

Government mulls year-round random drug tests for commercial pilots

New Delhi. (Agency)

The civil aviation ministry is considering random, year-round psychoactive substance testing for all commercial pilots, with Civil Aviation Minister K Rammohan Naidu saying on Tuesday that the DGCA is consulting stakeholders on further strengthening existing drug-testing norms as part of efforts to enhance safety standards.

"Right now, the rules say 10 per cent (drug tests) across the overall pilot network, but just like I said, DGCA is engaging (with stakeholders)... One of the opinions from our side is that everyone has to go through it (drug tests) the (whole) year at a random time.

"So, we have to see how all the stakeholders are going to respond to this," the minister said. The issue of possible substance use by pilots has come to the spotlight after an Air India captain of a Phuket-Delhi flight involved in a sudden altitude loss incident tested positive for marijuana. Currently, drug tests for pilots are done on a random basis.

Kejriwal challenges BJP to school face-off, dares Gujarat to compare 1,000 schools with Punjab

New Delhi. (Agency)

Aam Aadmi Party national convener Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday challenged the BJP to compare 1,000 government schools each in Punjab and Gujarat, while accusing the party of using "doctored, AI videos" to defame Punjab's schools.

In a video message, Kejriwal said he would provide a list of 1,000 schools in Punjab and asked the BJP to name 1,000 schools in Gujarat for a joint inspection, with the media covering the exercise.

"I challenge the BJP: You have been in power in Gujarat for 30 years, and we have been in power in Punjab for four and a half years. I will give you a list of 1,000 schools in Punjab, and you give us a list of 1,000 schools in Gujarat. Let us inspect these schools together and see which ones are better," Kejriwal said in a video message.

He alleged that BJP-ruled states were focusing on criticising Punjab's schools instead of improving their own education infrastructure.

"Within just four and a half years, we have made the schools of Punjab so good. There are around 19,700 schools in Punjab, of which only 500 schools remain. We have made the remaining 19,200 schools very good. Work is in progress in those 500 schools as well, and they too will be fixed within the next one-and-a-half to two years," Kejriwal said. Kejriwal claimed Punjab's school education system had witnessed a major turnaround since the AAP came to power in 2022, when the state ranked 28th. "We did not improve schools alone; the people of Punjab improved Punjab's schools. The teachers of Punjab improved them, the principals of Punjab improved them, the parents and children -- all of them together improved.

Rafales face China's J-16 jets in rare drill: Why India is watching closely

New Delhi (Agency)

Chinese J-16 fighters engaged in direct aerial combat drills against Rafale jets for the first time during a joint military exercise between China and Egypt. For India, the exercise carries significance well beyond a routine military drill. Here's why.

Chinese J-16 jets engaged in combat exercises with French-made Rafale fighters for the first time, in a rare military drill that allowed Chinese pilots to test their capabilities against a Western platform. India will be watching the exercise closely, particularly after its Rafales and Chinese J-10 jets, operated by Pakistan, were involved during the hostilities last year.

The China-Egypt 'Eagles of Civilisation' exercise will offer a valuable glimpse into how the two aircraft perform in a simulated combat environment, as well as the capabilities of the J-16. The J-16, nicknamed the 'Hidden Dragon', is a more advanced version of the J-10, and its performance will be of interest to India amid the growing Chinese air power in the region. Pakistan currently operates the Chinese-made J-10C, the export variant of the J-10, along with the jointly developed JF-17 Thunder. It

has also shown interest in acquiring the J-16 fighter jet, which makes it all the more important for India to keep an eye on the exercise. India, on the other hand, is looking to acquire 114 more Rafales from France.

CHINA'S J-16 CROSSES SWORDS



WITH RAFALE

The second edition of the drills began on August 22. On Monday, Chinese J-16s engaged in one-on-one air combat drills with Rafales. The pilots engaged in intense confrontations under realistic combat scenarios. Egypt's MiG-29s were also in

action.

Footage released by China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) showed a Rafale performing manoeuvres close to a J-16. It was the first time a Chinese fighter jet engaged in direct aerial combat drills against a Rafale. Both the J-16 and the Rafale are 4.5-generation fighter jets featuring modern avionics, advanced radar, and electronic warfare systems. The J-16 is a heavyweight, multirole fighter developed by the Aviation Industry Corporation of China (AVIC). Widely regarded as one of China's best combat aircraft, it can carry a variety of munitions and deliver more firepower than the J-10 series. Moreover, the J-16 is a twin-engine, two-seater jet designed for longer-range missions. Wang Yanan, an aviation expert, told Global Times that while the J-16 and the Rafale belong to the same generation, the French aircraft's overall combat capabilities "may not be as comprehensive" as those of the Chinese jet. However, it must be noted here that the Rafales used by the IAF have India-specific upgrades.

Telangana BJP asks Revanth Reddy to reveal purpose of blocked US visit

Telangana BJP chief N Ramchander Rao challenged Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to disclose whom he planned to meet in the US.

The clash has sharpened the political row over foreign visit clearance and Centre-state relations.

Hyderabad. (Agency)

Telangana BJP president N Ramchander Rao on Tuesday hit back at Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy over his attack on the NDA government at the Centre for denying permission for his proposed visit to the US. Rao said the Chief Minister should first explain whom he planned to meet in America and the purpose of those meetings. He said Revanth Reddy should answer the people of the country about the individuals he wanted to meet in the US and why those meetings were planned. Without properly sharing details of the visit, the Chief Minister should not make false allegations against the Centre, he said. Recalling that

Revanth Reddy was not denied permission for his previous two visits to the US, London and



Singapore, Rao said the Chief Minister should understand why permission was not being given this time. He also said several chief ministers

were not given permission for foreign visits during the previous UPA regime when adequate information was not provided, according to a BJP release.

Rao said such decisions are taken as per the rules of the Ministry of External Affairs. Responding to Revanth Reddy's criticism that the Centre favoured Gujarat while discriminating against Telangana, he said the NDA government treated all states equally. He said the expansion of National Highways, modernisation of railway stations, introduction of Vande Bharat Express trains, the establishment of a railway coach factory at Warangal, AIIMS at Bibinagar and other projects in Telangana reflected the Centre's development efforts in the state.

Should Know Basic Marathi, No Need To Be Expert: Devendra Fadnavis On Language Row

Devendra Fadnavis said the objective behind the government drive mandating "working knowledge" of Marathi was not to make the drivers language experts, but to ensure they can communicate in the local language for their work.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Widespread fear amongst autorickshaw and taxi drivers over rumoured steep fines linked to a state government Marathi proficiency drive erupted into street protests in parts of Mumbai on Monday, forcing Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis to step in and address the panic. During protests, some drivers tried to prevent other members from transporting passengers, inconveniencing common people in the morning hours. Some videos circulating on social media showed demonstrations being organised in suburban Kandivali, Malad



(West), Santacruz, Dahisar, Andheri and a few other locations.

A senior regional transport official at the Borivali RTO said they learnt that someone had spread misinformation among drivers that

they would be fined Rs 5,000 to Rs 20,000 for not having working knowledge of Marathi. Seeking to allay drivers' concerns, Fadnavis said the objective behind the government drive mandating "working knowledge" of Marathi was not to make the drivers language experts, but to ensure they can communicate in the local language for their work. He said drivers had already been given additional time to learn the language and asserted that no licence had been cancelled.

"There is no reason to make them experts in Marathi. They should know work-related, basic Marathi," Fadnavis added. State Transport Minister Pratap Sarnaik.

Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh gets 21-day furlough; 17th release since his conviction in 2017

New Delhi. (Agency)

Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh, who is serving a 20-year sentence for raping two of his disciples, walked out of Sunaria jail in Rohtak on Tuesday morning after being granted a 21-day furlough, jail sources said.

The release marks the 17th time Ram Rahim has been allowed to leave prison since his conviction in August 2017. He will stay at the Dera's headquarters in Sirsa during the furlough period, the sources said. This is his third release from prison this year. He was granted a 30-day parole in May and a 40-day parole in January.

Ram Rahim had also been granted a 40-day parole in August 2025, a 21-day furlough in April 2025 and a 30-day parole in January 2025, shortly before the Delhi Assembly polls.

In October 2024, he was released on a 20-day parole, days ahead of the Haryana Assembly elections. He had earlier received a 21-day furlough in August 2024.

His recurring temporary releases have drawn criticism from Sikh organisations, including the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee.

Ram Rahim was also granted a three-week furlough from February 7, 2022, shortly before the Punjab Assembly elections.

In March this year, the Punjab and Haryana High Court acquitted him in the 2002 murder of a journalist, seven years after a special CBI court had convicted him and sentenced him to life imprisonment in the case.

In May 2024, the high court had also overturned the conviction of Ram Rahim and four others in the 2002 murder of former Dera manager Ranjit Singh.

The Sirsa-headquartered Dera Sacha Sauda has a substantial following in Haryana, Punjab and Rajasthan. In Haryana, its followers are concentrated in districts including Sirsa, Fatehabad, Kurukshetra, Kaithal and Hisar.

NSA Doval, Wang Yi hold key talks on India-China border issue, improving bilateral ties

New Delhi. (Agency)

India's National Security Adviser Ajit Doval held talks with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Tuesday on the India-China boundary question and ways to improve ties between the two countries.

The talks come ahead of Chinese President Xi Jinping's potential visit to New Delhi for the BRICS summit on September 12-13. They also take place as differences over the border and Arunachal Pradesh continue to weigh on India-China relations.

Doval and Wang are the designated Special Representatives for boundary talks, a mechanism established in 2003 to address the dispute over the 3,488-km India-China border. Doval, who arrived in China on Monday for a two-day visit, also met Chinese Vice President Han Zheng ahead of the talks.

The two leaders discussed ways to strengthen peace and tranquillity in the border areas and further improve bilateral ties across economic, political and multilateral fora, in accordance with the consensus reached between the leaders of the two countries, the Indian Embassy said in a post on X.

Relations between New Delhi and Beijing came under severe strain following the 2020 Galwan Valley clash and the prolonged military stand-off in eastern Ladakh. Both sides have since taken steps to stabilise ties. Although the mechanism has not resolved the boundary dispute, officials on both sides regard it as a useful channel for addressing recurring tensions between the two countries.



"Misled": Rebel Trinamool MLA Kasem Siddiqui Returns To Mamata Banerjee Camp

"People voted because of Didi. I campaigned in Amdanga carrying Didi's posters. Wherever Mamata Banerjee is, we are there too," Kasem Siddiqui said

Kolkata (Agency)

Months after switching to the rebel camp led by MLA Ritabrata Banerjee, Trinamool Congress MLA Kasem Siddiqui has announced his return to the Mamata Banerjee camp.

On Monday, the MLA from Amdanga claimed that he was "misled" by the rebels under the impression that Mamata Banerjee remained their leader. Addressing a press conference alongside Belegghata MLA Kunal Ghosh, Siddiqui said that he was and will remain with Mamata Banerjee. Talking about his move to the rebel faction, he said: "I went there thinking Didi was present. Then I saw that Didi wasn't there; there was no sign of her

anywhere. People voted because of Didi. I campaigned in Amdanga carrying Didi's posters. Wherever Didi is, we are there



too.""We were called to just one meeting by Ritabrata and told that Mamata Banerjee

will remain our leader. We were made to sign the letter amid confusion. We later realised that there was no Didi there and it

was a separate group," he added.

"They were asked to sign by creating confusion and misrepresentation. There is no connection between the reality and the reason for which the signatures were obtained," Kunal Ghosh said. Kasem Siddiqui is the MLA from Amdanga and a Pirzada of Furfura Sharif, a revered place for Muslims. Meanwhile, as Kasem Siddiqui returned to the Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool, former Amdanga MLA Rafiqur Rahman met rebel leader Ritabrata Banerjee.

Mamata Banerjee had replaced Rafiqur Rahman with Kasem Siddiqui as the candidate in the last elections.

Sugar hoarding checks intensified in Noida amid price rise

Noida.(Agency)

GB Nagar administration has formed tehsil- and area-wise teams to check sugar hoarding and profiteering amid a rise in prices despite adequate stocks.

“The teams have been instructed to conduct regular campaigns in their respective areas to detect illegal stockpiling and profiteering. Officials have also been directed to take strict action as per rules wherever violations are found,” said additional district magistrate (Finance and Revenue) Ajit Kumar Singh.

Stock limits for sugar dealers came into effect on Aug 1 and will remain in force until Nov 30, 2026, under state govt directions. Centre’s July 28 order issued by Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution bars dealers from storing sugar for more than 30 days from the date of receipt. It also caps their stock at 4,000 quintals at any one time or location, subject to specified exemptions. The limits do not apply to stocks held on govt’s account or those stored by dealers designated by state govts for distribution through fair-price shops under the public distribution system. State govts and Union territories may also set stock-holding and turnover limits within the ceiling and period prescribed by Centre.

The district administration said inspections would continue to ensure adequate supplies and prevent hoarding from driving up prices.

Cousin hacks man to death with axe after fight in Noida

Noida.(Agency)

A 28-year-old migrant labourer was allegedly killed by his cousin following an argument at their rented accommodation in Rampur Fatehpur village in Dadri on Sunday night. Police said the accused, Imran, attacked Shahid with an axe before fleeing the spot. He remains absconding. According to police, Shahid and Imran, cousins from Ramai village in Bihar’s Araria, had come to Greater Noida in search of work and were employed as labourers. They had been living together in a rented room in Rampur Fatehpur village.

Police said the two men were in the room on Sunday night when an argument broke out over an unknown issue. The dispute escalated, following which Imran allegedly picked up an axe kept inside the room and attacked Shahid. Shahid suffered severe injuries to his head and other parts of the body and collapsed inside the room. He died at the spot, police said. Imran allegedly fled after the attack. The incident came to light after people nearby noticed the situation and informed police. A team from Dadri police station reached the spot and inspected the room. Police recovered the axe allegedly used in the attack and sent Shahid’s body for autopsy after completing the legal formalities. Police have launched an investigation into the circumstances leading to the attack and are conducting searches to locate Imran. Officers said the motive was not immediately clear and would be established during the investigation. Statements of people familiar with the two men are also being recorded.

Man posing as Delhi Police sub-inspector held

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

A 34-year-old man was arrested near Sector 117 on Sunday night for allegedly posing as a Delhi Police sub-inspector. Police said the accused Rahul Singh is a resident of Sector 117 and is not a Delhi Police officer but was caught wearing a police uniform and carrying forged identity documents. He allegedly used it as a ruse to throw his weight around, intimidate people and obtain food and other goods free of cost, passing himself off as an officer. A team from Sector 113 police station was patrolling the area around 8.30 pm when it



received a tip-off about a man in a Delhi Police sub-inspector’s uniform near the traffic signal on the service road close to Gate No 3 of Sector 117. Officers reached the spot and spotted the suspect, who appeared to notice them and tried to walk away quickly. He was stopped and detained a short distance away. During questioning, Rahul admitted he was not a police officer. He told investigators he had a fascination for wearing police uniforms and had used a Delhi Police uniform and fake identity cards to project himself as an officer, allegedly using the disguise to intimidate shopkeepers and obtain food and other items without paying.

Cops found a fake Delhi Police identity card bearing his name and describing him as a sub-inspector of South District during a search. His uniform carried a nameplate reading “Rahul Singh, Sub-Inspector”, Delhi Police insignia and two stars on each shoulder, police said. Police also recovered a Delhi Police cap, more than three sets of purported police identity and smart cards, an Indian Army canteen smart card, two Aadhaar cards, a PAN card, a driving licence, bank ATM and loan cards, an iPhone 17 Pro and a Metro card.

IRP and buyers’ rep of Supertech Basera suspended in Gurgaon

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Homebuyers of Supertech Basera — delayed by six years — have faced a fresh setback. Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) has taken action against two key people handling the insolvency process of developer Revital Reality Pvt Ltd — the company behind the Supertech Basera project, an affordable housing development in Sector 79/79B.

In separate orders dated Aug 20, IBBI suspended the registration of Gaurav Katiyar, the resolution professional (RP), for two years and ordered that he be replaced. The regulator also cancelled the registration of Deepak Kumar Goyal, the authorised representative (AR) of the homebuyers. Both orders will take effect after 30 days. The project has 15 towers

and 1,976 flats spread across around 12.1 acres. It was registered with Haryana Rera in 2017 and was expected to be completed around 2020. However, the project remained incomplete. For Basera buyers, the latest orders mean that both the resolution professional and their authorised representative will have to be replaced. The insolvency process against Revital Reality started on June 4, 2024, after National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) admitted a case against the company. Katiyar was appointed as the resolution professional, while Goyal represented the homebuyers in Committee of Creditors (CoC). IBBI found that Katiyar had allowed a prospective resolution applicant to submit changes to its resolution plan after the deadline fixed by CoC, without taking prior approval from the



committee. The regulator said informing CoC members later by email was not a substitute for prior approval. IBBI also found that Katiyar failed to justify the deletion of a five-year delivery condition from the eligibility criteria for prospective resolution applicants. The regulator said no such suggestion had

been received from any stakeholder and that the reasons recorded did not adequately explain the specific and material change. As a result, his registration has been suspended for two years and CoC concerned has been asked to appoint another resolution professional. Katiyar was contacted for his response. He questioned the reason for the story but did not offer any substantive comment on the findings recorded by IBBI in its order. Goyal faced separate action. IBBI said he failed to maintain proper minutes of meetings with homebuyers. It also found that he agreed to extend the deadline for revised resolution plans without first taking instructions from the buyers, even though he represented homebuyers holding 91% of CoC voting share.

