



Identify five cities beyond Bengaluru for industrial growth: CM Shivakumar to officials

BENGALURU. (Agency)

Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Friday directed officials to identify five cities outside Bengaluru for the industrial development “Beyond Bengaluru” across the Karnataka. Speaking at a review meeting of the Commerce and Industries Department, the CM said that the State Government aims to promote industries and create employment opportunities in various cities by offering special incentives and facilities to investors. He directed all the departments concerned to opt the single-window approval system for setting up industries. Further, the CM said the system currently integrates 22 departments and 119 services. They are emphasising on digital and time-bound approvals. “Karnataka is in the ninth place in NITI Aayog’s investor-friendly index... officials must take steps to improve the state’s ranking,” he said. In the meeting, they also discussed measures being adopted by states such as Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh to attract investments.

Naveen Patnaik urges Odisha BJP MPs to reverse changes to mining law

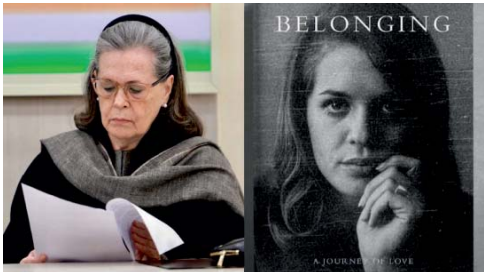
New Delhi. (Agency)

BJD president Naveen Patnaik has written to BJP MPs from Odisha, urging them to seek a reversal of the amendments to the MMDR Act that, he said, would restrict the state government’s powers to levy taxes on mineral rights and mineral-bearing land parcels. In his letter on Saturday, Patnaik also appealed to the ruling party MPs to protect the interests of the people who elected them to Parliament. He said the amendments, passed earlier this month in Parliament as the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2026, would have far-reaching implications for Odisha. Patnaik wrote, "I earnestly appeal to you (BJP MPs) to listen to your conscience and think about the future generations of Odisha. I appeal to you to challenge and call for a reversal of the amendment made in the MMDR Act that takes away the powers of the state government." He also said Parliament is the "highest temple of Indian democracy" and that MPs are the voice of Odisha in this "tallest forum of democracy". In the letter, he said, "The people of Odisha elected you in good faith to protect their interests. It is therefore a matter of utmost concern that you voted in favour of one of the most arbitrary legislations that will have far-reaching adverse implications for the people of Odisha who put their trust in you." Patnaik described August 13, the day the Bill was passed in the Lok Sabha with the support of Odisha BJP MPs, as a "black day" for the state.

"There's Pressure": Congress vs BJP As Penguin India Drops Sonia Gandhi's Memoir

New Delhi. (Agency)

Congress leaders have claimed that Penguin Random House India has been "pressured" to drop Sonia Gandhi's memoir, inviting a sharp response from the ruling BJP. The war of words began after Penguin Random House India on Friday said it was not the publisher of the book, "Belonging: A Journey of Love", days after American publisher Alfred A Knopf, an imprint of Penguin Random House, announced that the memoir would release on November 10. It said it had been keen to publish the memoir throughout "the relevant discussions", but it is their "prerogative and responsibility" to fact-check authors, a statement that came amid reports that the leading publisher backed out after Sonia Gandhi refused "editorial" changes. Gaurav Gogoi, Congress' deputy leader in Lok Sabha, slammed Penguin India's statement and called it "weak". "Such a weak statement. Penguin India is more than happy to publish 'Exam Warriors' and several books on the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh) RSS. No doubt there are those in the BJP government who have now become afraid of a book being read by the people of India," he wrote on X.Senior Congress leader Ashok Gehlot asked Penguin Random House India what was preventing it from publishing the memoir in India when it is being published worldwide by its imprint.



BJP turns PM's 'dimaagi Naxal' remark into memefest to bash Opposition

New Delhi (Agency)

BJP state social media handles have begun tagging and reposting one another in a meme-led campaign against the Opposition. The coordinated push centres on the party's 'Dimagi Naxal' line and signals a wider digital rollout.

The Bharatiya Janata Party’s (BJP) newly constituted social media team appears to be moving towards a more aggressive and coordinated digital campaign, with state units increasingly working together to target the Congress and other Opposition parties through memes, videos, satire and pop-culture references. Over the past three days, several BJP state social media handles have begun quoting, reposting and tagging one another, creating a cross-state amplification strategy around political messaging. The campaign has focused particularly on the BJP’s “Dimagi Naxal” narrative and what the party describes as an ideological battle with the Opposition.The activity comes as BJP national president Nitin Nabin’s new team settles into its organisational responsibilities. The party’s social media operation is being led by national social media convener Deepak

Maske, with state units experimenting with a more collaborative approach to digital campaigning.

The latest push appears to have begun with the BJP’s Jammu & Kashmir handle, which



shared a video featuring Bollywood actors Salman Khan, Sanjay Dutt and Jackie Shroff appearing together on a reality-show stage. The BJP gave the clip a political spin, portraying the actors as representatives of Karnataka, Jammu & Kashmir and Goa BJP units, respectively, and describing them as a

“nightmare” for the “Dimagi Naxal ecosystem”.Madhya Pradesh BJP subsequently joined the exchange, while Delhi BJP posted a video featuring actor Pankaj Tripathi with the message, “Haven’t forgotten us, have you?” The interactions have since developed into a broader meme-based campaign involving multiple state handles.

A NEW WAY OF GENZ OUTREACH? A BJP IT cell functionary said the objective was to bring the party’s state-level social media ecosystem onto a common platform. State handles are being encouraged to amplify one another’s posts and collaborate on content when an issue has relevance beyond an individual state. Party sources said the strategy is aimed not only at increasing reach but also at shaping political conversations across multiple states simultaneously. The BJP is also using scenes from Bollywood and Hollywood films, actors and humorous clips to make political messaging more accessible and shareable, particularly among younger audiences.

AMC’s Strange Predicament: Influx of Adulterated Products During Festive Season

If Traders Adulterate and Customers Demand Rapid Testing, What Will the Food Department Do?

MAHANAGAR METRO

Ahmedabad. With the onset of the festive season, the Food Department of the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) has begun focusing on inspections and preventive measures against adulteration in sweets and dairy products. It is not that the department is completely inactive, but its predictable and routine way of working draws immediate criticism.Typically, the department steps out to catch adulteration only when festivals arrive. However, the laboratory test reports of the suspicious samples collected by officials usually arrive long after the festivals are over. By that time, hundreds of citizens have already consumed the sweets, farsan, and other food items, with several people even falling ill.Adulteration is most rampant in sweets, and spurious ghee is openly sold under the label of pure ghee. Corrupt officials, having received gifts and sweets under the guise of administrative courtesy, often avoid taking strict action even when clear adulteration is detected.There is no doubt that the introduction of rapid test kits aims to curb the sale of adulterated or inedible goods during major festivals like Janmashtami and Diwali, when demand surges. With the help of these

kits, food safety teams can perform on-the-spot preliminary testing of various food items.According to available information, multiple AMC teams are visiting different municipal zones across the city to inspect sweets, farsan, paneer, cheese, and other eatables. These rapid test kits can immediately conduct primary tests on silver foil (vark) on sweets, detect non-edible artificial colors, identify starch in mawa, find vegetable fat in ghee, and detect counterfeit saffron and spurious cashews.Previously, authorities and consumers had to endure long waiting periods for laboratory results, whereas rapid testing now provides immediate primary information on suspicious items right at the spot. Sweet and farsan manufacturing units are currently under special surveillance due to the festive rush.This testing method is crucial for consumers, as it is nearly impossible to judge the quality and purity of sweets merely by looking at them at the time of purchase. On the other hand, it has now become strictly necessary for traders to use only approved raw materials, certified food colors, and maintain mandatory hygiene standards.The AMC’s drive using rapid test kits is expected to ac-



celerate inspections against adulteration across Ahmedabad. Checking everything from cashew foil to mawa and other food products will continue throughout the festive period. In the coming days, close watch will be kept on how many units are caught violating food safety norms and what punitive actions the AMC takes against them. During recent AMC inspections, sweet foil applied to cashews at a confectionery unit in the Kalupur area was tested using the rapid test kit. Initial on-site testing revealed that the foil was made of an unapproved metal instead of pure silver. Following this discovery, authorities took immediate action to seal the concerned unit.Fur-

ther investigation revealed that the manufacturing unit supplying these cashews was located in the Gujarat Housing Board area of Bapunagar, prompting enforcement action at that site as well. However, official samples of the foil have been dispatched for comprehensive laboratory testing, and the final conclusive findings will be confirmed once the official lab report is released. In another action, a mawa storage godown located in Dariyapur within the city's walled area was sealed after inspection teams discovered severe hygiene violations and licensing deficiencies.The AMC Food Department has reiterated that inspections of units manufacturing and selling sweets, farsan, mawa, and other festive food items will continue unabated, and strict legal action will be taken wherever food safety violations are detected.The primary objective behind deploying rapid test kits is not merely to penalize traders, but to ensure that safe, hygienic, and high-quality food products reach consumers during the festive rush. Harmful adulterants—such as unapproved chemical colors in sweets, starch in mawa, and toxic metal foils—pose severe hazards to public health.

Arunachal CM Pema Khandu unveils roadmap for youth-led growth by 2036

Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay moved from his designated chair and sat beside ministers in the Tamil Nadu Assembly. The unusual shift came amid a discussion on officials' presence in the House and broke with established seating practice.

Itanagar(Agency)

Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Saturday unveiled a roadmap to make the state's youth more skilled, entrepreneurial and globally competitive by 2036. He said the Arunachal Human Capital & Economic Transformation Vision 2036 and Arun MSME Mission aim to create new avenues for employment and enterprise across the state. Khandu said the plan seeks to build "a future-ready workforce, globally competitive entrepreneurs, and an innovation-driven economy". He said the journey towards 2036 is aimed at building an economy powered by talent, opportunity and global recognition.According to the chief minister, the vision targets training 1 lakh youths, 10,000 entrepreneurs and

10,000 apprentices, facilitating 10,000 overseas placements, establishing 100 industry partnerships, and transforming all



10 ITIs into modern skill hubs and centres of excellence. He said the focus would be on equipping young people with skills and opportunities that can help them compete not only within

the state and the country, but also in the global marketplace."Today's youth is not only looking for a job, but also looking for employment," Khandu said, underlining the growing entrepreneurial aspirations of young people. "To give strength to this entrepreneurial spirit, we have started the Arun MSME Mission," he said, adding that 500 MSMEs would be supported every year through revival and capacity upgradation, market linkages, capacity enhancement and export assistance.He said transforming all 10 ITIs into modern skill hubs and centres of excellence would provide a stronger foundation for skill development, while partnerships with industries would help align training with emerging employment opportunities. The initiative, he said, would help boost local entrepreneurship, generate.

Special voter enrolment drive to be held in Gurgaon on Aug 29 and 30

Gurgaon.(Agency)

The district administration will hold a special two-day campaign on Aug 29 and 30 as part of Special Intensive Revision (SIR) phase 2 to update and streamline electoral rolls. Deputy commissioner and district election officer Uttam Singh urged residents to complete pending voter-related formalities and ensure their names and details are correctly reflected in the electoral roll. He said booth-level officers (BLOs) will remain available at designated offices to assist voters with registration and other electoral roll-related work. The exercise will include registration of new voters, collection of documents, disposal of pending cases, and online uploading of documents and information, officials said. The administration has particularly appealed to young people who have completed 18 years of age to register as voters. Singh said those who had attained the age of 18 years or above as on July 1, 2026, but had not yet registered as voters, could approach their respective BLOs with the required documents and get their names included in the electoral roll by Aug 30. The administration has also asked voters who have received notices from BLOs regarding incomplete documentation to submit the required documents within the stipulated period. Such residents can contact their nearest BLO during the special campaign and seek correction or updating of their electoral roll details. Singh said an accurate and updated electoral roll was essential for ensuring that every eligible citizen could participate in the democratic process. He appealed to residents to actively participate in the SIR exercise rather than wait for the revision process to conclude.

Noida society feud over entry pass gets messy with 2 FIRs

Noida.(Agency)

A society feud turned ugly this week with two FIRs being filed — one on the complaint of a tenant who accused officials in charge of maintenance of assault and sexual harassment and the other by the maintenance officials accusing the woman of slapping and threatening them. The tenant, a 22-year-old third-year student, has alleged that she and her two male friends were assaulted and threatened by members of the maintenance team of the Greater Noida housing society when she requested them to renew her entry pass on Tuesday. The student, who has lived in the society as a tenant for a year, said she and her friends had gone to the maintenance team's office to obtain the NOC required to renew her entry-exit passes. The visit followed a dispute with the maintenance team that had left her barred from entering the premises three months ago. Societies can't legally bar anyone living lawfully on the compound — such as a tenant with a valid rent agreement — from accessing their home. She returned on Tuesday to have the restriction resolved and renew her pass. That is when the confrontation turned violent, she alleged. "My phone was snatched and broken while I was trying to record the incident to collect evidence. They took me away from the CCTV cameras in the parking area, thrashed me and physically assaulted me. One of them even sat over me, hit me and touched me inappropriately," she alleged. In her complaint at Rabupura police station, she named Shrikant Sharma, Shravan Sisodiya and Pradeep Tomar — all members of the maintenance team. An FIR was registered under BNS sections 115(2) for causing hurt, 351(3) for criminal intimidation, 352 for intentional insult and 74 for using criminal force against a woman.

Pipe breaks, water collects on roads in Sector 12

Noida.(Agency)

Water supply was disrupted for 24 hours from Friday morning in the densely populated Sector 12 after the supply pipeline was damaged. Apart from that, drain covers were reported broken and untended in the sector, which added to sanitation issues. Additionally, dirty, yellowish water was supplied in Sector 40 on Friday, exacerbating the situation. "A major water supply pipe burst near a house in Sector 12 on Friday morning. Water leaked from the damaged part for hours, accumulating on the street and leading to considerable wastage," said Tarsem Chand, president of the plot owners and residents Welfare Association (PORWA) of the sector. Chand wrote to Noida Authority to immediately repair the leak and restore supply for the area. Residents of the sector also complained the drainage infrastructure in the area lacked maintenance. In B Block, drain covers are broken and a dilapidated drain near Block Y has made the area prone to accidents and mosquito-borne diseases. Chand requested the Authority's civil department to conduct urgent repairs, emphasising the health hazards posed by open drains. "A comprehensive survey of Sector 12 is required to address all open drains, and immediate action should be taken to ensure the safety and well-being of residents," he said. Water supply issues were seen 6km away from Sector 12 as well. In Sector 40, residents said supply is inconsistent because of low pressure. When they do get water from the local pump house, it is dirty and yellow. Mohinder Singh, general secretary of the Sector 40 RWA, voiced his frustration over persistent dirty water supply and raised concerns about potential health risks for the community. He called for accountability and demanded an FIR against those who are causing the situation. An official from Noida Authority said they have taken note of both issues and they will be addressed on an urgent basis.

MCG to hire tractor-trolleys, earthmovers amid sanitation strike

Gurgaon.(Agency)

With the sanitation workers' strike entering its 23rd day and garbage piling up across the city, MCG on Friday floated tenders to hire tractor-trolleys and earthmovers to support sanitation operations in each of the city's eight zones. The estimated cost of the project is Rs 8.4 crore. The hired machinery will be used for waste collection, loading, unloading and transportation from different locations and wards to municipal solid waste processing and treatment facilities. The scope of work also includes drain cleaning, lifting garbage from roads, and sweeping, collection and transportation of garden waste. Each zone will have tractors with trolleys and earthmovers, along with drivers and operators. Their operational hours will be decided by MCG or its authorised representative based on requirements, officials said.

"The contractor will be responsible for providing the machinery and bearing the related expenditure. The equipment may



be used for sanitation work, including waste collection and transportation to municipal solid waste processing and treatment facilities," an MCG official said. The contract also requires the agency to collect waste from existing

dustbins from designated points and clean them three times a day. Sanitation work will be carried out every day in residential and commercial areas and green belts along major roads and sectors under MCG.

The scope of work can be increased or reduced proportionately depending on requirements, according to the tender conditions. Officials said the hired fleet will be monitored through technology-based systems. Agencies will have to install GPS devices at their own cost and integrate them with the civic body's integrated command and control centre and GMDA for regular monitoring.

The machinery may be inspected by MCG teams or an authorised representative before deployment. Agencies will also be responsible for vehicle insurance and operating the solid waste management (SWM) portal as required under the contract. The Haryana govt's SWM portal facilitates maintaining sanitation-related records.

"We want to strengthen our sanitation machinery and improve waste collection and transportation across the city's eight zones. The earthmovers will also support drain cleaning and other heavy-duty sanitation operations that cannot be efficiently carried out manually," the official said.

