came in retaliation for a Ukrainian drone barrage, killed two people, injured 14 workers, and forced a partial halt to production after damaging core energy and blast-furnace operations. Ukraine earlier launched hundreds of drones across Russia, killing at least six people in one of Kyiv's largest aerial attacks of the war. Moscow's regional governor Andrey Vorobyov described the assault as "one of the most massive drone attacks in recent memory". Russia's defence ministry said it had intercepted 822 drones across the country overnight. An 83-year-old man was killed after a Ukrainian drone hit a private home in the Moscow region, Vorobyov said, adding that another Ukrainian attack had sparked a blaze at a Wildberries warehouse.

Trump terms Saudi-Turkey-Pak defence agreement 'big, bold' step

WASHINGTON.(Agency)

US President Donald Trump has termed the Saudi Arabia-Turkey-Pakistan defence agreement a "big, bold and important first step" towards defending themselves in a "more meaningful way". Trump's remarks on Sunday



came days after the three nations signed the Mecca Joint Defence Agreement, holding any armed offensive against any of the three countries an attack against all of them. "Very happy to see that Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Pakistan have recently, and finally, signed

the Mecca Joint Defence Agreement.

It shows how the Middle East is coming together, and how countries will finally be able to defend themselves in a more meaningful way," Trump said in a post on Truth Social. "Congratulations to the Great Leadership of the three Nations mentioned. THIS IS A BIG, BOLD, AND IMPORTANT FIRST STEP - WOW," Trump wrote. The agreement was signed August 7 by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. India said it is assessing the implications of the Mecca agreement on its national security, as well as regional peace and stability. As far as this agreement is concerned, we are examining its implications both from the perspective of India's national security and considerations of regional peace and stability," External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said on August 11. "India remains fully committed to safeguarding its national interests and will take all necessary measures in this regard," Jaiswal said.

Higher fuel prices are driving up costs of nearly every part of education, from getting students and teachers to school to stocking classrooms with pencils and chalk.

KAMPONG PRAHOK.(Agency)

Sou Sreynich dreams of becoming a teacher. But she knows she's far behind. The 13-year-old first entered a classroom at 10, an age when most Cambodian children already have been in school for years. Her mother waited until she was old enough to swim, fearing the boat to school could capsize -- a decision familiar to many parents on Cambodia's Tonle Sap, the largest freshwater lake in Southeast Asia.

Now, the price of gasoline has spiked because of the Iran war, an additional burden. Unlike outright school closures during COVID-19, the Iran war's impact on education is less visible. But it is falling first and hardest on the poorest families. Soaring fuel prices are making it more expensive for children and teachers to get to school, and for governments to fund education as national budgets come under strain. On the lake, getting anywhere has always meant navigating the water. Climate change is making it harder, with increasingly unpredictable floods and droughts. Teachers at her school say 10 students have drowned over the years.

If the war continues, it could push up to 23.4 million more children like Sreynich into poverty by the end of the year, according to a recent United Nations Children's Fund report. About 80% of

those children would be in Africa and Asia. Most mornings, a gas-powered boat chugs through Kampong Prahok, steered by students often no older than those



climbing aboard. They pull up alongside floating homes, as peers in crisp uniforms clamber aboard, careful to keep their backpacks dry. Like most on Tonle Sap, Sreynich's family relies on fishing to

survive. They earn some money picking chili peppers and gutting fish for others. Rising fuel prices because of the Iran war mean the family can't afford to travel to deeper waters where fish are more plentiful. When money is tight, Sreynich skips a day or two of school to work alongside her parents. She dreads every absence. "I want to complete my studies," she said. Vulnerable children most at risk

For families already living on the edge, the war's ripple effects are forcing difficult choices: whether to pay for food, fuel, rent and electricity, or keep every child in school. "The Iran war is likely going to force millions of children out of school and could force millions of children to make the decision not to enroll in the first place," said Sabrina Hervey of the Qatar-based Education Above All Foundation.

Australia's mushroom murderer appeals conviction

SYDNEY.(Agency)

Australian toxic mushroom killer Erin Patterson launches an appeal Wednesday against her conviction in a triple-murder case that made headlines worldwide. The 51-year-old was found guilty last year of murdering her husband's parents and an elderly aunt in 2023 by serving them a beef Wellington lunch laced with lethal death cap mushrooms.

Patterson was also convicted of the attempted murder of her husband's uncle, a small-town local pastor who survived the beef-and-pastry dish after weeks in hospital. A judge sentenced her to life imprisonment, eligible for parole after 33 years. Over two days, three judges at the

Court of Appeal in Melbourne will hear two appeals: Patterson's attempt to overturn her conviction and the prosecution's demand for a stiffer



sentence. She has asked to watch the appeal by live video link from her prison, the maximum-security Dame Phyllis Frost Centre in Melbourne's western suburbs. Patterson claims she suffered several counts of "substantial miscarriage of justice"

because the trial judge erred in deciding what evidence could be presented. Some evidence accepted by the judge -- relating to Facebook messages, cell towers and posts of death cap mushroom sightings -- was not relevant or unfairly prejudicial to her case, her lawyer said. Other evidence about mushroom images on a memory card in Patterson's home was wrongly excluded, the lawyer said in an appeal submission in November last year. A "fundamental irregularity" also took place while the jury was sequestered that "fatally undermined the integrity of the verdicts", he argued, without giving further details. Patterson's solicitor additionally accused the prosecution of an "unfair and oppressive" cross-examination during the trial.