Lions Club Jaora Ranks Among Global Top 10, a Pilgrimage of Service: International 3rd VP C. Robert Rethby Lions International Third Vice President from Switzerland inspects Lions Eye Hospital

Mahanagar Metro Desk

Jaora: "Lions Club Jaora ranks among the top 10 clubs worldwide and is recognized as a pilgrimage of service within Lions International. Seeing the modern infrastructure, state-of-the-art medical equipment, and high patient satisfaction brings immense joy. The dedicated service demonstrated by the office bearers and members of Lions Club Jaora is truly exemplary." These thoughts were expressed by Lions International 3rd Vice President Lion C. Robert Rethby (Switzerland). He was addressing a family gathering organized after his comprehensive inspection of the Lions Eye Hospital, run by Lions Club Jaora, during his one-day visit. Hospital Inspection and Prayers According to Club Secretary Lion Sandeep Ranka and Program Convener Lion Dr. Shailendra Pandey, key dignitaries present included International Director Endorsee Lion Kulbhushan Mittal, Multiple Council Chairperson Lion Praveen Vashishtha, District Governor Lion Jaiprakash Tripathi, Second Vice District Governor Lion Dr. Rajendra Sodani, Past District Governors Lion Rajendra

Garg and Lion Yogendra Runwal, along with District G2 Governor Lion Mahesh Malviya. The guests commenced their visit by offering prayers at the Shri Ganesh Temple located within the hospital campus. This was followed by a thorough inspection of the eye hospital and an interactive session with admitted patients. Family Gathering and Welcome Ceremony The family meeting began with the national anthems of both nations, the Flag Salutation led by Lion Anil Dhariwal, the lighting of the ceremonial lamp, and the garlanding of Lions Club founder Melvin Jones' portrait. Club President Lion Sudhir Jain delivered the welcome address, outlining the club's key initiatives and service milestones. International Director Kulbhushan Mittal highlighted that the 55-year-old club and its 30-year-old eye hospital have previously received grants from LCIF and 'SightFirst', continuing to serve humanity through sustained community support. District Governor Jaiprakash Tripathi and Dr. Rajendra Sodani also addressed the gathering. During the event, a detailed project report was presented to request an international



grant for the hospital's expansion. Felicitation and Attendees Chief Guest Robert Rethby and visiting dignitaries were formally welcomed by President Lion Sudhir Jain, Secretary Lion Sandeep Ranka, Treasurer Lion Vipin Chordia, Convener Dr. Shailendra Pandey, Reception Committee Chairman Lion Yash Jain, past presidents, and club members. Every member of Lions Club Jaora personally greeted 3rd Vice President Lion C. Robert Rethby

with floral bouquets. The Chief Guest felicitated Club President Sudhir Jain and Eye Hospital Chairman Pradeep Sharma for their exceptional leadership and service. Notable attendees included Past Presidents Dr. H.S. Rathore, Kamal Jain, Ramesh Mehta, Harinarayan Arora, Vijay Pamecha, Rakesh M. Kochatta, Anil Dhariwal, Dharamchand Chaprod, Anil Kala, Saji Varghese, Ashok Sethia, Rajnikant Shah, Sujannal Kochatta, Arun Sanghvi, Pawan Modi, Gopal Sethia, A.N. Paliwal, and Dr. Suresh Mehta, alongside Second Vice President Pankaj Kanthad, Ashok Chopra, Sandeep Daseda, Sanjay Godha, Ajay Chourasiya, Rakesh P. Kochatta, Vijay Rathore, Manish Kochar, Prince Pamecha, Arpit Chatar, Rajat Soni, Sharad Dungalwar, Arpit Sethia, hospital staff, and fellow Lions from Petlawad, Ratlam, Alot, and Dewas. The program was conducted by Lion Pradeep Sharma, and the vote of thanks was delivered by Program Convener Dr. Shailendra Pandey. Information was shared by Secretary Sandeep Ranka.

City records 75mm rain, traffic chokes as key roads flooded by afternoon

GURGAON.(Agency)

Chaos descended upon the city yet again on Monday after an intense spell of rain left key stretches waterlogged, throwing traffic out of gear as commuters battled hours-long gridlocks across major corridors. The disruption was most visible at Subhash Chowk and Udyog Vihar, where water accumulated rapidly as the rain intensified. At Subhash Chowk, several school buses were stranded in deep water while commuters were forced to wade through flooded stretches. In Udyog Vihar, roads were inundated and visibility dropped sharply around noon, forcing two-wheeler riders to seek shelter under flyovers until the worst of the showers passed. Rajiv Chowk, Hero Honda Chowk, Golf Course Road, IFFCO Chowk, Old Delhi-Gurgaon Road, Sheetla Mata Temple Road, Sohna Road, Naharpur, Vatika Chowk and Narsingpur all witnessed heavy congestion. Delhi-Gurgaon Expressway was among the worst affected, while traffic on MG Road and connecting roads also slowed considerably. Several vehicles broke down after entering waterlogged

stretches and had to be removed by police in coordination with civic authorities, further slowing movement. “I started from Udyog Vihar around 11.30am and reached Rajiv Chowk in around 90 minutes. There was major congestion even though I had avoided the peak hours. From Rajiv Chowk, it took another 30 minutes to reach the district court, a stretch that normally takes just five minutes. It was extremely frustrating to remain stuck in traffic for so long,” said Abhinav Shukla, an office-goer in Udyog Vihar. Golf Course Road-Hero Honda Chowk route was similarly affected. “It took me around two hours to cover the stretch. The journey was exhausting,” said Anuradha, a commuter. Traffic police deployed drones to monitor waterlogged areas and major roads, using aerial surveillance to assess conditions and identify locations needing immediate intervention. Traffic personnel were also deployed at waterlogged spots and major junctions to regulate movement and clear bottlenecks, but the simultaneous flooding of several arterial roads meant

congestion persisted even as teams worked to restore movement. Gurgaon recorded 75mm of rain between 8am and 5pm, while Badshapur and Wazirabad recorded 65mm and 64mm, respectively. The rainfall was



widespread across the district — Kadipur and Harsaru recorded 40mm each, Manesar 36mm, Sohna 16mm, Pataudi 12mm and Farrukhnagar 7mm over the same period. The aim came amid active thunderstorm development across Delhi-NCR. In a 10.02am update, weather observer Navdeep Dahiya said thunderstorm activity would remain active across the region for three to four

hours, forecasting sudden moderate to heavy showers over Delhi, Gurgaon, Noida, Ghaziabad and Faridabad between 10am and 2pm, with rain at any given location lasting 45 to 60 minutes. Vishwas Chitale, fellow at Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), said Monday’s rainfall was part of a wider pattern of increasing monsoon variability. “The monsoon is not simply becoming wetter or drier, but increasingly erratic in its timing, distribution and intensity,” he said, citing CEEW’s long-term analysis showing that 64% of tehsils across India have seen more frequent heavy rainfall days over the last decade compared with the 1982-2011 baseline. Chitale added that 23% of districts, including New Delhi, have historically experienced a high frequency of both deficient and excessive rainfall years — and that in a highly urbanised region like Delhi-NCR, short bursts of intense rain can overwhelm drainage systems, disrupt mobility and essential services, and raise urban flood risk as concretisation reduces the land’s ability to absorb water.

IMD flags heavy rain for Haryana, Chandigarh and Delhi on Aug 25

Panchkula. (Agency)

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a heavy-rain warning for Haryana, Chandigarh and Delhi for August 25, but no weather warning has been issued for the subdivision for the subsequent six days through August 31. Punjab, meanwhile, carries no heavy-rain warning for any day from August 25 to 31, according to the IMD's subdivision-wise warning issued on Tuesday. The latest subdivision-wise warning lists "Heavy Rain" for Haryana, Chandigarh and Delhi on August 25, followed by "No warning" on August 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 and 31. For Punjab, the IMD has listed "No warning" during the seven-day period.

The forecast points to a noticeable break from intense rainfall across the northwestern plains after Tuesday, though occasional light or scattered showers may still dot the region. Interestingly, the IMD's All India Weather Summary and Forecast Bulletin paints a slightly different picture for August 25. It's a Day-2 warning for August 25, forecasting heavy to very heavy rainfall at isolated places over Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh.

It forecasts isolated heavy rainfall over Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Meghalaya, Bihar, Coastal Karnataka, Jharkhand, Kerala and Mahe, Madhya Maharashtra, Nagaland-Manipur-Mizoram-Tripura, South Interior Karnataka, Sub-Himalayan West Bengal and Sikkim, Tamil Nadu-Puducherry-Karaikal, Uttar Pradesh and Vidarbha.

Haryana bans use of 'Ghee' name for non-conforming products for one year

Panchkula. (Agency)

The Haryana government has prohibited, for one year, the manufacture, storage, distribution, and sale of any product labelled, described, offered, or sold as "Ghee" unless it conforms to the prescribed compositional standard for genuine ghee, according to a state government notification.

The restriction does not affect genuine ghee conforming to Regulation 2.1.8 of the Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards and Food Additives) Regulations, 2011. The order was issued by the Haryana Commissioner of Food Safety, Dr Manoj Kumar, and published in the Haryana Government Gazette. It invokes Section 30(2)(a) of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, which empowers the State Food Safety Commissioner to prohibit the manufacture, storage, distribution or sale of an article of food for a period not exceeding one year on specified public health grounds.

According to the prescribed standard, ghee must be made exclusively from milk or milk-derived products, contain at least 99.5 per cent milk fat, and have no more than 0.5 per cent moisture. It must also meet other parameters to ensure the absence of vegetable oil or other non-milk fats.

Ram Rahim out of jail for 17th time in nine years, gets 21-day furlough

Chandigarh. (Agency)

Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh was released from Sunaria jail in Haryana on Tuesday morning after being granted a 21-day furlough, with the jailed sect chief set to stay at the Dera headquarters in Sirsa during the temporary release.

Ram Rahim left the Rohtak jail at around 6:05 a.m., nearly two months after he returned to prison following his previous parole. His latest release marks the 17th occasion since his conviction in 2017 that he has been allowed out of prison on parole or furlough, according to details of his temporary releases. The 59-year-old sect chief was granted 40 days' parole in January and another 30 days' parole on May 26. He returned to Sunaria jail on June 26.

Ram Rahim is serving a 20-year sentence after a special CBI court in Panchkula convicted him in August 2017 of raping two female followers. He was sentenced to 10 years for each case. The Dera chief was subsequently convicted in two murder cases, although those convictions have since been overturned. In the murder of former Dera manager Ranjit Singh, Ram Rahim was sentenced to life imprisonment by a special CBI court in 2021 for conspiracy to murder. The Punjab and Haryana High Court acquitted him in the case in May 2024. He was also sentenced to life imprisonment in January 2019 for the murder of journalist Ram Chander Chhatrapati, who had published an anonymous letter alleging the sexual exploitation of a Dera follower in his newspaper Poora Sach.

A Facebook comment to fists and midnight FIRs: Gujarat BJP 'family feud' erupts in street violence in Vadodara

One group said they were attacked at a tea stall, the other said their car was waylaid. The videos are viral, and the BJP is struggling to contain what seems to be emerging as a pattern of violence

Vadodara. (Agency)

A Facebook comment was all it took to turn an old BJP-versus-BJP "family feud" in Bhilapur village in Dabhoi taluka of Vadodara into a full-blown street brawl — complete with flying fists, torn clothes, bleeding supporters, ambulances and, eventually, two cross-FIRs filed just before midnight. What began as social media sparring between the two rival factions spilled out on the road on Monday (August 24), exposing the increasingly bitter factional rivalry within the BJP's local ranks.

In their cross FIRs lodged at Dabhoi police station, each group accused the other of starting the clash. Videos of the confrontation that went viral on Monday showed groups of men grappling with and assaulting one another on a public road. At least four persons, including two local BJP

leaders were injured and moved to Vadodara's SSG Hospital for treatment. The first FIR was lodged by 60-year-old Paresh Patel against Yatin Patel, Raghuveersinh Thakor, Bhavesh Patel, Punit Bharwad, Hari Bharwad, and an unidentified person whom the complaint described as suffering from cataract in his eyes. The other FIR was filed by 34-year-old Navjyotsinh Thakor against Vivek Patel, Kiran Patel, Paresh Patel — the complainant in the first FIR — Janardhan Patel, Dipak Patel, Yogesh Patel, and an unidentified accused. Both complainants have narrated a different account of the same confrontation, accusing the other of gathering as a group, launching an assault and causing injuries.

A Facebook post and a critical comment
At the centre of the clash allegedly was a



recent post on the Facebook page of Bhavesh Patel, chairman of the Vadodara District Panchayat Health Committee about the work of the District Health Department.

Paresh Patel had posted a comment on the post, suggesting that the Department must work to ensure that people "do not take to addiction and to eliminate liquor and gambling" by "beginning from home".

It was this seemingly snide comment that allegedly triggered the argument between the two groups. But the Facebook exchange appears to have been only the latest flashpoint in a simmering disagreement.

BJP sources familiar with the local dispute said the two factions had been locked in a rivalry for some time, with differences over political and local administrative issues adding to the friction. The social media comment, they said, worked as the spark that set off an already combustible situation.

UP court gives man, 4 others life term for killing daughter, 9, to frame villager

A court in UP's Pilibhit sentenced a father and four accomplices to life for killing his nine-year-old daughter to frame a villager in a false murder case. The verdict underlines the brutality of the plot and the role of forensic evidence in exposing it.

Pilibhit. (Agency)

A court in Uttar Pradesh's Pilibhit district has sentenced five people, including a man who killed his nine-year-old daughter in 2022, to life imprisonment in a case linked to a conspiracy to frame a villager in a false murder case. Additional Sessions Judge Vijay Kumar Himanshu held all five accused guilty and imposed a fine of Rs 22,000 on each of them on Monday. The court awarded the girl's father, Anees, rigorous life imprisonment for the remainder of his natural life, describing the crime as extremely cruel and unforgivable. His accomplices, Shadab, Naseem, Saleem and Shahzade, were also sentenced to life imprisonment. According to prosecution officer Devendra Kumar, a villager, Sakil, had registered a rape case against Anees and his brother Shadab. After

warrants were issued, the accused allegedly pressured Sakil to withdraw the case. When he refused, they conspired to implicate him in a false murder case and allegedly used



Anees's daughter, Anam, as part of the plan, Kumar said. The prosecution said the incident took place on December 2, 2022. The accused took Anam to an Urs fair and,

while returning, allegedly gave her sleeping pills in a field. After she became unconscious, Anees hit her on the head with a brick and then stabbed her to death with a knife, it said. Her body was then hidden in straw, and Anees later went to the police station and lodged a false complaint claiming that his daughter was missing. During the investigation, it emerged that the girl was still struggling for life after the attack and her father allegedly recorded a video of her instead of taking her to hospital, the prosecution said. Police pieced together the case on the basis of evidence, forensic reports and witness statements. Sakil's name was removed after he was found innocent during the investigation, and a chargesheet was filed against the five accused. The court has now sentenced all five to life imprisonment in the case.

Class 1 student dies after having high fever, breathing issues; 26 hospitalised

Palghar. (Agency)

A seven-year-old student of a residential school in Maharashtra's Palghar district has died after suffering from high fever and breathing difficulties, while 26 other students have been admitted to hospital with mild symptoms of cold, cough and fever, officials said. The incident comes weeks after three tribal girls died of snakebite at a residential school hostel in Gadchiroli district. Officials said the exact cause of the Palghar child's death will be known after the post-mortem report is received.