The Wedding Invitation of the One I Once Prayed For

Mahanagar Metro Desk
Author: Rupesh Solanki

The Wedding Invitation of the One I Once Prayed For (Author: Rupesh Solanki) — Some pieces of paper are not merely pieces of paper... Some words are not merely words... And some wedding invitations do not arrive as invitations to a marriage, but as a final letter of separation, written upon someone's heart. That day, a wedding invitation came into my hands. I opened the envelope, and my eyes fell upon the first name... It was the same name that once found its way into my prayers; but today, my name was not written beside it. The wedding invitation of the one I had wished for in life had arrived in my hands. The letters on the invitation were beautiful, but slowly, those letters began to blur before my eyes. Because I was not reading the date of the wedding; I was searching for the dates of our unfinished conversations. I remembered that innocent smile from our first meeting, the hesitation hidden in those eyes, our long conversations, those little complaints, those unspoken promises, and the countless dreams we had seen about the future... Who knew then that one day I would have to sit



holding someone else's wedding invitation, surrounded by the ashes of those very dreams? Love is not always about being able to have someone. Sometimes, love means preserving someone so sincerely within your heart that even when that person is no longer a part of your life, their memories remain an inseparable part of it. You did not become mine, but your memories remained mine. Perhaps our paths were always meant to part. Perhaps someone else's name was written in your destiny, while my share was only your memories. Yet even today, my heart asks a question— "If you were never meant to be mine in the end, then why did you ever come into my life?" I still do not have an answer to that question. The wedding invitation was in my hands, and thousands of questions were in my mind. Yet I did not want even

one of those questions to reach you. Because you were now going to become someone else's life partner. And sometimes, true love considers the happiness of the person we love greater than our own right to have them. So, I closed the invitation. I took a deep breath. And all I said to myself was— "Wherever you are, may you always be happy... If not with me, then so be it. May that same smile always remain on your face, even if it is with someone else." Those words were easy to say, but just as difficult to accept. It is not easy to convince the heart. The heart does not follow logic; it follows emotions. Sometimes I wonder—if circumstances had been a little different, if fate had supported us a little more, if time had been a little kinder to us, perhaps my name would have been written beside yours on that invitation. But there is no place in life for the word "if." What has happened must eventually be accepted. Some people move away from us, yet they never truly leave our hearts. They do not become our life partners, but they become memories that remain with us for a lifetime. You are one such memory. Today, perhaps you are placing your hand in someone else's



hand and beginning a new chapter of your life. And me? I am quietly closing one page of my unfinished story. But not the entire story... Because some stories never truly end; they simply leave the realm of a living relationship and find a place in the book of memories. Your wedding invitation may have been an invitation to me, but to my heart, it was the final chapter of our love. I will no longer wait for you. But I will always pray for your happiness. Because I may not have succeeded in making you mine, but I truly loved you with all my heart—and that truth will always remain with me. The wedding invitation of the one I once prayed for had arrived in my hands... And along with that invitation, my unfinished love story came alive once again in my heart.

Typhoid cases rise following monsoon, doctors flag water contamination amid waterlogging

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Doctors in the city are reporting a noticeable rise in typhoid and other prolonged fever cases following monsoon, with waterlogging, sewage contamination and poor sanitation increasing the risk of water- and food-borne infections. However, physicians said typhoid has not overtaken dengue or malaria as the predominant confirmed monsoon infection, with dengue cases also showing an upward trend after recent heavy rains. Dr Tushar Tayal, associate director of internal medicine at CK Birla Hospital, said, "During this period, contamination of drinking water and food becomes more common as sewage and dirty water can mix with water sources. Poor sanitation and consumption of unhygienic food further add to the risk." Dr MK Singh, director and senior consultant of internal medicine at Narayana Hospital, said the hospital had seen a large number of fever patients since the monsoon began. "Typhoid cases have also increased, with some being culture positive, while dengue cases have risen over the past week following the heavy rains," he said. According to Singh, contamination of food and water was the main reason behind the rise in typhoid, while the



increase in dengue was linked to a rise in mosquito vectors following rainfall. Though typhoid numbers are not reported to the health department like dengue or malaria, doctors said they are seeing four to five cases a week, compared with just one to two a month earlier this year. Monsoon creates favourable conditions for transmission of salmonella typhi, particularly when heavy rain and waterlogging increase the possibility of sewage entering or contaminating drinking water sources. Poor hand hygiene and consumption of contaminated food or water can further facilitate transmission. Doctors, however, cautioned against assuming

that every prolonged fever during the monsoon is typhoid. Dr Shivam Sharma, senior consultant, internal medicine at Max Hospital, said the hospital was seeing more patients with prolonged fever and gastrointestinal symptoms during monsoon, but typhoid had not emerged as the predominant confirmed monsoon infection. "Dengue cases have been steadily increasing locally, with 30 confirmed cases reported in the district as of Aug 26, while malaria cases remain comparatively lower," he said. Typhoid continues to be an important cause of prolonged fever, particularly among patients with persistent fever, abdominal discomfort, diarrhoea or constipation and

weakness, Dr Sharma said, stressing the need for appropriate testing before starting treatment. He described the increase in typhoid as "noticeable rather than a dramatic surge," adding that its magnitude could vary across hospitals and localities. At the same time, Dr Sharma said the city was seeing favourable conditions for mosquito-borne diseases. Warm and humid weather, coupled with stagnant water following rainfall, can support mosquito breeding and contribute to the rise in dengue cases. Doctors said the overlap in symptoms of dengue, malaria, typhoid and viral infections makes clinical evaluation important, and that persistent fever should not be self-treated with antibiotics without establishing the likely cause. On prevention, Dr Tayal advised residents not to ignore persistent fever, particularly when accompanied by weakness, headache, abdominal discomfort or loss of appetite, and recommended safe drinking water, hand hygiene and avoiding food from unhygienic sources. Singh advised avoiding exposed food, consuming safe drinking water — preferably boiled or RO water — wearing full-sleeved clothing during the daytime, and using mosquito repellents to reduce exposure to dengue-transmitting mosquitoes.

NEWS BOX

2026 FIH World Cup: India men lose in shoot-out to finish eighth



BENGALURU. (Agency)

A horrible facial injury to Manpreet Singh in the fourth quarter — a mistimed close-range shot caught him flush near the eye when he was one of the covering defenders — marred the seventh-eighth World Cup play-off match between India and Belgium. As soon as the ball hit his face, he laid down and was writhing in pain even as players from both teams and the on-field referees immediately signalled for the doctors to hurry. Once he left the field of play, the mop up operation began as there was some blood on the blue canvas. Minutes after that, India conceded the third of a wild game. Just when the hosts thought they had won the game, India sounded the board via Harmanpreet Singh at the death to send the game into a shoot-out which the hosts won to seal seventh spot. There are two ways to look at India's performance. The easiest way to look at their performance is through their rankings. The eighth ranked team in the world finishing eighth at the World Cup? There's some kind of cold logic to that. But peel back the layers and it immediately stops making sense. If the women's team has played with a lot of heart and gumption and a proper identity over the last two weeks, the men's team has been a mess. Their games have been marked by chaos, confusion, a porous defence and, most worryingly, at least from the outside, a lack of fitness. At one point in Friday's game against Belgium, India had the cardinal sin of having 11 outfield players and the captain was promptly sent to the bin for 10 minutes. A schoolboy error. Ever since Craig Fulton took the job over three years ago, the South African has always sought to control games against elite opposition. At the 2024 Olympics, for example, this was the way they won bronze. There was a set system in place, there was a place for flair as long as the system tolerated it. It was the Pep Guardiola school of coaching but it worked.

Pakistan coach Sarfaraz Ahmed denies players knew of England tour boycott threat



New Delhi. (Agency)

Pakistan head coach Sarfaraz Ahmed has denied having any knowledge of the reported threat from the Pakistan Cricket Board to halt the England tour over a Sky Sports interview featuring the sons of former captain and Prime Minister Imran Khan. Sarfaraz insisted that his attention remained firmly on the ongoing second Test at Lord's. The controversy erupted during the lunch break on the opening day after Sky Sports broadcast an interview with Kasim and Sulaiman Khan, who spoke about their father's health and treatment in prison. Speaking after the second day's play, Sarfaraz said neither he nor his players were aware of the reported dispute between the PCB and the England and Wales Cricket Board. Asked whether there had been any possibility of Pakistan refusing to return for the afternoon session on Day 1, Sarfaraz replied, "All are OK. We were having lunch at that time." The PCB is understood to have raised the possibility of cancelling the Lord's Test and abandoning the remainder of the three-match series if the interview was aired. Sky Sports initially delayed the segment after receiving a complaint but eventually broadcast the pre-recorded interview.

PCB-SKY SPORTS ROW OVERSHADOWS LORD'S TEST

The interview was conducted by former England captain Michael Atherton and featured Imran Khan's sons discussing their concerns about their father's health, security and treatment. They also criticised the response of Imran Khan, 73, has been imprisoned since 2023 on corruption charges that he denies. Before entering politics, he enjoyed a distinguished 21-year international career and captained Pakistan to their only men's ODI World Cup triumph in 1992.

Beyond the numbers, Sri Lanka offered India a new grammar against spin

SL vs IND: Devdutt Padikkal's breakthrough in Sri Lanka has offered India a potential blueprint for tackling turning pitches. But with tougher challenges still ahead, the real test will be whether the left-hander and India can sustain that approach.

New Delhi. (Agency)

For much of the past two years, India's batting against spin has looked strangely uncertain in the conditions where it was once most at home. Batters raised on turning pitches began playing as though every delivery contained a trap, feet rooted, options narrowed, pressure allowed to build. The warning signs were impossible to miss. New Zealand's 3-0 sweep in 2024 exposed a batting order that had lost its old

fluency against spin. South Africa's 2-0 win a year later deepened the concern, as India's batting average sank to 15.23 and Simon Harmer took 17 wickets at under nine runs apiece. India were no longer making the bowler think twice. Too often, they were allowing the bowler to dictate the terms.

SL vs IND 2nd Test Day 5: Highlights

There was a time when Indian Test batting treated spin as a basic skill, not a special case. Use the feet. Play late. Work the ball into gaps. Stay long enough to make the bowler think twice. That discipline had not disappeared entirely, but it had become harder to find when India needed it most. New Zealand's spinners took 81 of the 112 wickets that fell in the 2024 series, with Ajaz Patel claiming 15 and Mitchell Santner 13 in a single Test. India were bowled out for 263 and 121 in Mumbai, with their senior batters offering no answer. The deeper concern was never just about individuals. India seemed to have lost

something collective — a shared method that once made them so difficult to beat on turning tracks. Replacing players is one thing. Rebuilding a batting culture is



another.

SRILANKA TESTS GIVE HOPE

The Sri Lanka series did not answer every question. The attack was not as severe, the pitches were not as hostile and the conditions were less punishing than those that produced India's home collapses. But the series offered something India had been missing: a sense of order.

At the centre of that was Devdutt Padikkal, who gave the No. 3 position a clarity it has lacked for some time. Padikkal finished with 328 runs in three innings at an average of 109.33, including 167 in Galle and 117 in Colombo. Dhruv Jurel added 173, Rishabh Pant 168 and KL Rahul 135. Even with quieter returns from Yashasvi Jaiswal and Shubman Gill, India posted 462 in the first Test and 503 for 9 in the second. Those numbers mattered, but not simply because they were big. Padikkal was not carrying the batting order on his own. India had several meaningful contributors, and they did so in different ways.

The second Test offered the clearest evidence. India were 300 for five when Jurel and Pant began rebuilding the innings. Pant's 63 changed the tempo, Jurel's unbeaten 115 provided the stability, and the lower order contributed enough to stretch Sri Lanka's workload. Jurel and Pant added 112 for the seventh wicket, and Jurel then shepherded the tail as India moved beyond 500 before declaring at 503 for 9.

Pakistan only as good as 2nd division county team: Ex-captain offers brutal take

ENG vs PAK: Michael Vaughan has delivered a brutal assessment of Pakistan's batting after their latest collapse at Lord's. The former England captain compared the visitors to a second-division county side and questioned whether they are meeting Test-match standards.

London. (Agency)

Pakistan's batting struggles in England have reached a point where former England captain Michael Vaughan believes the visitors are barely producing the standard expected of a Test-match side. After another collapse at Lord's, Vaughan compared the current Pakistan batting unit to a second-division county lineup. Pakistan were bowled out for just 110 in their first innings of the second Test, adding to the disappointment of their innings-and-53-run defeat in the series opener. Speaking on BBC Test Match Special, Vaughan questioned whether Pakistan's batters were capable of putting enough pressure on England's bowlers. "But this is Pakistan batting. Is it second division county cricket? There's no way that they are batting in any standard to

say that, that is a Test match batting lineup," Vaughan said. The comparison came after Pakistan's top order once again



failed to provide England with a serious challenge. Babar Azam, returning to the side after injury, scored only eight, while Abdullah Shafique, Shan Masood and Mohammad Rizwan also departed in single figures. Azan Awaiz offered the most resistance with 46, but Pakistan's total left England with a huge advantage

and their bowlers with little reason to ease off.

WHY VAUGHAN MADE THE COMPARISON

Vaughan's criticism was not directed at England's bowling, which he felt had been impressive, but at the lack of resistance from Pakistan's batting. "You're not going to get hurt. There's no batter that's going to hurt them. No one's going to damage their figures, and it's really, 'roll up, roll up, who wants to get the wickets?'," he said. Vaughan suggested England's bowlers can attack relentlessly because Pakistan are unlikely to make them pay for taking risks. "I think they all know that Pakistan aren't going to get big scores. So you're only going to be out there for 40 to 50 overs, so you give everything in every spell, you keep going to Joe Root saying, 'Err, I'll bowl another one.'

India's Asian Games-bound runner Abhishek Pal served NADA notice over doping

New Delhi. (Agency)

Asian Games-bound distance runner Abhishek Pal has landed in a doping controversy after being served a notice by the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) over an apparent violation. Pal has not been handed a provisional suspension at this stage, leaving his participation at the upcoming Asian Games uncertain. Pal features in India's 72-member athletics squad for the Games in Japan and is scheduled to compete in the 5000m and 10,000m. According to a source familiar with the development, a banned substance was detected in a very small quantity in his sample. "A banned substance has been found in a very small amount in his dope sample and he has been served a notice by the NADA," the source told PTI on

condition of anonymity. The substance involved is understood to potentially be a female fertility drug, making the circumstances of the case particularly unusual. "The banned substance is also



something surprising. I am sure he will request the NADA for an investigation," the source added. Pal is expected to seek an early resolution, given the proximity of the Asian Games.

Until the matter is examined and a decision is taken, his status with the Indian contingent remains uncertain.

PAL'S ASIAN GAMES SPOT UNDER CLOUD

The NADA notice comes shortly after Pal put together an impressive domestic campaign. He won the 10,000m title and finished second in the 5000m at the National Inter-State Championships in June. He also has international experience, having secured a bronze medal in the 10,000m at the 2023 Asian Championships. Pal has additionally spent time training in the United States as he has worked towards establishing himself at the international level. His selection for both distance events at the Asian Games was a reward for that recent form. The doping notice, however, could now force him to deal with an issue away from the track just weeks before the competition.

Aryna Sabalenka eyes dream US Open hat-trick, but shaky form raises questions



New Delhi. (Agency)

Aryna Sabalenka arrives at Flushing Meadows chasing something that very few women in the Open Era have achieved: three consecutive US Open singles titles. The world No. 1 lifted the trophy in New York in 2024 and 2025, and victory this year would place her alongside an elite group of champions who have dominated the tournament across generations.

But for all the weight of history behind her pursuit, Sabalenka's biggest challenge may not be the record books. It could be herself. The Belarusian began 2026 in extraordinary fashion, winning Indian Wells and Miami to complete the Sunshine Double. She won 26 of her first 27 matches of the season and appeared to have established herself. Since April, however, the picture has changed dramatically. Sabalenka is 17-7 in that period and has failed to reach another final. Her latest setback came in Cincinnati, where 20-year-old Czech Sara Bejlek stunned her 7-6(7), 6-4 in the Round of 16. Sabalenka led in both sets but could not close the match, a defeat that further exposed the vulnerability that has crept into her game.