Rescuers in Indonesia recover six more bodies in earthquake aftermath, raising death toll to 53

RUTENG.(Agency)

Rescue teams in eastern Indonesia recovered six more bodies Sunday, a day after a magnitude 7.7 earthquake, raising the death toll to 53, authorities said, as many of the thousands of displaced people spent the night outdoors in fear of aftershocks. Rescuers dug through debris looking for anyone buried beneath landslides triggered by the quake across six regencies on Flores, a predominantly Catholic island in the Muslim-majority country. They focused on three regencies that remained inaccessible: hardest-hit Manggarai, East Manggarai and Nagekeo. "We have cleared most landslides and reopened roads to previously isolated villages, although communication disruptions and power outages continue to hamper search efforts," said Fathur Rahman, head of the search-and-rescue office in Maumere, the capital of Sikka regency. More than 900 homes were

destroyed and 450 more damaged in East Nusa Tenggara province, forcing about 5,000 people into temporary shelters. At least 241 homes were damaged in the Flores region alone, said Abdul Muhari, the National Disaster Management



Agency's chief for disaster prevention. The quake occurred at a depth of 10 kilometers (6 miles) shortly before 6 a.m. Saturday, the U.S. Geological Survey said. Residents fled in panic as tsunami warnings were issued and later lifted. Authorities have since recorded at least 995 aftershocks, but only 46 were felt by residents,

Muhari said, adding that 135 people were injured. Many residents at Labuan Bajo, the gateway to Komodo National Park, one of Indonesia's best-known tourist destinations, spent the night outside because of the aftershocks. "The shaking was terrifying, so intense that my house nearly collapsed," said farmer Anastasia Imad, speaking from a makeshift green tent beside her damaged home. "We feared the aftershocks would bring it down on us while we slept." Landslides blocked sections of the Trans-Flores Highway, a roughly 700-kilometer (435-mile) road linking communities across the mountainous island.

Meanwhile, relief workers distributed rice, ready-to-eat meals, drinking water, blankets and medicine, while emergency shelters were set up for displaced residents. Authorities said restoring electricity and communications, as well as delivering aid to remote villages isolated by landslides, were among the biggest challenges.

Ukrainian missile strikes kill six in Russia's Belgorod

MOSCOW.(Agency)

Ukrainian missile strikes killed six people and wounded four others, including a child, in Russia's Belgorod region, the acting governor said Monday. With frontline fighting at a near standstill and talks frozen, the warring countries have significantly stepped up missile attacks, pushing the civilian death toll to its highest levels since the war's first months in 2022. Ukrainian terrorists attacked the village of Koloskovo, Valuysky district, with missiles," Belgorod acting governor Alexander Shuvaev said on the state-backed MAX platform. Koloskovo is about 15 kilometres (10 miles) from the Ukraine border. The attack, which Shuvaev said burned a "structure" and damaged a vehicle, came a day after Russia and Ukraine carried out missile and drone strikes deep inside each other's territory that killed 19 people on both sides. Moscow has carried out near-daily missile and drone strikes across Ukraine since launching its full-scale invasion in early 2022. It has recently intensified attacks using hard-to-intercept ballistic



missiles, exploiting Ukraine's air-defence shortages after the US-Israeli war against Iran diverted supplies. Ukraine has increasingly targeted warehouses belonging to Russia's biggest online retailer Wildberries, saying the company supplies components for Russian drones. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky says those strikes, along with attacks on oil refineries, are aimed at undermining Russia's war economy. In July alone, 437 civilians were killed in Ukraine, the highest monthly toll since May 2022, according to a United Nations tally. Russian authorities have reported 79 civilians killed on their side in July, up from the previous month.

Moroccan security forces arrest nearly 300 migrants trying to reach Spain's Ceuta

CASABLANCA.(Agency)

Hundreds of migrants trying to reach the Spanish exclave of Ceuta by land and sea were arrested by Moroccan security forces, Moroccan state television reported Sunday, as authorities tightened security along the border following calls for a new mass crossing. Moroccan state broadcaster Medi 1 TV said 294 migrants from sub-Saharan Africa were arrested Saturday while attempting to enter Ceuta. Authorities also arrested 61 Moroccans accused of facilitating the migration attempts, the broadcaster reported.

The attempted crossings followed a surge in social media posts calling on migrants to make their way to Ceuta, a Spanish city on Morocco's northern coast. In response, Moroccan and Spanish authorities beefed up security presence and limited movement toward the

area. The latest attempt comes two weeks after tens of thousands of would-be migrants, driven by poverty and misinformation, rushed toward Ceuta in one of the deadliest migration crises to hit



the region. At least 90 people died on both sides of the border, according to official numbers, while human rights groups reported higher figures. The interior ministry did not respond to

AP's questions about the latest arrests or the number of security personnel deployed around the border to prevent a new migration push. A senior Moroccan diplomat previously said that more than

20,000 Moroccan security personnel are deployed along the border with Ceuta each day, at a cost of hundreds of millions of dollars. The diplomat was not authorized to be publicly named speaking about the issue and spoke on condition of anonymity. Thousands of migrants from across Africa and beyond travel to Morocco each year, fleeing conflict, poverty and instability and seeking a route into Europe. Many attempt to reach Ceuta or Melilla, another Spanish exclave on Morocco's northern coast, hoping eventually to make their way to mainland Spain and better economic opportunities.