According to officials, the Class 1 student of the ashram school at Maswan developed high fever on August 22 and was taken to the local Primary Health Centre for treatment. When the fever returned on Monday, the PHC medical officer found that his oxygen levels were falling and advised that he be shifted by ambulance to the Rural Hospital in Manor. After he was taken there, medical

officers conducted an ECG and declared him dead, an official said. After the incident, senior health and administration officials visited the school. Of the 449 students enrolled there, 395 stay on the campus. A medical team carried out a full health



screening at the school. As a precaution, 26 students with mild symptoms of cold, cough or fever were placed under medical observation at the Maswan PHC, where their condition was stated to be stable, the official said. Integrated Tribal Development Project officer Vishal Khatri also visited the school and the health centre to meet the

hospitalised students and their parents. "As per the advice of the district health officer, a fresh health check-up drive was conducted at the Maswan ashram school. Essential measures for campus sanitation and water purification are being carried out in the institution, and all necessary precautions will be taken to prevent the recurrence of such unfortunate incidents," Khatri told. Earlier this month, officials said nearly one student died every day on average in Maharashtra's ashram schools over the last two years, taking the toll to 584 across state-run and government-aided residential facilities. The causes included snakebites, sickle cell disease, serious illnesses, accidents and suicides. Amid criticism over the deaths of the three tribal girls in Gadchiroli, the government has announced corrective steps, including cancelling that residential school's licence and ordering safety audits of such facilities across the state.

Haryana bans analogue, non-dairy paneer for one year

Panchkula. (Agency)

Almost seven out of every 10 paneer and dairy-like samples tested in Haryana did not meet the required standards, leading the state government to impose a one-year complete ban on making, processing, storing, transporting, and selling analogue or non-dairy paneer across the state.

Lab tests on 285 samples collected across Haryana from April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026 found that 200, or about 70 per cent, did not meet standards. Of these, 171 were below standard, and 29 were unsafe, according to a Haryana Government Gazette notification. Fat in a significant proportion of the samples also showed readings outside the prescribed limits for milk fat, indicating the addition or substitution of vegetable or other foreign fat not naturally present in milk. Government and notified laboratory reports found non-milk or foreign fat in such paneer, the notification said.

The order was issued by Haryana Commissioner of Food Safety Dr Manoj Kumar under Section 30(2)(a) of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006. Under the order, making, processing, preparing, packing, storing, distributing, transporting, wholesaling, retail selling, and offering for sale of analogue or non-dairy paneer — no matter what it is called — are banned throughout Haryana for one year from the date the Gazette was published.

The ban also applies to the food-service industry. No hotel, restaurant, caterer, eatery, cloud kitchen, or other food-service place can use, prepare, serve, store, keep, or sell analogue or non-dairy paneer in any dish during the ban period. The government said that using or serving these products, including pretending they are real paneer, misleads consumers, constitutes an unfair business practice under Section 24 of the Food Safety and Standards Act, and breaches the duties of food business operators under Section 26.

The notification says authorities found hotels, restaurants, caterers, eateries, and other places using analogue or non-dairy paneer instead of real paneer in dishes without telling customers on menus, bills, or signs. As a result, consumers were led to believe the dishes contained real paneer and were not given a clear choice, the government said.

Collective backs Ahmedabad school that forced to drop Malala, Anne Frank books

Protests over the books, which are valuable resources for learning, an extremely worrying symptom of education in Gujarat and India at large, says Student and Youth Collective, Ahmedabad

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

At least 200 people have expressed solidarity with a private school in Ahmedabad that was forced to drop books by Nobel Prize winner

Malala Yousafzai and Holocaust survivor Anne Frank from its mandatory reading list after protests from right-wing groups. Calling the protests over the books an "extremely worrying symptom of education in Gujarat and India at large", Student and Youth Collective, Ahmedabad, a civil society initiative, issued a statement on Monday urging the state government and all the stakeholders "to consider how education is multifaceted, and to bring this into schools one has to engage with critical books and resources other than textbooks".

Protests by parents, which began on August 11 over an alleged piece of glass found in a meal served at the Anand Niketan School Shilaj canteen, escalated to allegations of "discrimination against a religion." These allegations referred to the inclusion of Yousafzai's 'I am Malala' and Anne Frank's diary in the school's Book Club — an extracurricular mandatory

reading list. The parents alleged that a consultant the school had hired had tweaked the syllabus to include these books. The school is affiliated to the Council for Indian School Certificate Examination (CISCE).



Members of right wing organisations including the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and the Bajrang Dal joined the parents' protest, holding demonstrations on the school premises.

Following notices from District Administrative Officer Rohit Chaudhary, the school not only dropped the two books from its mandatory reading list but also terminated the services of its consultant, Munazza Shums. The school also fired its canteen supervisor.

'Give autonomy to school'

The Student and Youth Collective, Ahmedabad, has called on everyone concerned to give the school autonomy which it said is necessary to carry on with its educational initiatives. The statement signed by a wide range of citizens including students, youth, teachers, principals, activists, lawyers and professors condemned the action taken by the state government. The statement says, "Schools should be places of learning, but also for critical reading, discussion, and healthy debate. This involves teachers and instructors bringing in texts that are relevant to the times we are living in."

How ancient epics like Odyssey, Mahabharata are reframed for today's audiences

I finally watched Christopher Nolan's 'The Odyssey'. Western cinema stands out in how it brings the ancient world to life on screen. In our movies, even when the story is about Emperor Ashoka or Akbar, they end up singing with the heroine. Both the Greek epics 'The Odyssey' and 'The Iliad' are usually credited to the poet Homer. 'The Iliad' focuses on the anger of the greatest Greek warrior, Achilles, who stops fighting after a dispute with Agamemnon, the king of Mycenae. He only returns to battle after Hector, the Trojan prince, kills his close friend Patroclus, and then Achilles kills Hector. Odysseus also appears in 'The Iliad' as a leading strategist. He later becomes the main character in 'The Odyssey'.

After the war, Odysseus spends more than 10 years trying to get home because he has angered Poseidon, the god of the sea. On his way back to his island of Ithaca and his loyal wife Penelope, he faces monsters, curses, and the schemes of the gods. The film does a great job of taking viewers back to a world from 3,200 years ago. Watching Wolfgang Petersen's 'Troy' (2004) can help you understand the background of the Trojan War. In one flashback, Nolan shows Odysseus, who won the war through trickery, deeply shaken by the massacre in the city and overwhelmed with guilt. He cries because he broke the sacred code of hospitality and trust linked to god Zeus.

This made me think of Yudhishtira in 'Mahabharat'. After winning the terrible war of Kurukshetra and killing his cousins, Yudhishtira doesn't celebrate. Instead, he falls into a deep crisis. He is devastated by the destruction and looks at the battlefield, asking himself: 'What kind of victory is this, when all I have gained is a graveyard?' In fact, in many epics, the real tragedy isn't losing, but winning. Ashoka also seems to have asked himself a similar question after the Battle of Kalinga. In Thomas Malory's 1485 romance 'Le Morte D'Arthur', King Arthur spends his whole life building the utopian kingdom of Camelot but, eventually, it falls apart because of civil war and his son Mordred's betrayal.

In Shakespeare's play 'Macbeth', Macbeth kills King Duncan in a plot and takes the Scottish throne. Although this is exactly what he wanted, as soon as he becomes king, he finds no peace. Instead, he feels only guilt, sleepless nights, and mental pain. In Sophocles' Greek tragedy 'Antigone', Creon, the King of Thebes, manages to enforce his law against Antigone. But this victory leads to a series of suicides, including by his son Haemon and his wife Eurydice. By the end, Creon mourns over his family and wishes for death.

In the same way, even though Aurangzeb made the Mughal Empire bigger than ever, looking back during his last days, he saw more failure than success. In Winston Churchill's only novel, 'Savrola: A Tale of the Revolution in Laurania', published in 1900, Savrola leads a democratic revolution in the fictional Republic of Laurania in 1888 and overthrows a dictator. After a night of fierce fighting, he walks up a hill and looks at the destruction. Instead of feeling like a winner, he sighs, 'This is my work.'

Yet Odysseus' remorse after the Trojan War is Nolan's own interpretation. In Homer's story, Odysseus regards the victory at Troy as a triumph of his courage and ingenuity; there is no comparable sense of moral guilt over the destruction of Troy. Nor does he renounce violence or fundamentally alter his worldview. Nolan has therefore created this moral crisis in his film to explore more deeply the psychological wounds left by war. The 1989 film 'The Mahabharata' by British director Peter Brook, too, gives a unique take on an ancient epic. Both directors had the same challenge: making a 3,000-year-old story matter to people today. Brook chose to downplay its supernatural and miraculous parts.

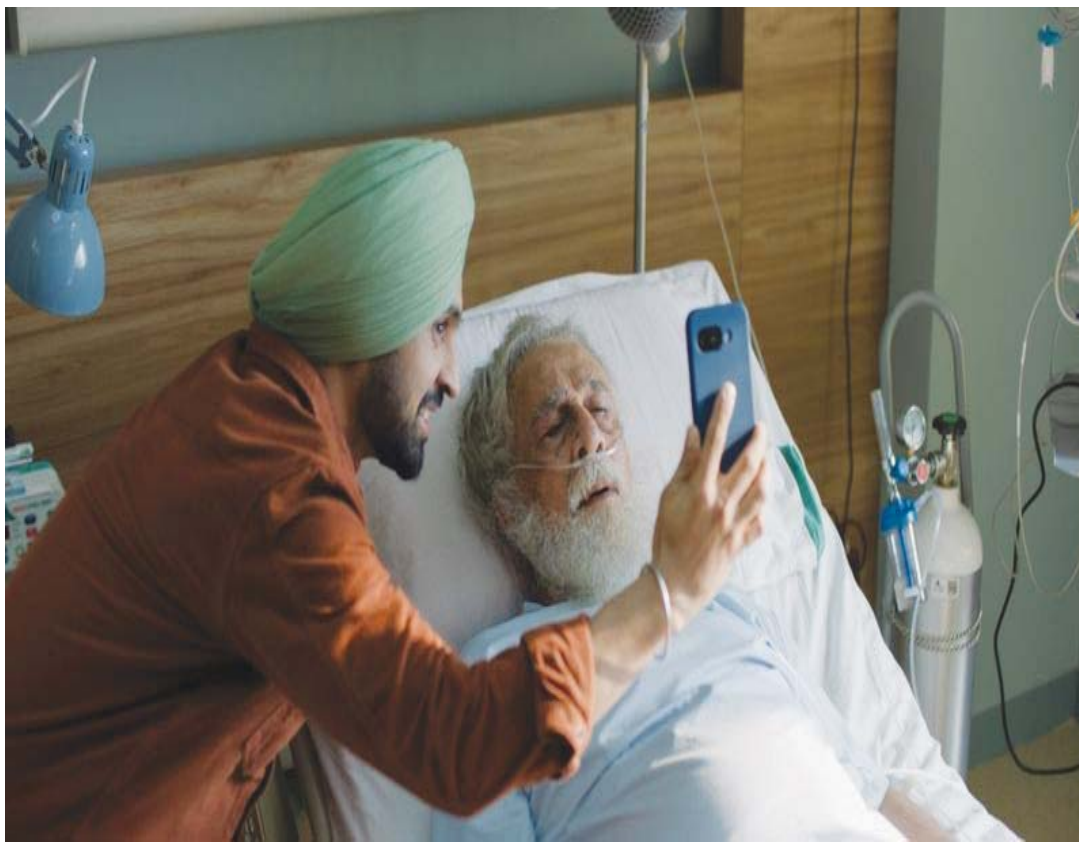
Main Vaapas Nahin Jaunga

I wonder what my parents, who barely survived Partition, would have made of 'Main Vaapas Aaunga'

It's been years since I read Fyodor Dostoevsky's novel, the wonderfully complex 'The Brothers Karamazov'. Of the many currents in that book, like belief in God, morality, free will and patricide, one tiny part of the classic has overtaken all others to remain embedded in my head. That bit concerns a folktale about a woman who, as a result of her selfish ways, is thrown into a lake of fire in hell. Then an angel remembers that she once gave a beggar an onion from her garden. God tells the angel to hold that onion out to her and pull her out of hell. As she is being pulled away, other sinners grab on to her legs to also try and escape. She kicks them away, shouting: 'I am to be pulled out, not you. It was my onion, not yours.' The onion breaks and she falls back. In that breaking onion, in that angry line, in the word 'my', there is a world of metaphors, parables and endless lessons. Across history, combinations and challenges have come from variables and from the absence of constants. Patience and resilience, when combined, await opportunity. Then the hammer strikes. A battleground soaked by rain can change the course of events or someone who was blindly trusted can turn out to be a traitor — the past is full of examples like these. Did the British Empire ever think that a thin, loincloth-clad man whose creed was non-violence would catalyse the collapse of the world's largest, wealthiest and most powerful domain that the planet had known? It happened. Call that 'Factor X'. The Unknown, the event, the person that no one anticipated, far less predicted.

During the Emergency of the 1970s, when civil liberties had been crushed, my father and uncles, or he and a couple of friends, would huddle and talk. The gist of their conversations was: "Is this what we got Independence for? The only difference seems to be that earlier the colonisers were from another nation, now they are from our own." This may be a little simplistic, but the kernel of truth is there. This remains to the present day. During the Emergency, a habeas corpus petition filed by Bharti Nayar challenged the illegal detention of her husband, prominent journalist Kuldip Nayar, under the draconian Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA). My father's friend was a part of the Division Bench of the Delhi High Court that ruled in favour of Nayar, ordering his release and stating that the right to personal liberty and legal procedures under the law still applied despite the proclamation of Emergency. Almost needless to add, the powers that be were rather displeased and the judge was sidelined. The spine showed then was acknowledged at the end of that unhappy period of our democracy.

Much earlier, in another part of the country, around the time of Partition, an uncle joined the RSS for a while. With the



extended family having been slaughtered almost by the score, my mother and her sisters were trained in self-defence and the use of firearms by members of the 'shakha'. Years apart, one had done his duty as demanded by his profession; the other had been drawn by emotion and by something that had given hope and support in a trying time. Despite contrary perspectives, was either anti-national or seditious? If anything, both were immensely patriotic.

The difference lay in their interpretation and application of the word 'patriotic'. The meeting ground could only be basic humanity, plain common sense, the rule of law and critically, in what was enshrined in the Constitution. History, like it or not, remembers those with a spine and those without. Despite the horror where it has its roots, there is gentleness in Imtiaz Ali's film, 'Main Vaapas Aaunga'. For good reason, the review aggregator, Rotten

Tomatoes, has given it an overall positive review. It has much of what makes a film memorable — a good story, good acting, good musical score and much else. This brings me to why I've mentioned it in August, around the anniversary of both Independence and Partition. I wonder what my parents, who barely survived Partition, would have made of this film. I can almost step into my father's shoes and say that it is unlikely that it would have resonated with him. That has nothing to do with the film, but with views that were shaped by the events of his life — by the years that preceded Partition and by those that followed. His take always was, 'Main Vaapas Nahin Jaunga' (I will not go back). For him, that door had closed and events had nailed it shut. At various points, he received opportunities to visit Lahore, where he was born and grew up. His answer was consistent: "Thank you. I have very happy memories. I would like to leave them at that."

Rethink death sentence in execution review

The question cannot be reduced to how much pain an execution causes or how long it takes. It should be whether the State should continue to take the life of a person it has convicted

The Supreme Court has again upheld hanging as a valid method of executing a death sentence. It also said the method can be reconsidered if evidence of an alternative emerges, while allowing the Centre to explore faster, less painful and dignified methods. The petition was about the manner of execution. But changing the method does not change the nature of punishment. Whether a person is hanged or killed by another method, the result is the same. It is retributive, not reformative, justice. The question cannot be reduced to how much pain an execution causes or how long it takes. It should be whether the State should continue to take the life of a person it has convicted.

India's judicial record shows why the punishment remains contested. Currently, 574 prisoners are on death row, the highest number since 2016. From 2016 to 2025, sessions courts handed 1,310 death sentences. High courts confirmed 70, commuted 411 to life terms and acquitted 285. Project 39A data says only about one in 20 death sentences between 2000 and 2015 were upheld on appeal.



The overwhelming majority did not survive higher judicial scrutiny. The bigger concern is that death cannot be reversed. In *Manoj vs Madhya Pradesh* (2022), the Supreme Court laid down mandatory protocols to prevent death sentences from being imposed without proper consideration of mitigating circumstances, a convict's mental state, background and capacity for reform. If the

justice system requires such careful examination before imposing the death penalty, the risk of irreversible misstep is clear.

The recent Muzaffarnagar episode adds another reason for caution. A trial court judge gave 22 death sentences in 10 cases over four months, raising concerns about judicial temperament and how trial courts respond to pressure in cases involving heinous crimes and strong public pressure. Abolishing the death penalty does not make the criminal justice system pacifist. Serious and atrocious crimes can still be punished with life imprisonment, including without remission where the law permits. The State does not have to take a life to punish a convict. Moreover, the plain truth is that an innocent person executed cannot be brought back. The Supreme Court has left the question of the method of execution open to future evidence. The country should use this moment to discuss the larger issue of whether India needs capital punishment at all.