CAN SABALENKA JOIN ELITE COMPANY

Sabalenka's ambition is enormous because the achievement itself is so rare. In the Open Era, Chris Evert and Serena Williams are the only women to win at least three consecutive US Open singles titles. Evert won four in succession from 1975 to 1978, while Williams completed her three-peat from 2012 to 2014. herself as the player to beat on hard courts. Sabalenka therefore has an opportunity to create a piece of history that would elevate her US Open legacy considerably. She has already established herself as one of the tournament's most reliable players,

Erling Haaland urges trust on Enzo Maresca's Man City after big 4-1 win vs Palace

New Delhi. (Agency)

Erling Haaland has urged Manchester City to give Enzo Maresca time as the new manager's ideas begin to take shape following a 4-1 win over Crystal Palace. The victory gave City maximum points from their opening two Premier League games and offered further encouragement after their difficult start. City had lost to Arsenal in the Community Shield before responding with consecutive league wins, with Rayan Cherki and Haaland both scoring twice at Selhurst Park. Speaking after the match, Haaland stressed that City are still learning how to get the best out of a revamped squad under their new manager. We have to keep on playing together and find out where we are best and how to play," Haaland said. "We have so many good players and we have to fit everyone in. We have to keep

going." The Norwegian's comments underline the adjustment still required at

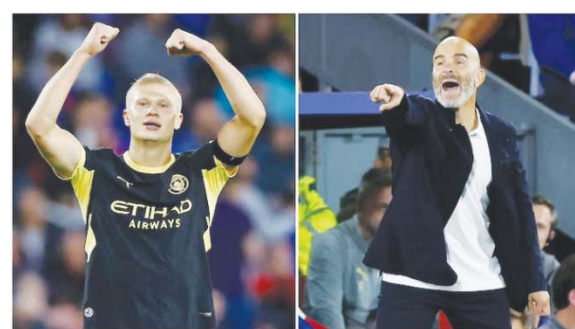
City, with Maresca attempting to establish his methods while integrating players arriving from different stages of their seasons.

HAALAND: CITY NEED TIME TOGETHER

Haaland pointed to Cherki's unusual pre-season situation, with the Frenchman having played at the World Cup only weeks before joining up with City, as an example of why the squad needs time.

"I think in the start of the season, it was barely pre-season for everyone. Rayan just five weeks ago was playing in the World Cup, so it's a step up and we take it game by game," he said. The striker also highlighted Elliot Anderson's performance and called for City to continue building their

understanding rather than expecting immediate perfection. "It's a right step in the



right direction from everyone. Elliot was incredible. We have to build on this," Haaland added. He also made clear that the players remain committed to Maresca's approach. "We know what to do and need to

trust the system and trust Enzo in what he wants us to do."

MARESCA'S CITY BEGIN TO FIND THEIR RHYTHM

City were made to work for their win after Palace started brightly, but Haaland's 17th-minute header gave the visitors the lead. An unfortunate Gianluigi Donnarumma own goal briefly brought Palace level before Cherki struck twice in five minutes to swing the game firmly City's way. Haaland completed the scoring in the 85th minute, continuing his strong start while giving Maresca another glimpse of the attacking depth at his disposal. Maresca admitted the opening spell had been difficult but was pleased with how City eventually took control.



The politics of religious 'purification'

A couple of days after Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge addressed a public gathering at Ramlila Maidan in Haldwani, Uttarakhand, on August 8, members of a right-wing group, reportedly Shri Ram Sena, conducted a ritualistic purification ceremony at the site where Kharge had delivered his speech. The act was widely criticised, with many seeing it as a reminder of the persistence of caste prejudice and notions of ritual purity and pollution. The incident also prompted questions about whether such an act could fall within the scope of laws dealing with untouchability and atrocities against the Scheduled Castes. Whatever its precise legal character, the episode is troubling because it appears to revive a notion that the presence or touch of a person belonging to a historically marginalised caste can render a place impure and in need of purification.

The incident, however, should not be viewed in isolation. There have been several instances in the past in which places or objects associated with Dalit leaders or visitors have reportedly been subjected to purification rituals. These include the purification of a statue inaugurated by Union Minister Jagjivan Ram in 1978, a temple purification following a visit by Bihar Chief Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi in 2014, and reported instances involving Munni Devi in Kanpur in 2016 and Manisha Anuragi, a sitting Dalit BJP MLA in Uttar Pradesh, in 2018. The Haldwani incident involving Mallikarjun Kharge, therefore, brings back a question that India has confronted repeatedly: how deeply have notions of ritual purity and pollution associated with caste survived despite the constitutional abolition of untouchability? The cases involving prominent public figures naturally receive attention because they are visible. But similar experiences may be faced by ordinary people in less visible ways. In all, there were as many as 55,865 atrocities registered against members of Scheduled Castes in 2024 alone. Pakistan already faces formidable internal-security pressures; Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan violence, Baloch militancy, Pashtun discontent and the unresolved confrontation surrounding Imran Khan. The former PM's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party continues to command substantial political loyalty and is planning another nationwide mobilisation in September. The idea of ritual purity and pollution has a long history in parts of the Hindu social order. Ancient dharmashastras and smritis contain several prescriptions concerning contact with those regarded as outside the caste order. The Vishnu Smriti was one of the earliest to refer to the need for purification after contact with a chandala or outcaste (asprushya). The Manusmriti prescribed bath after contact with a chandala, with the touching of food or earthen vessels requiring them to be thrown away and metal vessels scrubbed with ashes. The Apastamba Dharmasutra and Gautama Dharmasutra go beyond touch: if a chandala's sight falls on another person, that person must look at the sun to purify. If spoken to, the person must converse with a Brahmin or recite a specific Vedic mantra to cleanse themselves. Thus the Kharge incident is not an isolated one, but an inherent outcome of Brahmanical religious, ethical and legal codes, in which high castes are considered victims. Kharge's case may have been picked up deliberately because he chose egalitarian Buddhist ideology, not iniquitous Brahmanism. It is important to distinguish between the historical existence of such prescriptions and the beliefs and practices of contemporary Hindu society. Hindu traditions have themselves undergone considerable change, and millions of Hindus do not subscribe to notions of untouchability or caste-based exclusion. The Constitution, social reform movements and generations of struggles against discrimination have profoundly altered the social landscape.

Munir holds all the aces in Pakistan

The US won't protest if the Field Marshal keeps ex-PM Imran Khan in jail

FIELD Marshal Syed Asim Munir has a complete hold over Pakistan. Without declaring martial law, he has ensured that all Pakistani institutions bend before him. The elected government led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has become his willing instrument. Knowing that Munir will never allow ex-PM and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Imran Khan to leave prison, the government has shown disdain for the Supreme Court's recent order on Imran. Significantly, the Army's spokesperson, intruding into the judiciary's domain, has stated that constitutional duties take precedence over basic rights. The latest manifestation of Munir's control over Pakistan was the government's defiance of the Court's order that Imran be transferred to a private hospital and his personal doctor be allowed to attend to him. Imran was instead taken to the state-run Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences. Consequently, he was brought back to prison. However, the government followed the Court's directions permitting one of his sisters to meet him once a week and allowing him to talk to his UK-based sons. A contempt petition has been filed before the Court, but it has been posted for hearing in mid-September! Pakistan's judiciary has almost always kneeled before the Army. It is unlikely to adopt a pro-Imran position now because Munir will simply not tolerate any move to "dilute" Imran's imprisonment. Hence, Indian analysts who saw the initial Court decision as a sign of a shift in the wind in Pakistan were premature in their assessment. Indeed, Munir has moved systematically to augment his power ever since PTI supporters rioted against the Army on May 9, 2023. On that day, Imran was arrested when he had gone to the Islamabad High Court in connection with a corruption case against him. Munir first targeted those Army officers whose loyalty he doubted. Among those he removed was the Lahore Corps Commander, Lt Gen Salman Fayyaz Ghani. The message to the Army was clear: any sympathy towards Imran, who was then certainly Pakistan's most popular politician, would not be tolerated. All officers fell in line. With the Army in his firm grip, Munir attempted to control the country's political reins. In the 2024 elections, PTI candidates contested as independents but performed surprisingly well. Munir, however, ensured that the



Sharifs, supported by the Bhutto-Zardari family, formed the government under Shehbaz. Unlike his elder brother Nawaz Sharif, who wished to act independently as PM and control Pakistan's critical foreign policy as well as security policy, Shehbaz was willing to make himself subservient in all respects to Munir. This meant that Munir's stranglehold on the country tightened tremendously. Ironically, what made him the supreme figure in his country was the impact of India's Operation

cessation of hostilities occurred bilaterally after Pakistan approached India for this purpose. No wonder Trump was not pleased with India. He invited Munir to the White House for an unprecedented luncheon meeting in June 2025. He also dubbed him as his favourite Field Marshal.

That cemented Munir's position in Pakistan. He began to accompany Shehbaz for meetings with world leaders. Whatever may be the protocol, it was apparent that the world recognised Munir as the boss of Pakistan. This was also demonstrated when he emerged as a key diplomat and acted as Pakistan's main channel of communication between the US and Iran. Shehbaz, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar and Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, who were also engaged in the mediation process, played secondary roles. Certainly, it was only Munir who had credibility both in Washington DC and Tehran. The Pakistani system therefore praised Munir's role when the US and Iran agreed upon the 14-point Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in June. It collapsed by July and now the US has launched Operation Economic Outcast against Iran.

Significantly, there are sections of the Iranian government, including President Masoud Pezeshkian, that seem willing to enter into a deal with the US to end the war. However, this stance is being resisted by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, while Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei's position is unclear. Even Trump, despite his attempt to reduce Iran's economy to subsistence level if it does not agree to a deal of his choice, wants the war to end.

It is at this sensitive juncture that Munir travelled to Tehran and met the Iranian leadership earlier this week. There can be little doubt that he would have received America's approval before proceeding to Iran.

The Iranian hardliners are firm on their demands on the Strait of Hormuz and the implementation of the MoU. While Munir may not have currently made any headway in mediation, he will retain the goodwill of the US and the West. This means that they would not put pressure on Pakistan over Imran. The former PM will continue to languish in jail. And Munir will remain Pakistan's unchallenged boss in the foreseeable future.

Visits set stage for a weighty season of diplomatic dialogues

In a fragmented international system, simply keeping channels open matters. Much can be learnt from CIA Director John Ratcliffe's recent visit to Moscow

A season of consequential diplomacy appears to be on hand as signals emerge from several directions at once. The unannounced visit of CIA Director John Ratcliffe to Moscow, where he held talks with Russian intelligence officials is perhaps the brightest flare. The Kremlin confirmed the meetings while noting that Ratcliffe did not meet President Vladimir Putin. That distinction may be less important than the visit itself. At a time when US-Russia relations remain deeply strained, the fact that the CIA chief travelled to Moscow is significant. As the Kremlin noted, intelligence channels often remain open even during the darkest phases of diplomacy.

India, meanwhile, is moving on multiple diplomatic tracks. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's visit to Moscow included a meeting with Putin and the delivery of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's personal message. More significantly, Jaishankar said Modi looks forward to meeting Putin at the forthcoming Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in Kyrgyzstan this month-end and to welcoming him to India for the BRICS summit soon after.



Then there is the China channel. National Security Adviser Ajit Doval's talks with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi focused on border issues and the broader bilateral relationship. Beijing described the discussions as comprehensive, candid and friendly, while both sides announced steps to manage the border more effectively as they work towards a political solution. Coming ahead of a likely visit by President Xi Jinping—and

amid continuing efforts to stabilise India-China relations after years of border tensions—the timing is difficult to ignore. Taken together, these developments suggest that the diplomatic calendar is indeed becoming consequential. The forthcoming SCO and BRICS summits offer platforms where countries that may disagree sharply on major geopolitical questions can still meet, talk, test possibilities and build consensus. In a fragmented international system, simply keeping these channels open matters. For India, this is a particularly important. New Delhi has consistently pursued strategic autonomy maintaining strong ties with Washington and Moscow while simultaneously managing a difficult but important relationship with Beijing. And across the Global South, countries are asserting greater agency in shaping a more diverse and genuinely multipolar international order.

Amid this change, the willingness to talk creates space for de-escalation and greater understanding. Dialogue creates possibilities that confrontation cannot. A season of deliberative diplomacy, it seems, has arrived.

Fear and loathing in Great Britain

Anti-social behaviour is continuing to shape how people experience their neighbourhoods. As British gangland changes shape, the question is whether the definition of crime needs to change too.

Britain has a strange crime problem. According to the statistics, much of it is getting better. According to the public, almost everything is getting worse.

A new study from the Policy Institute at King's College London has found that Britons dramatically overestimate the scale of crime and routinely get its direction of travel wrong. The median estimate of the proportion of people experiencing crime in England and Wales in 2024-25 was 27 percent. The actual figure was 9.7 percent.

The mistakes continue down the list. Eighty-three percent thought mobile phone theft had increased since 2010, when it has actually fallen by about 70 percent. Majorities believed domestic burglary and vehicle theft had risen, although both have fallen by roughly half. Only shoplifting among the five offences tested had substantially increased over that period—by about 70 percent—and that was the one the public got right.

Professor Bobby Duffy, director of the King's Policy Institute, puts it bluntly: "The public are very wrong about crime." But that is not quite the end of the story. The latest official figures are more complicated than the headline 'Crime is falling' suggests. The Office for National Statistics stresses that the Crime Survey for England and Wales and police-recorded crime measure different things and have different strengths. The survey is particularly useful for long-term trends, while police data are preferred for offences such as homicide, robbery and weapons offences. Nor is every category falling. Shoplifting has risen sharply over the longer term, even though the latest figures show a fall. Fraud and computer misuse remain enormous problems. Anti-social behaviour continues to shape how people experience their neighbourhoods.

There is also a more prosaic version of the unease. Stories abound of apparently respectable men and women walking into shops, filling bags with expensive bottles of wine and other goods, and simply walking out without paying. Staff may know what is happening but hesitate to intervene, fearing confrontation or violence. The British Retail Consortium recorded about 1,600 incidents of violence and abuse against shopworkers every day in 2024-25, although that was itself a 20 percent fall.

And there is another question that the King's study does not answer: has the nature of British crime changed even as conventional crime has declined? The old British gangland had recognisable geography and recognisable characters. It lived in pubs, clubs, betting shops and East End streets. Today's organised crime can be harder to see. The National Crime Agency says the overall threat from serious and organised crime increased last year, with technology transforming the scale and reach of criminal activity and criminal markets increasingly converging. The gangland has not necessarily disappeared. It may have changed its clothes.

Drugs, fraud, people-smuggling, cybercrime and illicit finance cross borders with an ease the Kray brothers, Britain's notorious gangsters, could scarcely have imagined. The NCA says global criminal groups are increasingly diversifying and collaborating, while technological change is reducing barriers to offending.

This is where London becomes important. Talk to people in parts of east London and you will hear claims that the

old local gangland has been replaced by Albanian, Russian and other international networks. Those claims need testing rather than simply repeating. But the broader phenomenon is real: organised crime is increasingly international, networked and technologically enabled.



And it is not confined to deprived neighbourhoods. London's enormous legitimate economy, property market and financial system can provide opportunities for criminal money to mingle with respectable wealth. The

modern gangland may be less visible precisely because it can operate behind legitimate businesses, property and international financial transactions.

Then there is the question of trust. The King's study found that 35 percent of the public have no confidence at all in the government's ability to deal with crime. Among people who wrongly believe murder has increased, the figure rises to 48 percent. Sixty-five percent expect crime to rise nationally over the next three years, although only 40 percent expect it to rise in their own area.

That distinction is revealing. People may feel that Britain is becoming more dangerous even when their own street does not feel that way. Duffy believes psychology and information interact. "We have a deep negativity bias that tunes us to threat, and a rosy view of the past that makes us assume things were safer in the past than they were." He adds that when people give inflated estimates of crime, "they're sending a message about what worries them".

This is where Britain's increasingly bitter arguments about immigration, race, policing and 'two-tier justice' enter the picture. King's found that 52 percent believe ethnic or religious minorities are sentenced differently for crimes from others. Misperceptions about the nationality and ethnicity of offenders are particularly pronounced among Reform UK supporters. None of this means that people should be told their fears are imaginary. Perception is not evidence of a crime wave, but neither is it irrelevant. It tells us something about the society in which people believe they are living.

Prepping yourself up for your second Trimester

So you've got past the first three months somehow and also dealt with the dreaded morning sickness.

While most women heave a sigh of relief because symptoms of nausea usually lessen after the first trimester, there are a new set of demands that will come your way once you enter your second trimester. Here's what to expect...

- As your morning sickness gets lesser and lesser, you will start wanting to eat more and more. Make sure that instead of piling your plate with junk food, you have healthy portions of fresh fruits and vegetables.

- You'll also feel less tired than you did in the

first three months. Use this time wisely and embark on an easy and regular fitness program. This is also the time when you can start planning your baby's nursery, slowly start buying things that you will need post delivery, etc.

- In the first three months, your baby grows slowly. However, in the second trimester, your baby begins to grow quite fast. Thanks to the Internet and the plethora of mobile apps, you can actually keep track of your baby's growth — you

can see how it changes and grows every week.