Touchstones: Our patriotic celebrations

The mood still shines through despite the cynicism, funny memes and muggy weather

So much has happened since I wrote my last column, almost three weeks ago, that even though I try to keep away from commenting on current affairs, I have to reflect on the new trends emerging in public celebrations. Let me begin with my own memories of the Independence Day celebrations in my childhood. Of course, we loved the holiday that came with it but since I studied in a convent run by German nuns, there was no attempt to involve the students in any meaningful way. As day scholars (not boarders), we balanced our lives between that very 'phoren' education and the values practised by our family and the rest of the town. My father used to hoist the flag in the lawn of our house and his staff came to participate even though that meant a stiff climb to our Nainital home in the high Ayarpata area. The previous evening, flowers were tucked into the flag to be hoisted in the morning and carefully mounted on the tall flagpole. After it was over, my mother would serve tea and homemade snacks to all those who were there. We watched the whole ceremony (accompanied by children from the neighbouring houses) and after the elders had gone home, we enacted our own version of it. A smaller copy of the high flagpole (often just a crooked branch from a tree) was erected on the other side of the large lawn and we did our own version of the solemn ceremony my father used to preside over. We saluted the flag, sang the National Anthem lustily and marched round and round the lawn, saying 'left right'. Our patriotism was probably greater than what was on display in the other ceremony and how we loved to pretend we were grown-ups. The previous evening, we all crowded round our ancient radio to hear the President's message to the nation, delivered by President Dr S Radhakrishnan, surely the most thrilling orator of his time. We weren't allowed even to speak or get up until it was over. Mind you, this wasn't just in our home but in every home around



us. The same reverence was accorded to the Prime Minister's speech from the ramparts of the Red Fort by the one and only Chacha Nehru. No forced shouts of Vande Mataram, just a moving speech heard in rapt attention by the whole nation. There was a difference in that when I compare it to the state-choreographed version of the present times. Is it because we are now older and therefore more cynical, or is there a gradual ebbing away of the spontaneity that marked our celebrations all those years ago? Perhaps that is part of the reason but the muggy, miserable weather when the entire diplomatic corps, the

Army bigwigs and the high officials of the government are expected to be present in formal suits, ties or bandhgalas, wiping their sweaty faces, takes away the joy that should be the primary mood of such an occasion. Later, when I was married and we took part in the official Independence Day celebrations, where my husband had to do what was his duty as a government servant and hoist the flag, the childhood memory refused to go away. The reception at the Governor's At Home in the evening (or the President's At Home in Rashtrapati Bhavan when we moved to Delhi) was a nightmare of

another kind. The tea served was often a mishmash of what the historical records from colonial times showed (tea, cakes and sandwiches) alongside chhola bhaturas, samosas, sticky sweets or juicy rasgullas and gulab jamuns that sat uneasily together on one's plate. A separate enclosure, with a cordoned-off area, was created for the Prime Minister and his Cabinet colleagues, the Chief Justice and important Opposition leaders, and people gawped at them from afar. I can well imagine how uncomfortable it must be for those who were gawped at.

I could go on and on but this is not the occasion to dampen the patriotic mood that still shines through despite the cynicism, funny memes and muggy weather. Something stirs one each time one hears the National Anthem, no matter who you are or what your political and ideological position may be. To boycott the ceremony and not attend the reception is just not on.

Moving on, I am relieved that we are finally confronting the trauma suffered during Partition. It has taken almost 75 years for us to acknowledge what a cruel and horrifying effect it had on those who lost loved ones, homes and their land. What is worse, it drove a wedge through the subcontinent that made neighbours into enemies, languages into cultural battles and irretrievably damaged the bonhomie between two faiths. The colonial state and the British have a lot to answer for to all those who they permanently crippled, both culturally and socially. It is thus ironic that their own lands are now facing the problems that they inflicted on their erstwhile territories. Europe and Britain are wondering how to go back to the time when they were racially 'pure'. Rare is the country in that part of the world that will soon not be overrun by people who will occupy the land they considered 'theirs'. I may not be alive to see that but I think we in the subcontinent know that story well.

The 6 tools every man should own



Go beyond gaming consoles and music players and check out a few practical tools that can help you with home repairs lest an emergency arises...

1. Wire Cutters:

Because that tooth you lost as you tried to peel off a particularly tough wire isn't coming back, it's safe to use tools meant for the purpose. A pair of wire cutters always proves handy for any electrical emergencies you may have. Plus it is safe, as the plastic grip at the end prevents you from getting electrocuted.

2. Claw Hammer:

After you have drilled a hole in the wall, it is a light claw hammer that is used to drive the nail in. Its claw also helps you pull out old

nails, thereby protecting the surface where you're plucking the nail out from. And no, using a pestle is not a good idea as it could damage your fingers as well as your walls. Plus the Mrs won't be too happy either

3. Leatherman: A multi-purpose knife that makes other knives look like needles, this is a gadget that every man should own. From screwdrivers, to serrated blades, wire cutters, crimpers, pliers, scissors and even can-openers, the array of tools it offers is astonishing and practical. Besides that, you can always improvise with the many adjustments it provides.

4. Electric Drill:

There's always space for home improvement. Maybe it's that new family photo you want to hang on the wall. Or a new name-plate for the main door. The old fashioned way was to go banging away with the hammer. However, using an electric drill is a smart, clean way of going about things. It gets the work done fast, and there is no noise. So your neighbours don't have to worry about the wall coming down on their heads!

5. Crimpers:

A live internet connection is a lifeline. So, when the cables go awry and you face downtime, you don't need to wait for your internet guy to come in and sort your problem. Because if you notice,

most times, the guy will just chip off your ethernet cable, put in new RJ45 connector and fix it with a crimper. To avoid all that hassle, all you need is a crimper and a connector and you will be back online in no time, unless the issue is serious.

6. Multimeter:

Remember using the old green screwdriver which lit up at the end when you used it to check whether the wire was live? If you did and have lived to read this, you are a

lucky man as there was no fuse in those little things to prevent electrocution. Get a digital multimeter instead. It helps measure voltage, current, and resistance and to check whether the power line is functioning and at what level. If the voltage is too high, the in-built fuse that it has, helps avoid electrocution due to a current overload.



With Kate Middleton announcing her second pregnancy just a year after Prince George turned one, here's looking at 'two under two' phenomenon that is finding takers closer home too

Barely six weeks after Prince George turned one came the official announcement that the Duchess of Cambridge is pregnant again. With another heir on the way, the royal couple will be parents to two children under the age of two. Closer home, many urban couples are opting to closely space out the pregnancies too, following the strategy of 'two under two', also known as baby bunching.

Says consultant gynaecologist and IVF specialist Dr Bandita Sinha, "With most women in the metros starting their families well into thirties, they do not have the luxury of choosing wider space due to diminishing fertility. Also, those who are career-oriented may not want to take long breaks in their profession, so planning their next pregnancy quickly helps them to take care of two children together and get back to work early."

Two years wait is a must

While the earlier generations had wider age gaps between siblings, today, most siblings are usually one-and-a-half or three years apart. World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends a waiting period of at least two years after the baby's birth, says Sinha, adding, "In India, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare recommends spacing births by three years. However, the decision of spacing may vary depending upon the age and the health of the mother, career choices, financial conditions and child care support in the family."

Adds consulting psychiatrist Dr Pavan Sonar, "Psychologically, it is advisable to have a gap of around four years as the

Have you thought of baby bunching?



mother gets enough time to recover physically from the first pregnancy and support the next. It also gives the family adequate space to adjust to the entry of the new one, and help the first baby get adequate love and care."

Lesser age gap equals more sibling bonding

While growing up, Gauri Pednekar, who has a brother eight years older to her, often wished she had a sibling closer to her age. When she planned her pregnancies, she gave birth to daughters who are two years apart. She says, "It's been five years since my second child was born and today, both of them are each other's playmates. They play with the same kind of toys, go to school together and are a great support system for each other."

Dr Sonar says, "Reduced age gap facilitates more friendly relations between siblings. Also, parents can manage the attention, time and resources for each child well because they are closely spaced and hence, have the same kind of needs."

It's more challenging

Bringing up closely spaced siblings has its own share of challenges. Ask any mother who has delivered a child less than two years after the first one and she is likely to grumble about how the initial years pass by in a blur with sleepless nights and adjusting to both babies' schedules. Says Dr Sinha, "Some studies suggest that mothers are more likely to mistreat their children if they are spaced too closely. The older child, who is still a baby, has plenty of needs and may feel rejected. They are likely to have adjustment problems and throw temper tantrums later."

According to experts, common interests can lead to competition. Meanwhile, the first-born may be highly self-critical. "Many firstborns never lose this tendency to feel guilty or overly responsible when things go wrong," adds Sinha. "In future too, if both your kids opt for higher education, you will have to be prepared to spend a lot of money and resources almost at the same time," says Dr Sonar.

Health risks if second pregnancy is within six to 17 months

- Premature birth
- Low weight babies
- Chances of placenta praevia and placental abruption increases
- Nutritional deficiency may cause weakness and iron deficiency may cause anaemia
- Postpartum depression
- Increased chances of complications related to delivery

Things parents must remember

- Ensure that the mother gets enough nutrition even post the pregnancy
- Have a good support system of people in your family to attend the babies
- Ensure you give equal attention to both the kids
- Treat them as individuals rather than a single entity
- Ensure that your financial resources as well as savings for the future education are in place before planning a second pregnancy soon after

Relationship counsellor Sauleha Shaikh, however, feels it's okay to feel the slump at work sometimes. He says, "You need to boost your motivation every now and then so that you don't lose hope," he adds. So, stop fretting over and here's how you can keep yourself motivated:

Stay positive:

No matter what the job atmosphere is, remember that staying positive will keep you motivated. Also, negativity will sap you off your energies. When you stay optimistic it will automatically show in your work.

Surround yourself with happy colleagues:

At times, the reason to feel demotivated at work is that you have too many negative people surrounding you at your workplace. These are people who are constantly cribbing about the work atmosphere and leave no stones unturned when they have to gossip about something at work. Take the hint and try to maintain a distance from such people because their constant nagging may one day make you become just like them.

Talk it out with your boss:

If you think the reason for feeling demotivated is your boss's attitude, then try talking it out with your immediate superior.

How to cope with a career low and stay positive

Smita Aliva, a 36-year-old advertising professional, says, "I have been working in this company for the past three years and I have seen a few colleagues being fired for no reason. I now fear I will face the same treatment and it has affected my work." She's not alone, given the scenario.

Not only will you feel relieved, you will also be able to understand the perspective of your boss.

Don't worry too much:

Don't get too affected by your colleague losing his/her job or people finding it difficult to cope at work. It's all a part and parcel of the professional environment. Working hard will surely reap benefits.

Look out for another job:

Says clinical psychologist Dr Seema Hingorany, "Staying in a negative work atmosphere pulls you into further negativity. So, if you are not happy with your present job, it is better to look out for a job which suits you."

Seek professional help

Says Advaita Kalra, a 27-year-old software engineer, "I was jobless for almost eight months and had started losing hope. I would keep applying to various companies, but none had any vacancy. That is when a friend suggested that I approach an outsourced HR agency. Within two weeks, they approached me with a job opening and I was happy to take it up."





4 ways to bring order to your Work life

Keep your digital life organized:

In the highly technological world we are living in, it's essential to bring order to your digital life. If you have a pile of e-mails, then dedicating some of your time to sort these bad boys out on a daily basis, just like your emails, won't hurt. Keeping your digital life organized means you don't unnecessarily browse the web for endless hours. Don't spend too much of time on social networking sites. In the end, all these virtual activities are unproductive and don't add anything to your working life.

Clutter free work desk:

A clutter free work desk goes a long way in making your work life organized. So, make sure that your work desk doesn't look like an earthquake ravaged zone. Clear papers/ files off your desk. Throw away things which are not needed. Keep a to-do list on your desk to give you a sense of purpose on a daily basis.

Prioritize:

Get it clear in your mind. What's more important? Prioritizing will help you focus on the most important thing and postpone things which don't garner immediate attention.

Focus:

You can't have an organized work life if you don't focus. Don't leave any task half way. When you start a task, take it to the logical end. Leaving unfinished business is the hallmark of a disorganized person.



To achieve professional success, you need to be organized. Now, don't lose heart. Being organized is not that difficult if you bring mindfulness to your working life. Here are four simple ways to bring order to your work life

Work-life balance - Enjoy the small Moments

Like flowers, I enjoy the first warmth of spring, a cup of steaming tea and a great book. I manage my work and life even though I'm in four continents in a year - Asia, America, Europe and Africa.

Being a fit woman:

I manage my fitness regimen by doing yoga, walking, swimming and ayurvedic de-toxing. Sometimes, just laughing in the company of old friends is the best de-stressor.

Energy high and happiness:

Looking deeply and daily at the angelic faces of my three boys - Jad, Kais and Jai.

Risk take or a micro-planner:

I take risks and micro-plan my business. I am also a decision taker - for good or bad. I can handle it.

Handling failure and success:

Hopefully with equal aplomb and resilience. I am not a victim, I'm a survivor.

Crisis management:

My life has been a series of crisis management moments from ever since I was in my 20s, when my father was assassinated by ULFA militants. It's really how you get up and face life that sets you apart.

Icon for work-life balance: Gloria Steinham, Patti Smith.

Managing work-life balance: There is NO balance. It's extremes all the way. Either, I am working so single-mindedly that I cannot focus on the 'life balance' aspect or I am relishing a particular moment of my life. At this moment, I am enjoying seeing my spectacular rose blooms -I planted 3,000 roses in the garden in February. It's important to enjoy the little things in life.



Let your kids connect with Nature

Make some effort to make your child connect with nature and see what a difference it makes. Growing up in cities means staying away from nature. No wonder then children today are becoming disconnected from nature. It's so very essential to stay connected to nature for a holistic life. Never mind, even if you are living in an apartment. Make some effort to make your child connect with nature. Here are some ways to get it going. Give planned activity a miss. When you go outdoors with your kids, let their imagination soar. And let them go for some unplanned activities. Let them discover the neighbourhood. Take them to the nearest garden, park or lake. Let them discover the names of the plants and flowers in the park. Don't put pressure on them. Let them discover the landscape on their own. Children have a natural way to explore life around them. They have the ability to turn ordinary into extra-ordinary. Create some landscape art. Make them write a story that has nature as a theme. Let them make a collage of nature photos. Let them dance in the rain and play with mud. Let them have a feel of earth. When they go outdoors (mountains, sea or even a park), let them collect pebbles, shells, leaves, twigs and the like. Create a nature table and display all that they have collected. That will give them a sense of achievement and belonging.



The researchers found that when garden grown vegetables were slipped into school salads, kids were over four times as likely to take a salad. "This is a small study, but it suggests gardens can help children's diets," said lead author Brian Wansink from Cornell University. This pilot study, conducted in the US, measured the change in vegetable selection



and plate waste when school grown salad greens were incorporated in the cafeteria school lunch. The researchers measured the selections and plate waste of a total of 370 enrolled high school students over three

Make kids grow veggies to encourage Healthy eating

separate days. When the salad bar contained produce grown by students, the percentage of those who selected salads with their meals increased from two percent to 10 percent and on average, students ate two-thirds of their salads. Overall, salad consumption for the entire student body increased from approximately five to 12 servings per day. This study implies the larger potential benefits of the school garden programmes. "We see great promise with this research. The first hurdle in increasing

One simple way to make children eat more healthy is to help them grow vegetables in the gardens, says a new research.

vegetable consumption is simply getting kids to put them on their plate," co-author Drew Hanks from Ohio State University noted.

Ex-Cabin Crew Caught Smuggling Rs 30 Lakh Drugs From Gujarat To Mumbai

The interstate drug smuggling was busted on Monday when the Surat Crime Branch received information that a large quantity of MD (known as Mephedrone) drug was being transported in a car from Vadodara to Mumbai.

Delhi. (Agency)

A former cabin crew member and her alleged aide have been arrested for trying to smuggle drugs worth Rs 30 lakh from Gujarat's Vadodara to Mumbai, with the investigation revealing the woman's long history of drug dealing.

The interstate drug smuggling was busted on Monday when the Surat Crime Branch received information that a large quantity of MD (known as Mephedrone) drug was being transported in a car from Vadodara to Mumbai. Based on this, the officials stopped a suspicious car near a toll post on the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway.

Upon inspection, the cops found 977 grams of drugs in the vehicle - in which the former airhostess, identified as Mansi Sayed (41), and her aide, Sohail Suleman Shaikh (20), were seated. Additionally, they also found

multiple mobile phones and plastic bags and containers used for the packaging of the drugs.

During interrogation, they revealed that they had rented a car from Mumbai and had travelled to Vadodara to take the drugs back.

They had received the drug consignment from an unidentified woman near the Vadodara railway station. Investigation further revealed that once the drugs reached Mumbai, they would have been divided into smaller packets for supply.

The plan was to prepare packets with five to 10 grams of drugs and sell them to people based on demand. According to officials, the two accused lived in Mumbai's

Santacruz area and have known each other for several years.



Mansi Sayed's previous record

Investigation revealed that the accused, Mansi, who worked with Malaysian Airlines

and had travelled to various countries.

Officials said that Mansi had been in contact with the drug network since 2015. She has a long history of drug dealing and was previously arrested in Madhya Pradesh's Indore in 2021 after the police found her with around 100 grams of drugs. She ended up spending nearly four years in the case.

According to the police, Mansi's connection with the drug supply networks in various areas of Madhya Pradesh was revealed during the investigation of the 2021 case. The police are now probing the connection between her past and present contacts in the drug network. The cops are also on the lookout for the woman who supplied drugs to the accused, officials added.

Body Of Delhi Teenager, Who Fell In Drain Chasing Kite, Found After 4 Days

Delhi. (Agency)

The body of a Delhi teenager who was missing for four days after falling into an open drain has been found. 15-year-old Mithun fell into an open drain on Saturday morning in southeast Delhi's Jasola village while chasing a kite. Search was on for the boy for four days. The body was finally found on Tuesday. Following the incident, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) suspended a junior engineer of South East (Central) Zone for alleged dereliction of duty. The MCD said disciplinary proceedings are being initiated against the official.

Mithun, a Class 8 student, went missing around 11 am on Saturday, with his family and authorities suspecting he fell into a drain near his house.



Mithun's family, originally from Uttar Pradesh, lives in the area and works as labourers in Delhi. A multi-agency search involving the Delhi Fire Service, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), rescue teams and divers was launched after the incident.

A video purportedly showing Mithun's father searching for his son in the drain with a stick in his hand had gone viral on social media. The video showed the distraught father entering the drain himself as the rescue operation failed to locate the boy. Chief Minister Rekha Gupta had expressed strong displeasure and deep sorrow over the incident, a CMO official told news agency PTI.

Gupta had directed the chief secretary to provide information about the jurisdiction of the drain in question within an hour and suspend the guilty officer, he added.

Inundation, traffic chaos return after heavy shower

Delhi. (Agency)

As heavy showers lashed the city on Monday, waterlogging and traffic snarls were reported across key stretches, with some areas recording nearly 67 mm of rainfall. Several key stretches, including parts of Lutyens' Delhi, Mathura Road, Connaught Place, Bhairon Marg, ITO and the Zakhira underpass, were waterlogged. From shops and goods submerged in Sadar Bazar to severe waterlogging at Mahilpur flyover, knee-deep water in Sangam Vihar and Sonia Vihar, and flooding in Durga Vihar, Rail Vihar, Subhash Chowk, Vatika Chowk, Janakpuri and parts of Rohini, the downpour brought the city to a standstill.

The scenes on Monday were a repeat of the waterlogging woes residents had faced a few weeks ago. Videos circulating on social media showed at least a dozen students wading through waist-deep water in Sangam Vihar. In Sadar Bazar too, residents were forced to make their way through waist-deep water after parts of Old Delhi were inundated.

Several roads in and around Kamla Nagar market were also submerged following the heavy showers. The weather department data showed that Janakpuri recorded 67 mm of rain, followed by Chhatarpur at 57 mm, Pitampura at 35 mm and Safdarjung at 29 mm. Commuters were stuck in heavy traffic trails near Sarai Kale Khan, Mathura Road and the Dwarka Expressway. Some visuals on social media showed commuters wading through water at the Zakhira underpass, while severe waterlogging was also reported near Shivaji Stadium, inconveniencing commuters.

The weather office had issued a red alert for heavy rain across the capital for a few hours. Amidst the inclement weather, a portion of a dilapidated building collapsed in the Chandni Mahal area, damaging several two-wheelers, police said. After the Chandni Mahal police station received a PCR call about the collapse at 1569, Pahari Bhojla, it dispatched a police team, which reached the spot and secured the area.

Police said they shifted residents to a safe location and removed vehicles lying under or near the debris. No injuries were reported, they said, adding that the building was already in a dilapidated condition. According to police, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) had already issued a notice regarding the building's condition, and repair work was underway when the collapse happened.

Supreme Court notice to 20 rebel MPs in Trinamool's disqualification plea

The Supreme Court heard Abhishek Banerjee's plea on TMC's disqualification petitions against 20 rebel MPs. The bench said the key issue is whether the Speaker will conclude the proceedings within a reasonable time.

Delhi. (Agency)

The Supreme Court of India on Tuesday issued notices to 20 rebel Trinamool Congress MPs on a writ petition filed by the party's general secretary and Lok Sabha leader Abhishek Banerjee. He had sought directions from the court for an expeditious decision on the disqualification petitions pending

before Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla.

However, no notice was issued to Birla, who has been arraigned as the first respondent in the petition, after Solicitor General Tushar Mehta stepped in and said he would appear on behalf of the Lok Sabha Speaker. The SG further said that he has

issued notices on the disqualification petitions.

The 20 MPs named as respondents in Banerjee's petition include Sayani Ghosh, Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar, Sudip Bandyopadhyay, Satabdi Roy, Prasun Banerjee, Arup Chakraborty, Deepak Dev Adhikari and Yusuf Pathan, among others.

The petition has challenged a delay in making a decision on the disqualification of the 20 rebel MPs. These leaders won the Assembly elections earlier this year on a TMC ticket but later defected to the relatively unknown Nationalist Citizens Party of India (NCPI) soon after the results were announced in May. The rebel camp has sought recognition as a separate group in the Lok Sabha.



Close-range shots, broken ribs: What autopsy revealed in Karnataka forest shootout

Delhi. (Agency)

At least two of the three suspected poachers shot dead in Karnataka's Chamarajanagar district on August 15 were fired at from close range, with the victims sustaining multiple gunshot injuries to the chest, abdomen and thigh, documents accessed by revealed. The three men of Tamil origin -- Sebastian David Kumar, Anthony Swamy and John Rose Peter -- were shot dead by Forest Department personnel near the Karnataka-Tamil Nadu border.

Forest officials had claimed that the men were suspected poachers and that personnel opened fire in self-defence after coming under attack during an anti-poaching operation. The incident has since triggered protests and political friction between Karnataka

and Tamil Nadu, with leaders in both states, including the chief ministers, weighing in.

The post-mortem report of Sebastian



David Kumar recorded multiple gunshot injuries over the left chest and right thigh and states that the firearm injuries were caused by a shotgun fired from close range. The report also notes multiple pellet injuries and other firearm-related findings. Anthony

Swamy's autopsy report also recorded the range of fire as close and added that the cause of death was haemorrhage due to gunshot wounds to the right lower chest and abdomen. The report also mentions a rib fracture and firearm injuries, with pellet fragments found in the abdominal wall.

The autopsy findings have intensified the political controversy, with the Karnataka BJP accusing the Congress government of withholding crucial information about the incident.

BJP state president BY Vijayendra alleged that the government was "hiding the truth" about the shootout in the Hanur forest and said the party had constituted a fact-finding committee to ascertain what happened. The committee, he said, had visited the spot and gathered information that raised "several serious questions and doubts".

15 incoming flights to IGIA diverted, many outgoing planes delayed

Delhi. (Agency)

Thunderstorms and heavy rain forced the diversion of 15 incoming flights to Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) to Jaipur, Chandigarh and Lucknow on Monday afternoon. All landed safely in Delhi by evening. Hundreds of departing flights were also delayed through the day.

"Of the 15 flights diverted from Delhi airport due to weather conditions, three are international. Twelve were diverted to Jaipur International Airport, two to Chandigarh and one to Lucknow," a Delhi



airport source said.

Of the international flights, an Air India flight from Singapore was diverted to Lucknow, while flights from Dubai and Sharjah were diverted to Jaipur. A Jaipur airport source said the first diverted flight arrived at 12.25pm and the last at 1.05pm. Passengers were kept on board as the flights were expected to depart for Delhi once the weather cleared. The last diverted flight left for Delhi around 4pm.

According to Flightradar24, flights diverted to Jaipur included Air India flights from Singapore (AI 2381), Chennai (AI 2526) and Bhubaneswar (AI 1814); Air India Express flights from Sharjah (IX 136), Indore (IX 1236), Ranchi (IX 1047) and Imphal (IX 1462); SpiceJet's flight from Leh (SG 126); and IndiGo flights from Chennai (6E 404), Siliguri (6E 6125) and Goa (6E 2102). IndiGo flights from Dibrugarh (6E 6373) and Bengaluru (6E 830) were diverted to Chandigarh, while an Akasa Air flight from Mumbai (QP 1834) was diverted to Lucknow.

Put unused parking areas to active use, L-G Taranjit Sandhu tells officials

Chairing a coordination meeting with senior officers, Sandhu called for all agencies to function as a "whole of government" and work in close coordination.

Delhi. (Agency)

Lieutenant-Governor Taranjit Singh Sandhu on Monday directed officials to operationalise unused parking spaces across the national capital and enhance police presence in Narela. Chairing a coordination meeting with senior officers, Sandhu called for all agencies to function as a "whole of government" and work in close coordination.

The meeting was attended by the Delhi government Chief Secretary and Principal Secretary (Home), Delhi Police Commissioner, Principal Director of Delhi Fire Services (DFS), Additional Commissioners of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) and Delhi Development Authority (DDA) Vice Chairman, among others. The meeting deliberated on issues



requiring multi-agency coordination, including parking-related challenges, encroachments and their removal, fire preparedness and other matters involving the MCD, DDA and Delhi

Police.

Underlining the need for a "whole of government" approach, Sandhu said all agencies must work together than in silos, particularly in matters requiring

swift and coordinated action on the ground.

The Lieutenant-Governor also highlighted the need to increase outreach in schools and directed officials to strengthen engagement with teachers and students as part of ongoing civic and safety initiatives, including enforcement of POCSO guidelines.

On parking, Sandhu directed officials to make unused parking sites across the city operational at the earliest. He also emphasised the development of multi-level car parking facilities to ease pressure on available parking space.

Sandhu issued specific directions to the Delhi Police to enhance its presence and ensure security in the fast-developing Narela area. He also instructed the MCD to ensure proper civic amenities in the area.

Tata Sons board to meet on September 17, may discuss N Chandrasekaran's exit

New Delhi. (Agency)

The Tata Sons board is likely to meet on September 17 and could discuss chairman N Chandrasekaran's decision not to seek a third term, even though the matter is not formally listed on the agenda so far, according to a Moneycontrol report.

People cited in the report said that the board meeting is expected to take up routine matters as well as a possible date for the next Tata Sons annual general meeting (AGM), which was postponed on August 18 after the meeting could not proceed due to a lack of quorum. The Tata Sons board meets every quarter. Chandrasekaran's decision not to seek another term, announced on August 12, is therefore likely to become an important point of discussion at the upcoming meeting.

It is important to distinguish between Chandrasekaran resigning and choosing not to seek a third term. The Moneycontrol report says Chandrasekaran announced on August 12 that he would not seek a third term as Tata Sons chairman. It does not say that he has resigned from the position with immediate effect. The report also does not specify the reason behind his decision. That means the exact circumstances or personal or professional considerations behind Chandrasekaran's decision remain unclear based on the information currently available. What is clear is that the Tata group has now entered a succession phase, with one of its key stakeholders already beginning the process of identifying his successor.

WHO IS CHOOSING CHANDRASEKARAN'S SUCCESSOR?

One of the main Tata Trusts, Sir Dorabji Tata Trust (SDTT), has initiated the process of choosing Chandrasekaran's successor, according to Moneycontrol.

Markets decline in early trade amid elevated crude oil prices, escalating geopolitical tensions

MUMBAI. (Agency)

Market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty declined in early trade on Tuesday amid renewed escalation in the US-Iran standoff and elevated crude oil prices. The 30-share BSE Sensex was down 30 points to 77,336.32 in early trade. The 50-share NSE Nifty dipped 38.80 points to 24,179.50.

Later, the BSE benchmark traded 139.96 points lower at 77,235.23, and the Nifty was down 66.75 points to 24,162.50. Among the 30 Sensex firms, HCL Tech, Tech Mahindra, Maruti, NTPC, Power Grid and Bajaj Finance were among the major laggards. Trent, Adani Ports, ICICI Bank and Bharat Electronics were among the major winners.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, traded 0.35 per cent higher at USD 92.49 per barrel. "The US has launched what it calls an 'Economic D-Day' against Iran, with Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent announcing a sweeping new sanctions campaign that marks an intensification of economic pressure on Tehran," said Ponnudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth-tech firm.

The latest escalation in the US-Iran standoff follows the expiry of the 60-day ceasefire window, with no further talks currently planned, he added.

In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi, Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index were trading lower, while Japan's Nikkei 225 quoted higher.

Rupee falls 4 paise to 95.74 against US dollar in early trade

MUMBAI. (Agency)

The rupee traded in a narrow range and fell 4 paise to 95.74 against the American currency in early trade on Tuesday, as elevated crude prices and importer dollar demand weighed on the currency. Forex traders said the RBI's continued intervention through state-run banks helped prevent a sharper decline, keeping USD/INR in a narrow range despite weakness in Asian equities and renewed geopolitical uncertainty around Iran. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 95.74, registering a fall of 4 paise from its previous close.

On Monday, the rupee settled with a marginal gain of 1 paise at 95.70 against the US dollar.

Overall, the rupee remains firmly range-bound around ₹95.50-96.00, with oil prices and RBI intervention likely to remain the key near-term drivers," said Anil Kumar Bhansali, Head of Treasury and Executive Director, Finrex Treasury Advisors LLP. The rupee has remained range bound for the last two weeks with oil companies and RBI buying dollars at the lower end while RBI was also protecting the downside to the rupee by selling the dollars near to 95.75 levels, Bhansali added. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading at 99.04, higher by 0.04 per cent on safe-haven demand following the US escalation of sanctions on Iran, although the dollar remains under pressure from expectations around Treasury bond buybacks.

8th Pay Commission's next meeting in Bengaluru: What's on the agenda?

Kolkata. (Agency)

The 8th Pay Commission is taking its consultations to Bengaluru in October. With salary, allowances and pension among the key concerns, here's what could be on the agenda.

For lakhs of government employees and pensioners, the 8th Pay Commission is slowly becoming more than just a government announcement. It could eventually decide how much they earn, what allowances they receive and how their pensions are revised.

The Commission has been travelling across the country to hear directly from employees, unions and pensioner organisations. After consultations in Delhi, West Bengal, Ladakh and Uttar Pradesh, it is now heading to Bengaluru. The 8th Pay Commission will visit Bengaluru on October 7 and 8, 2026. The visit will give central government employees' associations, unions, organisations and other stakeholders an opportunity to meet the Commission and put forward their concerns. According to the latest notification from the Ministry of

Finance, interested organisations can request an appointment with the Commission. The request has to be



submitted by September 18, 2026, along with the Unique Memo ID generated after submitting their memorandum. The venue and detailed schedule of the meetings will be shared later.

WHY THE BENGALURU VISIT MATTERS

Pay Commissions are set up to review the

salaries, allowances and other service-related benefits of government employees. Their recommendations can also have a direct impact on pensions and retirement benefits. This is why every round of consultations attracts considerable interest from employees and pensioners. The Commission's meetings with different groups are also important because employees working in different departments and locations may have very different concerns.

While some may be seeking changes in salary and allowances, others may have issues related to promotions, working conditions or retirement benefits. The Bengaluru consultation will give these groups another opportunity to put their demands before the Commission.

Can private firms access your ITR, EPFO data?

New Delhi. (Agency)

Can a private company access information from your income tax return or provident fund records? The Supreme Court has asked the government to examine allegations that private verification entities are accessing, retrieving and commercially using sensitive employment and financial data, and to take steps to prevent any misuse.

The court was hearing a PIL alleging that a "commercial technological ecosystem" had emerged around the verification of personal information linked to EPFO/UAN records and PAN-linked financial data. The court did not, however, find that any particular company had illegally accessed such records or hold that private firms can freely access citizens' ITR or EPFO data. The case

has nevertheless raised an important question for millions of Indians. Can private companies access sensitive employment and financial information held by government agencies?

WHAT DID THE SUPREME COURT SAY?

The Supreme Court expressed concern over the alleged misuse of sensitive personal information by private entities and asked the government to examine the issue. According to reports of the hearing, the court said the government should consider devising an "antidote" to the problem with the help of domain experts. It directed the government and other authorities to consider the petitioner's representations and take necessary action, preferably within four months. But the court has not

said that private companies can freely access everyone's ITR or EPFO records. Nor has it found that a data breach took place. The court instead asked the authorities to examine allegations of unauthorised access, sharing, disclosure, transfer and commercial exploitation of sensitive data and decide what action, if any, is needed. WHAT ARE THE ALLEGATIONS? The PIL alleged that private verification entities were accessing or commercially exploiting statutory employment and financial data linked to EPFO/UAN records and PAN-linked information. The petitioner pointed to private services allegedly offering or advertising access to information described as EPFO passbook data, Form 26AS data and income-tax return information.