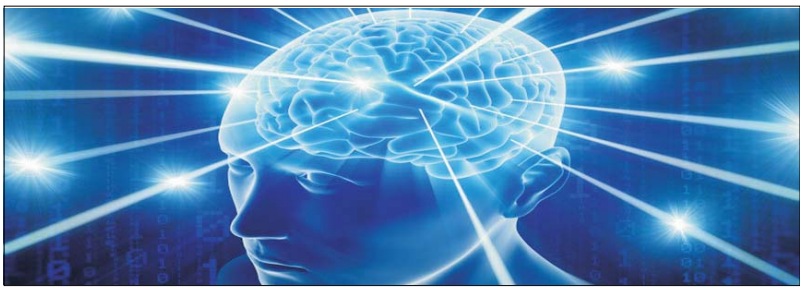
- As your baby grows, you will also experience backache — this is due to the extra weight that you're gaining as well as the fact that your baby is growing. Ensure that your bed has a hard mattress and the chairs you use have adequate back support. Try and sleep on your side and wear flat shoes.

- Many women also complain about pain in the gums and sometimes even bleeding gums. Use a soft bristled toothbrush, which won't cause you any pain.



Organise your Mind to function better

Studies say that the human mind, put very simply, is like a filing cabinet — the brain stores information that it thinks is important and deletes things to make way for new memories. No wonder then, it is important to find ways to make your mind function more productively.



We all have a lot of things going on in our lives. And sometimes we may tend to forget doing some tasks or errands simply because our mind is crammed with so much info. A helpful trick here is to keep a diary for yourself. This will ensure that you remain on track and are better organised. Whether you use a diary for daily tasks, certain errands or shopping trips, it will keep you composed.

- Do you ever feel like you have too much inside you and it all needs to come out? Why not pour out your thoughts in a journal or blog? You needn't make your blog public if you want to keep your thoughts private. But the habit of regularly penning down your thoughts will help you unburden your mind and eventually make you perform better at everyday tasks.

- Are you irresponsible when it comes to your things? Are you often

misplacing or losing them? To make sure you organise your mind, you also need to organise your habits. Keep things in place instead of thinking you'll do it later. This way you won't get stressed when you're in a hurry and can't find your things.

- Don't put off tasks or errands. The more you delay them, the bigger they get. Instead, give yourself a reasonable deadline and try to stick to it as much as you can.

- Don't take on more than you can handle. Sometimes it is okay to say no to someone. Recognise your limits and don't feel ashamed of asking for help if you need it.



A new study has suggested that when it comes to exercise, if people keep their 'eyes on the prize,' it could help them get to their target faster. The new research suggested that while walking, staying focused on a specific target ahead can make the distance to it appear shorter and help people walk there faster, psychology researchers have found. Their study, which compared the technique to walking while looking around the environment naturally, offered a new strategy to improve the quality of exercise.

One of the study's co-authors said that people get less interested in exercise if physical activity seems daunting to them, which could happen when distances to be walked appear quite long.

These findings indicated that narrowly focusing visual attention on a specific target, like a building which is a few blocks ahead, rather than looking around your surroundings, makes that distance appear shorter, helps you walk faster and also makes exercising much easier.

The study focused on "attentional narrowing," which affects perceptions of space. The researchers hypothesized that narrowing attention

on a finish line would lead to it appearing closer, increasing the walking speed and also reducing the feelings of physical exertion. The researchers conducted two experiments. In the first, adults visiting a park in the summer stood 12-feet away from an open cooler, which contained cold beverages and ice. The experimenter explained to the participants that they were to estimate the distance of the cooler from where they stood.

One set of adults were randomly assigned to a 'narrowed attention' condition in which they imagined that a spotlight was shining only on the cooler. They learned that to be

effective at estimating distance, they should focus their attention on the cooler and avoid looking around the environment.

The second set of adults were assigned to the 'natural attention' condition and were instructed to allow their attention to move naturally and in whatever way they found to be most helpful for estimating distance. Subjects who focused their attention only on the cooler, perceived the cooler as closer than did those who were in the natural attention group.

In a second experiment, the researchers used this intervention to change perceptions of distance and improve the quality of exercise. Here, 73 participants walked 20-feet in a gymnasium while

wearing ankle weights that added 15% to their body weight, thus making the task more challenging than unfettered walking.

As in the first experiment, one set of participants received the narrowed attention instructions (they were asked to focus on a traffic cone marking a finish line) and the other set received the natural attention condition (they were told to glance at the cone as well as look at their surroundings). Each group then completed the walking test while being timed by the experimenters. The results confirmed the researchers' hypothesis that attentional narrowing changed perceptions of distance, speed of walking and perceived effort, said the study.

Exercising is easier with 'eyes on the prize'



Keeping your "eyes on the prize" makes you motivated to exercise and helps you reach your target faster, a new study has suggested

Super benefits of ginger you did not know

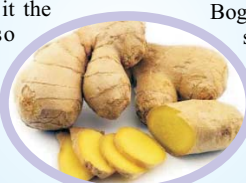
Here are some benefits of ginger that will have you biting into it.

Ginger is one condiment which not just spices up your food and gives it the punch; it also comes with a lot of health and beauty benefits. Here are some of them -
Bite into a small piece of ginger before a meal and it will help increase your appetite.
Ginger can get your digestive juices working.
Ginger absorbs essential

nutrients in the body. If you are feeling nauseous, chew on to some ginger, preferably with a splash of honey.

Bogged down with stomach cramps? Chew on to some ginger for relief.
Suffering from pain in joints? Bite into ginger and feel the relief.

Ginger tea is great for a soar throat and a blocked nose. Ginger also has aphrodisiac properties to spice up your life.





Why too much Vitamin D can be bad for you

A lot has been said about the importance of Vitamin D or rather about the ill effects of its deficiency, which could include symptoms like weakness, poor concentration, restless sleep, weight gain, headaches, etc. Therefore, it's not surprising to find people compensating for it through self-medication of the same. Also, it's inexpensive (cost varies from Rs 34 for an injection to Rs 46 for tablets and Rs 63 for a suspension approximately) and can be easily purchased over-the-counter. If you too are guilty of the same, you better stop doing it with immediate effect. Why, you may ask? Read on to find out more.

Case 1: Neeta Tejuja (name changed), a 27-year-old media executive began taking Vitamin D, courtesy of her friend who told her about its numerous health benefits. She began taking it in the form of suspension (a suspension is a liquid with small pieces of drug) once every 10 days, until she casually happened to ask her doctor about it who asked her to refrain from doing so.

Case 2: Afshan Qureshi (name changed), 32-year-old lawyer read about the downside of deficiency of Vitamin D and self-diagnosed herself as being deficient due to fatigue, improper sleep and some weight gain. But that was probably because of her stressful job and eating fast food on the go. Nevertheless,

Afshan began taking Vitamin D sachets once a week.

Daily ideal requirement

An ideal daily requirement of Vitamin D for our body usually depends upon one's age. Interventional cardiologist Dr Hareesh Mehta says that generally accepted figures are 400-600 IUs (International Units) in most people up to the age of 70. However, this requirement may increase beyond this age and go up to 800 and 1000 IUs. And, in case of deficiencies or certain illnesses, it can even go up to 1000 to 2000 IUs per day.

Don't self-diagnose

Reading about symptoms of Vitamin D on the internet or based on hearsay, and matching them with your general well-being is not a good/correct way to determine deficiency of Vitamin D. For this, it's best you consult a doctor who will prescribe test based on your health concerns. Ideally, the 25-hydroxy Vitamin D test is a good way to determine Vitamin D levels in the body.

Do not self-medicate

Now that you got the low down on Vitamin D, don't rush to your nearest drug store to buy it and self-medicate. "It is very unsafe to take Vitamin D or any supplement without consulting a doctor or health practitioner as there have been cases where patients have shown toxic levels of Vitamin D in their blood," warns Syed.

If there's a deficiency, you must certainly look for

Vitamin Supplements /capsules /tablets as advised by your doctor. "If taken in excess and high doses — for eg. above 4000 IUs everyday — for a long period of time, it may cause high levels of calcium in the blood. This increase in blood calcium may lead to hardening of arteries or Atherosclerosis, leading to blocked arteries. Other side effects of excessive intake of Vitamin D may be dryness in mouth, fatigue, weakness, headache and nausea among others," warns

Obesity leads to Vitamin D deficiency

There are plenty of health studies throwing light on the link between Vitamin D and weight, specifically, it being beneficial for weight loss. "It has been hypothesised that because Vitamin D is a fat soluble vitamin, it is hidden away and stored in fat tissues and muscles and then released slowly into the circulation. To summarise, obesity leads to Vitamin D deficiency and therefore an increase of the metabolic disorders too. Studies have also shown that calcium with Vitamin D supplementation has a small effect on prevention of weight gain in case of inadequate dietary intake," says GI laparoscopic surgeon and an obesity expert

So, if aiding your weight loss goal is your reason for self-prescribing Vitamin D, think again. Nutritionist Zainab Syed recommends supplementation of Vitamin D for weight loss only combined with moderate form of activity, a balanced diet and lifestyle modifications. "The first consultation is very important to know the patient's lifestyle, health concerns, etc. based on which I recommend a few diagnostic tests and then decide on their diet, supplementation and lifestyle modification," she says.

Eat with ease for weight loss

Everybody wants to look good. Today we see people doing crash diets and fad diets; people go in for weight loss pills and even go to the extent of going under the knife just to lose that extra weight.

Today I'll share a simple secret that not many are aware of, it's a simple and effective measure that can go a long way in helping and working towards achieving your weight loss goals.

Though any kind of exercise/workout is a very important factor in the process of weight loss it is also the food that we eat. It is not only the kind of food that one consumes but also the way one eats that affects the body weight. The answer to ones weight loss worries lies in simply 'eating slowly and with ease'. It's not about starving oneself with diets but eating healthy food in the required quantity as per our body's needs. Unbelievable but true.

So why should one eat

slowly?

Well, eating fast leads to eating more in less time. When we eat slowly, we feel satisfied and tend to eat less because our senses are more alert n send the signals to the brain saying the stomach is full. For the record a normal human needs only a fistful of food for one meal, that's the size of our stomach. In this way we can end a meal when we're actually satisfied instead of stuffed. Scientists have said that the very sight or smell of food sets about the brain activity that delivers the signal that we have eaten enough. It takes about twenty minutes into the meal, for this whole process to be completed and for our brain to get the signals from the digestive system that we are 'full'. Therefore when we eat fast or in a hurry we tend to stuff

ourselves more than required. By the time our brain sends its signals we would have already finished eating way more than what we should have in the same time span. That is why eating slowly helps. This way we provide sufficient time for effective communication to occur between these vital body systems.

Benefits of eating slowly:

Eating slowly has its own benefits as well, it aids in improving the digestion and absorption of nutrients fully as the process of digesting food begins in the mouth as we chew. When we chew our food properly and slowly out stomach doesn't have an overload of digesting food since the food is already broken down into a simpler form and thus the nutrients are absorbed faster and there are less digestive ailments. Strangely eating slowly also aids in reducing the stress level and also helps rapidly in weight loss.

Eating at a slow pace and focusing on what and how much we put into our mouth can directly impact our stress levels. Eating with soft music instead of fast or blaring music helps you calm down and focus on the food thus aiding in eating slowly which impacts on your daily calorie intake helping you reducing weight.

Back pain is one of the most common fallouts of everyday life. But even dumping your heels and stretching may not help your spine. New research shows that a vast majority of backaches are the result of cumulative effects of lifestyle that we often ignore. Simple daily habits such as hunching to read your smart phone or slouching in front of your computer can, over time, strain your spine and the surrounding muscles, leaving you vulnerable to serious back injury. Here are the habits to watch out for:

Sitting still

Forget heavy lifting — sitting hunched over a computer all day is poison for your back. Research has found that people with desk jobs suffer more back pain than those working in manual jobs. Using your joints and spine strengthens them, reducing risk of injury. But inactivity weakens them, which makes you more prone to problems.

Fix it: Get up and walk around for two minutes, at least once an hour, and improve your posture while you're sitting down. Aim for a "neutral spine position", in which everything is in line, with no strain spots. Your shoulders should be relaxed, feet flat on the floor, and eyes in line with the middle of your screen.

Sneezing

This seemingly innocuous, activity is apparently a very common cause of back pain — thanks to its sheer



force. A sneeze's speed of release can be up to 100 miles per hour, and our first instinct is to cover our faces and turn away. According to Janet Wakley, author of The Smart Guide to Back Care, this instinctive turn is terrible for our backs. "Spontaneously twisting to the side, combined with the force used by the chest muscles to sneeze, can wrench back muscles in a second," she says.

Fix it: Turn your body when you're about to sneeze, so that your back remains straight.

Wearing high heels, pumps Yes, tottering in high heels for long periods can make your back sore, but too much time in the wrong flats can do just as much damage. Heels cause

problems because they force your foot forward, altering your body's angle. Since your weight isn't evenly distributed over the spine, it can trigger pain from your knees all the way up to your back. But ballet pumps and flip-flops aren't any better as they allow your foot to slide around. The lack of stability that this causes puts pressure on your spine.

Fix it: Ensure your shoe holds your foot firmly in place. Alternate between high heels, mids and flats. By wearing different shoes every day, you lessen your chance of experiencing long-term problems caused by using only one type of shoe.

Your favourite bra Figures suggest 80 per cent women wear an ill-fitting bra. This can cause several muscular problems. A bad bra can lead to hunching and sore neck and back muscles, while one that gives proper support can minimise that forward hunch and relieve pain.

Fix it: Get measured by a trained bra-fitter. Go for styles with wider shoulder straps or a racer-style back, which offer better support and draw you to pull your shoulders back.

Your pot belly

Even an extra couple of pounds around your middle makes your pelvis tilt forward. This puts it out of alignment as your body works to rebalance itself. Also, this means that your spine isn't getting enough support from your abdominal muscles, which can cause excessive strain on your lower back.

Fix it: Don't do sit-ups — they won't flatten your tummy if there's fat on top. Fat-burning cardiovascular exercises, such as running or swimming, for 45 minutes, three times a week, are more effective at shifting the bulge.

Your Smartphone The head-down position that you use to look at phones, iPads and laptops strains the muscles in the neck and the pain can extend to your lower back. Using them for hours on end means your body will eventually start to adopt this hunched position.

Fix it: Make sure you take frequent screen breaks. Try to look straight ahead and not down at your screen.



IIT Delhi warns students of disciplinary action amid suicide protests

IIT Delhi has warned students of disciplinary action as protests over an MSc student's death intensified on campus. The standoff has sharpened demands for an independent inquiry while raising tensions over protest conduct.

Delhi. (Agency)

IIT Delhi Director Rangan Banerjee has warned of disciplinary action against students accused of disrupting the peaceful functioning of the campus during protests over the alleged suicide of a 31-year-old MSc student. The warning came as demonstrations entered their sixth straight day and tensions rose over events on Thursday night.

In an email to students on Friday, Banerjee said the protest had "escalated significantly" and reached campus residential areas. He said a group of protesters demonstrated outside faculty housing between 10.30 pm and 12.30 am and used "unsavoury, humiliating and threatening language in their slogans". "Such behaviour compromises the safety, privacy, and peace of faculty members and their families, including young



children and elderly dependents," he said. Banerjee added that the institute would act against those disrupting campus life. "The Institute will take disciplinary actions

against individuals disrupting the peaceful functioning of the campus including residential areas, classes, academic and other activities," he wrote.

The protests began after the death of the student, who allegedly died by suicide after jumping from a building on the institute's campus on August 22. Students have been demanding an independent inquiry, action against institute officials and compensation for his family.

On Thursday, IIT Delhi reconstituted the external probe panel set up to examine the circumstances surrounding the student's death, appointing retired Delhi High Court judge Mukta Gupta as its head. The move came a day after former Uttarakhand DGP Ashok Kumar, who had been named chair of the panel, recused himself from the committee citing "personal reasons", even as protests continued on campus. The developments have unfolded alongside the continuing student agitation and the institute's warning of disciplinary action over conduct during the demonstrations.

Delhi Master Plan 2047 seeks 1,000 hectares along drains to process desilted earth

Delhi. (Agency)

The Delhi Master Plan 2047, which was formally notified last week, has identified a requirement for around 1,000 hectares of land at different locations along the city's drains in order to help facilitate the processing of desilted earth.

According to the plan document, the Irrigation and Flood Control Department has proposed that the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) provide land parcels of around one hectare at every 10 km interval along the drains.

This requirement for more land has been flagged as part of the plan's assessment of land needed for the projects of the Irrigation and Flood Control Department. Difficulties in disposing of desilted earth by the department were mentioned in the document, while noting that Municipal Corporation of Delhi was reluctant to take the material.

To address the issue, the plan proposes that land parcels be made available along the drainage network for processing the desilted earth. The requirement has been estimated at around 1,000 hectares in total, the document mentioned.

Additionally, the plan envisages earmarking land outside the drain boundary along the entire alignment of the existing drains for the collection, processing, shifting and disposal of municipal solid waste (MSW) and construction and demolition (C&D) waste.

Meanwhile, the drainage network requires land for several other purposes. As per the plan, additional land along drains is required for remodelling & augmentation, operation & maintenance and the creation of green belts & service roads.

Apart from that, space is also required for services linked to electricity lines, communication cables and water & sewer pipelines, besides dhalaos, C&D waste and additional stores of the department. The plan points out the varying availability of land along different stretches of Delhi's drains.

Delhi HC restricts entry of law interns to courts, permits only final-year students

Delhi. (Agency)

The Delhi High Court has restricted the entry of law interns to its courtrooms. According to the new circular, entry passes will now be issued only to final-year students of the 3rd-year LLB course and to fourth- and fifth-year students of the 5-year integrated LLB.

In its revised policy on issuing entry passes and ID cards to law students interning with advocates, the High Court has mandated that the entry passes will be issued only to final-year students of the 3-year LLB course and fourth- and fifth-year students of the 5-year integrated LLB henceforth.

According to the circular, law students will have to furnish recommendation letters from the lawyer concerned along with his enrolment number, photocopies of the bar ID of the advocate, and the Aadhaar card and college ID card of the intern. Besides, the intern will also have to submit two copies of his/her stamp-sized photograph.

"As directed by the Chief Justice, it is hereby circulated for the information of all concerned that, henceforth, the entry passes/ID cards for law students doing internships with advocates shall be issued by this court only to the following categories of law students: third-year students of the 3-year LL.B. course and fourth-year and fifth-year students of the 5-year integrated law course," the circular said.

Also in court

Contempt notice for targeting judge

Delhi High Court has issued a show-cause notice to a social media user asking why contempt proceedings should not be initiated against him over the "prima facie contemptuous" YouTube videos targeting a sitting judge over the collapse of a multi-storey building in Saidulajab in May.

CNG price rise: Delhi auto, taxi bodies demand fare hike, threaten strike on Sep 9

The price of CNG in Delhi and adjoining cities increased by Rs 3.89 per kg from Saturday, according to Indraprastha Gas Ltd.

Delhi. (Agency)

Transport bodies in Delhi have demanded an immediate increase in autorickshaw and taxi fares following a hike in CNG prices, warning that they will go on strike on September 9 if their demand is not met. The price of CNG in Delhi and adjoining cities increased by Rs 3.89 per kg from Saturday, according to Indraprastha Gas Ltd. The company said a significant portion of the gas used for CNG was being sourced through imported

LNG, prices of which have risen sharply in the spot market since the beginning of the conflict in West Asia.

Rajendra Soni, general secretary of



the Auto Rickshaw Association and Delhi Pradesh Taxi Union, urged the Delhi government to increase auto and taxi fares within a week, saying the latest CNG hike had placed an additional financial

burden on drivers.

"CNG prices have been rising over the past two to three months, with a cumulative increase of around Rs 10-11," Soni said in a statement.

He said the government should either increase fares at the earliest or provide a subsidy on CNG prices. "If the fares are not increased, we will hold a strike on September 9," he said. The All India Motor and Goods Transport Association also raised concerns over the latest increase. "The sudden increase of Rs 3.89 per kg in CNG prices across Delhi-NCR is not merely a matter of higher fuel costs. It will directly affect the pockets of the common man, the transport industry and, ultimately, the prices of essential commodities," said Rajendra Kapoor, president of the association.

Sinking fund set up to handle Delhi government loans since 2013-14

Delhi. (Agency)

The Delhi government has set up a consolidated sinking fund (CSF) to redeem its outstanding liabilities, including debt repayment, officials said on Friday.

The fund is to be utilised from the current financial year. It will not be utilised for any purpose other than redemption of the outstanding liabilities, they said. A sinking fund refers to a monetary reserve created by a government or any other agency to dispose of its long-term liabilities. According to an economic survey report, Delhi's outstanding debt by March 2025 stood at Rs 30,556.54 crore. It included the non-plan loan received during 2013-14 from the

Centre for meeting the outstanding liabilities of the Delhi Vidyut Board and Electricity Supply Undertaking, which was Rs 3,326.39 crore, and the



Chandrawal Water Treatment Plant amount of Rs 447 crore.

The outstanding liabilities are defined to comprise both internal debt and public account liabilities of the

government. The outstanding debt in 2025-26 was around 2.3% of the Gross State Domestic Product. Delhi's outstanding liabilities and debt levels remain very low and well under control, historically hovering around 4-5 per cent of its GSDP. According to a gazette notification, the government will be able to avail of a short-term special drawing facility from the RBI against collateral of investment made in fund for meeting temporary cash-flow mismatches, subject to terms and conditions as fixed by the bank from time to time.

The government will make "conscious efforts" for building up the CSF corpus to 5% of the outstanding liabilities within a span of five years.

Security women tie rakhis to L-G, CM Rekha Gupta celebrates with street kids

Delhi. (Agency)

Delhi Lieutenant-Governor Taranjit Singh Sandhu and Chief Minister Rekha Gupta celebrated Raksha Bandhan on Friday and extended their wishes to the public. Sandhu observed the festival at Lok Niwas, where female personnel from his security team tied rakhis to him. "A touching moment at Lok Niwas Delhi today, as women from my security team tied rakhis, filling the day with warmth, affection and joy," he said in a post on X (formerly Twitter).

The L-G said the women's gesture beautifully captured the spirit of the festival, a celebration of love, trust, and togetherness and a reminder that these bonds strengthen our sense of community beyond personal relationships.

Meanwhile, Gupta celebrated Raksha Bandhan at the Mukhyamantri Jan Seva Sadan with children living on the streets. As part of the CM's interaction with the children, they ties rakhis to Gupta and opened up to her about their dreams, aspirations and interests.

The Chief Minister assured them that the Delhi government remained fully committed to offering them the necessary support for their education and overall well-being. She further emphasised that every child should have the opportunity to dream big and receive enough backing to realise those aspirations. Officials said some of the children present on the occasion had been admitted to schools.

The CM took to X to extend her wishes, writing, "This festival of affection, trust and duty is the strength of our familial values. May this bond bring happiness, prosperity, and warmth to every home, and may the love between brothers and sisters remain forever unbreakable."

CM's pledge to kids

As part of the CM's interaction with the children, they ties rakhis to Gupta and opened up to her about their dreams. The CM assured them that the Delhi government remained fully committed to offering them support for their education and well-being.

Raksha Bandhan rush chokes Delhi roads

Hassled commuters say jams happen every year but no effort to find solution Sandhu says bonds of trust and togetherness strengthen sense of community

Delhi. (Agency)

Several roads across the national capital witnessed heavy traffic snarls on Friday as people stepped out in large numbers to visit markets and meet relatives to on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan.

The Delhi Police had already issued an advisory warning of increased pedestrian and vehicular movement on Thursday and Friday around Anand Vihar ISBT, Road No. 56, NH-9 and Vikas Marg. Police had advised commuters to avoid these stretches. Kalindi Kunj, Sarai Kale Khan and Dwarka were among the areas that saw the most traffic congestion.

A commuter from the southeast part of the city said he got stuck in traffic for nearly an hour while travelling from his home towards Ghaziabad. He said the

congestion was particularly severe around Kalindi Kunj, where traffic jams have become a recurring problem.

"We left home for Ghaziabad and have been stuck in traffic for nearly an hour. The situation around Kalindi Kunj is particularly bad, and this has become almost routine. Traffic jams have been happening here for years, but there seems to be little effort to find a permanent solution," he rued, adding, "People generally do not vote on issues such as traffic and infrastructure, so perhaps these problems do not become a priority for governments either."

Another commuter, who was travelling from Faridabad in Haryana to Mayur Vihar in Delhi to celebrate the festival

with his family, said he was caught up in the congestion for nearly an hour.

"A road has already been constructed

celebrate the festival, but the authorities should have made better arrangements to manage the rush," he said.

Jahnavi Rathor, a resident of Lajpat Nagar, said, "I waited for the surge period to get over to get a cheaper fare. The fares have been hiked by cab aggregators, probably due to Raksha Bandhan."

Police advisory flags routes with traffic congestion

The Delhi Police had already issued an advisory warning of increased pedestrian and vehicular movement on

Thursday and Friday around Anand Vihar ISBT, Road No. 56, NH-9 and Vikas Marg. Police had advised commuters to avoid these stretches. Kalindi Kunj, Sarai.



here, but it has not been opened for commuters, which is adding to the problem. It was expected that there would be heavy traffic today, as people have come out in large numbers to

Before the FDA walks in: How restaurants audit kitchens and food safety

MUMBAI. (Agency)

When a food-safety inspector walks into a restaurant, the problems that stand out are often the most obvious ones: A dirty kitchen, a cockroach, an open drain or food being stored at the wrong temperature. But in an organised restaurant or quick-service restaurant (QSR) chain, internal controls are meant to identify such problems before the inspector arrives. Recent inspections by the Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA) have brought several lapses to light, including at outlets of major restaurant chains and well-known eateries. Reported violations have ranged from pest infestation and poor sanitation to improper storage, inadequate segregation of food and deficiencies in records. The action has ranged from notices and improvement directions to suspension of licences.

Food safety is supposed to be built into daily operations, starting with the supplier and raw material entering the kitchen and continuing through receiving, storage, temperature checks, preparation, staff hygiene, cleaning and pest control. So, who conducts these checks, how often are they carried out, and what happens when something goes wrong?

The audit before the FDA audit

Internal checks at larger restaurant chains can operate at several levels, according to Sukhjinder Randhawa, a food safety and quality assurance professional with more than 11 years of experience and head of quality assurance (QA) at an international restaurant chain. At the outlets she currently handles, Randhawa said a manager on duty conducts basic checks every day, a restaurant or operations manager undertakes a more detailed check, and the QA team carries out a formal audit every month.

IGL raises CNG price by Rs 3.89 per kg in Delhi as LNG costs surge

New Delhi. (Agency)

Teity gas distributor Indraprastha Gas Ltd (IGL) on Saturday announced a 4.6 per cent increase in compressed natural gas (CNG) prices across its geographical areas, citing a surge in spot input gas prices. Following the increase, CNG will be priced at Rs 86.98 per kilogram (kg) in Delhi. "With international LNG prices remaining elevated and the cost impact becoming increasingly significant, a calibrated revision of ₹3.89 per kg has now become necessary to partially offset the increase in input gas cost while ensuring continuity and reliability of CNG supplies. Even after this revision in CNG prices being effected from 6 AM on 29th Aug 2026, CNG retail price in Delhi continues to be amongst the most economical option for consumers," the company said in a statement. IGL added that despite soaring imported spot gas prices, city gas distribution (CGD) entities such as IGL had maintained competitive CNG prices compared with alternative fuels, supporting sustained growth in CNG consumption in India. The company said CNG consumers, including private car owners, auto and taxi operators, public transport users and other price-sensitive sections, had largely been insulated from volatile increases in imported spot LNG prices. Among gas-importing countries, Delhi has one of the lowest CNG retail prices in the world, IGL said. Since July 2026, the re-escalation of the West Asia crisis and its impact on LNG cargo movements through the Strait of Hormuz have led to global LNG prices nearly doubling compared with pre-crisis levels, according to the company.

India state fiscal health: Delhi boasts highest own revenue share in FY25

New Delhi. (Agency)

Delhi had the highest own revenue as a share of total revenue receipts among states and Union Territories for which comparable data was available in the 2024-25 Budget Estimates (BE), at 93.2 per cent, according to Business Standard's India State Fiscal Health Tracker. The tracker is based on the Reserve Bank of India's 2025 Handbook of Statistics on Indian States and compares states and Union Territories across eight fiscal indicators.

In the ranking, Delhi was followed by Haryana (80.4 per cent), Telangana (78.4 per cent), Karnataka (77.3 per cent) and Tamil Nadu (75.5 per cent). At the other end were Manipur (10.0 per cent), Nagaland (12.5 per cent), Arunachal Pradesh (12.8 per cent), Tripura (16.6 per cent) and Mizoram (19.6 per cent).

What does own revenue tell us?

Own revenue measures how much of a state's revenue receipts come from its own sources. It combines own tax revenue and own non-tax revenue. Own tax revenue includes taxes collected by a state, while own non-tax revenue includes sources such as fees, royalties, dividends and user charges. The measure is useful for assessing a state's revenue self-reliance. A higher share means a larger part of the state's revenue receipts comes from its own sources rather than its share of central taxes and grants from the Union government. However, a higher ratio does not by itself mean that a state has better tax policies, public services or overall fiscal health.

Max Estates buys 85-acre land in Delhi, eyes ₹10,000-12,000 cr revenue

New Delhi. (Agency)

Realty firm Max Estates Ltd has acquired 84.71 acre land in West Delhi from promoters' land holding entities, in a share-swap deal worth Rs 420 crore, as part of its expansion plan. The company will develop residential and commercial projects on this land parcel and expects revenue of Rs 10,000-12,000 crore from upcoming projects on the site.

With this acquisition, Max Estates said it has entered into Delhi's housing market. It is already doing residential projects in Gurugram and Noida markets of Delhi-NCR. In a regulatory filing on Saturday, the company said it has entered into a share purchase agreement to acquire 100 per cent stakes in nine promoter-owned land-holding companies, which together own 84.71 acre land parcel. The acquisition is structured as non-cash share swap transaction. Max Estates will pay consideration through the issue of

The company will develop residential and commercial projects on this land parcel and expects revenue of Rs 10,000-12,000 crore from upcoming projects on the site

equity shares. As per the deal, Max Estates will allot about 70 lakh equity shares at an issue price of Rs 597.50 per share, aggregating up to Rs 420.2 crore, to the identified allottees. The nine land owning companies would become a wholly-owned subsidiary of Max Estates.

On the rationale for acquisition, Max Estates said it currently has a strong residential launch pipeline with a total revenue potential of Rs 16,150 crore. "The company is targeting for next phase of growth in presales and pipeline, a trajectory that requires continuous replenishment of developable land..." the company said. Max Estates is planning an integrated, mixed-format development -- residential, retail, social and community infrastructure.

The company is expecting 4-6 million sq ft of developable area from 85 acre land parcel and a revenue potential of Rs 10,000-12,000 crore, the filing said. The transaction increases the company's land bank and future revenue pipeline without any release of cash. Sahil Vachani, Vice Chairman & Managing Director, Max Estates, said, "This is a landmark transaction for Max Estates. It gives us

our first foothold in Delhi -- the one core NCR market we did not yet have a presence in -- at a fraction of prevailing land values elsewhere in the region, and without deploying a rupee of cash." The



land parcel are located at the heart of Delhi's westward urban expansion under Master Plan 2047, with strong land-pooling momentum and improving connectivity via UER-II, Dwarka and IGI Airport, he added.

Meta India head Sandhya Devanathan to join OpenAI in regional role

Devanathan will be based in Singapore and oversee consumer growth, enterprise adoption, partnerships, regulatory engagement and operations across Southeast Asia and Australia

New Delhi. (Agency)

Meta's vice-president and India head Sandhya Devanathan has decided to leave the company after a decade and is set to join OpenAI as vice-president for Southeast Asia



and Australia. In her new role at OpenAI, Devanathan will be based in Singapore and report to Kiran Mani, the company's managing director for the Asia-Pacific region. In the newly created role,

Devanathan will be responsible for consumer growth, enterprise adoption and partnerships, regulatory engagement and operations across Southeast Asia and Australia. Devanathan, who joined Meta in 2016, was appointed India head in 2023.

With over 25 years of experience, she has worked across banking, payments and technology companies. "She joined Meta in 2016 and helped build our Singapore and Vietnam businesses and teams, as well as the e-commerce initiatives in Southeast Asia. In 2020, she moved to lead Gaming for APAC, one of our largest global verticals," Meta had said while announcing her appointment as India head.

Govt allows RE projects to store, sell curtailed power via battery systems

New Delhi. (Agency)

The power ministry has allowed renewable energy (RE) producers to use electricity curtailed under temporary general network access (T-GNA) to charge additional co-located battery energy storage systems (BESS) and sell the stored power, the Economic Times reported on Saturday. A no-objection certificate (NOC) from the procurer will not be required under the existing power sale agreement (PSA). The ministry, in a letter dated August 27, clarified that the stored electricity can be sold to any entity through power exchanges or other arrangements.

"To facilitate optimum utilisation of renewable energy generation, it is hereby clarified that RE projects, awarded under the applicable bidding guidelines, may utilise the renewable energy curtailed under T-GNA for charging an additional co-located BESS, not covered under the existing PPA/PSA (power purchase agreement/power sale agreements)," the ministry said, according to the ET report. The clarification follows representations from developers seeking an enabling clarification on the issue.