Bitcoin breaks \$80,000: Has the crypto rally found its legs again?

New Delhi. (Agency)

Bitcoin is back above the \$80,000 mark, and this time the move is not happening in isolation. Ethereum and several other major cryptocurrencies have also jumped sharply over the past week, bringing traders back into the



market and raising a bigger question: Is crypto entering another strong rally, or is this just a short-term bounce? At around 11.30 am, Bitcoin, the world's largest cryptocurrency, was trading at \$80,732.71, up 4.6% over the previous 24 hours. It has gained around 25.77% over the past week. Bitcoin's move above \$80,000 is particularly significant as it crossed the level for the first

time since May.

ETHEREUM, XRP AND SOLANA JOIN THE RALLY

Ethereum, the second-largest cryptocurrency, was trading at around \$2,507.92, up 2.39% over the previous 24 hours. It has gained 32.44% in the past week.

Several other major tokens have also seen strong gains. XRP has climbed 52.87% over the past seven days, while Solana has risen 34.70%. Cardano has gained 31.37% during the same period. Even popular meme coins have joined the party. Dogecoin has risen 32.99% over the past week, while Shiba Inu has gained 29.68%. The broad-based nature of the gains suggests that investors are not just returning to Bitcoin. Risk appetite appears to be spreading across the wider crypto market.

MARKET IS MOVING BEYOND SCEPTICISM

Rajagopal Menon, Vice President at WazirX, said the current phase of the crypto market brings to mind an old observation by legendary investor Sir John Templeton: "Bull markets are born on pessimism, grow on scepticism, mature on optimism and die on euphoria." Menon said the comment is particularly relevant to the current market. "Bitcoin's move back above \$80,000, alongside improving sentiment and renewed participation across altcoins, suggests that the market is gradually moving beyond the scepticism that has defined much of the recent period," he said.

Sensex, Nifty slip as Iran sanctions, crude prices keep investors cautious

New Delhi. (Agency)

Equity markets opened lower on Tuesday as investors remained cautious over escalating tensions in the Middle East, the impact of fresh US sanctions on Iran and elevated crude oil prices. The caution also comes ahead of the monthly expiry of Nifty 50 derivatives contracts. By 9:43 am, the BSE Sensex was down 116.44 points, or 0.15%, at 77,252.67, while the Nifty 50 had fallen 59.60 points, or 0.25%, to 24,159.45. The Sensex opened at 77,295.49 and has moved between 77,146.03 and 77,390.72 so far. The Nifty opened at 24,175.75 and touched an early high of 24,198.25 and a low of 24,128.85. Fourteen of the 16 major Nifty sectoral indices were in the red, pointing to broad-based caution at the start of trade. Nifty IT fell 0.53%, Nifty Auto declined 0.44%, Nifty Realty dropped 0.41% and Nifty FMCG slipped 0.34%. Nifty Oil & Gas fell 0.35%, while Nifty Financial Services 25/50 and Nifty Private Bank were both down 0.14% and 0.08%, respectively.

Nifty Metal also declined 0.67%, while Nifty Pharma fell 0.08%. Nifty Healthcare was down 0.12% and Nifty Consumer Durables declined 0.27%. On the other hand, Nifty Media gained 0.32%, while Nifty PSU Bank added 0.14%. Nifty Financial Services ex-Bank rose 0.03%, Nifty MidSmall Financial Services gained 0.42% and Nifty MidSmall IT & Telecom added 0.25%. Dr V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Limited, expects the market to remain range-bound in the near term, with buying emerging at lower levels and selling at higher levels. He sees the immediate Nifty range at 24,100-24,500, but said the bulk of market activity is likely to remain beyond the benchmark, particularly in the mid-cap and small-cap segments.

"The U.S. sanctions on Iran and the threat of secondary sanctions on countries that trade with Iran have introduced a new wave of uncertainty," Vijayakumar said, adding that crude is likely to remain at elevated levels, which could constrain a sustained market rally.

MID- AND SMALL-CAPS REMAIN RELATIVELY RESILIENT

The broader market was holding up better than the frontline indices. The Nifty Midcap 50 was marginally higher and Nifty Midcap 100 gained 0.03%, while the Nifty Smallcap 100 slipped 0.05%. Nifty 100 fell 0.24%, Nifty 200 declined 0.19% and Nifty 500 was down 0.16%. Vijayakumar said there was "hectic activity" in the broader market, with positive corporate news attracting strong buying. He noted that both retail investors and FIIs were participating in this momentum despite elevated valuations.

As sugar price surges, government toughens rules to curb hoarding

Under the revised conditions, imported raw sugar must be converted into refined sugar within two months and the refined sugar must also be sold within the same period, the government said.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Amid a surge in sugar prices, the government on Monday revised raw sugar import rules to prevent hoarding, requiring imported raw sugar to be refined and sold in the domestic market within two months. The notification, issued by the Commerce and Industry Ministry, is aimed at ensuring that imported sugar reaches consumers quickly and does not get stockpiled as raw or refined sugar. The earlier rules required imported raw sugar to be

processed within a reasonable period and sufficiently in advance to enable its sale in the domestic market by October 31. The revised conditions set a specific two-month window for processing and sale.

Sugar prices have risen in India despite strong sugarcane production, with crop damage caused by pests and excess rain, festive demand and speculative buying contributing to the surge. Earlier, the government allowed imports of 10 lakh tonnes of sugar by October 31 and imposed stock-holding limits on traders and bulk consumers such as soft-drink and ice-cream makers. States have been asked to take action against hoarding and black marketing. The government in May also banned exports of raw, white and refined sugar until September 30 to stabilise domestic prices amid tightening supplies. On

Monday, the average all-India retail price of sugar stood at Rs 63.05 per kg, up 29 per cent from Rs 48.73 per kg a month earlier, according to government data.



The maximum retail price was Rs 75 per kg, while the model price stood at Rs 65 per kg.

Food Secretary Sanjeev Chopra said ex-mill sugar prices had jumped to Rs 62 per kg from Rs 47-48 per kg in just seven to

10 days, calling the increase "unjustified".

NO SUGAR SHORTAGE, SAYS INDUSTRY

The Indian Sugar and Bio-Energy Manufacturers Association (ISMA) said there was no shortage of sugar in the country and retail prices were expected to decline following the government's measures. "India does not have a sugar shortage. Our production and stock position remain fundamentally comfortable," ISMA president Niraj Shirgaokar said on Monday.

India's net sugar production, after diversion to ethanol, is estimated at around 279 lakh tonnes in the 2025-26 marketing year, while opening stocks stood at 50 lakh tonnes. Domestic demand is estimated at 280-285 lakh tonnes.

Madhya Pradesh cops bust gang linked to Rs 80 lakh cyber fraud; 4 arrested

Chhatarpur.(Agency)

Madhya Pradesh Police have busted an interstate gang that allegedly used mule accounts to launder proceeds from cyber fraud, with investigators tracing about Rs 80 lakh in transactions linked to nearly 50 complaints across several states, officials said on Tuesday.

Four alleged members of the gang have been arrested in Narsinghpur in connection with the cheating of a man in Chhatarpur district, who was allegedly duped of Rs 28 lakh after being promised that his money would be doubled by increasing his online ratings through the Telegram app. Police said the gang rented bank accounts through Instagram advertisements, routed fraud money through them and quickly transferred the funds onward. The probe has also indicated that the money was being converted into cryptocurrency.

According to police, complaints linked to the transactions have been filed in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Bihar and Jharkhand. Investigators have also found links to the accused network in West Bengal, Uttarakhand and Maharashtra. So far, about Rs 80 lakh in cybercrime transactions have been detected in suspicious bank accounts. Superintendent of Police Rajat Saklecha said Mohit Choubey recently lodged a complaint at Khajuraho police station, alleging that he had been defrauded of about Rs 28 lakh with the promise of doubling his money by increasing his online ratings through the Telegram app.

Undertrial prisoner gets VIP ward, plus girlfriend visit at Karnataka hospital

Bengaluru.(Agency)

An undertrial prisoner was allegedly found meeting his girlfriend at a hospital in Karnataka's Mandya during a surprise inspection, sources said, adding he was found in a special ward despite having no serious medical condition. The inspection by the Karnataka State Legal Services Authority (KSLSA) at Mandya District Jail and MIMS Hospital raised questions over the special privileges allegedly being extended to the prisoner, Mohammad Hussain. Hussain, who was arrested in connection with alleged irregularities at the Srirangapatna Taluk Land Records Office, was remanded to judicial custody on July 3.

He was later admitted to MIMS Hospital on the recommendation of the jail medical officer. The KSLSA team found that Hussain was being treated in a special ward without court permission and that there was no serious medical condition warranting such treatment, according to sources. Sources also said he was allegedly meeting his girlfriend while in hospital. Following the inspection, a case was registered under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). The inspection team included District Sessions Judge and District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) President Chandrashekar C. KSLSA Member Secretary Shashidhar Shetty, PRO Balasubramani, Member Dr Mohan Rao Nalvade and DLSA Member Secretary Anand M.

Madras HC nixes pleas for CBI probe into Palani temple mutt land deal case

Chennai.(Agency)

The Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court has dismissed petitions seeking a CBI probe into the alleged fraudulent registration of 1.40 acres of land belonging to the Palani Dhandayuthapani Swamy Temple, one of the six abodes of Lord Muruga, valued at around Rs 100 crore.

When the pleas came up for hearing on Monday evening, a status report was filed by the Crime Branch-CID wing of the Tamil Nadu police on the progress of the investigation into the case. The report mentioned about the searches conducted in six districts, seizures of 207 documents, mobile phones, laptops, electronic gadgets including hard disks, audio records and cash. The CBI-CID also submitted that as of date 115 witnesses were examined and that it was analysing various records gathered from the Registration and Revenue departments, banking records, mobile call and Internet Protocol Detail Records (IPRDs), CCTV footages and documents relating to the property, its administration and other records. It said the probe was still going on and all these documents have to be analysed. During the hearing, the government said the CBCID investigation was proceeding in the proper direction and that there was no need to transfer the case to the CBI. After taking note of the status report and accepting the government's submissions, a Division Bench comprising Justices C.V.Karthikeyan and R.

After notices to 128 flat owners, Mumbai civic body acts on encroachment in high-rise

The luxury residential complex in Mumbai's Prabhadevi reportedly houses flats owned by Maharashtra Cabinet ministers and MLAs.

Mumbai.(Agency)

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) on Monday initiated demolition action against unauthorised construction carried out in violation of sanctioned building plans at one wing of the high-rise residential complex, Rustumjee Crown, in Mumbai's Prabhadevi.

The violations included the use of glass and aluminium structures in common lobbies to convert the spaces into habitable areas, officials said. The luxury residential complex reportedly houses flats owned by Maharashtra Cabinet ministers and MLAs. The Prabhadevi project comprises three towers, two of which are 63 storeys, while the third one has 65 floors.

According to official records, the BMC had previously issued notices to 128 flat owners in the complex over unauthorised alterations carried out across multiple floors. "On Monday, the action was taken against three to four flats. The demolition work is continuing," an officer said on



illegally merged 450-500 square feet of common space with their apartments to increase the usable carpet area.

"Based on the prevailing market rate valuation of approximately Rs 50,000 per sqft, the

encroached area represents an unauthorised gain of Rs 2.25 crore to Rs 2.50 crore per flat/unit. Considering the number of flats in Tower 'A', the aggregate market value of the encroached area is estimated to be in the range of 225 crore to Rs 250 crore," read Daundkar's complaint.

Later, based on the directive of the then BMC additional municipal commissioner, the civic ward office served 128 notices across the flats for unauthorised construction. In March, the civic body issued speaking orders to some flat owners for merging the lobby area into habitable spaces against the authorised building plans. Following the notices, the BMC on Monday deployed labourers to raze the unauthorised constructions across floor on two floors inside one of the complex wings.

"The action by the Municipal Corporation is welcome. However, it raises more questions than it solves as to how the building plans were approved, which gave scope to encroach on the common areas, also has to be seen," YP Singh, Daundkar's advocate, said.

Mumbai churchgoers' 'insurance' as anti-conversion law kicks in from Friday

'Self-declaration' more as assurance, say pastors in Vasai, Virar, Mira-Bhayandar, Thane, Mumbai, Palghar after incidents of disrupted Sunday prayers and FIRs.

Mumbai.(Agency)

The Maharashtra anti-conversion law that toughens legal provisions against forced conversion comes into effect August 28. Its shadow has already fallen on Christian congregations across the Mumbai Metropolitan Region. At prayer halls in Vasai, Virar, Mira-Bhayandar and beyond, local pastors are asking worshippers to do something they never had to before – fill a form. This "self-declaration" states that they are attending the prayer meeting of their own "choice" and face "no pressure, inducement, temptation, lure, or threat of any kind". It further says their decision to attend church "is

completely personal, voluntary, and independent." The form asks for a passport-size photograph and an Aadhaar or PAN



number.

Until this year, anyone could walk in.

Over the past month, The Indian Express

found these forms being circulated – in English, Marathi and Hindi – to congregations in Mumbai, Mira-Bhayandar, Vasai-Virar, Palghar and Thane. This follows a run of Sunday disruptions at prayer meetings over the past five months: there have been nine FIRs linked to five such disruptions between April and July.

Pattern of prayer, protest

Typically, a prayer meeting is held on a Sunday, often in a rented hall, school, banquet hall or home. People identifying themselves as Bajrang Dal or VHP workers object, often alleging that Hindus are being converted. Police are called, both sides are taken to the station, and in some cases an FIR follows.

'Never even saw his face': Newborns die in Maharashtra hospital fire

Amravati.(Agency)

As he sat outside the mortuary on Monday, Swapnil Borge was shell-shocked. His son was born only a day before, and although he'd not even seen his face yet, Borge went around distributing sweets to anyone he came across – staff of the government hospital, fellow patients and even passers-by. "Chehra pan pahila navhta mi ajun (I hadn't even seen his face yet)," he said. "I don't know how to tell my wife about this. Pooja la kalla tar bohot bekar kaam hoil [It would be terrible if she knew]."

Borge's newborn son is one of three newborns who died in a fire at the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) of the government-run Amravati District Women's Hospital. Officials

said the fire, which broke out in the early hours of Monday, could have been caused by a fault in a ventilator in the NICU. "The incident took place around



4 am at the NICU of the hospital," Amravati Collector Ashish Yerekar told The Indian Express. "There were 39 babies, of whom we were able to rescue 36, while three died. When the fire broke out, there were nine babies — one

on a ventilator and eight on warmers.

The baby on the ventilator and two babies who were next to him died in the incident." Thirty-two of the rescued

babies have been referred to other hospitals, while four babies have been kept with their mothers. Dr Vinod Pawar, District Surgeon, Amravati, said: "According to the preliminary information, it appears that there was an explosion in the ventilator."

Police have registered three cases of accidental deaths. Minister for Public Health and Family Welfare Prakash Abitkar, who visited the hospital and met the affected families, told the media that a committee headed by Health Commissioner Sanjay Katkar will look into the incident and submit a report in seven days.

Odisha villagers pledge support to police in curbing ganja cultivation

Bhubaneswar.(Agency)

The panchayati raj institution representatives and local residents of villages vulnerable to cannabis cultivation under Adava police station limits in Odisha's Gajapati district have unanimously resolved not to allow illegal ganja cultivation in their areas and pledged to work with police and government agencies to prevent the practice.

The resolution was adopted during a special awareness and community mobilisation programme organised today by Gajapati Police at the Adava Gram Panchayat office as part of the ongoing campaign to make the district "Cannabis-Free" and Odisha "Nasha Mukht."

The participants pledged to spread awareness among villagers, discourage people from engaging in illegal cannabis cultivation and assist police and other government agencies in identifying and preventing such activities. The programme, held under the guidance of the Gajapati Superintendent of Police, was attended by Sarpanchs, ward members, community leaders and residents from cannabis-affected and vulnerable areas.

Participants were sensitised to the legal consequences of illegal cannabis cultivation and its adverse impact on youth and society.

Students 'lured with biscuits' to protest: UP cops file FIR in Kannauj

In another case, an activist was booked for posting a video of a 'dilapidated' school campus in Deoria. CM Yogi Adityanath had issued a directive to file FIRs over 'misleading' videos of schools and colleges.

Lucknow.(Agency)

As student protests roil schools and colleges across Uttar Pradesh, authorities in two districts have cracked down with FIRs — in Kannauj, police alleged students were lured with biscuits to join a protest, while in Deoria, an activist was booked after filming and posting a video of a 'dilapidated' school campus.