Why were developers seeking permission to use curtailed power?

In a representation made in June, the National Solar Energy Federation of India (NSEFI) said around 90 per cent of the power scheduled under T-GNA in the northern region was being curtailed. The association had also made a case for allowing the arrangement, saying a merchant BESS would constitute a new element and would not form part of the contracted project configuration under the power purchase agreement (PPA). Since the PPAs did not explicitly provide for such an arrangement, member developers had



approached renewable energy development agencies, including the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) and NTPC, seeking project-specific NOCs. These approvals were sought to allow developers to use curtailed electricity to charge merchant BESS and subsequently sell the stored energy at their discretion.

How will the move benefit renewable energy developers? The power ministry's decision will provide relief to renewable energy developers by allowing them to monetise electricity that would otherwise be curtailed under T-GNA. Developers can store the curtailed power in separately deployed, co-located battery energy storage systems (BESS) and sell the stored electricity independently.

Apparel exporters urge commerce minister to regulate cotton yarn exports

New Delhi. (Agency)

Apparel exporters on Saturday urged Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal to consider steps to regulate cotton yarn exports to contain rising prices of the yarn as it is hurting competitiveness of the industry. Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPCC) Chairman A Sakthivel in a communication to the minister said rising prices of raw cotton and cotton yarn are increasing due to supply-side constraints. The limited stock availability with ginners and reduced arrivals have resulted in mills relying increasingly on CCI (Cotton Corporation of India) auctions. He said substantial quantity of cotton has moved from farmers to traders, contributing to hoarding and speculative practices in the market. "AEPCC has urged the minister to consider suitable measures to regulate the export of cotton yarn, particularly 20s count and above, in view of the sharp increase in yarn prices and the growing pressure on the competitiveness of India's apparel export industry," Sakthivel said. Cotton yarn prices have



increased around 60 per cent, from about Rs 250 per kg in early 2026 to around Rs 400 per kg currently, and it is increasing pressure on the apparel manufacturing value chain. Rising costs of other raw materials and fuel are also aggravating the situation, he said. The letter further highlights the increase in exports of Indian cotton and cotton yarn to apparel-producing countries such as Bangladesh and Vietnam, following restrictions by the US on the use of Chinese cotton under the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act (UFLPA).

"This has added to the pressure on raw material prices across the garment value chain," he said, adding that higher apparel manufacturing costs are affecting the competitiveness of Indian apparel exporters at a time when opportunities are expanding in international markets, particularly in new FTA markets, such as the UK and New Zealand. Sakthivel highlighted the substantially higher value realisation and employment potential associated with exports of finished garments compared with raw cotton and yarn. The letter notes that raw cotton fetches about Rs 275 per kg, while cotton converted into yarn fetches around Rs 325 per kg.

Coal India says gasification scheme rules may favour private sector players

CIL has flagged the 60-day bidding window and exclusion of captive power plants from eligible project costs, saying the rules could disadvantage it against private rivals

New Delhi. (Agency)

Coal India (CIL) has reportedly told the government that rules for the Centre's ₹37,500 crore coal-gasification incentive scheme could put the state-run company at a disadvantage vis-a-vis private sector competitors. According to an Economic Times report on Saturday, CIL has raised concerns over the short bidding window and the exclusion of captive power plants from the costs considered for calculating incentives.

What are Coal India's key concerns?

The state-run company sought six months for the first round of applications, arguing that the proposed 60-day window could favour companies that already have project reports ready. The coal ministry, however, is said to have rejected the request, saying subsequent bidding rounds will begin immediately after the previous round closes, with each round having a two-month application period.

A senior CIL official said applicants are required to submit a board-approved feasibility report or project report along with their applications, giving an undue advantage to companies whose detailed project reports (DPRs) or preliminary feasibility reports (PFRs) are already ready or under preparation, the Economic Times reported. The timeline is significant because financial support for each product category is capped at ₹9,000 crore across applicants. Companies submitting bids in the initial rounds could therefore secure a larger share of the



available support, while projects still completing their feasibility studies may have to wait. Coal India has also questioned which costs can be counted while calculating the incentive. The company asked whether a captive power plant using rejects from a coal washery to supply electricity to a gasification unit would qualify as part of the project. It also sought clarity on whether such a plant could be included in the project cost and the cost of plant and machinery used to calculate the incentive. The ministry's

What is the coal-gasification incentive scheme?

In June this year, the Centre operationalised its ₹37,500 crore scheme to provide incentives for coal gasification by notifying a competitive-bidding framework. Under the framework, bidders seeking lower financial incentives will receive higher evaluation scores. The notification, issued by the Ministry of Coal, provides for subsidy caps, milestone-linked payouts and penalties for project delays. It offers financial assistance of up to 20 per cent of the cost of an eligible plant and machinery.

response was categorical in its denial, according to the Economic Times report, saying "No. Captive power plants do not fall under the definition of project."

5 BLOs suspended over 3,400 SIR forms found at Kharghar photocopy centre; one booked

PANVEL. (Agency)

Election commission officials on Thursday found 3,400 confidential voter enumeration forms pertaining to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls at a photocopy centre in Kharghar, triggering a confrontation between local BJP and Shiv Sena (UBT) workers, a first information report against a Panvel resident allegedly linked to the BJP Yuva Morcha who was found photocopying the forms, and the suspension of five Booth Level Officers (BLOs) linked to a bulk of the forms. “These are extremely confidential and important election documents. A shocking incident has come to light in Kharghar where such forms were illegally kept in possession and photocopied in direct violation of the law,” Raigad collector Kishan Jawale said on Friday, while briefing reporters about the incident.

The issue came to light on Thursday evening after Shiv Sena (UBT) Raigad district coordinator chief Prasad Bhoir lodged a complaint with the Electoral Registration Office regarding the unauthorised photocopying of enumeration forms at a photocopy centre in sector 19 in Kharghar. Assistant electoral registration officers subsequently visited the photocopy centre, where they found Suraj Patil, a resident of Murbhi village, photocopying enumeration forms of voters in the Panvel assembly constituency, said Jawale. In all, election commission officials found 3,400 forms relating to 11 polling stations across Panvel, Jawale said.

Car used by shooters in hotelier murder seized; raids in Bihar-Bengal-Odisha

Jamshedpur. (Agency)

Amid unconfirmed reports of a shooter's arrest in Jamshedpur hotelier Nikhar Sablok murder, the red hatchback car used by the assailants to flee after the shooting was seized from Mesra in Ranchi, while police teams are conducting raids in Bihar, West Bengal and Odisha for the two suspected shooters seen in the CCTV footage from the 10th Milestone Resort where Nikhar was shot dead on August 24, people close to the matter said on Friday.

“The two suspected shooters were seen in the CCTV footage but their exact identities are yet to be conclusively established. Raids are, however, being carried out in several states by different teams of the SIT. The red coloured hatchback without any numberplate used by the shooters to flee has been seized. This car was last seen at the Bundu toll plaza before being abandoned in Mesra locality of Ranchi,” a senior police officer said, not willing to be quoted. A senior police officer in the 18-member SIT said they were expecting a breakthrough in a day or two.

“The investigation is ongoing in the right direction and all the crucial leads are being followed. Over 50 persons have been interrogated, CCTV footage in and around the resort and several toll plazas have been examined. The shooters first moved towards Jamshedpur and then shifted to a red car on way to Chandil,” the officer said.

MGMMCH gears up for ₹394 cr super specialty project

Jamshedpur.(Agency)

The health department has sought details of infrastructure and faculty status, requirements for modern medical equipments as per the specification of the National Medical Commission (NMC) for increasing the under graduate (UG) MBBS seats to 250 and PG seats to 150 in next three years for upgrading the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Medical College Hospital (MGMMCH) here to a super specialty hospital as also starting robotic and spinal surgery there under a project worth ₹394 crore, officials said on Friday.

“We have reviewed the availability and required modern medical equipments, faculty, specialist doctors, infrastructure, digitisation of services as well management system etc. from MGMMCH principal Dr Sanjay Kumar and superintendent Dr Balram Jha in view of increasing the UG seats to 250 and PG seats to 150 there during next three years. They have been asked to prepare to start robotic surgery and spinal surgery as well. All required machines will be made available to MGMMCH for these purposes under the ₹393.91 crore fund the state Cabinet has approved,” Ajay Kumar Singh, health secretary, told HT on Friday. Singh also said the civil surgeons of the districts had been instructed to the start preparation for turning the district sadar hospitals into multi-speciality hospitals.

HC strikes down MbPAs retrospective rent hikes

Mumbai. (Agency)

The Bombay High Court (HC) has quashed retrospective rent hikes imposed by the Mumbai Port Authority (MbPA) on 154 residential and commercial tenants between Colaba and Sewri, ruling that the rent rates under a compromise proposal upheld by the Supreme Court (SC) in 2004 in the Jamshed Hormusji Wadia case would continue to apply to the tenants until March 31, 2024.

A division bench of Manjusha Deshpande and Bharati Dangre on Wednesday set aside a series of gazette notifications through which the MbPA had sought to impose revised Scale of Rates (SOR) from October 2012 till September 2022, holding that the port authority could not unilaterally adopt rates that were contrary to the compromise proposal upheld by the SC. The court also quashed demand notices seeking recovery of differential lease and tenancy arrears from 62 writ petitioners, a handful of intervening applicants and other affected tenants, with some facing liabilities running into crores of rupees. The dispute relates to the SOR sanctioned by the Tariff Authority for Major Ports (TAMP) and subsequently adopted by the MbPA. Revised rates based on the SOR

The court set aside a series of gazette notifications through which the MbPA had sought to impose revised Scale of Rates (SOR) from October 2012 till September 2022, holding that the port authority could not unilaterally adopt rates that were contrary to the compromise proposal upheld by the SC

from October 1, 2012 till September 30, 2017 were notified on October 29, 2021, whereas revised rates from October 1, 2017 till September 30, 2022 were notified on December 18, 2021. The court set aside these notifications, related speaking orders and other notifications seeking to impose revised SOR retrospectively. The court, however, clarified that the MbPA would be at liberty to fix fresh rents after March 31, 2024, adhering to the principles laid down



by the Supreme Court in the Jamshed Hormusji Wadia case. The revised rates must be fair and reasonable, the court stressed, making it clear that the port authority could not resort to “profiteering and rack renting” while determining rents. The court also considered a challenge to provisions in the Port Land Guidelines and Manual (PGLM) 2015 guidelines relating to fixation of SOR on the basis of the market value of land.

Since the guidelines were framed by the central government and made applicable to the MbPA, the court read down the provision insofar as it applied to the port authority.

Advocate Prerak Choudhary, who represented the 62 writ petitioners and some intervening applicants, termed the judgment a major relief for the affected tenants, a bulk of them from the Darukhana Iron Steel and Scrap Merchants Association (DISMA).

Bengaluru police inspector dies in Madhya Pradesh bus crash during cybercrime probe

Ravi joined the police department as a constable in 2005. He cleared the exam for recruitment of sub-inspectors in 2007.

BENGALURU.(Agency)

Ravi KB, 45, a police inspector attached to the South-East CEN police station, died and two policemen were injured in a road accident in Madhya Pradesh's Rajgarh district on Friday morning. They were part of a team investigating a cyber crime case. They were traveling from Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh to Indore in Madhya Pradesh by a sleeper bus when its driver lost control over the vehicle and rammed the safety wall of the Bhopal bypass bridge in Biaoara. Several passengers, including Ravi, were thrown off the bus. Five passengers, including Ravi, died and 12 others suffered injuries. The accident occurred around 7 am. Ravi died in hospital around 7.30 am. Ravi joined the police department as a constable in 2005. He cleared the exam

for recruitment of sub-inspectors in 2007. He worked in Ashoknagar, Indiranagar and Koramangala police stations in Bengaluru.



“Ravi and his team had gone to Madhya Pradesh in connection with a cyber crime case. The team had arrested two accused. The inspector and two policemen stayed

back, while other team members returned to Bengaluru. The condition of one of the injured policemen is critical,” a police said.

Body arrives in Bengaluru

The mortal remains of Ravi were received at the HAL Airport by state police chief MA Saleem. Pronab Mohanty, DGP, CID, Seemant Kumar Singh, Bengaluru City Police Commissioner, and other senior police officers paid their last respects.

The body is kept at the Ranga Mantapa of CAR (South) in Adugodi for public viewing. The last rites will be performed at Ravi's native Konasur village, Piriyaapatna taluk on Sunday. Chief Minister DK Shivakumar and Home Minister Priyank Kharge have expressed their condolences to the family members of Ravi.

Nurse arrested as probe widens into Jammu minor's alleged rape, death

A nurse at Kishtwar district hospital has been arrested in the case linked to the alleged rape of a 15-year-old tribal girl and her death after a pregnancy termination attempt. Her arrest takes the total to six and sharpens scrutiny of an alleged cover-up and medical complicity.

Jammu. (Agency)

A nurse at the district hospital in Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar has been arrested in connection with the alleged rape of a 15-year-old tribal girl by a school teacher, taking the total number of people held in the case to six, officials said on Saturday. The girl had allegedly been sexually assaulted repeatedly over several months, which resulted in her pregnancy.

She died on August 20 after an alleged attempt to terminate the pregnancy in the Chatroo area. Police said Sonika, a nurse at Kishtwar district hospital, was apprehended on Friday after an FIR was registered under relevant provisions of the POCSO Act, the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. Her role came to light during the investigation by a special investigation team. Officials said the government school teacher accused in the

case and his brother were arrested earlier. According to the police spokesperson, the SIT found that the teacher, in conspiracy with his brother, administered medicines



purportedly to terminate the girl's pregnancy. Police said the accused first took the girl to a public health centre in Chatroo. She was later shifted to the district hospital in Kishtwar, allegedly in connivance with an accused sweeper working there.

The girl delivered a stillborn baby and later

died, officials said. The police spokesperson said Sonika's role in terminating the girl's pregnancy surfaced during the investigation, leading to her arrest. The spokesperson said the SIT was continuing a thorough, scientific, impartial and evidence-based investigation into the circumstances leading to the minor's death and the role of every person connected with the case. Further arrests, wherever warranted by evidence, were being pursued, and strict legal action would be taken against all those found involved in accordance with the law. On Thursday, one of the accused, a sanitation worker at Kishtwar district hospital, was removed from service for his alleged role in a conspiracy to conceal information about the crime. With Sonika's arrest, six people have now been held in the case linked to the alleged sexual assault of the minor and the events that led to her death.

Nepal floods: 140 tourists from Maha on their way back; over 60 untraceable

Mumbai. (Agency)

As Nepalese authorities are engaged in rescue operations following the flash floods, caused by the collapse of a glacier on Wednesday that killed at least 579, the Maharashtra government's latest report states over 395 tourists from the state are stranded in various parts of the Himalayan country. While over 60 remain untraceable, more than 140 are on their journey back home. The first batch of 106 tourists from Nagpur reached Janakpur from Kathmandu by bus on Friday before boarding connecting trains to complete their journey back home. They are expected to arrive on Saturday or Sunday morning, after travelling for 36 hours.

Similarly, a batch of 37 people from Thane, Pune, Alibag, Raigad and Dombivli will take a flight from Kathmandu on Saturday afternoon and are expected to reach Mumbai in the evening. Dr Nitin Gandhi, one of the

37 tourists, who HT spoke to, said, “We are shortly reaching Kathmandu by road and will be taking the flight on Saturday afternoon. We have another group of 16 people travelling with us from north and



south Kashi, who will be travelling with us to Maharashtra. All of us are safe.” The tourists, who were on the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, were returning to Kathmandu on Friday. The state government established contact with them through the Bharatiya Janata Party

(BJP) state chief Ravindra Chavan. “They started their journey by road from Saga on Friday morning and are expected to reach Kathmandu through the Nyalam check-post on Saturday. A few others are completing the Mansarovar parikrama and will begin their return journey after that,” said an official from Mantralaya.

“We have not been able to establish contact with over 60 of these tourists, whose family members from various districts have registered their names with us. Unfortunately, they may have been caught in the flash floods. Had they been safe, communication could have been established in the last two days.”

said another officer from Mantralaya. “We hope they are stuck in areas which remain disconnected from other parts of Nepal. In such areas, only communication devices with the armed forces work. Many areas are still without communication facilities and

The first batch of 106 tourists from Nagpur reached Janakpur from Kathmandu by bus on Friday before boarding connecting trains to complete their journey back home

remain disconnected as the roads have been washed away,” the officer added. An anxious Sanjay Patankar from Thane, whose brother Satish and sister-in-law Rekha are yet to be traced, said they had crossed over to Timure on August 26 and were at the immigration office when the area was hit by the flood. The two were part of Dr Milind Chitley's group to Mansarovar – all of whom are yet to be traced. “We have been unable to make contact with them since the time the floods hit the area,” Sanjay told HT. “The tour operator has asked us not to come to Nepal and has two people monitoring the situation there. Many people who were crossing over have been rescued, but no one from Dr Chitley's group has been traced yet,” he said. According to officials from the state government's disaster management cell, information received from the district level is being passed on to the Ministry of External Affairs. “Flights and trains are being arranged for those that have been traced with help of the central government,” the officer said.

NEWS BOX

2026 FIH World Cup: India men lose in shoot-out to finish eighth



BENGALURU. (Agency)

A horrible facial injury to Manpreet Singh in the fourth quarter — a mistimed close-range shot caught him flush near the eye when he was one of the covering defenders — marred the seventh-eighth World Cup play-off match between India and Belgium. As soon as the ball hit his face, he laid down and was writhing in pain even as players from both teams and the on-field referees immediately signalled for the doctors to hurry. Once he left the field of play, the mop up operation began as there was some blood on the blue canvas. Minutes after that, India conceded the third of a wild game. Just when the hosts thought they had won the game, India sounded the board via Harmanpreet Singh at the death to send the game into a shoot-out which the hosts won to seal seventh spot. There are two ways to look at India's performance. The easiest way to look at their performance is through their rankings. The eighth ranked team in the world finishing eighth at the World Cup? There's some kind of cold logic to that. But peel back the layers and it immediately stops making sense. If the women's team has played with a lot of heart and gumption and a proper identity over the last two weeks, the men's team has been a mess. Their games have been marked by chaos, confusion, a porous defence and, most worryingly, at least from the outside, a lack of fitness. At one point in Friday's game against Belgium, India had the cardinal sin of having 11 outfield players and the captain was promptly sent to the bin for 10 minutes. A schoolboy error. Ever since Craig Fulton took the job over three years ago, the South African has always sought to control games against elite opposition. At the 2024 Olympics, for example, this was the way they won bronze. There was a set system in place, there was a place for flair as long as the system tolerated it. It was the Pep Guardiola school of coaching but it worked.

Pakistan coach Sarfaraz Ahmed denies players knew of England tour boycott threat



New Delhi. (Agency)

Pakistan head coach Sarfaraz Ahmed has denied having any knowledge of the reported threat from the Pakistan Cricket Board to halt the England tour over a Sky Sports interview featuring the sons of former captain and Prime Minister Imran Khan. Sarfaraz insisted that his attention remained firmly on the ongoing second Test at Lord's. The controversy erupted during the lunch break on the opening day after Sky Sports broadcast an interview with Kasim and Sulaiman Khan, who spoke about their father's health and treatment in prison. Speaking after the second day's play, Sarfaraz said neither he nor his players were aware of the reported dispute between the PCB and the England and Wales Cricket Board. Asked whether there had been any possibility of Pakistan refusing to return for the afternoon session on Day 1, Sarfaraz replied, "All are OK. We were having lunch at that time." The PCB is understood to have raised the possibility of cancelling the Lord's Test and abandoning the remainder of the three-match series if the interview was aired. Sky Sports initially delayed the segment after receiving a complaint but eventually broadcast the pre-recorded interview.

PCB-SKY SPORTS ROW OVERSHADOWS LORD'S TEST

The interview was conducted by former England captain Michael Atherton and featured Imran Khan's sons discussing their concerns about their father's health, security and treatment. They also criticised the response of Imran Khan, 73, has been imprisoned since 2023 on corruption charges that he denies. Before entering politics, he enjoyed a distinguished 21-year international career and captained Pakistan to their only men's ODI World Cup triumph in 1992.

Beyond the numbers, Sri Lanka offered India a new grammar against spin

SL vs IND: Devdutt Padikkal's breakthrough in Sri Lanka has offered India a potential blueprint for tackling turning pitches. But with tougher challenges still ahead, the real test will be whether the left-hander and India can sustain that approach.

New Delhi. (Agency)

For much of the past two years, India's batting against spin has looked strangely uncertain in the conditions where it was once most at home. Batters raised on turning pitches began playing as though every delivery contained a trap, feet rooted, options narrowed, pressure allowed to build. The warning signs were impossible to miss. New Zealand's 3-0 sweep in 2024 exposed a batting order that had lost its old

fluency against spin. South Africa's 2-0 win a year later deepened the concern, as India's batting average sank to 15.23 and Simon Harmer took 17 wickets at under nine runs apiece. India were no longer making the bowler think twice. Too often, they were allowing the bowler to dictate the terms.

SL vs IND 2nd Test Day 5: Highlights

There was a time when Indian Test batting treated spin as a basic skill, not a special case. Use the feet. Play late. Work the ball into gaps. Stay long enough to make the bowler think twice. That discipline had not disappeared entirely, but it had become harder to find when India needed it most. New Zealand's spinners took 81 of the 112 wickets that fell in the 2024 series, with Ajaz Patel claiming 15 and Mitchell Santner 13 in a single Test. India were bowled out for 263 and 121 in Mumbai, with their senior batters offering no answer. The deeper concern was never just about individuals. India seemed to have lost

something collective — a shared method that once made them so difficult to beat on turning tracks. Replacing players is one thing. Rebuilding a batting culture is



another.

SRI LANKA TESTS GIVE HOPE

The Sri Lanka series did not answer every question. The attack was not as severe, the pitches were not as hostile and the conditions were less punishing than those that produced India's home collapses.

But the series offered something India had been missing: a sense of order.

At the centre of that was Devdutt Padikkal, who gave the No. 3 position a clarity it has lacked for some time. Padikkal finished with 328 runs in three innings at an average of 109.33, including 167 in Galle and 117 in Colombo. Dhruv Jurel added 173, Rishabh Pant 168 and KL Rahul 135. Even with quieter returns from Yashasvi Jaiswal and Shubman Gill, India posted 462 in the first Test and 503 for 9 in the second. Those numbers mattered, but not simply because they were big. Padikkal was not carrying the batting order on his own. India had several meaningful contributors, and they did so in different ways.

The second Test offered the clearest evidence. India were 300 for five when Jurel and Pant began rebuilding the innings. Pant's 63 changed the tempo, Jurel's unbeaten 115 provided the stability, and the lower order contributed enough to stretch Sri Lanka's workload. Jurel and Pant added 112 for the seventh wicket, and Jurel then shepherded the tail as India moved beyond 500 before declaring at 503 for 9.

Pakistan only as good as 2nd division county team: Ex-captain offers brutal take

ENG vs PAK: Michael Vaughan has delivered a brutal assessment of Pakistan's batting after their latest collapse at Lord's. The former England captain compared the visitors to a second-division county side and questioned whether they are meeting Test-match standards.

London. (Agency)

Pakistan's batting struggles in England have reached a point where former England captain Michael Vaughan believes the visitors are barely producing the standard expected of a Test-match side. After another collapse at Lord's, Vaughan compared the current Pakistan batting unit to a second-division county lineup. Pakistan were bowled out for just 110 in their first innings of the second Test, adding to the disappointment of their innings-and-53-run defeat in the series opener. Speaking on BBC Test Match Special, Vaughan questioned whether Pakistan's batters were capable of putting enough pressure on England's bowlers. "But this is Pakistan batting. Is it second division county cricket? There's no way that they are batting in any standard to

say that, that is a Test match batting lineup," Vaughan said. The comparison came after Pakistan's top order once again



failed to provide England with a serious challenge. Babar Azam, returning to the side after injury, scored only eight, while Abdullah Shafique, Shan Masood and Mohammad Rizwan also departed in single figures. Azam Awaits offered the most resistance with 46, but Pakistan's total left England with a huge advantage

and their bowlers with little reason to ease off.

WHY VAUGHAN MADE THE COMPARISON

Vaughan's criticism was not directed at England's bowling, which he felt had been impressive, but at the lack of resistance from Pakistan's batting. "You're not going to get hurt. There's no batter that's going to hurt them. No one's going to damage their figures, and it's really, 'roll up, roll up, who wants to get the wickets?'," he said. Vaughan suggested England's bowlers can attack relentlessly because Pakistan are unlikely to make them pay for taking risks. "I think they all know that Pakistan aren't going to get big scores. So you're only going to be out there for 40 to 50 overs, so you give everything in every spell, you keep going to Joe Root saying, 'Err, I'll bowl another one."

India's Asian Games-bound runner Abhishek Pal served NADA notice over doping

New Delhi. (Agency)

Asian Games-bound distance runner Abhishek Pal has landed in a doping controversy after being served a notice by the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) over an apparent violation. Pal has not been handed a provisional suspension at this stage, leaving his participation at the upcoming Asian Games uncertain. Pal features in India's 72-member athletics squad for the Games in Japan and is scheduled to compete in the 5000m and 10,000m. According to a source familiar with the development, a banned substance was detected in a very small quantity in his sample. "A banned substance has been found in a very small amount in his dope sample and he has been served a notice by the NADA," the source told PTI on

condition of anonymity. The substance involved is understood to potentially be a female fertility drug, making the circumstances of the case particularly unusual. "The banned substance is also



something surprising. I am sure he will request the NADA for an investigation," the source added. Pal is expected to seek an early resolution, given the proximity of the Asian Games.

Until the matter is examined and a decision is taken, his status with the Indian contingent remains uncertain.

PAL'S ASIAN GAMES SPOT UNDER CLOUD

The NADA notice comes shortly after Pal put together an impressive domestic campaign. He won the 10,000m title and finished second in the 5000m at the National Inter-State Championships in June. He also has international experience, having secured a bronze medal in the 10,000m at the 2023 Asian Championships. Pal has additionally spent time training in the United States as he has worked towards establishing himself at the international level. His selection for both distance events at the Asian Games was a reward for that recent form. The doping notice, however, could now force him to deal with an issue away from the track just weeks before the competition.

Aryna Sabalenka eyes dream US Open hat-trick, but shaky form raises questions



New Delhi. (Agency)

Aryna Sabalenka arrives at Flushing Meadows chasing something that very few women in the Open Era have achieved: three consecutive US Open singles titles. The world No.1 lifted the trophy in New York in 2024 and 2025, and victory this year would place her alongside an elite group of champions who have dominated the tournament across generations.

But for all the weight of history behind her pursuit, Sabalenka's biggest challenge may not be the record books. It could be herself. The Belarusian began 2026 in extraordinary fashion, winning Indian Wells and Miami to complete the Sunshine Double. She won 26 of her first 27 matches of the season and appeared to have established herself as the most reliable player. Since April, however, the picture has changed dramatically. Sabalenka is 17-7 in that period and has failed to reach another final. Her latest setback came in Cincinnati, where 20-year-old Czech Sara Bejlek stunned her 7-6(7), 6-4 in the Round of 16. Sabalenka led in both sets but could not close the match, a defeat that further exposed the vulnerability that has crept into her game.

CAN SABALENKA JOIN ELITE COMPANY

Sabalenka's ambition is enormous because the achievement itself is so rare. In the Open Era, Chris Evert and Serena Williams are the only women to win at least three consecutive US Open singles titles. Evert won four in succession from 1975 to 1978, while Williams completed her three-peat from 2012 to 2014. herself as the player to beat on hard courts. Sabalenka therefore has an opportunity to create a piece of history that would elevate her US Open legacy considerably. She has already established herself as one of the tournament's most reliable players,

Erling Haaland urges trust on Enzo Maresca's Man City after big 4-1 win vs Palace

New Delhi. (Agency)

Erling Haaland has urged Manchester City to give Enzo Maresca time as the new manager's ideas begin to take shape following a 4-1 win over Crystal Palace. The victory gave City maximum points from their opening two Premier League games and offered further encouragement after their difficult start. City had lost to Arsenal in the Community Shield before responding with consecutive league wins, with Rayan Cherki and Haaland both scoring twice at Selhurst Park. Speaking after the match, Haaland stressed that City are still learning how to get the best out of a revamped squad under their new manager. We have to keep on playing together and find out where we are best and how to play," Haaland said. "We have so many good players and we have to fit everyone in. We have to keep

going." The Norwegian's comments underline the adjustment still required at City, with Maresca attempting to establish his methods while integrating players arriving from different stages of their seasons.

HAALAND: CITY NEED TIME TO GEL

Haaland pointed to Cherki's unusual pre-season situation, with the Frenchman having played at the World Cup only weeks before joining up with City, as an example of why the squad needs time.

"I think in the start of the season, it was barely pre-season for everyone. Rayan just five weeks ago was playing in the World Cup, so it's a step up and we take it game by game," he said. The striker also highlighted Elliot Anderson's performance and called for City to continue building their

understanding rather than expecting immediate perfection. "It's a right step in the

trust the system and trust Enzo in what he wants us to do."

MARESCA'S CITY BEGIN TO FIND THEIR RHYTHM

City were made to work for their win after Palace started brightly, but Haaland's 17th-minute header gave the visitors the lead. An unfortunate Gianluigi Donnarumma own goal briefly brought Palace level before Cherki struck twice in five minutes to swing the game firmly City's way. Haaland completed the scoring in the 85th minute, continuing his strong start while giving Maresca another glimpse of the attacking depth at his disposal. Maresca admitted the opening spell had been difficult but was pleased with how City eventually took control.



right direction from everyone. Elliot was incredible. We have to build on this," Haaland added. He also made clear that the players remain committed to Maresca's approach. "We know what to do and need to

Kalyani Priyadarshan

Shoots For Pralay With Ranveer Singh In Mumbai, Misses Onam Celebration At Home

Malayalam actress Kalyani Priyadarshan, who impressed the audience with her performance in Lokah Chapter 1 in 2025, is gearing up to make her Bollywood debut with the upcoming zombie thriller Pralay. She will be seen alongside Ranveer Singh. Unlike previous years, when the actress marked Onam with celebrations at home and shared glimpses of the festivities, she found herself away from home this time as she remained busy with work. Sharing pictures from her time in Mumbai, Kalyani revealed that she missed the celebration since she's "fully locked in to Pralay" in Mumbai.

Kalyani took to her Instagram handle and shared glimpses of her time in Mumbai while she shoots for her Bollywood debut. Her latest photo dump featured everything from selfies and photoshoot moments to little glimpses of her new home. In one of the pictures, she appears to be picking out a wall colour for the space. Mumbai also became the setting for her birthday



celebrations in April. One picture shows her cutting into three cakes alongside friends who seemingly share the same birthday. However, it was another picture that caught the attention of fans. Kalyani included a sneak peek at the script of Pralay, giving followers a glimpse of the project that marks her entry into Bollywood.

Along with the photos, she wrote a heartfelt note that read, "Fully locked in to Pralay in Mumbai this Onam, so no Sadhya with the fam, no pretty white saree pics, no festive content. Here's a dump of random things from the last couple months instead. Hope you all had a truly happy Onam." Have a look:

Soon after she shared the post, it was flooded with sweet fan reactions. One fan commented, "@kalyanipriyadarshan Thank youuuuuuuuu so muchhhhhhhh... break the limits in pralayy." Another fan wrote, "@kalyanipriyadarshan waiting eagerly for your entry in Bollywood movies. Please make it fast." One of the comments also read, "PRALAY SEND MY GOOD WISHES TO RANVEER."



Dia Mirza

'Had To Strip Bare In Front Of 100s Of Men' For Song Shoot: 'That Really Unshackled Me'

Actress Dia Mirza has recalled how she had to "strip bare" in front of "hundreds of men" for the shoot of the song Mujhe Tumse Mohabbat Hai. She mentioned she was initially hesitant as she didn't feel confident in her body. However, Dia found the experience to be quite liberating. The song was shot with Emraan Hashmi for their 2004 film, Tumsa Nahin Dekha.

Dia Mirza told Bollywood Bubble, "It kind of liberated me in ways that I would have never imagined. And the confidence with which I was able to perform the song came from, of course, the fact that Vaibhavi Merchant is the choreographer of the song. And everyone working on it made me feel so safe." She added, "But it was possibly one of the most difficult things that I've ever done as a girl. Because I had to strip bare, almost down to underwear and a bra, in front of hundreds of men on set." The actress also opened up about why she agreed to do it and said that she was aware of what was needed for her character.

Dia continued, "And it could have felt like a very... how do I explain it? It felt, but it didn't, because by then, by the time we shot the song, I had become so aware of how important it is to find an actor's character truth and what you are conveying through a character, that it didn't matter to me whether there were 500 people or 1,000 people in the room."