The action comes amid Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's directive on Saturday to file FIRs and take strict action against those spreading false information and "misleading" videos about schools and colleges. At an event in Lucknow on Sunday, he said that some people were posting videos of dilapidated school buildings on social media to "tarnish" the government's image. Basic education officers in several districts had also directed schools to restrict the entry of outsiders, including YouTubers and social media

users, without prior permission from the authorities concerned.

Protest against headmaster

According to police, on August 20, students and their parents staged a protest against the headmaster of a composite school in Gugarapur, stopping and surrounding his vehicle and raising slogans. Parents alleged that the headmaster had discriminated against the students, misbehaved with them and assaulted them. Students also boycotted classes. However, officials said that during an inquiry, headmaster Rakeshendra Saxena alleged that the students were made to participate in the protest as part of a conspiracy against him. He claimed some people had distributed biscuits and offered other incentives to lure the children. After a video of the incident went viral, an inquiry was conducted by an officer. Students allegedly told the officer that unidentified persons had lured them with

biscuits and persuaded them to take part in the protest. Kannauj Block Education Officer Vishwanath Pathak — the complainant in the case — alleged in his complaint to the police that some political



persons were using the incident to tarnish the image of the education department and the state government. Pathak further alleged that some people shown in the video as students' parents were actually local anti-social elements.

The case was filed against unidentified persons at Gurusahaiganj police station for abetment, presence of an abettor when an offence is committed, abetment of an offence by the public or more than 10 persons, and unlawful assembly, four days ago. Station House Officer, Gurusahaiganj police station, Ajay Awasthi said the case was lodged for misleading the students. No arrest has been made so far.

A school campus video goes viral

In Deoria, activist and local resident Rajat Singh was booked for allegedly entering a primary school without permission and posting a video showing its "dilapidated" condition. The education department, however, said the campus had an unused building that was auctioned and demolished as per rules. Some debris remained in a corner and was being cleared. The department said it was completely removed after Singh's video was circulated.

NEWS BOX

Willstrop wants to add everything he has to Indian squash team: Harinder Pal Sandhu



CHENNAI. (Agency)

As Indian squash players began to prepare for the Asian Games in Japan next month, they received a shot in the arm with the confirmation of former World No 1 James Willstrop as their foreign coach. Former Asiad gold medal winner and current national coach Harinder Pal Sandhu will work alongside him.

"Me and James have been in touch regularly since he's been confirmed as coach for the Games. I have been sharing my thoughts. He has been sharing his thoughts. I have made sure that before he travels here, he's aware of all the players and what kind of game everyone plays. He's also keeping an eye out for all our players who are playing different tournaments leading up to the Asian Games. So, everyone is on the same wavelength," Sandhu told this daily.

While appointing him just for the Asian Games may appear to be a short-term fix, Harinder explained that he has previously sparred with a few and has coached both Anahat Singh and Abhay Singh. That way, Willstrop's assignment with the Indians already has a jump start. "Since James has depths of knowledge and experience, my work over there with him is to make sure he's aware of everyone. He has worked with most of our players before. He's aware of Velavan (Senthilkumar), Veer Chotrani, Joshna (Chinappa), Tanvi (Sharma). He wants to add on everything that he has. So, we have had some good conversations leading up to the Asian Games till now. And going forward also, we are speaking every other day."

Additionally, the players underwent a week-long camp early this month sparring with top 50-ranked players like Gregoire Marche (World No 19), Melvil Scianimanico (World No 31) and Spaniard Bernat Jaume (World No 36). "It was a good eight days of intense sparring. At the same time, we were very attentive to our recovery protocols, too. We made sure recovery was also equally prioritised in those eight days because everyone was taking part in tournaments. So, it was a mix of match plays.

Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand get big boost in rankings after heroic bronze



MASON. (Agency)

Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand, who punched well above their weight to win a historic bronze medal at the Badminton World Championships, have been rewarded with a big jump in the latest world rankings. The Indian women's doubles pair, who entered the tournament ranked 39th in the world, have climbed 12 places to No. 27. Their rise is the biggest ranking jump among women's doubles pairs in the top 50. The ranking boost comes after a stunning run in Delhi, where Treesa and Gayatri repeatedly defied the odds against higher-ranked opponents to reach the semi-finals and secure India's first women's doubles medal at the World Championships. The duo began their campaign as the 39th-ranked pair in the world but quickly showed that their ranking did not tell the full story. They produced one of the biggest results of their campaign in the quarter-finals, beating China's Jia Yi Fan and Zhang Shu Xian to book their place in the last four. The victory was an emotional one for the Indians. Treesa and Gayatri broke down in tears after securing their place in the semi-finals following a gruelling one-hour, 10-minute battle against the Chinese pair. Treesa was one of the standout performers throughout the tournament, with her powerful smashes from the back court repeatedly troubling their opponents. Gayatri, meanwhile, continued to grow into the tournament and produced some superb badminton as the pair moved closer to the medal.

TREESA-GAYATRI PUSH WORLD NO.1s

Their semi-final was another test of their progress. Up against the world No. 1 pair Liu Sheng Shu and Tan Ning, Treesa and Gayatri refused to be overawed. They stunned the Chinese duo by taking the opening game 21-18 and moved within two games of a place in the final.

Michael Vaughan demands severe punishment after England's latest nightclub incident

Michael Vaughan has called for severe punishment after England dropped Brydon Carse from their second Test squad amid an ongoing investigation into a nightclub incident in Derby.

Mackay. (Agency)

Michael Vaughan has called for severe punishment after England dropped Brydon Carse from their squad for the second Test against Pakistan while an investigation into a reported incident at a pub in Derby, central England, continues. Carse was seen in handcuffs outside a pub on Saturday night, shortly after Durham's 338-run County Championship win over Derbyshire. The 31-year-old fast bowler was reportedly detained for a few minutes but was not arrested or charged. The England and Wales



Cricket Board (ECB) has referred the matter to the Cricket Regulator, which will investigate the incident and establish the full facts. England have since ruled Carse out of selection for the Lord's Test and replaced him with Sonny Baker.

VAUGHAN WANTS A MESSAGE

"Someone is going to have to get a punishment that sends a shiver down the



whole England cricket team and right down through the programme," Vaughan told BBC Radio. "It's the only punishment that will really hurt players. Vaughan stressed that he would not want Carse to become a scapegoat for England's wider disciplinary issues. He said he hoped the Durham fast bowler was getting the right support and advice, while describing him as someone

who can be "a little bit loose" if given too much freedom. "I would feel for Carse if he is the one who takes the rap for what has happened over the past nine months," Vaughan said. But he also believes England need to set a clear precedent that such behaviour will not be tolerated. Carse was not with the England team when the incident took place. He had been released from the Test squad to play for Durham after missing the first Test against Pakistan at Headingley. He had taken two wickets in Durham's victory, while England captain Ben Stokes claimed five for 17. Footage circulating on social media appeared to show Carse surrounded by police officers outside the pub, with Stokes also visible in the background. There is no suggestion that Stokes was involved in the incident. Reports indicate Carse was briefly detained and later released without charge.

ROOT'S PROBLEM RETURNS

The development comes at an awkward time for England, who lead the three-Test series 1-0 and are preparing for the second Test at Lord's on Thursday. Vaughan believes Joe Root will be frustrated that the focus has once again shifted.

Gen Z cricketers want 3 Ranji teams from Uttar Pradesh, stage protest alongside parents

Around 250 'Gen Z' cricketers and their parents staged a protest at Lucknow's Ekana Stadium, demanding three Ranji Trophy teams in Uttar Pradesh. The protesters argued that the state's size and population mean a single team cannot provide enough opportunities for young players.

Lucknow. (Agency)

A group of 'Gen Z' cricketers and their parents turned up at Lucknow's Ekana Stadium on Sunday with an unusual demand: they want Uttar Pradesh to have three Ranji Trophy teams instead of one.

Around 250 young cricketers and their parents participated in the protest, organised under the aegis of the Uttar Pradesh Cricket Players Association and the Cricket Association of Purvanchal. Their argument is simple: Uttar Pradesh is too big to have just one Ranji Trophy team if young players from across the state are to get a fair shot at domestic cricket. The protesters, mainly from Purvanchal and central Uttar Pradesh, are demanding the creation of three separate cricket associations in the state, which would then field three Ranji Trophy teams.

Arvind Singh, the state president of the Uttar Pradesh Cricket Players

Association, told PTI that Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had previously spoken in favour of having more than one Ranji team



in a state as large as Uttar Pradesh. Singh said the state's population of around 25 crore warranted three cricket associations and, consequently, three Ranji Trophy teams. The protest at Ekana Stadium was aimed at putting that demand back in the spotlight. But the players' concerns go beyond the Ranji Trophy. Singh also alleged that cricketers from Purvanchal

and central Uttar Pradesh are being overlooked in the ongoing Uttar Pradesh T20 League. According to him, around 150 players are part of the six teams competing in the current season of the league. However, only 16 of them are from Purvanchal and central Uttar Pradesh. In comparison, 89 players are from nine districts in western Uttar Pradesh, while eight players are from Delhi. That disparity, the association claims, is another example of why a single state structure is not providing equal opportunities to young cricketers across Uttar Pradesh. Major agitation' planned in September. The protesters are now planning to take their campaign a step further.

Singh said cricketers from across Uttar Pradesh are preparing for a major agitation in September, with the association appealing to 'Gen Z' players to turn up in large numbers.

Who is Dhakshineswar Suresh, the first Indian to win a main draw ATP-level match in 2026

New Delhi. (Agency)

THE big-serving Dhakshineswar Suresh became the first Indian player to pick up a tour-level ATP singles victory in 2026. A look at the 26-year-old's 6-3, 7-5 win over Marcos Giron at Winston Salem...

Who is Suresh?

A player who has come in via the American collegiate system over the last few years. His biggest victory so far had been two Davis Cup singles wins against the Netherlands in Bengaluru in February. He has featured a lot on the Challenger circuit in 2026. His biggest result there in 2026 was a semifinal at Bloomfield Hills as a qualifier. He had earned 10 ATP points for his run in July. Is Winston Salem a Challenger event? No, Winston Salem is a 250-level event. He played at the event last year as well

when he lost in the first round after advancing via the qualifiers. In 2026, he had actually lost in the second round of the qualifiers but came in as a lucky loser. In



the first round against Marcos Giron on Monday, Suresh used his biggest weapon - the service -- to beat Giron, the World No. 77. Has Suresh won a tour-level match

before?

No, this is first ever win at this level. However, he has won three Davis Cup singles rubbers for India (one in 2025 and two in 2026). In fact, the last time an Indian singles player a main draw tour level match was in 2024 when Sumit Nagal won a first round match at Kitzbuhel in July 2024 (Lukas Klein).

Who is he playing next?

Argentina's eighth-seed, Juan Manuel Cerundolo, is his opponent in the second round. But the World No. 394 is not scheduled to play more tour-level events, at least for the time being. He wasn't eligible to get a US Open qualifying berth. In fact, the only Indian men's player who is in the qualifying draw is Sumit Nagal.

Kings vs Pakistan, paupers vs big teams: India's hockey reality exposed at World Cup



Colombo. (Agency)

India's men's team would have known exactly what was at stake when they stepped onto the field against Argentina. The women's side, meanwhile, had put up a brave fight throughout their campaign, which came to a heartbreaking end on Sunday, August 23, following a draw against Australia. Yet, few would hold their results against them.

After all, India lost just one game in the entire tournament, against the mighty Netherlands. They drew with China, Australia and England, while also registering a win over South Africa. In retrospect, this campaign could be seen as a step in the right direction for the Indian eves, even if their wait for another World Cup semi-final appearance now stretches beyond 52 years. For the men's team, however, the expectations were entirely different. The kings of Asia came into the tournament hoping to bridge the gap with the world's best and prove that they belonged at the highest level. Confidence was high. The players were ready, while the management was careful not to let expectations spiral out of control. What followed, though, was more than just a reality check for the team. It was a reality check for Indian hockey and its fans. India struggled against the teams ranked above them and, more importantly, failed to beat any of them. They were outclassed by the Netherlands, England and, finally, Argentina, a team that has now scored 23 goals against India in their last five meetings. India did beat Wales and their arch-rivals Pakistan. But Pakistan hockey is currently in a far deeper crisis than Indian hockey. And even against Wales and Pakistan, India's performances were far from convincing or dominant. The margins were narrow, and India often had to dig deep just to hold on for victories. That raises the biggest question of all: How, and when, will India bridge the gap with the world's best?

A French revolution: How France produced badminton world champions

New Delhi. (Agency)

"I am going to walk on the road, and probably no one cares." Alex Lanier had just become a world champion, the first Frenchman to win the men's singles title at the BWF World Championships. A few hours earlier, Thom Gicquel and Delphine Delrue had become France's first badminton world champions, winning the mixed doubles title.

Two gold medals on the same day in New Delhi. A moment that should have changed the way a country looked at badminton. There will be nobody waiting for us, I think," Gicquel said when asked what kind of reception he expected at the airport back home. There was humour in both answers, but also a truth about where French badminton sits in the sporting landscape. France is a country that has produced



football World Cup winners, Grand Tour cyclists, Olympic champions and some of rugby's greatest teams.

Badminton, despite having a substantial playing base, has never occupied that sort of

space in the national imagination. And yet, in the space of a few hours at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium, France produced two world champions. It prompted a congratulatory tweet from French President

Emmanuel Macron. THE LONG BUILD

The French badminton revolution not happen by accident. Nor did it happen in the last two years. The story of French badminton is not about a federation suddenly finding the right coach, or a talented generation appearing from nowhere. It is about a system that has been built, altered and refined for decades, largely without the attention that comes with sporting success.

Ask Cyrille Gombrowicz, the French federation's technical director, when the process began and he does not hesitate. That was when France established its first national centre dedicated to performance. Before that, it was essentially a club sport. The first centre was followed by two other national centres for young players and then nine regional centres for younger athletes.

'Will She Wear It On Eid?'

Kriti Sanon

Trolled For 'Revealing' Raksha Bandhan Ad Outfit, Hurting Hindu Sentiments

Kriti Sanon is facing backlash from a section of social media after appearing in a Raksha Bandhan jewellery advertisement wearing a fusion outfit featuring a bralette-style blouse, a cape and a draped skirt. While some users questioned her outfit for a festive ad, others said it had nothing to do with the festival and called the criticism moral policing. The advertisement also shows Kriti tying a rakhi to a dog after he barks at her. The idea of including a pet in the festival did not go down well with a section of netizens, while others focused on her outfit and questioned whether it was suitable for Raksha Bandhan.

Why Is Kriti Sanon Being Trolled Over Her Raksha Bandhan Ad?

Kriti's outfit soon became a bigger talking point than the ad itself. While some users objected to her look, most others pointed out that dressing differently does not mean disrespecting a festival and said women should not be subjected to such scrutiny.

One went on to ask for a complaint against the Adipurush actress. "A FIR be filed against @kritisanon for perverted portrayal of brother sister festival of rakhi & hurting the dharmik sentiments of hindus u/s 299 BNS— Deliberate & Malicious Acts to insult religious beliefs through visual or electronic means punishment up to 3 years in prison (sic)." Some of the criticism also brought religion into the discussion, with users questioning whether similar outfits would be accepted for festivals such as Eid or Christmas.

Kriti Sanon Fans Rally Behind Her

Not everyone agreed with the criticism. Most came to Kriti's defense and argued that no one — a man or a woman — should have to follow a particular dress code to prove his or her respect for a festival.

One user wrote, "Everyone trolling Kriti Sanon for this GIVA ad, saying she's wearing a 'bikini.' Is she? Nope. She's not dressed inappropriately. Maybe her outfit just doesn't fit your definition of 'decency.' I could wear that in front of my brother too. Same people cheering her bikini scenes in movies are now policing her clothes. Women are judged either way. Get a life, trolls."

Another user said, "Funny how people suddenly become guardians of decency when it comes to women's clothes. If you don't like the outfit, scroll. No need to police someone else's choices." A third one wrote, "Kriti Sanon's Rakhi AD sparks outrage over cleavage & tying rakhi to a dog. Critics questioned her so called 'revealing outfit' during a festival & objected to her tying a rakhi to her pet dog, calling the portrayal inappropriate !! Moral police!"



Ravi Kishan's Daughter Rivva Loves His Meme Era: 'Every Morning, We Talk About Them'



Ravi Kishan's latest brush with internet fame has turned into a source of daily entertainment for his family. The actor-politician has become a popular meme fixture on social media, and his daughter Rivva Kishan says nobody at home is taking the jokes more seriously than necessary. Instead, the family actively searches for the funniest ones and sends them to each other. Rivva, who recently appeared with her father on the reality show Alliance, also addressed a considerably more serious subject during the same conversation: the advantages and pressures that come with being a star kid.