"And I feel like there are lots of things like that that are connected to earlier parts of my career that have informed the artist that I have become today. And if I'm able to bring nuance and texture, or like a lived truth, to a moment, it comes because of the things I have been

able to overcome within myself over this journey of 25 years. And I think it's also a continuous process, right? Hopefully, I will keep learning, and I will keep getting better," she shared. Dia called the shoot a "liberating experience". "Because there were lots of, you know, preconceived concepts and ideas that I shed when I worked on that film. I was a girl who came from Hyderabad. I came from a very conservative



background. And, I was very, I wasn't so confident in my body. That film made me really confident in my body, because there is that one song, Mujhe Tumse Mohabbat Hai. That really unshackled me," she explained in the same chat.

Tumsa Nahin Dekha - A Love Story is directed by Anurag Basu and produced by Mukesh Bhatt. The film is inspired by Hollywood's Pretty Woman, and revolves around a rich man who falls in love with a bar dancer, but stands to lose his inheritance if he doesn't marry the girl his family chose for him. It also stars Anupam Kher and Pooja Bhatti.

Amitabh Bachchan Gives Marriage Advice; Warns Husbands, 'Galti Kardi Toh Joota, Belan Sab Chal Padega'



Megastar Amitabh Bachchan left viewers in splits while sharing a lighthearted yet important piece of marriage advice. The actor, while in conversation with a contestant on Kaun Banega Crorepati 18, commended a contestant for remembering the exact dates of both his first meeting and wedding anniversary.

The legendary actor further cautioned husbands against forgetting such important milestones, adding his trademark humour to the advice.

Addressing the husbands among the contestants and viewers, Amitabh said, "Jitne bhi yahan pati log hain, ek baat dhyani se sun lijiye. Jis din aapka byah hua tha apni patni ke saath, sari duniya ko bhool jaiye, us date ko kabhi mat bhooliyege. Yeh bahut hi mahatvapurna tareekh hoti hai, aur patniyan jo hain woh baar-baar poochhti rehti hain ki 'tumko maloom hai hamara byah kab hua tha?' Aur kahin apne galti kar di bhai saab, toh joota, chhappal, belan sab chal padega."

(All the husbands out there, listen carefully. The day you got married to your wife, forget every other date in the world, but never forget that one. It's a very important date. Wives have a habit of asking again and again, 'Do you remember when we got married?' And gentlemen, if you happen to get that date wrong, be prepared for shoes, slippers, rolling pins, everything might come flying your way.) Amitabh, who has been married to Bollywood star Jaya Bachchan, had recently opened up about his equation with his wife. In another conversation, he revealed that he informs his family in advance whenever a shoot is likely to make him late for dinner, joking that this helps him avoid being questioned by Jaya. He also said that when there is no domestic help at home, he takes care of the household chores himself. Admitting that while cooking is not his strength, he sometimes asks Jaya to prepare something for him, who then gets excited and makes different dishes for him, asking him if he liked them. He also recently thanked Jaya on the show for preparing mango kheer for him after he stopped eating regular kheer.

Preity Zinta Gets Her Favourite Kadhi Chawal In Paris While Down With Fever: 'Brightened My Day'



Actress Preity Zinta recently shared a heartwarming glimpse of a kind gesture that brought some comfort to her while she was unwell in Paris.

Taking to Instagram, the 'Soldier' actress revealed that she had been down with a fever and was not feeling well. Her friend happened to mention her condition to a neighbour, who went out of her way to send the actress her favourite comfort food – Kadhi Chawal. Sharing her gratitude, Preity gave a shout-out to what she called the "sweetest & kindest family" living in Paris. Preity said the thoughtful gesture not only lifted her spirits during a difficult day but also left a lasting impression on her. Sharing her video, the 'Kya Kehna' actress wrote, "A big shout out to the sweetest & kindest family that lives in Paris. I was down with fever & not feeling great at all. My friend mentioned that to her neighbour & Wow! She sent me my favourite Kadi Chawal to brighten me up. This little act of kindness & warmth not only brightened my day but will stay with me forever." "There is a reason we say Punjabi Hospitality is the best. If you are in Paris check out the goodies folks & thank me later Ting."

The video shows Preity Zinta opening a box containing aloo gobi ki sabzi, followed by a tiffin filled with her favourite Kadhi Chawal. Reacting to the thoughtful gesture, she said, "Oh my God, Kadhi Chawal! This is so sweet. I loved it. When you are ill, you want only comfort food. Thank you."

A few days ago, Preity Zinta visited the Kanapathy Temple in Paris on the last Monday of Sawan and shared glimpses of her spiritual outing on social media. In a video, the 'Mission Kashmir' actress documented her visit to the temple, where she was seen offering prayers, lighting diyas and seeking blessings. Dressed in white, the actress participated in the temple rituals and spent some time in prayer. "Who would have thought that I would end up going to the most beautiful Indian temple in Paris on the last Monday of Sawan. This last Minute plan overwhelmed me cuz I had a feeling that I was always meant to come here. Wow! The divine and the universe work in unexpected ways. My short trip to Paris has turned out to be extremely sweet after this visit. If you are in Paris do check out the Kanapathy Temple folks. I'm sure you will love it just the way I did. Thank you my darling @shailzaswami for taking me here & for making my trip."

NEWS BOX

Iceland votes on whether to resume EU membership talks

REYKJAVIK.(Agency)

Icelanders go to the polls on Saturday in a referendum on whether to resume membership negotiations with the European Union, in a tight race that will be closely watched in Brussels. The country of just under 400,000 people applied to join the EU in the wake of a 2009 financial crisis that devastated its economy. The membership talks were suspended in 2013 when a eurosceptic government came to power. Now, the result of the referendum is expected to be very close, with the latest opinion polls putting the 'Yes' and 'No' sides neck and neck. "It's pretty tight, but I'm always optimistic," Foreign Minister Thorgerdur Katrin Gunnarsdottir, a staunch europhile, told AFP. "It's not done until it's done." Voting begins at 9:00 am (0900 GMT) and closes at 10:00 pm. With no exit polls and given the tight race, the first reliable results are only expected late Saturday at the earliest. The around 273,000 voters are being asked to answer 'Yes' or 'No' to the question: "Should Iceland resume accession negotiations with the European Union?" If the "Yes" side wins, an accession agreement would be negotiated with Brussels and then put to a new referendum on actual membership. The issue of fisheries -- a pillar of Iceland's economy and over which Reykjavik wants to retain exclusive control -- would have to be hammered out with Brussels, which this time around appears more willing to compromise. "The fundamentals are very domestic, but there is a significant impact that has come with the second term of (US President) Donald Trump and this sort of geopolitical upheaval," Bifrost University political scientist Eirikur Bergmann told AFP.

Trump announces 'biggest oil deal in world history' with Venezuela; US to control 65 billion barrels

WASHINGTON.(Agency)

President Donald Trump said Friday his administration has reached a huge oil deal with Venezuela that gives the United States majority control of 65 billion barrels of proven petroleum reserves. The deal -- which Trump proclaimed as "the biggest oil deal in world history" -- will bring nearly \$100 billion in private investment to Venezuela, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said. Venezuela has the world's largest proven oil reserves. Its government has operated under intense pressure and close scrutiny from the Trump administration since the US ousted and captured long time ruler Nicolas Maduro in January. It allowed his then vice president, Delcy Rodriguez, to stay on and serve as interim leader so long as she toes the US line. Trump has made no secret of his desire to secure Venezuelan oil for the US, and in his post announcing the deal on his Truth Social platform, he said it will more than double US oil reserves. There was no immediate confirmation of the arrangement from the Venezuelan government. Trump said Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth had reached the deal with Rodriguez "through a partnership with private business." "This Transaction will greatly strengthen the already growing relationship between Venezuela and the United States!" Trump wrote. Rubio said the deal demonstrated how "President Trump's bold foreign policy is driving America First wins: securing stable reserves and low-cost oil in our Hemisphere and lowering gas prices here at home." "For the Venezuelan people, this deal will bring nearly \$100 billion in private investment, support thousands of high-paying jobs, and drive the reconstruction of Venezuela's economy," the top US diplomat wrote on X, without providing further details.

US families with relatives missing in the Nepal-China floods plead for more rescue help

About 90 Americans are among those unaccounted for, according to the U.S. State Department.

world.(Agency)

Mukti Patel has huddled with family and friends at her parents' Richmond, Virginia, home since her dad, sister and two other relatives went missing in the catastrophic flash floods along the Nepal-China border. She knows the hotel they were staying in was swept away. But as she shared memories of them on Friday, she caught herself. "I shouldn't talk in past tense yet," she said. "We don't know anything." As rescuers continued pulling

survivors from the mud, family members of some of the more than 2,000 people missing in the disaster were still holding out hope -- however dim -- that their loved ones survived. On a Zoom call Thursday night, some family members wanted to know if they could reach the site and whether a relative might be trapped inside an air pocket, said Sanket Pandey, managing director of Himalayan Glacier Adventure and Travel Company. The tour group, which has an office in Baltimore, had organized a two-week excursion to the region with 40 guests and seven tour guides. All of them are now missing, Pandey said. Their families are desperate for any information. "It's really difficult to have nothing," he said. Patel's family was in the Himalayan Glacier group when the floods struck on Wednesday, killing hundreds of people and leaving more than 2,000 missing.

About 90 Americans are among those unaccounted for, according to the U.S. State Department. Patel, 27, said her dad,



Umesh Kumar, 56, had wanted to make the trip for many years and traveled through India to Nepal, where he was joined by her sister, Akanksha, 32, and her sister's husband, Ishan, 32. Ishan's mom, Shilpa, 59, was also on the trek. Ishan and Shilpa Patel have dual Canadian and U.S. citizenship while Umesh Kumar and

Akanksha Patel are Canadian citizens, according to Mukti Patel.

Akanksha Patel is a psychiatrist who wants to break stigma around mental health problems, her sister said. "Everything I've done in life has been off the blueprint of my sister," Mukti Patel said between tears in a phone interview. "There's no ounce of meanness in her." Her father is a joyous person who helped victims of the COVID-19 pandemic, and her brother-in-law, an orthopedic surgeon, has brought great happiness to her sister's life, she said. Ishan Patel turned 32 on Wednesday, and the family called to wish him a happy birthday. That was their last contact. Mukti Patel said she would like more countries to help the rescue and recovery efforts. Jiwan Jyoti, who has U.S. citizenship, also was traveling with Himalayan Glacier and was listed by the group as missing.

A Dutch institute issues a 'Red Alert' over potentially lethal Trump-shaped ecstasy pills

THE HAGUE, Netherlands.

A Dutch drug addiction and mental health institute warned users on Friday about potentially lethal ecstasy pills shaped to look like the head of U.S. President Donald Trump. The respected Trimbos Institute said that several of the pills have been handed in recently at a network of centers that test drugs for users before they take them. "Absolutely do not use these pills," the institute warned. It released a photo of the pills that have a depiction of Trump's head on one side and on the other side "NL" and "Trump" stamped into the surface either side of a vertical line. One of the pills has a green face and another is yellow. The institute warned in a "Red Alert" published on its website

and social media that they contain a high concentration of a chemical called PMMA, or para-methoxymethamphetamine, that is similar to MDMA, the active



ingredient in ecstasy pills. However, PMMA is slower working than MDMA and that could lead users to take more because they think that the first pill didn't work, leading to a risk of overdosing, the institute said,

adding that use of the pills "can lead to overheating with possibly deadly consequences." Spokesperson Anniek Groothuis said that the institute has no reported cases of serious illness or fatalities among people who may have used the drug. "We do not know of any victims where PMMA was found in their blood," she told The Associated Press. Producing, selling and using ecstasy is illegal in the Netherlands, but it's widely used, particularly at clubs and music festivals. A government report in 2024 said that some 550,000 people took the drug in a year. It's not the first time ecstasy pills in the form of Trump's head have appeared. In 2017, German police seized thousands of orange Trump-shaped tablets.

No word yet on 77 Isha Foundation pilgrims missing after Nepal-Tibet flash floods

The popular king modernized the royal house but refused to follow in the footsteps of other aging monarchs who have abdicated in recent times.

world.(Agency)

There is still no information about the whereabouts of 77 pilgrims associated with the Isha Foundation who have been missing since a devastating flash flood hit areas near the China-Nepal border two days ago, according to the group's coordinator. The pilgrims, who were travelling under the banner of the Isha Foundation founded by spiritual leader Jaggi Vasudev, popularly known as Sadhguru, lost contact after the disaster struck in Gyirong, Tibet, near the Nepal border. Maa Gambhiri, a coordinator with



the group, said rescue operations were underway but authorities had yet to provide any information about the missing pilgrims. She said Sadhguru had wanted to travel to Gyirong, where the flooding was reported to be most severe, to assist with relief efforts. However, he was unable to obtain the required permission to enter the affected area. According to Gambhiri, the group comprised pilgrims from 19 different nationalities. The organisers have contacted embassies and

government authorities in India, Nepal and China in an effort to locate the missing members and secure assistance. "There has been no update on the 77 missing Isha Foundation pilgrims for the last two days," Gambhiri said, adding that rescue personnel were continuing their efforts at the site.

The uncertainty has left the families of the missing pilgrims deeply distressed, she said, with 77 families waiting for information about their relatives. The Isha Foundation conducts several Kailash Mansarovar pilgrimage groups during the season. Pilgrims typically travel from Kathmandu into Nepal before entering Tibet, with portions of the journey in a statement shared on his official Facebook account on Wednesday, Sadhguru said one of the foundation's pilgrimage groups was caught in the flash flood while making its way back toward Nepal. rney involving trekking on foot.

Europe's summer drought threatens fish in rivers, lakes and farms

NOVI SAD.(Agency)

Small boats stand idle on cracked ground in a shriveled side channel of the Danube River in northern Serbia, where the water has receded into a couple of shrinking ponds under pressure from extreme drought and heat. Fish circle in the shallow waters.

"This is all we have, these two little ponds that are full of juvenile fish," fisherman Dusan Jovanovic said. He said the fish are in danger because there is too little water and its temperature is over 30 degrees Celsius (86 degrees Fahrenheit). "If they start to die, they will all die at once," Jovanovic said. Persistent drought and scorching heat this summer have ravaged ecosystems and businesses across the region, from a lake in Slovenia and the side channel of the Danube in Serbia, to fish farms in Bosnia, the Czech Republic, Romania and Hungary.

The fish industry has been hit especially hard, with damage estimated in the millions of euros (dollars). This is adding to the already high toll caused by problems with energy and water supplies, devastated crops, losses in river traffic and trade. Finding themselves unprepared for this year's crisis, countries and businesses are now pondering ways to minimize the effects of future extreme weather events that scientists have tied to human-induced climate change. Hungary's fish die as entire country faces extreme drought. Around 99% of Hungary's lands are currently under severe or extreme drought conditions, according to the national meteorological service. Desertification, a process where vegetation recedes because of high heat and low rainfall, threatens much of the Great Hungarian Plain. Among the most affected are Hungary's roughly 27,000 hectares (67,000 acres) of fish ponds. The country's Agriculture and Food Economy Ministry said last week that "persistent heat and water shortages" had led to 1,588 hectares (3,924 acres) of those ponds drying out, causing the deaths of nearly 280 metric tons of fish at 20 farms. The estimated revenue loss from the damage was 1.3 billion forints (\$4.2 million), the ministry said. Producers say replacing lost fish could take years. Sometimes, operators were forced to drain one pond and divert its water to save fish in another, the Hungarian Aquaculture and Fisheries Inter-branch Organization said in early August.

Repeated drought over years hurts Romanian fish farmers

For fish farmers in Romania, especially those cultivating carp, this year's blistering heatwave follows severe droughts in 2023 and 2024, the effects of which are still being felt, says Catalin Platon, president of ROMFISH National Association of Fish Producers.

Nepal flood toll climbs to 579 amid fear of fresh deluge; India ready to send NDRF teams if required

world.(Agency)

The death toll from flash floods in central Nepal climbed to 579 on Friday as more



bodies were recovered after search and rescue operations resumed at full pace, following a brief slowdown amid fears of fresh flooding due to rising water levels in the Bhotekoshi River area. The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA) said rising water

levels at the site of a devastating flash flood earlier this week increased the risk of another flood in the area. "The water level mixed with mud has increased at the same place where the flash flood occurred on Wednesday, and there is a risk of more flooding in the area," the NDRRMA said.

The warning came after a massive flash flood swept through Rasuwa and other parts of central Nepal on Wednesday, killing hundreds and causing widespread damage to settlements, roads, bridges and hydropower infrastructure. The NDRRMA urged people involved in search and rescue operations, as well as those staying in the Bhotekoshi and Trishuli areas for various reasons, to remain highly alert and immediately move to safer places if they face any risk. Nepal Police on Friday said 579 bodies were recovered from eight districts of the Himalayan nation, with thousands still missing.

Europe's summer drought threatens fish in rivers, lakes and farms

The fish industry has been hit especially hard, with damage estimated in the millions of euros (dollars). This is adding to the already high toll caused by problems with energy and water supplies.

NOVI SAD.(Agency)

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