Ravi Kishan's Family Has A Meme Routine

Speaking on a Filmgyan podcast, Rivva revealed that she has been following the memes surrounding her father and thoroughly enjoys the creativity people bring to them.

"Of course, I am watching all of it. I love it. I am proud. We cherish it, celebrate it, and we laugh," she said. The memes have apparently become regular family material. Rivva admitted that whenever she has some free time, she searches social media to see what people have created next. "We keep sharing those meme reels with each other and keep laughing. Every morning, we end up talking about the memes," she added.

For Rivva, the attention isn't something to be embarrassed about. She sees it as another consequence of the long career her father has built through films, television and public life.

Rivva Kishan Addresses The Nepotism Debate

The conversation also turned towards Rivva's own career and the inevitable nepotism discussion surrounding actors born into film families.

Rivva acknowledged that being Ravi Kishan's daughter gives her visibility and makes it easier for people within the industry to know who she is. But she argued that recognition alone cannot sustain a career. "I am my father's daughter. People know that they can approach, but you have to prove yourself. It takes a lot to prove yourself," she said.

Koffee With Karan 9: Salman Khan To Grace Karan Johar's Controversial Talk Show Solo?



Salman Khan is reportedly set to return to Koffee With Karan 9 as the first confirmed guest. The actor may appear solo as the show is expected to stream around Diwali 2026.

Koffee With Karan 9 is expected to return soon, and with the Koffee couch coming back, it will bring back all the gossip, with the show's guest list already making headlines. It has been reported that Salman Khan is all set to mark his return to the reality show. According to Variety, "Salman has confirmed his presence to Karan Johar for the premiere episode. While other details are being ironed out, they are in agreement that Khan should appear solo this year."

Season 9 of Koffee With Karan is reportedly set to start streaming from October-November 2026, during the Diwali season. The report has stated that while several names have been circulating in recent times, Salman is the first guest to have been locked as a confirmed guest on the new season.

About KWK Rumoured Guest List

One of the biggest talking points from the alleged list is the possibility of Aamir Khan, Saif Ali Khan, Farhan Akhtar and Akshaye Khanna sharing the couch. Yes, that's right. We could see a Dil Chahta Hai reunion if this really happens.

The alleged list also has Diljit Dosanjh and Vicky Kaushal as another possible pairing, while Varun Dhawan and Kriti Sanon are reportedly expected to feature together.

If there is one pairing that could send social media into overdrive, it is probably Vijay Deverakonda and Rashmika Mandanna. Others expected to attend the show include Samay Raina, Farah Khan, Kareena Kapoor Khan, Kajol and Jaya Bachchan, Ahaan Panday and Annet Padda.

Speaking recently, Karan Johar confirmed Season 9 of the show. With a smile, he revealed that Season 9 is slated for the Diwali release this year. Launched in 2004, the show has become one of Bollywood's most talked-about platforms, often generating headlines as much for its candid conversations as for the controversies that follow.

Bhumi Pednekar

Stops Posing For Paps As National Anthem Plays At Mumbai Event, Netizens Say 'Respect'

Bhumi Pednekar recently won several hearts with a simple gesture. The actress recently attended an event in Mumbai where she was seen walking towards the paps for photo ops. However, just then, she heard Jana Gana Mana, the

national anthem of India, playing from inside the hall. Instead of continuing to pose for the photographers, Bhumi stopped them and stepped

aside in respect. The video is now going viral on the internet and netizens are praising her. In the clip, Bhumi is seen telling the paps, "Ek second, National Anthem..." She stepped aside and stood respectfully until the National Anthem ended, after which she returned to the red carpet and continued posing for the paparazzi.

The video has received praise from social media users, who applauded Bhumi for showing respect during the National Anthem. One user called her gesture "very sensible" and praised her for it, while another simply wrote, "Respect to her."

Meanwhile, on the work front, Bhumi Pednekar was last in the psychological crime thriller series titled Daldal. It was based on Vish Dhamija's bestselling novel Bhendi Bazaar. She was also seen in Mere Husband Ki Biwi, alongside Arjun Kapoor and Rakul Preet Singh. The film released in 2025.



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NEWS BOX

Chinese Hackers Use DeepSeek To Scale Up Cyberattacks, Researchers Say

WORLD.(Agency)

Chinese hackers are ramping up attacks after integrating DeepSeek and other open-source artificial intelligence models into their operations, highlighting attackers' ability to leverage basic AI tools to hit targets abroad.

State-affiliated cyber groups more than doubled the amount of attacks they carried out since they began delegating mundane tasks to AI and using it to develop advanced malicious software, according to TeamT5, a Taiwanese research firm. Researchers said it wasn't always possible to identify the AI model they used, but in general DeepSeek's offerings are popular with hackers in the country because of its high performance and ability to be customized. Anxieties among US national security officials are mounting over the autonomous capabilities of advanced models from Anthropic PBC and OpenAI after a series of high-profile incidents in which they managed to break out of testing environments. Researchers say experienced Chinese hackers are using far less capable AI to scale up their activities and achieve breakthroughs. While other models produced in the country are more powerful - including Moonshot's breakout Kimi K3 model - hackers are drawn to DeepSeek's relatively lax cybersecurity barriers and low cost of running, researchers said. They added that they had yet to record an incident involving Kimi K3, which they believe is prohibitively expensive for hackers to run. DeepSeek is the AI of choice for Chinese hackers because it's relatively powerful with very low cyber guardrails," said Charles Li, chief analyst at Team T5. "Western models are highly sought-after but their guardrails are much more strict and require a lot more effort to bypass."

French Tourist Dies After Being Trapped In 47 Degrees Celsius In Death Valley

World.(Agency)

A French tourist who became stranded on a remote road in Death Valley -- routinely one of the hottest places on Earth -- died as temperatures soared to a punishing 116F (47C), the US National Park Service said. The vehicle that Pierre Michel Formosa, 68, was using with his travel companion, who was also from



France, got bogged down in mud on August 17. The two men decided to hike across salt flats in an effort to find help, but had only gone around 1.3 miles (two kilometers), when Formosa became unable to continue, the NPS said. The other man carried on and was eventually able to get help from a passing motorist, who alerted authorities. A search-and-rescue mission discovered Formosa a short time later. He was pronounced dead at the scene, the NPS said. "This is a heartbreaking reminder of how quickly conditions here can turn dangerous," said Death Valley National Park Superintendent Mike Reynolds. Death Valley is an extraordinary place, but its heat, distances, and remoteness can be dangerous, regardless of experience. "Death Valley, which lies about 200 miles northeast of Los Angeles, claims lives every year, despite repeated warnings from park authorities to plan ahead when travelling into such a hostile environment."

Armed men ambush patrol in South Sudan, killing two UN peacekeepers

JUBA.(Agency)

Armed men ambushed a patrol traveling to a remote area of South Sudan on Monday, killing two U.N. peacekeepers, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan said. Though violence is rampant in the African country, attacks against peacekeepers are rare. No group immediately claimed responsibility for the attack. Seven others were wounded -- three peacekeepers, two members of the South Sudanese police and two civilian staffers, the mission known as UNMISS said in a statement.

The two peacekeepers killed and three injured were from Ethiopia, U.N. spokesperson Stéphane Dujarric said. The mission said it had deployed a "Quick Reaction Force" to secure the area and support the emergency response after the attack. The patrol was going to the area of Pajut in the state of Jonglei when it came under attack. "Such deadly violence targeting UNMISS personnel who are

serving to support peace in South Sudan is unacceptable," Anita Kiki Gbeho, the head of UNMISS, said in the statement. The killings bring the number of peacekeepers killed by militias since Jan. 1 to nine, Dujarric said, stressing that attacks against U.N. peacekeepers may constitute war crimes under international law.

U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres condemned the ambush "in the strongest possible terms" and called for a prompt investigation that would lead to the prosecution of those responsible, Dujarric said later Monday. "The secretary-general reaffirms the United Nations' commitment to stand with the victims and their families during this profoundly difficult time," the spokesman said. Government troops in South Sudan have been combating fighters and militias loyal to opposition leader Riek Machar, who was suspended last year as vice president as he faces charges of treason and other offenses. Machar says the charges are politically motivated.

Psychologist testifies Lindsay Clancy killed children so they wouldn't be left behind

A prosecution expert testified that Lindsay Clancy was severely mentally ill but not acutely psychotic when she killed her three children, challenging the defense's claim of postpartum psychosis.

KYIV.(Agency)

Lindsay Clancy did not have acute psychosis when she killed her three children but rather took their lives so they wouldn't "suffer" after she took her own life, a forensic psychologist testified Monday in her murder trial. Kirk Heilbrun

said he ruled out acute psychosis with command hallucinations because he didn't believe Clancy when she said she heard a voice telling her to "kill the children so you can kill yourself."

"The way she described this as happening is that she heard a voice that she'd never heard before, experienced a hallucination and she's never experienced it since. But she only experienced it for the 18 minutes or so that it took to kill the children," Heilbrun testified. "To put it mildly, that would be a very, very unusual pattern or manifestation of how this kind of thing comes about. Very unusual."

"A key issue at trial is Clancy's mental health. Defense attorney Kevin Reddington does not dispute that Clancy killed the children in January 2023 but says she shouldn't be held criminally responsible because she had postpartum



psychosis, a rare mental illness linked to the stress, sleep deprivation and hormonal changes that follow childbirth. Clancy didn't want to leave her children behind. After killing her children, Clancy jumped from a second-floor window and remains paralyzed from the waist down. Heilbrun testified that he concluded that Clancy killed her children because she

wanted to kill herself but didn't want to leave them behind. "One of the things that she said when I asked about what happened, is that in the course of strangling each child, she said, 'Go to God, baby. Go to God,'" he said. "That was part of her expectation that she and the children would be together in heaven with God." Heilbrun also mentioned Clancy's Catholic faith, prompting a request for a mistrial from Reddington that Judge William Sullivan denied.

He later instructed the jury to disregard the reference to "the religion that the defendant was raised with," calling it "an absolutely inappropriate area of testimony." Prosecution argues Clancy wasn't suffering from psychosis. Heilbrun is the latest prosecution witness to say that while Clancy was mentally ill, she still knew that what she was doing was wrong.

Six months into Iran war, Hormuz traffic way down, sailors stranded

PARIS, France.(Agency)

Six months since the start of the Middle East war, the strategic Strait of Hormuz remains largely paralysed, with thousands of sailors still stranded in the Gulf and commodity carrier traffic way below its normal level. Only a few transits per day. Before Iran blocked the strait in response to joint US-Israeli strikes in February, around one fifth of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas exports passed through the waterway. Iran's Guards have also warned of a "danger zone" covering 1,400 square kilometres where mines may be present. After Iran closed the strait on March 1, commodity carrier traffic

plummeted to an average of 10 transits per day, compared with a daily average of 95 in February, according to an AFP analysis of data from maritime tracker Kpler.

An agreement signed by the United States and Iran in June led to a temporary rebound to 36 transits per day, before they dropped back to an average of 15 between the resumption of hostilities on July 8 and August 22. New routes, 'dark' transits. Before the war, vessels crossed the strait freely via a route through the centre of the waterway adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). There are now two distinct routes: one to the north, near the Iranian coast

-- the only one approved by Tehran -- and another to the south, between the Omani coast and potentially mined areas. During the relatively calm period between June 17 and July 7, an average of nine ships per day used the Iranian route and eight the Omani one. The rest transited via unidentified routes or the traditional IMO corridor. Ever since the ceasefire collapsed on July 8, two-thirds of transits have become "dark", or unknown, compared with less than one percent before the war, according to Kpler. These transits involve vessels whose exact route cannot be confirmed due to insufficient data stemming from disabled transponders.

Strikes in Gaza kill 4, including 2 children, a week after US asked Israel to curb attacks

Israeli strikes and tank fire killed at least four Palestinians, including two children, in Gaza as residents fled their homes following evacuation warnings, amid efforts to advance the ceasefire.

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip.(Agency)

Palestinian residents of war-battered Gaza fled homes and businesses as Israeli strikes and tank fire killed at least four people Monday, including two children, hospital officials said, a week after a US delegation asked Israel to draw down attacks. After evacuation warnings by Israel's military, a strike hit a building in the Bureij refugee camp in central Gaza. One family was unable to flee and a 4-year-old child was killed, according to Awda Hospital, where he was taken. His mother and sister

were wounded. There was no Israeli military comment.

Israeli strikes hit three other



buildings across the territory after residents said they received evacuation warnings. Some people sprinted away, with mothers carrying children, while others moved amid the rubble in wheelchairs or with canes. Smoke rose over the already devastated landscape. Israel's military said it carried out strikes in the Shati refugee camp in Gaza City and in Deir al-Balah after issuing warnings, targeting what it described as two Hamas weapons storage facilities inside mosques. The military did not provide evidence but

said the facilities contained dozens of "Kalashnikov rifles, magazines and additional military equipment." An earlier Israeli strike on a tent in Deir al-Balah killed a man, according to Al-Aqsa Hospital, where his body was taken. Israel's military said it killed a militant affiliated with Hamas' special forces unit. Others were killed or hurt in Khan Younis in the south. A man was killed and five others were wounded in an Israeli strike in Khan Younis in southern Gaza, according to Nasser Hospital, which received the casualties. And Israeli tank fire hit an area east of Khan Younis, killing a 10-year-old girl, according to the hospital, where her body was taken. Israel's military did not immediately comment on the strike in Khan Younis and said it was not aware of the incident with the child. Israel has continued to carry out targeted killings in the week since a US delegation met with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in an effort to push last year's ceasefire deal forward.

15 per cent decline in Indian students seeking admission to undergraduate courses in US



WASHINGTON.(Agency)

Amid tightening of immigration policies, the number of Indian students seeking admission in US colleges witnessed a 15 per cent decline in 2025-26 over the previous year, a report by a non-profit organisation representing over 1,100 institutions said.

A report released by the Common App shows that although application volume for undergraduate admission in the upcoming 2026-27 academic year rose overall, the number of international applicants through March 1 fell 10 per cent, the steepest decline on record. The report recorded a 15 per cent decrease in applicants from India -- the top source for international students in the US. Earlier, a report by an organisation of educators had said that stricter visa rules and uncertain policy are expected to lead to up to 1.1 lakh fewer registrations of international students in US colleges and universities in Fall 2026.

According to the report by NAFSA and research firm JB International, the registration of international students in Fall 2025-26 was an estimated 11.69 lakh, which has declined this year to 10.57 lakh.

India is the largest source of international students in the US, with over 3.63 lakh enrolling for different courses in the 2024-25 academic year.

According to the report, international students contributed USD 41.77 billion to the local economy in the Fall 2025-26. The same number is projected to be at 38.37 billion in 2026-27. In July, the US government notified new rules eliminating traditional "duration of status" for student and visitor visas, capping the stays at four years, which is the usual duration of an academic course. The US is also considering a USD 100,000 fee on foreign students who wish to use the Optional Practical Training program to work in the United States after their graduation.

Canada to announce retaliatory tariffs as Trump tells its leaders to 'fall in line'

Trump threatened 50% tariffs on Canadian vehicles, auto parts and steel, while Carney said U.S. demands aimed to "destroy" key industries.

TORONTO.(Agency)

Canada will announce retaliatory tariffs against the United States on Tuesday after relations deteriorated sharply Monday, with President Donald Trump telling Canadian leaders to "fall in line" or face consequences "far WORSE" than existing tariffs and Prime Minister Mark Carney accusing Washington of trying to subordinate Canada. Trump also threatened new 50% tariffs on Canadian vehicles, auto parts and steel, while Carney said U.S. trade demands showed Washington

wanted to "destroy our major industries," including autos, steel and aluminum. Finance Minister François-Philippe Champagne and three other Cabinet ministers are scheduled to unveil Canada's response Tuesday morning. Carney said



earlier Monday that Canada may need to move away from matching U.S. tariffs dollar for dollar and instead use more targeted retaliation aimed at protecting Canadian workers and businesses.

"An attitude at the negotiation table that Canada is a subsidiary of the United States"

is "not something we're going to accept," Carney said. Carney was even more blunt in French. "We learned during the negotiations that the Americans want to destroy our major industries, including autos, steel and aluminum," Carney said. "That was one of the main reasons we said no. It was a bad deal." The fiery words from both sides show how U.S.-Canada relations have deteriorated since Carney walked away from trade negotiations with the Trump administration late Friday, triggering the president's threatened 50% tariffs the next day on about \$20 billion worth of Canadian goods. Canada and the United States share one of the world's largest trading relationships, with deeply integrated supply chains across autos, energy, agriculture and manufacturing, making a prolonged trade fight potentially costly for businesses and workers on both sides of the border. Carney cast doubt on the U.S.'s dependability, saying Canada was finding reliable partners "everywhere in the world, except in the United States. Except in the United States. And Russia."